

Jharkhand University of Technology Ranchi, 834010



SCHEME OF INSTRUCTION AND SYLLABUS

For B.Tech. Program

Professional Skills

(Effective from 2024-25)

AUDIT COURSE

**Detailed Draft Syllabus
B.Tech.
(III – SEMESTER)**

Professional Skills

Context with Justification:

One of the significant outcomes of Higher Education is to prepare for entering the job or employment market. Besides the knowledge and skill set required for a particular job or occupation, professional skills are also required to be gainfully employed and to enjoy a successful and satisfying life. Professional skills are part of life skills. We should be able to demonstrate professional skills involving the use of intuitive, logical critical thinking, communication and interpersonal skills which are not limited to cognitive and creative skills. These skills, behaviour, and quality of output enhance employability.

Career skills empower us with the ability to prepare appropriate résumés, address the necessary gaps for facing interviews, and actively and effectively participate in group discussions thereof. It is also of significant importance that we possess the know-how to explore career opportunities for ourselves, recognizing our innate strengths and weaknesses.

We must be well prepared to take on new challenges and opportunities. With the increasing use of technology in the way we live, learn and work, we must be able to utilize basic computing concepts and also have and espouse excellently. Team skills, collaborating and working together can assist in resolving complex problems, which allow us or offer us the opportunity to articulate new ideas and perspectives. It further allows us to design, develop, problem-solve, and adapt to situations based on experience and skills.

Duration: 30 hours

The Course on Professional Skills is divided into two parts:

- A. Career Skills
- B. Team Skills

A. Career Skills

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Acquire career skills and fully pursue to partake in a successful career path
- Prepare a good résumé
- Prepare for interviews and group discussions

Explore desired career opportunities in the employment market in consideration of an individual SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). SWOT is a strategic planning and strategic management technique used to help a person or organization identify different parameters.

Expected Outcomes:

Learners shall be able to:

- Prepare their résumé on an appropriate template without grammatical and other errors and using proper syntax.
- Participate in a simulated interview.
- Actively participate in group discussions towards gainful employment.
- Capture a self-interview simulation video regarding the job role concerned.
- Enlist the common errors generally made by candidates in an interview.
- Perform appropriately and effectively in group discussions.
- Explore sources (online/offline) of career opportunities.
- Identify career opportunities in consideration of personal potential and aspirations.
- Use the necessary components to prepare for a career in an identified occupation (as a case study).

Duration: 15 Hours

Number and Titles of Modules:

Module 1	Résumé Skills	3 Hours
Module 2	Interview Skills	5 Hours
Module 3	Group Discussion Skills	4 Hours
Module 4	Exploring Career Opportunities	3 Hours

B. Team Skills

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Understand the significance of team skills
- Acquire team skills
- Design, develop, and adapt to situations as an individual and as a team member.

Expected Outcomes:

Learners shall be able to:

- Demonstrate a set of cognitive skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving and the ability to learn for smooth and efficient functioning at a workplace.
- Demonstrate a set of non-cognitive skills such as empathy, creativity, teamwork, and collaboration, for smooth and efficient functioning at a workplace.
- Use common technology messaging tools that are used in an organization for the flow of information and transition from command and control to informal communication during an online or offline team session.
- Actively use and operate online team communication tools such as Webinar, Skype, Zoom, Google, and Hangout.

- Appreciate and demonstrate team skills.
- Demonstrate a set of cognitive skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving and the ability to learn for maintaining good interpersonal relations and smooth and efficient functioning at a workplace.
- Demonstrate a set of non-cognitive skills such as empathy, creativity, teamwork, and collaboration, for maintaining good interpersonal relations and smooth and efficient functioning at a workplace.
- Participate in a digital lifestyle conversant with computer applications, the Internet, and the nuances of cyber security.
- Empathize with and trust colleagues for improving interpersonal relations.
- Engage in effective communication by respecting diversity and embracing good listening skills.
- Distinguish the guiding principles for communication in a diverse, smaller internal world.
- Practice interpersonal skills for better relations with seniors, juniors, peers, and stakeholders.
- Project a good personal image and social etiquette so as to have a positive impact on building of the chosen career.
- Generate, share and maximize new ideas with the concept of brainstorming and the documentation of key critical ideas/thoughts articulated and action points to be implemented with timelines in a team discussion (as MOM) in identified applicable templates.

Number and Titles of Modules:

Module 1	Cognitive and Non-cognitive Skills	3 Hours
Module 2	Presentation Skills	4 Hours
Module 3	Trust and Collaboration	2 Hours
Module 4	Listening as a Team Skill	2 Hours
Module 5	Brainstorming	1 Hour
Module 6	Social and Cultural Etiquettes	2 Hours
Module 7	Internal Communication	1 Hour

Module 1: Résumé Skills

3 Hours

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Comprehend the importance of a résumé.
- Identify essential components of a good résumé while preparing it.
- Identify common errors in a résumé.

Expected Outcomes:

The learners shall be able to:

- Prepare a good résumé considering all essential components without error.

Module Outlines:

- 8.1 Résumé Skills: Preparation and Presentation
 - 8.1.1 Introduction of Résumé and Related Terms
 - 8.1.2 Importance of Preparing a Good Résumé
 - 8.1.3 Difference between a CV, Résumé, and Biodata
 - 8.1.4 Essential Components of a Good Résumé
- 8.2 Résumé Skills: Common Errors
 - 8.2.1 Common Errors
 - 8.2.2 Guidelines for Résumé Preparation

8.1 Résumé Skills: Preparation and Presentation

Twenty learners passed with an ‘A’ grade from a renowned professional institution. They applied for jobs in different companies. Only eight applicants got their desired jobs.

Do you know the reason for the rejection?

The reason was: Their résumé or CV was neither appropriate for the job nor impressive to the employers. Preparing a résumé or CV is a skill and an art. It is important to know what a résumé is and understand other terms used worldwide, like curriculum vitae (CV) and biodata.

8.1.1 Introduction of résumé and related terms

- 1) **Résumé:** This is originally a French word meaning “summary”. A résumé is ideally a summary of a person’s education, skills, and employment when applying for a job or new job. It does not list out all the details of a profile, but only some specific skills customized to the target job profile. It thus is usually one or two pages long. A résumé is usually written in the third person to give it an objective and formal tone.
- 2) **Curriculum vitae (CV):** Curriculum vitae is a Latin word meaning “course of life”. A CV is more detailed than a résumé, generally two to three pages, or even longer as per the requirement. It lists out every skill, all the jobs and positions held, degrees,

professional affiliations the applicant has acquired, and in chronological order. A CV is a detailed document highlighting the professional and academic history of an individual. CVs typically include information like work experience, achievements and awards, scholarships or grants earned by the candidate, course work, research projects and publications of the work. A CV is used to highlight the general talent of the candidate rather than specific skills for a specific position.

- 3) **Biodata:** Biodata is the short form for, Biographical Data, and is an archaic terminology for résumé or CV. In a biodata, the focus is on personal particulars like date of birth, gender, religion, race, nationality, residence, marital status, and the like. A chronological listing of education and experience comes after that.

8.1.2 The importance of preparing a good résumé

Question: Why do we need to prepare a good résumé or CV?

A résumé is a mirror reflection of a person's pursuits.

Employers or recruiters require aspiring candidates to submit a résumé to be considered for the position. Résumés are first used to weed out unlikely candidates. Apart from identifying the unsuitability of the applicant, résumés that are rejected at the first instance may be because of errors in presentation and spelling, inappropriate appearance, and/or due to incomplete details.

Employers or recruiters further review such résumés that are a perfect or near-perfect fit for the advertised opening. These résumés are then scrutinized to shortlist candidates for interview based on education, additional training, community involvement, life experiences and anything else that indicates the suitability of a candidate for the advertised opening. Therefore, preparing an impressive résumé is vital.

8.1.3 Difference between a CV, résumé and biodata

A CV and résumé are similar in that they are both documents that summarize a candidate's professional history, education, skills, and achievements. Sometimes both documents are provided to the employer for consideration for a position.

It is important to note that in the United States and most of Europe, résumés and CVs are not interchangeable. There are a few exceptions. In India, South Africa, and Australia, the terms CV and résumé are interchangeable. The term biodata is mostly used in India, and is usually used while applying for government jobs.

8.1.4 Essential components for formatting a good résumé:

There are certain elements that are required in any résumé, irrespective of the format chosen. There are also some optional elements that are specific to an individual. A person should make decisions about these according to the job objective, career history, and the amount of space that is available.

A good résumé must start with a brief profile of the candidate, a summary of qualifications, followed by industry expertise and then professional experience in reverse chronological order. Focus is on the most recent experiences (with responsibilities and accomplishments), and previous experiences are only presented as a summary or additional information. This is followed by education details and/or professional affiliations and/or voluntary initiatives.

A résumé must contain at least the following three principal areas of information:

i) **Contact information**

- Name
- Postal address
- Telephone no: work, home, mobile, as applicable
- Fax number, if applicable
- E-mail address

ii) **Education and training:** Provides information about the formal education and professional training. Some tips on listing information:

- As a learner, making the transition to the workforce for the first time, the educational credentials should be at the top, or the very beginning of the résumé.
- List the highest level of education first and work backwards. Any specialization or professional training that relates directly to the job objective should be listed first.
- Include any special honours or rewards.
- List any courses, seminars, workshops, or training experiences as a part of professional development or recent positions held that relate to the career focus.

iii) **The following additional components may be included:**

- **Publications/presentations:** If it is a long list, divide and then subdivide by topics. Articles that are in preparation and will be published may also be listed.
- **Special skills:** This portion is appropriate if the job requires expertise. These may include computer hardware or software knowledge, or language proficiencies.
- **Certificates and training:** List these if they directly relate to the job.
- **Associations/affiliations:** Include current (not past) membership or active involvement in any professional or civic associations that relate to the job objective.
- **Awards/honours and recognitions:** List any career-related awards/honours gained, without adding an element of self-praise. Be precise and specific.
- **Work history:** This is the body of the résumé, if applying for a new job.

Activity

- ✓ Provide some exemplary résumés for learners to evaluate, as a small group assignment based on essential components.
- ✓ Hold discussion on résumés with essential components and without essential components. Ask the learners to identify the errors made in the résumé.

8.2 Résumé Skills: Common Errors

Based on the above activities, ask learners about the common errors that the candidates committed in their résumé. Summarize these errors as follows:

8.2.1 Common errors

People generally make the following common errors in preparing their résumé:

- i) **Spelling and grammatical errors:** These are very common errors, especially with freshers or first-timers. It is always good to do a spelling and grammar check once the résumé is written out. The best way to make mistakes is to have someone else review the résumé.
- ii) **Not including keywords that match the job position:** Mentioning the same keywords in the résumé that appear in the job listing is necessary.
- iii) **An outdated résumé:** It is important to update the résumé for every job. One should always remember to update the skills section, important additions, contact number, address details, current location, etc.
- iv) **Including too much information:** A résumé should contain information relevant to the job opportunity. Using bullet points instead of written paragraphs, gives precision and enhances readability. Details can be narrated, if required during the oral interview. A résumé should not exceed one or two pages.
- v) **Including a career summary that does not match the job requirements:** One must ensure that there is a match between the résumé summary and the key job requirements.
- vi) **Leading paragraphs with irrelevant duties:** Begin with a statement that shows that the candidate possesses the key duties and skills required for the particular job applied for.
- vii) **Being too modest:** It is important to mention the accomplishments and rewards in the résumé, but at the same time we need to understand and know the best way to put these across.

8.2.2 Guidelines for résumé preparation:

Besides taking care of the essential components, keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Always use good quality paper.
- Send a good quality photocopy.
- Ideally the résumé should not exceed one or two pages.
- As a fresher, primarily describe the academic achievements, workshops, internships and seminars attended where the skills were acquired and/or updated.
- Include sections like languages known, hobbies and interests, extra-curricular activities and the positive points in brief. Select a simple font with an appropriate font size to give clarity and legibility. You may refer to the template provided herewith for this.
- Check spelling errors and grammatical mistakes before finalizing the résumé.

A sample résumé is given here to facilitate learners.

Candidate Name	
Photo	Career Objective
Passionate and self-learning person looking for a challenging role in an evolving organization to utilize my technical and management skills for the growth of the organization as well as to feed my learning experience.	
Educational Qualifications	
Mailam Engineering College, Chennai • B.E – ECE • 8.3 CGPA • 2017-2021	
St. Anne's Girls Higher Sec School, Chennai • HSC • 81% • 2016-2017	
Government Higher Sec School, Chennai • SSLC • 90.2% • 2014-2015	
Project	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic Arduino Controlled Writing Robots It helps the blind people to write without help of other people	
Certification Courses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ C Beginners Certification➤ C++ and OOPs Concepts Basic Certification	
Father's Name	Skills:
<input type="text"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ C/C++ Programming❖ OOPs Concepts❖ DBMS❖ Network Communication
Mother's Name	Extra-Curricular Activity
<input type="text"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Browsing internet❖ Teaching kids (Tuition)❖ Volunteer Works in Campus❖ Rangoli design
Marital Status	
<input type="text"/>	
Date of Birth	
<input type="text"/>	
Nationality	
<input type="text"/>	
Languages Known	
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
Declaration	
I hereby declare that particular of information and facts stated here in above are true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.	
Source: ICT Academy, New Delhi	
Yours Sincerely,	
<input type="text"/>	

Activity

- ✓ Learners may select their preferred job and prepare a good résumé by considering all the essential components and discuss with peers.
- ✓ Learners may present the résumé in front of a larger group (whole class) using Power Point presentation.
- ✓ Invite an alumnus from the organization and get the résumés evaluated.

Note: Websites given in the references at the end of this module can be visited by the learners for understanding and preparing their résumé.

Assessment

1. Written evaluation.
2. Assessment can be done by the faculty member, self and peers as well as by juniors and seniors on the activities organized during classroom interaction.
3. The learning outcome in this module is that the learners could prepare an ideal résumé of their own. The résumé developed by the learners may be assessed by self, peer, or faculty member using some checklist or rating scale. The faculty member and learners may elaborate the following criteria for preparing the checklist or rating scale.

Comprehensiveness

- Size of résumé
- Any spelling errors
- Any grammatical errors
- Appropriateness of font type
- Appropriateness of font size

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

1. Lee, K. (2021, February 14). *How to Write a Neat Resume*. Wikihow. <https://www..com/Write-a-Neat-Resume>
2. Indeed. (n.d.). *Cover Letter Samples*. Indeed. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/cover-letter-samples>
3. Freshersworld. (2022, December). *Difference Between Resume CV & bio-data*. Freshersworld. <https://placement.freshersworld.com/difference-between-%20r%C3%A9sum%C3%A9-cv-bio-data/33122016>

Videos

1. The Urban Fight. (2018, October 23). *How to Write a Resume/For Freshers & Experienced People (Step-by-Step Tutorial)*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8YH0Qbu5h4>

Module 2: Interview Skills

5 Hours

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Describe the meaning and types of interviews.
- Describe the important questions generally asked in a job interview.
- Identify common errors people make during an interview.

Expected Outcomes:

The learners shall be able to:

- Script responses to typical interview questions.
- Critique the performance of a few simulated interviews.

Module Outlines:

- 1.1 Interview Skills: Preparation and Presentation
 - 1.1.1 Meaning of Interview
 - 1.1.2 Types of Interview
 - 1.1.3 STAR Approach for Facing an Interview
- 1.2 Interview Procedure
 - 1.2.1 Do's and Don'ts
 - 1.2.2 Important Questions Generally Asked in a Job Interview
- 1.3 Interview Skills: Common Errors
 - 1.3.1 Common Errors
 - 1.3.2 Interview Questions for Assessing Strengths and Weaknesses
- 1.4 Simulation
 - 1.4.1 Job Simulation Formats
 - 1.4.2 Comment Critically on Simulated Interviews
- 9.5. Demonstrate an Ideal Interview

9.1 Interview Skills: Preparation and Presentation

9.1.1 Meaning of interview: Ask the learners if they have faced any interviews. Discuss their experiences and description of the term 'interview'. The description can be summarized as follows:

- An interview is a conversation where questions are asked by one or more individuals known as the interviewer(s) and answers are given by an individual, the interviewee.
- In a job interview, it is a conversation with the purpose of an employer to assess the candidate and for a job seeker to convince the employer.
- Sometimes, information can be transferred in both directions.

Interviews usually take place face-to-face and in person. However, new communication technologies such as smartphones and video conferencing software have enabled conversations wherein both the interviewer and the interviewee are separated geographically. Interviews generally involve an oral conversation between the interviewer(s) and the interviewee. In some cases, a conversation” can happen between two persons who type questions and answers back and forth.

9.1.2 Types of interviews:

A few examples of different types of job interviews are:

- Telephonic Interview
- Face-to-face Interview
- Video Conference Interview
- Selection Interview
- Behavioural Interview
- Group or Panel Interview

Activity

- ✓ Learners may be asked to prepare details of the above types of job interviews. They can take help from the videos given in the references.
- ✓ Plays/skits/dramas/self-created videos may be used to make the activities enjoyable without losing the purpose

9.1.3 STAR Approach for facing an interview:

STAR is an acronym that stands for:

Situation : Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example.

Task : Describe what your responsibility was in that situation.

Action : Explain the steps you took to address it.

Result : Share the outcomes of your actions.

What is the STAR interview response technique?

In a behavioural interview, the STAR interview response technique is a way of answering questions. This technique offers a straightforward format to answer behavioural interview questions. These questions have openings like:

- Tell me about a situation where...
- What do you do when...
- Have you ever...
- Share an example of...
- Describe what you think...

The answers provide real-life examples of how actual situations at work in the past were handled by the candidate.

Activity

- ✓ Ask learners to watch the video and note the important tips to remember while framing the answer for STAR type interview and discussion. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRLF8ULhZmw>

9.2 The Interview Procedure*

Usually, a candidate submits his/her detailed résumé containing relevant facts and information about education, experience (if any), and other achievements before the interview.

During the interview, the candidate has to present himself or herself to the potential employer in a very limited time in such a way that the employer gets to know the candidate, understands what he or she can do, and is convinced that he or she is the most suitable candidate.

9.2.1 Do's and don'ts: Employers have two primary goals while interviewing candidates for a job. First, they want to determine if the candidate is qualified for the job, and second, they want to check or ensure that the candidate will fit well into the organization.

Following are some Do's and Don'ts before, during and after the interview process that can help a candidate to be successful in the job interview. Employers view candidates' actions in the whole hiring process as examples of their ability and work. This is an opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate abilities and potential.

Essential things to prepare for the interview: One has to prepare extensively for a successful outcome of the interview. Some useful tips:

A. Before the interview

- i) **Do the homework:** The first essential step in the interview process is preparation. Do adequate research about the company and the employer, visit their website to know all the details of the company (functions, staff, etc.), and make a mental note of all important points.
- ii) **Making a good first impression is important:** In a face-to-face interview, do a trial run if it is at an unfamiliar location and arrive a few minutes early for the interview. Carry your résumé/CV and ensure you know the dates and specifics so you can confidently talk through your CV and give examples.
If it is a video interview, test the video tool the day before the interview, on the day of the interview, and set it up at least 15 minutes before the scheduled time. Ensure proper connectivity and that the place is quiet, well lit, and comfortable. As physical face-to-face contact with the interviewer(s) is not possible, virtual face-to-face is the best alternative. Smile confidently and stay interested and engaged.
- iii) **Don't let any past rejections spoil the future:** It is quite stressful to find a new job. Approach each interview as a new opportunity and learn from past mistakes. If there are several interviews lined up, ensure some space between them to enable some opportunity to be refreshed and at your best.
- iv) **Don't assume it isn't an interview:** Be sure to treat everyone in the company with respect, from the people in the parking lot to the receptionist and the recruiting staff. If other candidates are present, introduce yourself and be polite. It may be used as an opportunity to assess your suitability for the potential role.

* Before taking an interview (online or face-to-face) and while preparing for it, learners should go through Module 1: Listening; Module 3: Speaking; Module 4: Writing and Different Modes of Writing; and Module 7: Nonverbal Communication.

B. During the interview

- i) Stay relaxed and comfortable.
- ii) Greet everybody present in the interview board.
- iii) Keep your job search records organized and handy.
- iv) Refer to your résumé as needed.
- v) **Listen carefully and answer accordingly:** It is important to listen attentively to the questions asked by the interviewer and answer clearly and directly using examples from past experiences to back it up. Direct your answer to the person who asked the question but maintain eye contact with all the members of the panel.
- vi) **Prepare smart, open-ended questions to ask the interviewer:** Before appearing for the interview, prepare some relevant open-ended questions to ask the interviewer. The questions will help illustrate your interest and motivation to succeed in the role and company. It will also determine if this really is the opportunity or business you want to join and to get noticed and separated from other candidates.
- vii) **Highlight strengths and expertise:** Communicating your experience and successes to the employer during an interview clearly highlights the strengths that are relevant to the role.
- viii) **Never speak negatively about former employers:** This conveys the impression to the interviewer that the candidate will do the same if he/she leaves and it reflects on the professional ethics and loyalty traits of the candidate. Negativity will alert the interviewer.
- ix) **Don't give incorrect information:** Be truthful in answering all questions and explain and describe things that relate to the position on offer, and truly reflect on your past experiences. If the probing is in an area that is not your strength you should be honest and let the interviewer know that you are willing to learn or work on how you can up-skill in this area. As a candidate, you could be bringing strengths in another area to the table.
- x) **Never interrupt the interviewer:** It is important to be a good listener as well as a good speaker. Patient listening shows that you are respectful and have strong interpersonal skills. Avoid rushing to answer a question in case the interviewer hasn't finished speaking.
- xi) Thank everyone who is present and carry all your belongings before quietly leaving the room.

C. After the interview

- Reflect on your performance in the interview.
- Send a “thank you note” (or email) immediately after the interview to demonstrate your understanding of the process, the rules of common courtesy, your commitment to complete a ‘project’, and your ability to communicate.

Learners can watch the following videos for more understanding about facing interviews

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thzOhKXRETw>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCGkKhmJ2T4>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pg4mDThQ5aQ>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQgPnXS9yas>

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHQbsHT_9dg
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8emh3KK_Bg

Activity

Ask learners to discuss the following in small group and present in class

- ✓ What are five things you should do during an interview?
- ✓ What questions are not allowed in an interview?
- ✓ What should you not bring to an interview?

9.2.2 Important questions generally asked in a job interview: There are basically two types of questions that are generally asked – *Open-ended and Close-ended Questions*.

i. **Open-ended Questions:** Open-ended questions require more than one-word answers. The answers could come in the form of a list, a few sentences or something longer such as a speech, paragraph or essay. Examples of Open-ended Questions:

- How would you describe yourself?
- What accomplishments are you particularly proud of?
- What do you know about our company, industry and/or position?
- Why should we hire you?
- Where do you see yourself in two years?
- How do you deal with conflict?
- Give me an example of a time when your work was criticized in front of others. How did you respond? What did you learn from this situation?

ii. **Close-ended questions:** These questions can be answered by a simple 'yes' or 'no', or in "one or two words". Few examples of close-ended questions:

- What is your best quality?
- Do you have many friends?
- Do you like reading?
- When is your birthday?

Activity

- ✓ Learners may be asked to identify a few more questions and discuss them in the class.
- ✓ Mock interviews and skits may be organized to practice facing the interview.

9.3 Interview Skills: Common Errors

Sometimes the candidate makes mistakes before and during interviews without realizing it. Most of these are very common. It is necessary to devote time to prepare before the interview so that one can feel satisfied after the interview.

9.3.1 Common errors: Some of the most common errors made by candidates which must be avoided:

- i) **Reaching late** – Always plan to reach the place of interview early to avoid any unforeseen circumstances. Reaching late apart from being unethical suggests poor time management skills, and disrespect to the company, job and the interviewer.

- ii) **Poor dressing sense:** It is very essential to look professional and appropriately dressed while appearing for an interview, as per the position or job.
- iii) **Disinterested in appearance:** It is important to demonstrate an interest in the company and the job through your behaviour. Therefore, show your interest in the job you are interviewing for and why you want the job by asking some intelligent questions.
- iv) **Not bringing the résumé:** Generally, the interviewers have a copy of the résumé of the candidate, still it is important to carry a copy for each member of the panel.
- v) **Phone interfering during the interview:** Keeping your mobile phone in front of you and looking at it frequently is completely unacceptable. It gives a wrong message to the employer that getting the job is not your top priority. The phone should be switched off during the interview and kept aside. Pay full attention to the interview and the interviewers.
- vi) **False résumé:** Never make the mistake of adding false information in the résumé. You will be able to discuss about yourself frankly and freely if you are truthful about your résumé, your qualifications and your past experiences during your interview.
- vii) **Lack of attention:** Pay full attention at the interview. Always maintain eye contact, lean forward slightly when talking to your interviewer, and make an active effort to listen with full concentration. Focus your attention in the interview only.

9.3.2 Interview questions for assessing strengths and weaknesses: Following are some of the strengths and weaknesses generally reported by the interviewees while answering questions during the interview process. The learners may be asked to discuss these and learn.

Strengths and Weaknesses

i. Assessing the Strengths:

Make a list of personal skills/strengths before any interview and categorize them into the following three categories:

- **Knowledge-based skills:** Acquired from education and experience (computer skills, languages, degrees, training, and technical ability).
- **Transferable skills:** Your portable skills that you take from job to job (communication and interpersonal skills, analytical problem-solving, and planning skills).
- **Personal traits:** Your unique qualities (dependable, flexible, friendly, hard working, expressive, punctual, trustworthy, creative, honest, respectful).

When you complete this list, choose three to five of those strengths that match what the employer is seeking in the job. Make sure you can give specific examples to demonstrate why you claim that is your strength if probed further.

Scripting your answers (example)

Write a positive statement you can say with confidence:

“My strength is my flexibility to handle change. As a customer service manager at my previous job, I was able to turn around a negative working environment and develop a very supportive team. As far as weaknesses, I feel that my management skills could be stronger, and I am constantly working to improve them.”

When confronted with this interview question, remember the interviewer is looking for a proper fit. She/He is forming a picture of you based on your answers. Therefore, put your energy into your strengths statement — what you have to offer. Then let the interviewer know that although you may not be perfect, you are aware of any shortcomings you have and are working on them.

Job interviews are among the most challenging part of the job-search process; therefore, being prepared makes all the difference.

ii. Assessing the Weaknesses:

Common weaknesses as reported by the candidates

- Focus too much on the details
- Hard time letting go of a project
- Difficulty in saying ‘No’
- Get impatient when projects run beyond the deadline
- Could use more experience in a particular area
- Lack of confidence sometimes
- Have trouble asking for help
- Difficult to work with certain personalities
- Difficult to maintain a healthy work/life balance
- In the past been uncomfortable with ambiguity

Activity

- ✓ Learners may be asked to add more strengths and weaknesses in the list after discussion in the class. Each learner may identify his/her weaknesses and strategies to overcome those.

9.4 Simulation

Job simulation is any task designed to give the candidate an accurate preview of the role that he/she is interviewing for and what entails on a day-to-day basis. Job simulations help companies to predict more accurately whether or not a particular candidate will be successful if selected.

9.4.1 Job simulation formats: Job simulations can take many different forms, such as in-person assignments, online exams, take-home assignments, role-playing, presentations or even virtual simulations. Chris Chancey, the founder of Amplio Recruiting, described some of the more common job simulation formats, in-depth (<https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/job-simulation-preparation/>)

- i) **In-basket exercises:** Here, the candidate is required to complete certain tasks such as responding to emails, taking phone calls, and handling grievances within a set amount of time. Often, these exercises are best for administrative and managerial positions.
- ii) **Situational judgment tests:** The candidate is presented with a work-related scenario and is asked to use his or her judgement to provide a solution that can amicably resolve the situation at hand. These tests lend themselves well to positions such as customer service and supervisory roles.

- iii) **Work sample tests:** These, typically hands-on tests, require the candidate to complete certain activities that are similar to the actual tasks they would perform on the job. Examples include writing codes, take-home assignments, collaborating with others to design a website or completing an on-site construction task.
- iv) **Role-playing:** Role-playing is probably the most common of all job simulation formats. These exercises help to evaluate a candidate's ability to navigate interpersonal challenges in a work environment.

This is not a complete list. Because job simulations mimic the tasks of actual jobs, therefore, the possibilities are many.

Visit this link and learn more <https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/job-simulation-preparation/>

- 9.4.2 Comment critically on the simulated interview:** After watching the following video invite observations and comments of learners and discuss.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5v-wyR5emRw&pbjreload=101#DanLok#InterviewQuestions#TellMeAboutYourself>

9.5 Demonstrate an Ideal Interview

Ask the learners to visit the following link and prepare interview questions and answers.

<https://www.inc.com/jeff-haden/27-most-common-job-interview-questions-and-answers.html>

Discuss observations and learning of learners on the following ideal interviews.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CetTjU155Y>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7a9inDMw90>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMQ1A-TIAsk>

Activity

- ✓ **Role Play:** Make small groups of learners. One learner plays the role of interviewee and three or four others can be the interviewers. The role may be reversed after each interviewee answers one question. Other learners can observe and give their comments.

Assessment

1. Written evaluation.
2. Role play: Role play or mock interviews on different types of interviews may be used to assess the outcomes.
3. Classroom observation: Active participation of each learner in classroom activities can also be considered for assessment.

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

1. Moore, E. (2019, January 23). *What Is a Job Simulation & How Can You Prepare for One?*. Glassdoor. <https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/job-simulation-preparation/>
2. Wikipedia. (2022, October 11). *Interview*. Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interview>

3. Hays. (n.d.). *How to conduct an interview*. Hays. <https://www.hays.ie/Resources/hiring-advice/how-to-conduct-an-interview>
4. Robert Half. (n.d.). *Planning and conducting a job interview*. Robert Half. <https://www.roberthalf.co.nz/management-advice/recruitment-process/conduct-interviews>
5. Vawizard. (n.d.). *The STAR Method of Behavioral Interviewing*. Vawizard. https://www.vawizard.org/wiz-pdf/STAR_Method_Interviews.pdf
6. Marsdd. (n.d.). *Open-ended and behaviour-based interview questions: Examples*. Marsdd. <https://learn.marsdd.com/article/open-ended-and-behaviour-based-interview-questions-examples/>
7. Doyle, A. (2022, December 11). *10 Easy-To-Make Job Interview Mistakes*. The balance. <https://www.thebalancemoney.com/most-common-interview-mistakes-2061111>
8. Virginia Tech. (n.d.). *Interviewing Dos & Don'ts*. Virginia Tech. https://career.vt.edu/job-search/presenting_yourself/interviewing/do-dont.html
9. Joyce, S. P. (n.d.). *Guide to Successful Interviews*. Job-Hunt. <https://www.job-hunt.org/job-interviewing/>

Videos links

1. Oxford Online English. (2017, October 26). *English Job Interview Tips and Tricks - How to Answer Job Interview Questions in English*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhTcuUvLGOE>
2. Learn English Hamza Classroom. (2019, December 1). *JOB INTERVIEW / Learn English Conversation - 02 (Season - 05) / Daily English Conversations*. [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVnMXNW_grk
3. Cognitive Group Recruiting For Your Future. (2016, March 16). *7 body language tips to impress at your next job interview*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCWVi5pAa30>
4. Learn English Let's Talk - Free English Lessons. (2014, June 29). *08 common Interview question and answers - Job Interview Skills*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mHjMNZZvFo>

Module 3: Group Discussion Skills

4 Hours

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Describe the meaning and importance of a Group Discussion in a selection process.
- Describe the procedure of a Group Discussion.
- Identify essential skills to be evaluated during a Group Discussion.
- Identify common errors people commit in a Group Discussion.

Expected Outcomes:

The learners shall be able to develop skills for participating effectively in a Group Discussion without making any mistakes.

Module Outlines:

- 10.1 Meaning and Importance of Group Discussion (GD)
 - 10.1.1 Meaning of a Group Discussion
 - 10.1.2 Importance of a Group Discussion
 - 10.1.3 Types of Group Discussions.
- 10.2 Procedure of a Group Discussion
 - 10.2.1 Methodology
 - 10.2.2 Ground Rules
 - 10.2.3 Stages of group formations
 - 10.2.4 Evaluation of Group Discussion
- 10.3 Group Discussion: Common Errors
- 10.4 Group Discussion: Simulation

10.1 Meaning and Importance of Group Discussion (GD)

Twelve learners participated in its Group Discussion phase for the hiring of candidates in a reputed company. Only two out of twelve were selected.

Learners may be asked to give reasons for the selection of only two candidates. The faculty member can initiate a discussion on the concept of Group Discussion and its significance in the selection of candidates.

10.1.1 Meaning of a Group Discussion (GD): Group discussion may be defined as a form of systematic and purposeful oral process characterized by the formal and structured exchange of views on a particular topic, issue, problem or situation for developing information and understanding the essentials for decision-making or problem-solving.

GD is a methodology used by an organization (company, institute, business school) to gauge whether a candidate has the skills and personality traits suitable to a particular job

position. The group of candidates is provided with a topic or a situation, some time to think about it, and then are asked to discuss it among group members for a specific duration. Learners watch the following videos on mock GD <https://placement.freshersworld.com/gd-mock-2/33122059>

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmGuCGPsosM>
- <https://www.shiksha.com/mba/articles/group-discussion-topics-for-mba-blogId-19559>

10.1.2 Importance of a Group Discussion: The main purpose of a GD is to identify essential skills in a candidate. It helps in the final selection of candidates for an organization (company, institute, business school) based on the following skills:

- i. **Interactive skills:** Interactive skills are the most important skills under judgement during a GD. One needs to communicate his/her thoughts verbally through actual words and non-verbally through gestures.
- ii. **Leadership skills:** One who can get the topic discussed in the right direction or steer the entire discussion evolves as a leader. He/she encourages other members to share their views and helps them build a place for themselves. The panel tries to see if you are that person.
- iii. **Flexibility:** Sticking to one point till the end without seeing and accepting the logic given by others makes you come across as a stubborn participant. And yes, this is one quality which is under judgement.
- iv. **Creativity:** Creativity is essential to reach the right solution. Team workers should have distinct ideas, so that the best alternative can be reached. How you approach the topic and what you make out of the discussion.
- v. **Initiation:** For the success of a project, the team members must take the initiative. Through the GDs, the panel tries to identify the people who take the initiative. If you decide to initiate the discussion ensure that you have something substantial to say.
- vi. **Awareness:** Awareness helps you to stay confident. Make sure that you read a lot and are aware of the current events in the world.
- vii. **Confidence:** Confidence is another important quality under judgement during a GD. Your knowledge about the topic does give you confidence but your overall conduct during the GD tells if you are confident of yourself and of what you say. Do not try to snatch away the limelight by speaking when it is another candidate's turn. This is impolite and makes you look insecure.

10.1.3 Types of Group Discussions: GDs can be topic-based or case-based.

- 1) **Topic-based GDs:** Topic-based GDs can be classified into the following three types:
 - a) **Factual topics:** Factual topics are about practical things, which an ordinary person is aware of in his or her, day-to-day life. These are current socio-economic topics, maybe in the news lately, or could be unbound by time. A factual topic for discussion gives a candidate a chance to prove that he or she is aware of and sensitive to the environment. Examples: The education policy of India, Tourism in India, WTO and its impact on the Indian Economy, and so on.

- b) **Controversial topics:** Controversial topics are argumentative in nature. They are meant to generate controversy. The idea behind giving a controversial topic is to assess the maturity a candidate displays by keeping the temper in check, and rationally and logically arguing points of view without getting personal and emotional. Examples: Demonetization is a successful and effective move; Caste-based reservation must be replaced with economic status; the education of parents.
- c) **Abstract topics:** Abstract topics are about intangible things. These topics are not given often for discussion, but their possibility cannot be ruled out. These topics test lateral thinking and creativity. Examples: Every cloud has a silver lining, smart work versus hard work.

Activity

- ✓ Learners may prepare a list of few more topics of Factual, Controversial and Abstract issues.

- 2) **Case-based GDs:** Another variation is to have a GD based on a case instead of a topic. The case study tries to simulate a real-life situation. Information about the situation is given to the members of the group and as a group, they are asked to resolve the situation. In the case study there are no incorrect answers or perfect solutions. The objective is to get you to think about the situation from various angles. Management institutions usually have a case-based discussion rather than a topic-based discussion in their selection procedures.

10.2 Procedure for Group Discussion

10.2.1 Methodology: In a GD, there are 8 to 10 participants seated in semi-circle or a U-shaped arrangement. Occasionally, there might be a round table for a group discussion. The panellists sit in front of the group; in the case of a round table they may observe the group from a distance. The duration of the GD depends on the Corporate/Institute conducting the group discussion. There are several roles that a candidate can play in a GD such as: initiator, data giver, critic, supporter, listener, questioner, traffic policeman, spectator or observer, and leader (coordinator). Many candidates act or behave in a certain way or make their points in a particular manner. English is the common language of the GD. During the discussion, the panel evaluates the candidate's potential to be a leader and his/her ability to work in teams.

10.2.2 Ground rules: To keep the discussion on track, there are some ground rules:

- Respectful attitude: Everyone must treat everyone else with respect: no name-calling, no emotional outbursts, and no accusations.
- No personalized arguments: No arguments directed at people; only at ideas and opinions. Disagreement should be respectful with no ridicule.
- Avoid interruption: Listen to the others' thoughts completely. Actually, listen instead of just running over your response in your head.
- Respect for the group's time. Keep comments short and to-the-point, so that others have a chance to respond as well.
- Consider all comments seriously. Evaluate others' comments fairly. It is important to be open to others' ideas and comments. It may change your mind or *vice versa*.

- Don't be defensive. If anyone disagrees with you, there is no need to be offended or defensive. Evaluate both positions, and only continue to argue for your viewpoint if you believe it is right.
- Everyone is responsible for following and upholding the ground rules.

10.2.3 Stages of group formation (Zoltan and Vancea, 2016): Task functions and personal relations are two dimensions that are present in any group and which influence its development. The formation of a group is therefore influenced by:

- a) Personal characteristics: Individuals with similar beliefs, attitudes, and values feel more connected with each other, and are more likely to form a group,
- b) Opportunity for interaction among the members uncovers many things that are common among them, which results in forming a group,
- c) Sharing similar interests and goals also leads to forming a group, and
- d) A group has more power and influence over anything than any single individual; this fact also promotes the formation of a group.

There are five stages recognized during the formation of a group:

- i. **Setting-up stage (forming):** This begins with some confusion and uncertainty and marks the first step in group formation. This is eased out by a leader.
- ii. **Conflict stage (storming):** This is noticed as hostility among members of the group due to internal struggles for leadership, and is manifested as initial tensions and the rise of conflicts.
- iii. **Cohesion stage (norming):** In this stage, friendships and mutual support relations develop among the group members, which manifests as acceptance of certain norms/rules by the group.
- iv. **Effectiveness stage (performing):** At this stage, the group becomes an effective team with members becoming interdependent, relations among them mature on mutual trust, and work becomes harmonious and synergistic, which results in members displaying maximum engagement to the common and motivating objectives of the group.
- v. **Dismantling stage or “breaking” of a group:** This happens either on the completion of objectives to be achieved, and/or the departure of some group members.

10.2.4 Evaluation of a GD: The GD may be evaluated on the following parameters:

- A. **Initiative:** The ability to impart directional inputs and provide a flowchart for a subsequent discussion. The initiative is not just limited to being the first speaker in the discussion; even a speaker who participates later in the discussion may be high on the initiative. It depends on the ability of a speaker to add something new and relevant to the discussion. It includes the following three ‘C’ approaches helping in taking the right initiative:
 - i. **Clarity:** This refers to the clarity in thought process and is manifested in the way the speaker channelizes the discussion.
 - ii. **Content:** This refers to the ability of a speaker to add discrete subject matter for the discussion at hand. A grip on current affairs and strong environmental sensitivity is helpful.

- iii. **Confidence:** This is the speaker's ability to connect comfortably with other members of the group and participate confidently.

B. Contribution

- a. **Action/reaction:** A group member may contribute in two ways: either initiate an action or react to someone's action. Initiating the discussion requires clarity with respect to the topic for discussion, as well as sufficient content. Reacting to a member's viewpoint may either indicate your agreement with him or her or disagreement. In the case of agreement with the group member's point, value to the point by giving an illustration or example is added. In case of a disagreement, the contradiction is supported by giving effective arguments.

b. Role

- i. **Leader:** A leader's role in GD showcases his or her ability to lead the discussion and ability to motivate the team members.
- ii. **Fountainhead:** In this role, a member exhibits the ability to add new and relevant points to the discussion to keep it active.
- iii. **Piggy rider:** A piggy rider in GD steals someone else's idea and rides on the other someone. However, the member needs to be smart and fluent to measure up to this role.

c. Nature of contribution

- i. **Positive:** A positive contribution creates a learning and participative environment for the group members. He or she cannot dampen the spirits of other participants.
- ii. **Negative:** A negative contributor in a GD impedes the flow of meaningful discussion by unnecessary intervention and objectionable behaviour/attitude. Such a participant doesn't conform to the basics of team dynamics and is therefore undesirable.

C. Communication: It includes both verbal and non-verbal communication.

a. Verbal Communication*

- i. **Fluency:** The ability to speak continuously and uninterrupted.
- ii. **Articulation:** The ability to speak in a clear and pleasantly audible manner.
- iii. **Modulation:** The ability to add a contextually relevant flavour to the voice, as is reflected in the occasional pitch variation.

b. Nonverbal Communication**

- i. **Energy:** Member's high energy level indicates his/her capacity for work. However, this should not be confused with impulse, which is a negative trait.
- ii. **Posture:** Upright and appropriate body posture projects a well-composed and poised candidate.
- iii. **Eye contact:** Eye contact with the key speakers adds value and acknowledges attentiveness. Occasional eye contact should also be made with other participants, including the ones who are absolutely quiet.

* Refer to Module 1: Listening, and Module 2: Speaking

**Refer to Module 7: Nonverbal Communication

- iv. **Gesticulation:** Appropriate and well-positioned gestures, add to the effectiveness of communication. Too much is distractive.
- v. **Persuasion:** In controversial topics, a persuasive speaker leads the discussion.
- vi. **Ethos:** Persuasion based on trust and credibility. Candidates who add value to the discussion in its formative stages are more likely to be heard and respected.
- vii. **Pathos:** Managing the emotions of other group members by knowing when to counter/support the viewpoints of others and the correct entry/exit points in a discussion.
- viii. **Logos:** This refers to the logical proposition of a candidate in speech. Candidates with stronger logical quotients are better received than others.
- ix. **Group dynamics:** Effective group dynamics helps in keeping a balance between individual excellence and group performance. Establishing positive relationships with other members is a great advantage in connecting with the team. However, this should not be misconstrued as compromising the essence of healthy controversy.

Another effort towards positive group dynamics is to ensure a logical progression of the discussion. It is advised to logically go from one discussion thread to another, rather than in a haphazard manner.

10.3 Group Discussion – Common Errors

It is very necessary to know the rules of participating in a GD as well as the role one would like to play. If we do not develop this understanding, then errors will occur.

Some common errors while participating in a GD:

- i) **Wrong start:** It is good to initiate the discussion on the given topic in a GD. It has its benefits of making our presence known and demonstrates our leadership skills. But this requires command over the topic and knowing what to say. Maybe sometimes we don't listen attentively, and mishear what is said or don't really know the topic well enough. We should take initiative only if we are confident in the subject. The alternative is to understand the topic through what others have to say. Then we add to the discussion by building on someone's idea or by throwing in a new idea.
- ii) **Nerves:** Participating in a GD may lead to nervous anxiety. It is quite normal. We can get over it by preparing and knowing how to relax.
- iii) **Lack of communication skills:** To be successful in a GD we need strong and effective communication skills especially in the spoken language. It is also essential to communicate meaningful ideas supported by facts, figures, and examples; in a comprehensible manner.
- iv) **Lack of confidence:** Self-confidence plays an important role in participating successfully in a GD. Worrying that you won't do well or thinking others are doing better takes away your focus on grasping the topic and participating successfully in the discussion. Lack of confidence may be seen in your body language as well.
- v) **Talking too much:** Too much talking is viewed negatively in a GD. It is better to participate strategically at some point in the beginning, possibly in the middle, and at the end while offering sound ideas and interacting with others

- vi) **Deviating from the topic:** Sometimes the topic is misunderstood and facts and figures are misquoted. In addition, getting distracted such as daydreaming or writing notes without listening to what others say, is deviation. It is necessary to listen carefully and actively participate with quality ideas in a GD.
- vii) **Poor body language:** Body language such as hand gestures, eye contact, body posture, and facial expressions are as important as verbal communication. Body language gives the evaluator insights into the personality.
- viii) **Interruption:** Interrupting when some other member is speaking is perceived negatively. Wait to listen and hear what others are saying. It could be adding value to the discussion. Speak only at an opportune moment.
- ix) **Showing off:** It is important to talk naturally in a GD as we would normally talk with others in day-to-day life. There is no need to show off as that is easily detected and perceived as going over-the-top; it is not seen as harmonious with the group. It suggests a “know it all” attitude, which comes across as insincere and as not being a team player in the workplace environment.
- x) **Losing your cool:** Sometimes topics in a GD can be quite touchy. In many instances, candidates make blatant statements and generalized comments that offend others in the group. Participants then react in an aggressive manner. Retaliating angrily will always go against you. The interviewer or panellist may also notice your breaking point. So no matter how strong the urge to react is, stay calm.

The following videos give some insight to perform better in a GD.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yru-WGgvtME5CommonmistakestoavoidinagroupDiscussion>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=papqqwvULDQHowtocrackGD:MostcommonGDRoundMistakestoAvoid>

Key points for success in a group discussion: Work on the following key points for success in a GD.

- Enhance your knowledge of current affairs
- Do not dress casually
- Be the initiator
- Be a good listener, do not dominate
- Make eye contact with all participants
- Do not go into unnecessary details
- Differ in a polite manner
- Focus on body language and posture
- Work on communication skills

10.4 Group Discussion – Simulation

- Eight to ten learners as participants in a GD sitting in a semi-circle or a U-shaped arrangement.
- The panellists may observe the group from a distance.
- Duration of the GD maybe 45 minutes to an hour.

- Roles that a candidate can play in a GD such as initiator, data giver, criticizer, supporter, listener, questioner, traffic policeman, spectator and leader (coordinator).

The faculty member will explain the following ground rules to the group members:

- Treat everyone else with respect: no name-calling, no emotional outbursts, and no accusations.
- No arguments are directed at people — only at ideas and opinions. Disagreement should be respectful — no ridicule.
- Don't interrupt. Listen to others' thoughts completely.
- Respect the group's time. Keep comments reasonably short and precise, so that others also have a chance to respond and participate.
- Consider all comments seriously and try to evaluate them fairly. It is important to be open to others' ideas and comments.
- Don't be defensive if someone disagrees. Evaluate both positions, and only continue to argue for yours if you continue to believe it is right.
- Everyone is responsible for following and upholding the ground rules.

The other learners can act as observers. They can observe the roles played by each member of the group and give their feedback after the GD. Similarly, all learners may be given the opportunity to participate in the GD.

Assessment

1. Written assessment.
2. Classroom observation: Active participation of each learner in classroom activities can also be considered for assessment.
3. Role play: Role played by each learner in the simulation GD can be taken for assessment based on the criteria given in the following Table:

Group Discussion/ Participation Rubric

Learner_____

Assessor:_____

(who is being graded)

(who is doing the grading)

Objective	Criteria				Points
	4 Exemplary	3 Accomplished	2 Developing	1 Beginning	
Time Management	Learner is never distracted and stays on task all the time.	Learner is rarely distracted and stays on task most of the time	Learner is occasionally distracted and stays on task some of the time	Learner is always distracted and hardly ever stays on task	

Objective	Criteria				Points
	4 Exemplary	3 Accomplished	2 Developing	1 Beginning	
Level of engagement in a small group	Learner always has something to contribute to his group discussion by sharing ideas, asking questions, or making plans.	Learner usually has something to contribute to his group discussion by sharing ideas, asking questions, or making plans	Learner rarely has something to contribute to his group discussion	Learner never has something to contribute to his group discussion.	
Listening Skills	Learner listens when others talk and incorporates or builds off the ideas of others.	Learner listens when others talk.	Learner does not listen when others talk.	Learner does not listen when others talk and often interrupts when others speak.	
Behaviour	Learner almost never displays disruptive behaviour during group meetings.	Learner rarely displays disruptive behaviour during group meetings.	Learner occasionally displays disruptive behaviour during group meetings.	Learner almost always displays disruptive behaviour during group meetings.	
Preparation	Learner is almost always prepared to meet group members and is ready to share research findings with the group.	Learner is usually prepared to meet group members and is ready to share research findings with the group.	Learner is rarely prepared to meet group members and share research findings with the group.	Learner is never prepared to meet group members and share research findings with the group.	

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

- Griffin, T. (2022, September 26). *How to Conduct a Group Discussion*. wikiHow. <https://www.wikihow.com/Conduct-a-Group-Discussion>
- Padilha, E., and Carletta, J. (2022). *A simulation of small group discussion*. Semantic Scholar. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/A-simulation-of-small-group-discussion-Padilha-Carletta/27f9357a7e5bff62a9c99a7a87d39f5cbc1b97ac?p2df>
- Young, S. K., Wood, J. T., Phillips, G. M., and Pedersen, D. J. (2006). *Group Discussion: A Practical Guide to Participation and Leadership, Fourth Edition*. Waveland Press. https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Group_Discussion/se4kAAAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0
- Bright, P. S. (n.d.). *Manual to Group Discussions*. Bright Publications. https://books.google.co.in/books?id=lgYQHX0guEsC&pg=PA5&hl=hi&source=gbv_selected_pages&cad=2#v=onepage&q=&f=false

Video links

- Sugandha Sharma. (2020, July 1). *How to Crack Group Discussion: Most Common GD Round Mistakes to Avoid*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=papqqwvULdQ>
- Pebbles Language & Competitive Exams. (2015, December 16). *Practical Group Discussion Example / group discussion videos / group discussion tips*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfJg-67smf4>

Module 4: Exploring Career Opportunities

3 Hours

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Acquire career planning skills and fully pursue a successful career path.
- Explore desired career opportunities in the employment market in consideration of an individual SWOT analysis.

Expected Outcomes:

The learners shall be able to:

- Explore sources of career opportunities (online/offline).
- Identify career opportunities in consideration of their own potential and aspirations.
- Use the necessary components to prepare for a career in an identified occupation (as a case study).

Module Outlines:

- 11.1 Process of Career Exploration
- 11.2 Knowing Yourself — Personal Characteristics
- 11.3 Knowledge about the World of Work, Requirements of Jobs Including Self-employment.
- 11.4 Sources of Career Information
- 11.5 Preparing for a Career Based on Potentials of Learners and Availability of Opportunities

11.1 Process of Career Exploration

Career exploration means knowing oneself, surveying career options, gaining new experiences, and preparing a strategic plan to attain career goals. The same process is followed for selecting the subjects.

To facilitate learners about the process of career planning, ask them to watch the video using the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnU5KYr8gjk>

(How to Choose a Career — Choosing a Career)

Ask the learners to prepare a write-up on the following points followed by a presentation in the class

- What is career planning?
- What are the main components of career planning?

The answers may include the following:

Defining career planning: Career planning can be defined as a systematic process by which the aspirant decides his or her career goals and the path to reach these goals. A career can be defined as all the jobs held during working life. It consists of a series of properly sequenced role experiences leading to an increasing level of responsibility, status, power, and rewards. A career is a sequence of separate but related work activities that provide continuity, order, and meaning to life. In the concept of career, changes in attitudes, motivation, and values occur,

as a person grows old. In both perspectives, the focus is on the individual. A Career, thus, represents an organized, well-timed, and positive move taken through life.

Main components of career planning:

- Self-assessment (general mental ability, special abilities, personality characteristics, personal interests, attitudes values, aspirations), through SWOT analysis.
- Career exploration (It focuses on learning about the occupations that seem to be a good fit based on the results of self-assessment and any other professions of their interest).
- Gathering information about career options through print, electronic, and online sources.
- Gaining experience in the chosen career.

Ask learners to visit the following website for exploring Career Tools and Resources. <http://www.careerprofiles.info/career-exploration.html>

11.2 Knowing Yourself – Personal Characteristics

There are testing and non-testing methods to assess individual characteristics. The standardized psychological test can measure these characteristics and individuals can come to know their strengths and weaknesses. Learners may take the help of a professional career counsellor to know about the following characteristics.

- General mental ability
- Special abilities
- Personality characteristics
- Interests
- Attitudes
- Values
- Aspirations

Activity

- ✓ Learners in small groups may be asked to prepare a brief write-up on the above characteristics.

11.3 Knowledge about the World of Work, Requirements of Jobs Including Self-Employment

In India, several agencies provide information regarding job opportunities in and outside the country. Union Public-Service Commission (UPSC), State Public Service Commissions (SPSC), Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) and all the employment exchanges give relevant information about job opportunities. The information about the technological employment opportunity is available at the Ministry of Education (MoE), University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Institute of Engineers (IEI), New Delhi.

The vacancies have been classified into seven categories: Engineering, Technology, Agriculture, Medicine, Natural Science, Social Science and other areas. Each category is classified into sub-branches. Central Institute for Research and Training in Employment Services (CIRTES) also provides information related to vocational guidance and counselling.

Besides, the Census, the National Sample Survey, Planning Commission, and other agencies supply from time-to-time information related to employment and unemployment trends. Newspapers and other media also publish career information. Based on such information future human resource requirements can be made.

There are ample opportunities in the field of self-employment. It is important to explore such opportunities to take the best career decision.

In addition to learning position titles in various occupations, professions and careers, it is also important to discover the skills, educational and training requirements, duties, working conditions, salary including perks, job prospects, advantages or disadvantages and personal attributes needed to be successful in various fields.

11.4 Sources of Career Information

Learners may be asked to explore sources of information in the careers of their interest using print and online sources. They can prepare the list and later search the careers. They may visit the websites of ministries and government departments to collect information about jobs and further courses or/and training opportunities.

Assessment

Based on the knowledge gained through various websites and videos the learners can prepare a strategic career plan considering the following steps:

Step 1: Assess personal strengths and weaknesses

Step 2: Identify careers of choice using print, electronic and online sources of career information

Step 3: Develop a strategy or action plan to proceed in the right direction

Learners may prepare this assignment in small groups as per their common career goals. Reflection on their learning may be depicted in the report. This may be included in the portfolio for assessment.

11.5 Preparing for a Career Based on Potentials of Learners and Availability of Opportunities

Project

- Preparation of Career Case Study in an identified occupation.
- Ask the learners to identify professionals in the career of their choice and interview them using an interview schedule or questionnaire. The interview schedule or questionnaire may be based on the dimensions given in point 11.3 of this module.
- The learners may analyse the responses in the case study and finalize their career plans. Learners can also share the case studies with peers to think about a particular career.

Assessment

1. Written evaluation.
2. **Through evaluating portfolio:** Learners may be asked to prepare a portfolio in which they can record their experiences, report their work with reflection, photos, video/audio recordings of the interview with professional.
Note: The learners should be told in advance the criteria for portfolio evaluation.
3. Project evaluation.

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

1. McKay, D. R. (2022, September 13). *The Career Planning Process*. The Balance.
<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/the-career-planning-process-524774>.
2. Career Profiles. (n.d.). *Career exploration*. Career Profiles.
http://www.careerprofiles.info/_career-exploration.html.

Module 1: Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Skills 3 Hours

Objectives

The objectives are to help learners:

- Describe cognitive and non-cognitive skills in general.
- Describe the use of cognitive and non-cognitive skills required for smooth and efficient functioning at the workplace.

Expected Outcomes

The learners shall be able to:

- Develop cognitive and non-cognitive skills for use in day-to-day life.
- Demonstrate a set of cognitive skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving and the ability to learn for smooth and efficient functioning at the workplace.
- Demonstrate a set of non-cognitive skills such as empathy, creativity, teamwork, collaboration, interpersonal skills, and resilience for smooth and efficient functioning at the workplace.

Module Outlines

- 12.1 Cognitive Skills: Meaning, types of cognitive skills, and strategies.
 - 12.1.1 Critical Thinking Skills.
 - 12.1.2 Problem-solving Skills
 - 12.1.3 Ability to Learn.
- 12.2 Non-cognitive Skills: Meaning, Types of Non-Cognitive skills and Strategies
 - 12.2.1 Empathy
 - 12.2.2 Teamwork
 - 12.2.3 Creativity
 - 12.2.4 Collaboration
 - 12.2.5 Resilience
 - 12.2.6 Interpersonal Skills
 - 12.2.7 Perseverance
 - 12.2.8 Self Control
 - 12.2.9 Social Skill
 - 12.2.10 Peer Pressure
 - 12.2.11 Stress and Stress Management

12.1 Cognitive Skills: Meaning, Types of Cognitive Skills

1) Meaning

Cognitive skills are also known as cognitive functions, cognitive abilities or cognitive capacities. Cognitive skills are essential for human adaptation and survival. These brain-based skills are needed in acquiring knowledge, manipulating information, and in reasoning.

These skills help the human brain to remember, reason, hold attention, solve problems, thinks abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly, and most importantly, learn from experiences (Plomin, 1999). Cognitive ability is closely associated with educational attainment even in pre-kindergartens (Welsh, et al., 2010), occupation, and health outcomes (Plomin and Von Stumm, 2018). These skills have more to do with the mechanisms of how people learn, remember, solve problems, and pay attention, rather than with actual knowledge. Cognitive skills or functions encompass the domains of perception, attention, memory, learning, decision making, and language abilities.

When cognitive skills are weak, learning becomes a challenge. These abilities are impaired in developmental disorders of attention, language, reading, and mathematics, such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. Cognitive abilities help an individual to process new information by taking that information and distributing it to the appropriate areas in the brain. The brain uses cognitive skills to retrieve and use that information whenever that information is needed. Appropriate development of cognitive skills helps the brain to complete this process more quickly and efficiently. The individual ensures understanding of the new information and thus effectively process it. For learners, therefore, cognitive skills are mental capabilities that are vital to learn effectively. They complement each other to function effectively and determine the success of learning outcomes.

2) Types of Cognitive Skills

Cognitive skills are divided into nine different categories, each reflecting a different method that the brain uses to effectively interpret and use information.

Ask learners to go through the web link <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/cognitive-skills-how-to-improve-them> to gain more understanding about the following types of cognitive skills:

- Sustained attention
- Selective attention
- Divided attention
- Long-term memory
- Working memory
- Logic and reasoning
- Auditory processing
- Visual processing
- Processing speed

3) Strategies to Develop Cognitive Skills

While cognitive skills are not generally amenable to direct instruction, they can be developed through the right kind of cognitive training or brain training. Effective cognitive training incorporates key neuroscience principles to be successful. While the teacher's teaching skills are important, the learner's learning skills are equally important. There is a direct relationship between the learner's ability to learn and the teacher's ability to teach. With a strong cognitive foundation and sufficient learning capacity, teaching can be more effective. The following strategies can be used to develop cognitive skills:

- i) **Physical and mental exercises:** Physical exercises (like walking, exercising, yoga, or playing some physical games) and mental exercises (meditation and being mindful of thoughts) help in developing cognitive skills.

- ii) **Practice focusing:** Purposeful focusing of the mind, removing distractions, and engaging more senses can help in focusing attention. Taking a brief walk around the workspace after having sat for a long duration, or listening to music (using headphones so as not to disturb others) to help re-focus are simple methods.
- iii) **Exercising the brain:** Activities such as reading a book, playing mind games, writing a story or memorizing a favourite song or poem; hobbies and learning something new (difficult, but achievable) every day stimulate certain areas of the brain and improve the associated cognitive skills and reduce cognitive decline.

4) Essential Cognitive Skills at the Workplace

Cognitive skills are very important in the workplace. These skills help to interpret data, remember team goals, pay focused attention, and more. These skills help recall previous information that may relate to the organization's goals and in making important connections between old and new information to work more effectively.

Activity: Ask learners to identify the cognitive skills required at the workplace for effective functioning and discuss them in the classroom.

They can refer <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/cognitive-skills-how-to-improve-them>

5) Highlighting Cognitive Skills during Job Search

Almost all jobs including manual labour require the workers to exercise their cognitive skills —their “thinking skills”. It is important for job seekers to be able to demonstrate that they have the types of cognitive skills employers want. One can find these under the “preferred qualifications” section in a job advertisement. Mention the skills that are a close match to the employer’s requirements in the résumé and cover letters, and during job interviews.

For details visit <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/cognitive-skills-how-to-improve-them>

12.1.1 Critical thinking skills

- I) **Meaning:** Critical thinking is a valuable skill for all aspects of life. It benefits problem-solving, creativity, and teamwork. It is also very much required at the workplace. Critical thinking is a way of approaching whatever is presently occupying the mind to come to the best possible conclusion. Critical thinkers are clear-minded, organized, rational and can make logical connections between ideas. They are focused on constantly upgrading their knowledge, and they engage in independent self-learning. Critical thinkers make some of the best leaders, because they are ready for self-improvement and can reach for self-actualization.
- II) **Characteristics of Critical Thinkers:** Ask learners to visit <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/321660> to learn about the following characteristics of critical thinkers:
 - Careful observation
 - Curiosity
 - Objectivity
 - Introspection
 - Analytical thinking
 - Identifying biases
 - Determining relevance

- Inference
- Compassion and empathy
- Humility
- Willingness to challenge the status quo
- Open-mindedness
- Awareness of common thinking errors
- Creative thinking
- Effective communication
- Active listening

III) Need for Critical Thinking at the Workplace: The learners may be asked to visit the following web link and prepare a write-up for discussion in the class on the need for critical thinking at the work place:

<https://pmctraining.com/site/resources-2/what-is-critical-thinking-and-why-is-it-valuable-in-the-workplace/>

12.1.2 Problem-solving skills

I. Meaning

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1995) a problem is, “*A doubtful or difficult matter requiring a solution*” and “*Something hard to understand or accomplish or deal with*.”

We are continuously exposed to opportunities in life, at home, school, at work, and even in the community. However, sometimes we miss opportunities or do not take full advantage of them. Often we are unsure of how to take advantage of an opportunity and we create barriers, or reasons why we can’t take advantage. These barriers can turn a potentially positive situation into a negative one or a problem. All problems have the following two features in common:

Goals: Goals can be anything that we wish to achieve, or where we want to be.

Barriers: Barriers or obstacles prevent the immediate achievement of goals.

If there were no barriers in the way of achieving a goal, then there would be no problems. Problem-solving involves overcoming these barriers in achieving goals.

II. Stages of Problem-solving

Many approaches may be used to solve problems but the following stages are required for a workable solution:

1. Define the problem
2. Brainstorm alternatives
3. Choose the best strategy
4. Implement your solution

The learners may be asked to visit the following website for a detailed understanding of the process of problem-solving:

<https://www.careerbuilder.com/advice/what-are-problemsolving-skills-and-why-are-they-important>

III. Essential Skills for Successful Problem-solving

“You can never solve a problem on the level on which it was created.” — Albert Einstein
Successful problem-solving requires the following important skills in proceeding efficiently from identification or defining the problem in the implementation of the solution:

Source <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/problem-solving.html>

- **Observational skills:** In the early stages of problem-solving, strong **observational skills, lateral thinking, and analytical abilities are very essential.** These skills help in properly assessing what's going on and to pinpoint the core cause of the issue.
- **Persistence:** Persistence is required to explore potential solutions to the issue.
- **Innovative thinking:** Innovative thinking helps in finding the right approach to the issue.
- **Teamwork and leadership:** A careful balance of **teamwork and leadership** helps to implement solutions.
- **Resilience:** There is a need for **resilience** to withstand the inevitable pushback from co-workers who resist change.
- **Communication and negotiation:** Both skills are important at this point.
- **Critical thinking and attention:** Critical thinking and **attention skills are needed** once the solution is implemented. These are required to assess the results and tweak the strategy as needed to ensure that the problem is successfully resolved.

IV. Problem-solving Strategies

People may use many different ways in solving problems. Some of the strategies people employ to figure out and fix a problem are:

- i) **Algorithms:** An algorithm is a step-by-step procedure that always produces the correct solution. For example, a mathematical formula is a good example of a problem-solving algorithm. This strategy, however, is not practical for many situations because it can be time-consuming.
- ii) **Heuristics:** A heuristic is a mental rule-of-thumb strategy that may or may not work in certain situations. Heuristics do not always guarantee correct solutions. However, heuristics do allow people to simplify complex problems and reduce the total number of possible solutions to a more manageable set.
- iii) **Trial and error:** This approach involves trying out several different solutions and ruling out those that do not work in problem-solving. This approach can be appropriate when a very limited number and similarly weighted options are available.
- iv) **Insight:** Sometimes, the solution to a problem appears as a sudden insight. This can occur because the problem is actually similar to something dealt with in the past or is present as an exemplar. However, the underlying mental processes that lead to insight happen outside of awareness.

Source: <https://www.verywellmind.com/problem-solving-2795008>

V. Obstacles in Problem-solving

The following are different obstacles that can interfere with the ability to solve a problem quickly and efficiently:

- **Assumptions:** When dealing with a problem, people often make assumptions about the constraints and obstacles that may hinder certain solutions.

- **Functional fixedness:** Functional fixedness prevents people from seeing all the different options that might be available to find a solution.
- **Irrelevant or misleading information:** The more complex a problem the easier it is to get misled by irrelevant and misguiding information. It is important to distinguish between information that is relevant to the issue and irrelevant data that can lead to faulty solutions in problem-solving.
- **Mental set:** This is the tendency to only use tried and tested solutions, those that have worked in the past rather than look for innovative or alternative ideas. Although the mental set can work as a heuristic, it can lead to inflexibility, making it more difficult to find the most effective and viable solutions.

VI. Important problem-solving skills at the workplace

Following are some important problem-solving skills that employers look for in candidates:

- Listening
- Analytical thinking
- Creativity
- Communication
- Decision-making
- Teamwork

For details, learners may visit <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/effective-problem-solving-steps>

12.1.3 Ability to learn

I. Meaning

No matter what you may set your sights on doing or becoming, if you want to be a contender, it's mastering the ability to learn that will get you in the game and keep you there.

-H.L. Roediger in *Make It Stick*

The ability to learn is the most “In-demand Soft Skill” for a learner and an employee. The ability to learn is in itself an acquired skill. It means knowing how to actively grow and develop a skill. Learning any new skill in the future requires understanding the principles of learning. Candidates must know what talents employers are looking for in new employees. ‘Hard’ skills, like computer programming or proficiency in a foreign language, are very important, but equally important are soft skills. These are less quantifiable skills, such as communication, leadership, problem-solving, critical thinking and most importantly, the ability to learn.

II. Tips for developing the skill of ability to learn

Due to the continuous development in technology and more and more connections among countries, contemporary workers need to know how to keep up with job demands. Learning is a process and continuing to use the same process, almost automatically, throughout the work life does not function in the ever-changing scenario. A new worker who knows little to nothing about an assignment or position, but knows how to acquire that knowledge, is going to be far more valuable than someone who knows more from past experience but has not diversified or expanded the knowledge by improving the ability to learn new or

renewed skills. Following are a few points a learner should remember while developing the skill of “Ability to Learn”:

- Understands the principles of planned and deliberate practice
- Has a mindset tuned to growth and understanding (believe that he/she can keep learning).
- Is good at objectively assessing their strengths and weaknesses.
- Has the ability to take in critical feedback.
- Is good at self-correcting and is ready to learn from mistakes.
- Is focused and concentrated during practice.
- Puts in a lot of effort.
- Focuses on the long run by improving or perfecting one thing at a time.
- Prioritizes and finds time for practice.
- Creates an optimal practice environment.
- Takes responsibility for the learning process, rather than make excuses.
- Always looks for ways to improve.

III. Characteristics of people having the skill of the ability to learn

Following are a few characteristics of people with the skill of “Ability to Learn”. Learners may be asked to explore details about the following characteristics by visiting the web link <https://hbr.org/2015/06/improve-your-ability-to-learn>:

- Innovating
- Performing
- Reflecting
- Risking
- Avoid Defending

Researchers have found that individuals with the agility to learn to translate the above five facets into behaviour, performance, and results at work in the following manner:

- **Extroverted:** More sociable, active and more likely to take charge.
- **Focused:** Continually refine and polish their thinking and work. They are more organized, driven, and methodical.
- **Original:** More likely to create new plans and ideas, seek complexity, and readily accept change and innovation.
- **Resilient:** They are more “at ease,” calm and optimistic. They bounce back quickly from stressful events.
- **Challenging:** They are less accommodating, likely to challenge others, welcome engagement, and express their opinions.

12.2 Non-cognitive Skills: Meaning, Types of Non-cognitive Skills and Strategies

I. Meaning and Types

Non-cognitive skills are defined as the “patterns of thought, feelings and behaviours” (Borghans et al., 2008) that are socially determined and can be developed throughout

the lifetime to produce value. Non-cognitive skills comprise personal traits, attitudes, and motivations. Non-cognitive skills have a positive effect on employment outcomes and these can be developed through education and training. Gutman and Schoon (2013) identified eight non-cognitive skills: self-perception of ability, motivation, perseverance, self-control, metacognitive strategies, social competencies, resilience and coping, and creativity. Positive associations between each of these eight non-cognitive skills and academic achievements have been demonstrated in some social studies. Non-cognitive skills are relatively stable at a particular life stage, but they are greatly influenced by culture.

The University of Chicago scholars have identified the following five non-cognitive skills as contributors to learners' academic success:

- Academic Behaviours – observable behaviours that show learners' engagement and effort.
- Academic Mindsets – learners' attitudes and beliefs about their academic work and ability.
- Academic Perseverance – the ability to overcome distractions, obstacles, and challenges to complete academic work.
- Learning Strategies – tactics that learners use to help them to remember, think, and learn.
- Social Skills – behaviours that allow learners to interact with peers and adults in positive and productive ways.

12.2.1 Empathy

I. Meaning

Empathy is the ability to recognize emotions in others, and to understand other people's perspectives on a situation. Empathy and sympathy are two terms used for such feelings, but there is a difference between empathy and sympathy. Sympathy is a feeling of concern for someone, and a sense that they could be happier. Unlike empathy, sympathy doesn't involve shared perspectives or emotions.

Ask learners to watch the following video to learn about empathy

<https://youtu.be/UzPMMSKfKZQ>

II. Stages of Empathy

According to psychologist Daniel Goleman, empathy is one of the five key components of emotional intelligence, (a vital leadership skill). It develops through the following three stages: cognitive empathy, emotional empathy, and compassionate empathy:

- i) **Cognitive Empathy:** Cognitive empathy is the ability to understand what another person might be thinking or feeling. It need not involve the observer's emotional engagement. Managers or leaders may find cognitive empathy useful in understanding the feelings of their team members. This would help them to decide the style of leadership that would get the best out of them in a particular situation.
- ii) **Emotional Empathy:** Emotional empathy or affective empathy is the ability to share the feelings of another person, and understand that person at a deeper level. It is not just a matter of knowing how someone feels, but of ensuring genuine rapport with that person. A team leader will definitely benefit from developing some level of emotional empathy. It helps to build trust between managers and team members, and develop honesty and openness. Empathy combined with action is most valuable.

- iii) **Compassionate Empathy:** It is the most active form of empathy as it involves not only having concern for another person, and sharing their emotional pain, but also taking practical steps to reduce it.

III. Strategies to Develop Empathy at Work

Practice the following techniques to display empathy in recognizing the behaviour of an individual that appears, at first sight to be over-emotional, stubborn, or unreasonable.

- Ensure mindful listening and direct full attention.
- Consider the other person's perspectives.
- Take affirmative action.

Learners can visit the following website to gain more understanding of empathy.

<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/EmpathyatWork.htm>

12.2.2 Teamwork*

I. Meaning

Vince Lombardi “Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.”

Andrew Carnegie “The ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.”

Teamwork is a process in which team members, using their individual knowledge, experience and skills through dynamic interaction with other team members, seek to achieve the common goals of the group/organization. Teamwork focuses on shared behaviours, cognitions, and attitudes of team members. Communication plays an important role in teamwork. It helps team members to resolve disagreements, synchronize information from multiple sources, align toward goals, or distribute critical information to each other.

According to Driskell et al., “teamwork is the process through which team members collaborate to achieve task goals. Teamwork refers to the activities through which team inputs translate into team outputs, such as team effectiveness and satisfaction”.

A team can achieve effectiveness by creating team synergy through the mechanism of process gain and loss. Working in teams is the most effective way to do such work, both in the classroom and in the business world. In class projects, teams bring different interests and skills to the problem, as well as reduce the amount of work to be done by learners and instructors alike.

II. Advantages of Using Teams

Effective teamwork provides significant benefits to both the organization and the team members. The organization gets a complete entity that collectively has all the knowledge and skills needed to improve the process. Therefore, an effective team can often make fundamental, lasting process improvements, rather than just push the problem from one department to another, in the absence of effective teams. The individuals also benefit by learning from fellow team members about other aspects of the process or better.

* Refer to Module 14 : Trust and Collaboration

III. Factors Contributing to the Success of a Team

Scholtes, Joiner, and Streibel (2003) discuss the following factors contributing to the success of a team :

- Clear goals
- Clear roles
- Project plan
- Use of scientific methods including data
- Knowledge of the process being improved
- Problem-solving skills
- Productive team dynamics
- Clear communication
- Balanced participation
- Follow ground rules
- Group process awareness

IV. Strategies to Deal with Conflict among Team Members:

Following are some ways for dealing with conflict occurring among team members, especially during team meetings (from *The Team Memory Jogger*):

- Avoid conflict by being objective
- Stay focused on the subject, not the people involved.
- Try to understand the other person's point of view.
- Avoid judgmental and inflammatory language.
- Handling disagreements
- Decisions are built on a series of small agreements.
- Identify areas of agreement and disagreement.
- Build on areas of agreement.
- Listen carefully and check for understanding.
- Dealing with feuds and focusing on the work of the team, not the feud.
- Help the team move forward in spite of the feud.
- Work to keep the feuding parties from dominating the meeting.
- Ensure that the feud is handled outside the meeting.

Learners may watch the following videos to learn about teamwork and collaboration.

- <https://youtu.be/y0FtXhSu0J0>
- <https://youtu.be/RuQjYzP9PMo>
- <https://youtu.be/4ET3SvXJyhw>

12.2.3 Creativity

I. Meaning

“Creativity doesn't wait for that perfect moment. It fashions its own perfect moments out of ordinary ones.”

—Bruce Garrabrandt

“There is no doubt that creativity is the most important human resource of all. Without creativity, there would be no progress, and we would be forever repeating the same patterns.”

—Edward de Bono

Creativity is a mental and social process involving the generation of new ideas or concepts, or new associations of the creative mind between existing ideas or concepts. Another point of view is that it is simply the act of making something new. Creativity is also defined as an “assumptions-breaking process”. Creative ideas are generated when one discards preconceived assumptions and attempts a new approach or method that might seem to others unthinkable. Creativity is the ability to think about a task or a problem in a new or different way, or the ability to use the imagination to generate new ideas. Creativity enables us to solve complex problems or find interesting ways to approach tasks. Creative people look at things from a unique perspective.

Ask learners to watch the following video to learn about creativity and innovation.

<https://youtu.be/FXJUDyqobbM>

From a scientific point of view, the products of creative thought or divergent thought have both originality and appropriateness. Although creativity is associated with art and literature, it also plays an essential part in innovation and invention. Creativity is equally important in the business, architecture, economics, and science and engineering professions.

II. Strategies to Increase Creativity

Nickerson (1999) provided a summary of the various creativity techniques that have been proposed. These include approaches that both academia and industry have developed :

- Establishing purpose and intention
- Building basic skills
- Encouraging acquisitions of domain-specific knowledge
- Stimulating and rewarding curiosity and exploration
- Building motivation, especially internal motivation
- Encouraging confidence and a willingness to take risks
- Focusing on mastery and self-competition
- Promoting supportable beliefs about creativity
- Providing opportunities for choice and discovery
- Developing self-management (metacognitive skills)
- Teaching techniques and strategies for facilitating creative performance
- Providing balance

The learners may get a detailed description of these approaches in following web link:

<https://zety.com/blog/creative-thinking-skills>

Following are a few more strategies suggested to develop creativity:

- Commit yourself to creativity
- Become an expert
- Reward your curiosity
- Take risks

- Build your confidence
- Make time for creativity
- Overcome a negative attitude
- Fight fear of failure
- Brainstorm new ideas
- Explore multiple solutions
- Keep a creativity journal
- Use mind maps and flow charts
- Challenge yourself and create opportunities
- Try the six hats technique
- Look for inspiration
- Consider alternative scenarios
- Try the snowball technique

The learners may get a detailed description of these points from the following web link:

<https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-boost-your-creativity-2795046>

Learners may watch the following video to learn about more strategies to develop creativity:

[https://youtu.be/EGvI1BTCm5w.](https://youtu.be/EGvI1BTCm5w)

III. Creative Skills at the Workplace

Creativity is also required at the workplace. The following examples of creative skills can be practised to become more creative in the workplace. Used in combination, these can be helpful in thinking differently about a problem or a task:

- Making connections
- Asking questions
- Making observations
- Networking
- Experimenting

The learners may visit the following web link to get a description of the stated examples:

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/creativity-ski>

12.2.4 Collaboration

I. Meaning

Collaboration is a purposeful relationship in which the concerned parties decide strategically to cooperate to achieve shared or overlapping objectives. Teams that work collaboratively are more likely to obtain greater resources, recognition, and rewards, especially when facing competition for limited resources.

II. Types of Collaboration

- **Team collaboration**
- **Network collaboration**
- **Video collaboration.**
- **Cloud collaboration**

- **Contextual collaboration**
- **Cross-functional collaboration**
- **Community collaboration**
- **Social collaboration**
- **Virtual collaboration**

Ask learners to visit <https://eztalks.com/video-conference/4-different-types-of-collaboration.html> to learn about the types of collaboration.

III. Importance of Collaboration in an Organization

Effective collaboration can achieve the most important effects within an organization of making employees happier, reducing stress by making work easier, making way for better work relationships, and reducing overall stress. More effective collaboration gives an organization a huge advantage when it comes to brainstorming, value creation, and equal opportunity. A high level of importance on collaboration can increase efficiency, enhance job satisfaction, and employee retention.

Collaboration is important because it:

- helps in problem-solving
- brings people (and organizations) closer together
- helps people learn from each other
- opens new channels for communication
- boosts morale across the organization
- makes workers more efficient
- leads to higher retention rates among employees

Source: <https://blog.jostle.me/blog/why-collaboration-is-important>

IV. Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning can be between two peers or in small/larger groups. Peer learning is a type of collaborative learning that involves learners working in pairs or in small groups to discuss concepts or find solutions to problems. It helps in addressing misunderstandings and clarifying misconceptions. Research shows that educational experiences that are active, social, contextual, engaging, and learner-owned lead to deeper learning.

i. Advantages of Collaborative Learning

- Helps in developing higher-level thinking, oral communication, self-management, and leadership skills.
- Promotes interaction between learners and faculty.
- Increases learner retention, self-esteem, and responsibility.
- Provides exposure.
- Prepares learners for real life social and employment situations.

ii. Process of Collaborative Learning

The following three-step process may be adopted in collaborative learning. The duration may depend upon the task at hand.

- *Introduce the task:* This can be done by instructing learners to discuss or debate a topic with their neighbour.

- *Provide learners with enough time to engage with the task:* The faculty member may walk around and address any questions as needed.
- *Debrief:* Few learners may be asked to share a summary of their conclusions. Any misconceptions or confusing points may be clarified by the faculty member. Questions from the other participants may be invited.

For larger group work projects, the following strategies may be used to ensure productive group dynamics:

- Provide opportunities for learners to develop rapport and group cohesion through icebreakers, team-building, and reflection exercises.
- Give learners time to create a group work plan allowing them to plan for deadlines and divide their responsibilities.
- Set standard ground rules for learners to create a contract for each member to sign, such as agreed-upon penalties for those who fail to fulfil obligations.
- Assign roles to members of each group and change the roles periodically. For example, one learner can be the coordinator, another the note-taker, another summarizer, and another planner of the next steps.
- Allow learners to rate each other's quantum of contribution. Use these evaluations when giving individual grades, but do not let them weigh heavily on a learner's final grade. Communicate clearly how peer assessment will influence grades.
- Check and follow-up with groups intermittently but encourage the learners to handle their own issues before asking for assistance from the faculty member.

For better understanding the learners may be asked to visit: <https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/active-collaborative-learning/collaborative-learning>

iii. Collaborative Learning or Group Work Activities: Few examples

- Stump your partner
- Think-pair-share/write-pair-share
- Catch-up
- Fishbowl debate
- Case study
- Team-based learning
- Group problem-solving

Source: <https://teaching.cornell.edu/resource/examples-collaborative-learning-or-group-work-activities>

Learners can visit the web link <https://www.gdrc.org/kmgmt/c-learn/44.html> to know about the 44 Benefits of Collaborative Learning

12.2.5 Resilience

I. Meaning

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant stress. The stressors may be family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or related to workplace and financial issues. Emotions of pain and sadness are common in people who have suffered major adversity or trauma in their lives. Resilience is

not a trait, it involves behaviour, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone. The following video may help learners to develop an understanding of resilience: <https://youtu.be/4ET3SvXJyhw>

II. Strategies for Building Resilience

All people do not react in the same manner to similar traumatic and stressful life events. Therefore, developing resilience is personal. People use varying strategies depending on cultural differences. Following are some ways to build resilience:

- Maintain good relationships with close family members, friends or others.
- Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.
- Accept circumstances that cannot be changed.
- Develop some realistic goals and move toward achieving them.
- Take decisive actions rather than detaching completely from problems and stresses and wishing them away.
- Develop positive views of yourself and confidence in your ability to solve problems and trust your instincts to build resilience.
- Keep things in perspective even when facing very painful events. Avoid blowing events out of proportion.
- A hopeful outlook enables the expectation that good things will happen in life. Try visualizing what you want, rather than worrying about what you fear.
- Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing to keep the mind and body focused to deal with situations that require resilience.
- Write a journal on the deepest thoughts and feelings related to any trauma or other stressful events.
- Practice meditation to build connections and restore hope.
- Stay flexible in using strategies

Source: American Psychological Association (2014)

12.2.6 Interpersonal skills

Interpersonal skills are sometimes referred to as social skills, people skills, soft skills, or life skills. We need these skills and use them to communicate and interact with other people both individually and in groups.

Interpersonal skills are the foundation for success in life. People with strong interpersonal skills tend to work well with others, including in teams or groups, formally and informally. They communicate effectively with others, whether family, friends, colleagues, customers, or clients. They also have better relationships at home and work.

I. Variants of Interpersonal Skills:

1. Communication skills*:
Verbal Communication with oral language.

* Refer to Module :1 Listening, Module : 3 Reading, Module : 4 Writing and different modes of writing and Module : 7 Communication

- Non-verbal Communication: Communicating using body language, gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, and many more.
2. Emotional Intelligence: The ability to understand and manage personal and others' emotions.
 3. Team Work: Ability to work formally or informally with others in groups and in teams.
 4. Negotiation, Persuasion and Influencing Skills: The ability to work with others to find a mutually agreeable outcome. Although this may be considered a subset of communication, it is often treated separately.
 5. Conflict Resolution: Working with others to resolve interpersonal conflicts and disagreements in a positive way.
 6. Assertiveness: It allows an individual to respect one's own thoughts, rights, beliefs, and values, while respecting the rights and opinions of others.
 7. Empathy: Understanding how others are feeling and showing compassion and support. It can help an individual to respond appropriately. Being empathetic allows an individual to build trust and eliminate conflict with others.

II. Developing Interpersonal Skills

Good interpersonal skills are the foundation for good working and social relationships, and also for developing many other areas of skill.

1. Identify areas for improvement
2. Focus on basic communication skills
3. Improve more advanced communication skills

<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/interpersonal-skills.html>

12.2.7 Perseverance

Perseverance usually helps an individual to keep trying repeatedly to overcome obstacles or challenges and to accomplish the final goal. Perseverance and grit are malleable by environmental factors. It can be improved by reflecting on failures, belief in the changeability of brain or cognitive abilities, as well as by focusing on envisioning and planning in breaking obstacles. It improves learners' performance especially in mathematics and increases the ability for retention in learners. However, in some cases, too much perseverance may lead to stubbornness and less flexibility to the environment.

12.2.8 Self-control*

Self-control is defined as an individual's capacity for altering one's own responses according to the standards of a social group such as ideals, values, morals, and social expectations, and to support the pursuit of long-term goals. Some other terms such as self-regulation, self-discipline, will-power, effortful control, ego strength, and inhibitory control are also used by researchers to describe self-control. Researchers have found the positive relationship of self-control with psychological adjustment, interpersonal communication, achievement in school, organizational citizenship behaviours, personal initiative, and proactive coping.

The learners can watch the following videos to learn about Self Control: Teaching Learners About Their Greatest Inner Strength with Nathan DeWall- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2jYdEO18nU> Self control is the key to success. Lessons from the Marshmallow

* Refer 12.2. 6 to understand the need of self control

Test- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZUTZKbe4hI> How Instant Gratification is Harming Society and What to Do About It | John Davidson | TEDxCSUS-

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4StLXX1k_9I
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XxEDFPzNUYQ>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lw_2qDIEV8s

12.2.9 Social skills*

Social skills can be defined as the ability to establish a compatible and effective relationship with others. It can be understood as an individual's knowledge of and ability to use appropriate social behaviours that are pleasing to others in interpersonal situations.

Training in social skills is provided as a group intervention for learners that includes, programmes for friendship and conversational skills, anger management, empathy training, and taking perspective (Kjøbli and Ogden, 2014).

The learners can gain more information from the following exemplar videos and improve social skills

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTArupmpjCA> How to improve your social skills?
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nm3vgg8k-0> 14 Social Skills to Help You Win in Life.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ku_XltAHvjA What are social skills. Improving social skills.

Activity

- ✓ Learners may be asked to have small group discussion/presentations or practice sessions after watching the above videos

12.2.10 Peer Pressure

I. Meaning: A peer can be any individual who belongs to the same social groups or circles and has some type of influence over other members of the group. Members of a peer group may influence a person's beliefs and behaviour. A group or individual may be encouraged and want to follow their peers by changing their attitudes, values or behaviours to conform to those of the influencing group or individual.

Peer pressure is the process in which the members within the same group influence other peers in the group to engage in a behaviour or activity that they may not be willing to engage in. Everyone irrespective of age, race and gender may face some type of peer pressure at some point in their life. Children and adolescents of any age can experience peer pressure in the form of engaging in risky behaviour, name calling or bullying other children or breaking rules. The adolescents become more susceptible to direct, spoken peer pressure, such as taking a drink in a social situation, accepting a cigarette or engaging in pranks, vandalism and/or bullying.

II. Types of Peer Pressure: Following are the types of peer pressure which can be experienced by an individual at any age:

- Spoken Peer Pressure
- Unspoken Peer Pressure

* Refer 12.2. 6 and Module 17 : Social and Cultural Etiquettes to understand the need of Social Skills

- Direct Peer Pressure
- Indirect Peer Pressure
- Positive Peer Pressure
- Negative Peer Pressure

III. Dealing with Peer Pressure: It is necessary to recognize the impacts of peer pressure on people's mental health, regardless of their age, race and gender. Social anxiety is one of the common consequences of peer pressure, especially if it has been experienced several times and/or over the course of one's core developmental age brackets (Kapoor, Sharma & Khosla (2020).

- i. Being aware of one's feelings about the situation and environment when peer pressure is happening.
- ii. Being assertive to say 'no' to any behaviour or act which is under peer pressure.
- iii. Setting boundaries to ensure that the peer group respects you, your value system and boundaries.

Activity

- ✓ Organise a group discussion on the impact of positive and negative peer pressure and the strategies to overcome negative peer pressure.

12.2.11 Stress and Stress Management*

I. Meaning: Stress is a mental reaction that our body experiences due to a demanding circumstance or event that requires immediate action and attention. Stress is defined as a state of mental or emotional strain caused by adverse circumstances. Hans Selye explained his stress model based on physiology and psychobiology as General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). His model states that an event that threatens an organism's well-being (a stressor) leads to a three-stage bodily response. Selye identified these stages as alarm, resistance, and exhaustion (<https://www.healthline.com/health/general-adaptation-syndrome#stages>).

Hans Selye introduced the concept of stress having two categories: distress and eustress. Distress is stress that negatively affects an individual. Eustress or positive stress energizes and motivates an individual to make a change. It is vital to enhance our positive energy. However, negative stress or distress, is responsible for all kinds of physical, mental, and behavioural problems.

The learners may visit the following link to know more about types of stress and impact of stress <https://www.mentalhelp.net/stress/types-of-stressors-eustress-vs-distress/>

II. Causes of Stress: The actual cause of stress varies from person to person. The same situation may be stressful for an individual but challenging for others. The stressful conditions and situations known as 'stressors' are generated by one's own perception depending on their personal traits, thought process, habits, available resources etc. One feels stressed when the challenges are greater than his or her ability to encounter them.

III. Stress management techniques: Stress management is a process that helps an individual to control stress levels by practising self-care, relaxation and also imparts some techniques to handle stress when it occurs. Effective stress management helps an individual to be happier and more productive.

*Refer Module 20 Managerial Skill

Robinson, Smith, and Segal suggested the following techniques for stress management

- Identification of sources of stress
- Practice the 4 A's of stress management (mention 4 A's)
- Get moving
- Connect to others
- Make time for fun and relaxation
- Better time management
- Maintain balance with a healthy lifestyle
- Learn to relieve stress at the moment

The learners may be asked to visit following web links and discuss the techniques

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-management.htm>

<https://www.educba.com/stress-management-skills/>

The understanding and practice of cognitive and non-cognitive skills help individuals to be successful, both in personal and professional life.

Assessment

1. **Written evaluation.**
2. **Through self-assessments:** Learners may assess themselves by responding to certain questions that indicate their level of cognitive and non-cognitive skills and personality characteristics acquired during classroom interaction.
3. **Through parents:** Reports of learner's behaviour, tendencies, or abilities that measures externalizing and internalizing behaviour, persistence, ability to focus, and social skills outside the institution.
4. **Through cumulative records:** Maintained by teachers/faculty members about learner's behaviour, tendencies, or abilities that measure externalizing and internalizing behaviour, persistence, ability to focus, and social skills in the classroom.
5. **Through apprenticeships/internships/community engagement:** These can serve as a very practical and effective approach for the assessment of a range of cognitive and non-cognitive skills.

Suggested Readings & e-Resources

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Web links

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Module 2: Presentation Skills

4 Hours

Objectives:

The objective is to help learners

- Describe the strategies to prepare various types of presentations

Expected Outcomes:

The learners shall be able to

- Prepare effective presentations considering the important strategies

Module Outlines:

13.1 Presentation: Meaning and Types

13.1.1 Meaning of Presentation

13.1.2 Types of Presentations

13.1.3 Presentation for Internal and External Communication

13.2 Presentation Strategies

13.3 Ways to Improve Presentation Skills over Time

13.1 Presentation: Meaning and Types

Identify situations of formal and informal presentations with the help of learners which they made or attended. Ask them if anyone has made presentations in the past. Give them five minutes for sharing their experiences.

Ask them: “What did they do while making the first presentation?”

After listening to their experiences ask the following questions: What is a presentation?

What other types of presentations do they know?

13.1.1 Meaning of presentation

Based on learners' answers describe the concept of presentation and its types.

A presentation is a means of communication adapted to various speaking situations such as presenting in a seminar or conference, talking to a group (small or large), addressing a meeting or briefing a team, speaking at a formal or informal gathering, and many more. Careful thought and preparation are required for an effective presentation.

Every organization or institution needs to disseminate information among its members. For this, one needs to have presentation skills to convey the message clearly and effectively. Today, presentation skills are required in almost every field, and most of us are required to give presentations on various occasions. Some people feel comfortable in public speaking while for some others this is difficult. Making a presentation can indeed be challenging.

13.1.2 Types of presentations:

There are two basic types of presentations— informative presentations and persuasive presentations.

- 1) **Informative Presentations:** The purpose of informative presentations is to promote understanding of an idea or to convey information. They are often used to provide information about a concept or idea that is new to them.
- 2) **Persuasive Presentations:** Persuasive presentation is used to influence a change in the belief, attitude, or behaviour of another person when that person has some degree of free choice.
Ask learners to give examples of informative and persuasive presentations from their day-to-day lives.

13.1.2 Presentation for internal and external communication

- 1) **Presentation for internal communication:** It is the sharing of information, knowledge, ideas, and beliefs among the members of any organization/institution.
- 2) **Presentation for external communication:** This is used to inform the public about new products, services, personnel changes, company events, and brand building. External communication is the transmission of information between two organizations. It also occurs between a businessman and another person outside the company. These persons can be clients, dealers, customers, government officials or other authorities. A customer's feedback is also external communication. An organization invests a lot of time and money to improve its image through external communication.

The faculty member may elaborate on the type of presentations used for internal and external communication.

13.2 Presentation Strategies*

The preparation of any presentation requires certain skills and one has to keep them in mind while preparing the presentation. These skills are:

- i) **Knowing the Purpose:** It is very important for the presenter to write the purpose or objective of the presentation in a single concise statement once the topic is selected. The statement helps in developing the presentation. The basis of the objective and the level of the content depends on the duration of the presentation and the background knowledge of the audience. The objective needs to specify exactly what the audience would learn from the presentation.
- ii) **Knowing the Audience:** It is important to know about the audience before preparing any presentation. The nature of the audience may be summarized as:
 - **Auditory learners:** Learn through words and sounds.
 - **Visual learners:** Learn through images and illustrations.
 - **Kinesthetic learners:** Learn through feeling and doing.

Discuss: Why it is important to know the audience?

The audience in any presentation will be made up of a combination of different types of learners. Therefore, presentation strategies should cater to all three types of learning styles.

* Presentation is a part of Communication Skills. Therefore, before learners start preparing presentations they should go through Modules 3 to 7 of Course 1.

Activity

- ✓ Ask learners to give examples of presentations to be used in each category of the learners.

Opening and Closing a Presentation: The following video can be played in the class so that the learners learn how to open and close the presentation.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1_FJAOCFgQ

(How to open and close presentations? - Presentation lesson from Mark Powell)

The video can be followed by a discussion in the class to highlight the major points of opening and closing any presentation.

The faculty member may describe the tips for opening and closing of a presentation to the learners.

- Make the introduction relevant to the goals, values, and needs of the audience
- Make some illustrations
- Stimulate thinking by asking questions
- Share a personal experience
- Begin with an anecdote
- Project a cartoon or colourful visual
- Make a stimulating or inspirational statement
- Give a unique demonstration

Conclusion: In the concluding session, the presenter should reinforce the main ideas communicated during the presentation. Thus, the audience will remember the main ideas.

Assessment

An assignment can be given to the learners to select a particular type of presentation and suggest the opening and closing of the presentation. After the submission of the assignment, the faculty member can ask a few learners to describe the opening and closing of the presentation. Other learners can note down the strong and weak points. The same may be shared with the presenters.

- iii) Using Presentation Tools:** The tools in a presentation are used to emphasize the main ideas, illustrate a concept, or stimulate the interest of the audience. The tools may be audio and/or a video clip. The tools in addition to the text make the presentation more effective. The aids include an audio recording, a clip from the film, animation, flip charts, posters, photographs, slides, collages, and videos.

The faculty member may describe the following tips on the use of visual aids:

- Give the visuals a consistent appearance including colour and spacing.
- Start the text at the same place on each visual.
- Try to observe the seven-by-seven rule: On an overhead slide should have no more than seven lines and seven words per line. Similar rules would also pertain to flip charts, PowerPoint presentations and other computer-generated slides, and posters.
- Use a simple typeface or font. Don't use more than two different typefaces, if possible.

- Make sure the text is large enough for people at the back of the room to read. Letters on a flipchart should be at least three inches in height. For a projected overhead or slide, fonts between 20 and 48 points are customary.
 - Don't show visuals that conflict with what you're saying — this includes displaying them once you've moved beyond their content.
 - Don't read the text that is on the visual, but paraphrase and add to it.
- iv) **Handling Questions:** Generally, there is a question-and-answer session after the presentation. If not prepared in advance to face a few questions from the audience, it can become very embarrassing for the presenter.
The presenter decides in advance how and when the questions will be entertained and make it clear to the audience at the start of the presentation. Some speakers prefer questions to be raised as they arise during the presentation. Others prefer to deal with questions at the end. It is important to learn how to make the question-answer session pleasant and productive.
- v) **Presentation to Heterogenic group:** The audience may vary in age, sex, ethnic group, caste, socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. The presenter should have knowledge about the audience to develop a presentation and accommodate a divergent audience.

13.3 Ways to Improve Presentation Skills over Time

Learners may watch the following video to learn to improve their presentation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5WT2vweFRY>

(Presenting and Public Speaking Tips - How to improve skills and confidence)

After watching the video, learners can evaluate their presentation and improve on it.

Assessment

1. Written evaluation.
2. Evaluation of presentation by learners in the classroom.
3. **Learners' portfolio evaluation:** Learners may keep their different presentations with feedback and remarks by the faculty member and the peers in the portfolio. The portfolio will be submitted at the end of the course for evaluation.

Note: The skills of an effective presentation may be assessed for each presentation during class interaction. The faculty member may develop a checklist or rating scale or rubrics using some parameters on which the assessment will be done. Help of learners may be taken for identifying the parameters.

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

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Module 3: Trust and Collaboration

2 Hours

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Describe the role of trust in creating a collaborative team.
- Describe strategies to build trust with employees.
- Describe strategies to overcome the fear of being judged.

Expected Outcomes:

The learners shall be able to:

- Build trust as a leader with employees to create a collaborative team.
- Overcome the fear of being judged as a team member and/or employee.
- Realize the importance of trust in creating a collaborative team.

Module Outlines:

- 14.1 Explain the importance of trust in creating a collaborative team*
 - 14.1.1 Definition of Trust
 - 14.1.2 Importance of Trust in Creating a Collaborative Team
- 14.2 Strategies to Build Trust with Employees
- 14.3 Criteria for Evaluation of Trust and Collaboration in Teams
- 14.4 Agree to Disagree and Disagree to Agree – Spirit of Teamwork
- 14.5 Understanding Fear of Being Judged and Strategies to Overcome Fear
 - 14.5.1 Understanding the Fear of Being Judged
 - 14.5.2 Signs and Symptoms of Social Anxiety Disorder
 - 14.5.3 Strategies to Overcome Fear or Social Anxiety

14.1 Explain the Importance of Trust in Creating a Collaborative Team

“Trust is the knowledge that staff will be involved in decisions that will affect them.”

—Barna

If we pose the following questions to the leader or manager of an organization and get a ‘yes’ to any of these questions then perhaps he or she has an issue with letting go, with trusting others, and treating them as colleagues.

- Do you find yourself referring to the staff you lead as “my staff”?
- Do you regularly ask for reports and updates on progress and performance from your staff?
- Do you sometimes feel that it is easier to do it yourself, or that you could do it better?
- Do you make the decisions?

* Refer to Module 12.2.2 of Module 12: Cognitive and Non-cognitive Skills

Let us understand the concept of ‘trust’ and how it can influence the performance of an organization.

14.1.1 Definition of Trust

Trust can be described as, “Reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something.” Trust is essential to an effective team because it provides a sense of safety. When the team members feel safe with each other, they feel comfortable to open up, take appropriate risks, and expose their vulnerabilities.

Without trust, there is less innovation, collaboration, creative thinking, and productivity, and people spend their time protecting themselves and their interests — this is time that should be spent helping the group attain its goals.

Trust is also essential for knowledge sharing. Trust is a key element in a team’s knowledge acquisition. If team members trust one another, they are more likely to share knowledge and communicate openly.

Following are different types of trust, each having a different theoretical grounding and level of analysis and each playing its role in collaboration.

- Cognitive type of trust or fragile trust
- Affect-based trust or resilient trust
- Calculus based trust
- Deterrence based trust
- Institution based trust

Activity

- ✓ Learners may be asked to prepare a brief write up on each type of trust and present it in the classroom for sharing. It can be small group work.

14.1.2 Importance of trust in creating a collaborative team:

Collaboration across institutional and national boundaries is now an accepted strategic choice for most businesses competing in an increasingly competitive world. The role of trust in collaboration is usually attributed to ex-post; successful alliances seem to involve trust, unsuccessful alliances do not. The relationship between trust and performance still remains somewhat elusive in collaborative relationships, maybe due to the frequent application of interpersonal types of trust to inter-organizational types of collaborations.

14.2 Strategies to Build Trust with Employees

It is important to first give trust for gaining the trust of others. It is reciprocal. Some strategies suggested to build trust among the employees and between management and the employees in an organization are as follows:

- i) **Set an example:** In an organization, if the team leader wants to build trust within the team, then he or she should show the team members that he or she trusts them. This means trusting everyone in the organization— the team members, the colleagues, and the boss. Team members always watch and take cues from a leader and try to emulate them.
- ii) **Communicate openly:** Open communication is essential for building trust. The strategies to accomplish open communication among team members include:

- Create a charter for team members to define the purpose of the team, and each person's role. Present this charter at the first team meeting, and encourage each team member to ask questions, and discuss expectations.
 - Organize team-building exercises. Carefully selected and well-planned exercises can help "break the ice" and encourage people to open up and communicate.
 - Organize regular meetings to provide all team members with a chance to talk about their progress and discuss any problems they're experiencing. This is important as it provides opportunities for team members to talk and help one another solve problems.
 - Demonstrate that open communication is important to you by consistently sharing with the group. The more sharing with team members the more will it make them comfortable in developing trust in the leader and each other.
- iii) Know each other personally:** Knowing each other is another strategy to develop trust. This can be done in the following ways:
- Create situations that help people to share personal stories like asking sensitively about their family, or their hobbies.
 - Set aside time every week for informal group discussions where some common topics may be discussed. Or team members can talk about their expertise and skills, their personal history, and their interests. The same can be organized online if the team works remotely or if it's a new team.
- iv) Avoid blaming others for making a mistake:** It is always better to encourage everyone in the group to think constructively about the mistakes made by a member to avoid an unpleasant atmosphere. Criticism or fault finding lowers morale, undermines trust, and reduces productivity. Instead, everyone should try to analyse what has happened, and move forward together to ensure that such a mistake doesn't recur.
- v) Discourage small group formation or cliques:** It is quite natural that smaller groups or cliques form, within a team, between some team members who share common interests or work tasks. While this is natural, it might negatively affect other members. It can lead to jealousy, insecurities, and mistrust between group members. The leader can avert the formation of small intimate groups or cliques by openly discussing about this with the team members to get an objective insight into what they think about it, and the effect on other group members. The potential of such behaviour of team members having a damaging effect on the morale of the entire team can be discouraged by addressing the issue openly.
- vi) Discuss trust issues:** Trust issues appear in a team due to some interpersonal problem. The first step to deal with these issues is to get to the origin or root of the problem. The issues can be resolved by asking team members to anonymously fill out a questionnaire. Ask them about the level of trust within the group, as well as why they think there is a lack of trust. After getting the responses, get everyone together to talk about these issues while respecting the anonymity of the responses.

14.3 Criteria for Evaluation of Trust and Collaboration in Teams

Few criteria for the evaluation of trust in a leader with team members:

- Admit mistakes
- Offering trust

- Active listening
- Affirmation
- Decision making
- Visibility
- Coaching and monitoring
- Care and concern
- Confidentiality

Trust is an essential element in the productivity of a team. Without trust, it is unlikely to get anything meaningful done. But with mutual trust, teams can accomplish everything they set out to do. A leader should set an example to show the team members and colleagues how critical trust is by implicitly trusting them. The leader should also make an effort to help everyone get to know each other at a personal level and encourage conversations on values, family, or hobbies. If the cliques are damaging to the trust and morale of the group, discourage them.

Activity

- ✓ Ask learners to download the rubrics for assessing trust and transformational leadership practice from the Internet.

14.4 Agree to Disagree and Disagree to Agree – Spirit of Teamwork

“Agree to disagree” or “agreeing to disagree” refers to the resolution of a conflict (usually a debate or quarrel) whereby all parties agree that they are not in agreement but they tolerate the other person’s point of view and respect it, even though they do not accept the opposing position(s). It generally occurs when all sides recognize that further discussion is unnecessary, ineffective, or otherwise undesirable. To agree to disagree can be an amicable solution while accepting that people have different points of view. The spirit of teamwork in this situation is reached by resorting to “Consensus decision”.

Consensus decision-making is a creative and dynamic way of reaching an agreement between all members of a group. Instead of simply voting to get a majority opinion, the group using consensus is committed to finding solutions that everyone can actively support, or at least can live with. This ensures that all opinions, ideas, and concerns are taken into account.

As per the definition of consensus, no decision is made against the will of an individual or a minority. This means that the entire group works hard at finding solutions that address everyone’s concerns rather than ignoring or overruling minority opinions.

14.5 Understanding Fear of Being Judged and Strategies to Overcome Fear

14.5.1 Understanding fear of being judged: Some people have an intense fear of certain social situations—especially situations that are unfamiliar or in which they feel being watched or evaluated by others. This is referred to as “social anxiety disorder” (SAD). These situations can be very frightening that people get anxious just thinking about them thus disrupting their lives in the process. However, vulnerable people can learn to be comfortable in such social situations and reclaim their lives.

Causes of social anxiety: Although social anxiety is quite common and many people struggle with these fears, the situations vary from individual to individual. Some common causes that can trigger social anxiety:

- Meeting new people
- Making small talk
- Public speaking
- Performing on stage
- Being the centre of attention
- Being watched while doing something
- Being teased or criticized
- Talking with or meeting ‘important’ people or authoritative figures
- Being called on in class
- Speaking up at a meeting
- Taking examinations
- Making phone calls
- Attending parties or other social gatherings

Activity

- ✓ Learners may identify few more situations where they experienced social anxiety. Once the exhaustive list is prepared, each learner can rate them as “Always to Never” (The five-point Likert scale: always, often, sometimes, rarely, never) following the list of likely causes or situations where people feel social anxiety.

14.5.2 Signs and symptoms of Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD): Social anxiety is expressed in emotional, physical and behavioural signs and symptoms. These are described briefly below:

i) **Emotional signs and symptoms**

- Excessive self-consciousness and anxiety in every-day social situations.
- Intense worry for days, weeks, or even months before an upcoming social situation.
- Extreme fear of being watched or judged by others, especially unknown people.
- Fear that one’s actions will prove embarrassing or humiliating.
- Fear that others will notice one’s nervousness.

ii) **Physical signs and symptoms**

- Flushed or blushing face
- Shortness of breath
- Uneasiness or upset stomach, nausea (for example, “butterflies in the stomach”)
- Trembling or shaking (including shaky voice)
- Racing heartbeat or tightness in the chest
- Sweating or hot flushes
- Feeling dizzy or faint

iii) Behavioural signs and symptoms

- Avoiding social situations to an extent limiting his/her activities or disrupting his/her life
- Staying quiet or hiding in the background to escape notice and embarrassment by other people
- A need to always bring a buddy along with wherever he/she goes out
- Drinking before social situations to soothe your nerves

14.5. 3 Strategies to overcome fear or social anxiety: Dealing with symptoms of social anxiety disorder or social phobia may seem difficult. However, the following six steps may help.

Step 1. Learn more about the fear

Learning about the fear will help to face it. To do this, write a journal or daily diary for two or three weeks. Record any such noticeable patterns

- Do your hands turn clammy and your stomach clench when the doorbell rings?
- Do you experience more symptoms of anxiety in the morning or in the evening?
- What do you tend to do when your fears rise?

Note down all the significant occurrences. Writing down the fear patterns and symptoms can help demystify them. They no longer seem so big and insurmountable. Thus, learning all about fears gives an insight into how to deal with them.

Step 2. Use imagination in positive ways

Imagination gives power, creativity, and the ability to think outside the box. Imagination can help in overcoming fear. Follow the given steps to use imagination in positive ways:

- Select a calm moment when you are relaxed and not anxious.
- Close your eyes and imagine yourself in a situation that normally causes fear, like being lost in a crowded place.

Now, imagine yourself handling the situation peacefully. Search for signposts or use a mental map that will help you regain your sense of direction.

- Imagine reaching home safely without any adverse incidents.

The peace and confidence you experience in your imagined scenario can help you get through the actual ordeal more successfully.

Step 3. Shift the focus: When fearful symptoms arise, focus on something else. Use a scale (1 for perfectly calm and 10 for the very worst symptom) to rate the level of calmness and anxiety. If you rate your fear at 7, then, you can work on lowering it to a 4 or a 3. Try using the next step to lower your fear rating.

Step 4. Focus on breathing: Usually, anxiety is accompanied by rapid, short breaths. Deep breathing helps immensely in overcoming anxiety. Focus on breathing once you recognize that you are becoming fearful. Inhale slowly and take a deep breath then exhale even more slowly, taking longer than the inhaling. Deep breathing forces the body to calm itself physically, and that helps to calm the mind.

Step 5. Practice mindfulness: Mindfulness is a passive thinking activity that allows a person to become more aware of fears and anxieties. Practising the following mindfulness tips at a time of less severe stress, fear and anxiety help:

- When fear symptoms seem to be arising, sit down and reflect on what is happening. This is like making an entry into a mental journal.
- Observe the symptoms as they arise.
Don't do anything about it. Just sit and observe as the moment continues.
- Being passive raises self-awareness and prevents compulsive actions and reactions which are instinctive when experiencing fear.

Step 6. Be with nature for relaxation: Nature calms the mind, reduces stress levels and changes moods from being anxious to feeling relaxed. Taking a walk or being with nature like in parks, gardens or being with plants at home helps reduce feelings of fear and anxiety. Physical activity of walking, jogging outdoors or working out indoors even requires focused attention of a different kind and that helps turn away from irrational fearful thoughts to clearer logical thinking that can help to overcome fears.

Assessment

1. Written evaluation.
2. Demonstration by learners: Learners may be encouraged to demonstrate each strategy as used by a leader to build trust in the team members. These demonstrations may be used for assessment.
3. Evaluation of learners' portfolios.

Note

1. Learners may develop a portfolio on their observation of practicing trust during their visit to an organization. They can develop some tools like a rating scale, a checklist or a questionnaire for the leader and team members to study trust and collaboration among them.
2. They can also note down the situations where they felt social anxiety, the signs and symptoms, and the strategies they adopted to overcome the anxiety.

The faculty member may develop a checklist or rating scale using some criteria on which the assessment will be done. He or she should take the help of learners for identifying the criteria.

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

1. Nielsen, B.B. (2004). *The role of trust in collaborative relationships: A multi-dimensional approach*. Management. 7(3): 239-256.
2. Mind Tools. (n.d.). *Building Trust Inside Your Team*. Mind Tools <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/building-trust-team.htm>.
3. Benjamin's English.engVid. (2014, May 17). *Conversation skills: How to agree or disagree in English*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amJ7ApXR0tw>.
4. Broenlee, D. (2010, September 1). *How do you help the group reach consensus when they simply don't agree?* Project Smart. <https://www.projectsmart.co.uk/team-building/how-do-you-help-the-group-reach-consensus-when-they-simply-dont-agree.php>.

5. Help Guide (n.d.). *Social anxiety disorder*. Help Guide. <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/anxiety/social-anxiety-disorder.htm/>.
6. Writer, S. (2020, September 8). *6 strategies to overcome fear and anxiety*. Real Life Counseling. <https://reallifecounseling.us/overcome-fear-and-anxiety/>.
7. *Consensus decision making*. (n.d.). <https://thedecider.app/consensus-decision-making>.
8. Seeds for Change. (2018, April 11). *How to do consensus decision making*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FgjgXIxHmml>.
9. Seeds for Change. (2018, April 11). *What is consensus decision making?* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYMgLl1WrNg>.

Module 4: Listening as a Team Skill

2 Hours

Objective:

The objective is to help learners

- Develop listening as a team skill.

Expected Outcome:

The learners shall be able to:

- Use effective listening skills as team leaders and/or team members for the proper functioning of the team.

Module Outlines:

15.1 Listening as a Team Skill

- 15.1.1 Listening Skill
- 15.1.2 Advantages of Effective Listening Skills
- 15.1.3 Types of Listening

15.2 Listening as a Team Member and Team Leader

- 15.2.1 Listening as a Team Leader
- 15.2.2 Listening as a Team Member
- 15.2.3 Improving Listening Skills

15.3 Uses of Active Listening Strategies to Encourage Sharing of Ideas

- 15.3.1 The Importance of Active Listening in the Workplace
- 15.3.2 Strategies for Improving Active Listening Skills to Encourage Sharing of Ideas

15.1 Listening as a Team Skill

“Know how to listen, and you will profit even from those who talk badly”. – Plutarch Before starting the discussion on listening as a team skill ask the learners the following questions :

1. Do you have to try hard to control the habit of interrupting others while they are speaking?
2. Are you tempted to jump in and finish someone else’s sentence?

If they answer ‘yes’ to one or both questions, they need to work on improving their listening skills. What is meant by “listening skills”, and the role they play in professional and personal life is explained.

15.1.1 Listening Skill*

Listening skill has been discussed in detail in Module 1. Here we are focusing on its advantages and its use to team leaders and members in making their functioning more effective and increasing the organization’s productivity. To succeed in any walk of life,

* Refer to Module 1: Listening

listening is a core competency. Listening is the combination of hearing and interpreting. Failure in either part is a failure in listening. Effective listening makes the person who is speaking feel valued, prevents miscommunication, speeds up productivity, and creates more active forums for discussion. Without proper training, two things can hinder effective listening: bad habits and style differences. The first step to being an effective listener is to break and eliminate bad habits. The second step is to understand the different ways people listen, and at the same time recognise the beneficial and potential trouble spots.

15.1.2 Advantages of Effective Listening Skills

Effective listening skills can help anyone become a better listener by eliminating barriers to good listening, improving communication skills, maximizing productivity, and building interpersonal relationships. Effective listening between speaker and listener develops respect and trust. Employees respond better to managers who they think are listening to them intently.

Being a good listener in the workplace has many benefits. People with well-developed listening skills are more productive, better problem solvers, and have healthier interpersonal relationships.

Advantages of effective listening skills:

- i) **Mutual trust:** Authentic listening generates respect and trust between the talker and the listener. Employees will naturally respond better to managers who listen intently to their needs.
- ii) **Increased productivity:** Problems are solved faster if people are encouraged to explain their problems and are given the freedom to work out solutions before being told what to do.
- iii) **Cool and calm perspective :** Listening intently helps both sides to stay calm and cool. It also helps to generate a peaceful environment, especially when the two parties are dealing with a crisis or discussing a sensitive issue.
- iv) **Boost confidence:** Great listeners have better self-esteem and self-image because, in their listening, they work toward establishing positive relationships.
- v) **Fewer mistakes:** Good listening ensures more accuracy in retaining information. It is far easier to remember important facts later, minimizing the risk of miscommunication and errors.

Activity

A group discussion can be organized and learners can observe the following advantages of listening skills:

- ✓ Effective listening implies concentration and the use of other senses as it is more than just hearing the spoken words.
- ✓ We learn more when we talk less and listen more.
- ✓ The better we listen, the more will we be listened to.
- ✓ Listening makes us more knowledgeable and thoughtful.
- ✓ Without listening, messages are misunderstood and communication breaks down.
- ✓ Good listeners always come across as wise people.

- Good listening and skilful questioning give out a powerful message to those with whom we interact.
- Good listening encourages open, honest and full communication.
- Always seek clarification while listening, to ensure that your understanding is correct.

15.1.3 Types of listening

There are different types of listening. Each is useful in different scenarios and is often practised intuitively.

Different Types of Listening

- *Active listening*: Listening in a way that demonstrates interest and encourages the speaker to continue speaking.
- *Appreciative listening*: Utilizing ways to accept and appreciate the speaker through what he or she says. Seeking an opportunity to praise.
- *Attentive listening*: Listening obviously and carefully, showing attention.
- *Biased listening*: Listening is hindered through the filter of personal bias.
- *Casual listening*: Listening without attention as it may vary or wander
- *Comprehension listening*: Listening to understand the meaning.
- *Content listening*: Listening to grasp the meaning and better understanding.
- *Critical listening*: Listening to evaluate, criticize, or otherwise pass judgement on what someone else says.
- *Deep listening*: Listening with full concentration to understand the person, the personality and the actual spoken words and unspoken meanings and motivators behind them.
- *Dialogic listening*: An alternative to active listening, which helps to find meaning through dialogue or conversation, asking for clarity and better understanding.
- *Discriminative listening*: Listening for something specific but not paying cognizance to anything else.
- *Empathetic listening*: Seeking to understand what the other person is feeling.
- *Evaluative listening*: Listening to evaluate, criticize, or otherwise pass judgement on what someone else says.
- *False listening*: Pretending to listen but actually of something thinking else.
- *Full listening*: Listening to understand thoroughly and grasp the meaning.
- *High-integrity listening*: Listening from a position of integrity and concern.
- *Inactive listening*: Pretending to listen but spending more time thinking.
- *Informative listening*: Listening to understand. Seeking a little more meaning.
- *Initial listening*: Listening at first then thinking about the response and looking to interrupt.
- *Judgemental listening*: Listening to evaluate, criticize or otherwise pass judgment on what someone else says.
- *Partial listening*: Listening most of the time but also spending some time day dreaming or thinking of a response.

- *Reflective listening*: Listening, and then reflecting to the speaker on what he or she may have said.
- *Relationship listening*: Listening to support and develop a relationship with the speaker.
- *Sympathetic listening*: Listening with concern for the well-being of the speaker.
- *Therapeutic listening*: Seeking to understand what the other person is feeling.
- *Total listening*: Paying very close attention in active listening to what is said to find deeper meaning through how it is said.
- *Whole-person listening*: Seeking to understand the person, the personality and the real and unspoken meanings and motivators.

Learners may visit the following link to acquire more knowledge about listening skills.

http://changingminds.org/techniques/listening/all_types_listening.htm

15.2 Listening as a Team Leader and Team Member

15.2.1 Listening as a team leader

Listening is an important leadership responsibility. Those who do listen are in a much better position to lead the increasingly diverse and multi-generational workforce. Employees respect those leaders who listen because they know how difficult listening can be. The following statistics suggest the importance of effective listening.

- i) Eighty-five per cent of what we know we have learned through listening.
- ii) Humans generally listen at a 25 per cent comprehension rate.
- iii) On a typical business day, we spend 45 per cent of our time listening, 30 per cent of our time talking, 16 per cent reading and 9 per cent writing.
- iv) Less than 2 per cent of all professionals have had formal education or learning to understand and improve listening skills and techniques

An effective leader should practice the following six effective forms of listening skills:

- i) **Showing concern and care:** Employees of any organization want to be led by such leaders who genuinely care about them and what they represent to the team and the organization at large. When a leader cares about the employees, the latter are motivated to work harder and aim to exceed all expectations of the leader. A leader must consider employees as valuable assets bringing unique capabilities and aptitudes to their job, not necessarily limited to their job functions. The amicable relationship between a leader and employees should not end at work. Employees want leaders who care about their general well-being and who can be depended upon during times of professional and personal hardships.
- ii) **Engage with employees:** A leader needs to engage in matters important to the employees. When employees share their opinions, the leaders must ask questions for clarity and encourage them to elaborate and expand their perspectives. When a leader engages more actively, he or she is also accountable for follow-up with the employees. The employees know that the leader is listening, paying attention, and attempting to understand what matters most to them.
- iii) **Show empathy:** Empathy is a powerful means of listening and interacting. Every employee manages the stress and pressure of the workplace differently. Therefore, the leader needs to be empathetic to how stress and pressure impact an employee's performance. Many leaders would like to avoid emotional interaction, but the best

leaders know how to empathize and make themselves approachable to those who need them. Great leaders know how to balance the head and the heart.

- iv) ***Don't judge others:*** Leaders who are effective listeners, do not judge others. Some leaders often harshly criticize those who have a different style or approach. Instead of judging the team members and or the employees, they could be learning from them.
- v) ***Practice mindfulness:*** True leaders, if practising mindfulness, actively listen beyond the obvious with both verbal and nonverbal communication. They use body language, facial expressions, and nods to acknowledge the speaker. These types of leaders possess a tremendous degree of executive presence and are always tuned in to the dynamics around them. A leader should be expansively mindful.
- vi) ***Don't interrupt:*** Compassionate leaders listen and don't interrupt the flow of the dialogue of the team member. They embrace two-way communication and are aware that with every interruption comes disengagement. They stay focused on what the employees are saying. Staying in the moment, being respectful of others, and listening carefully make a more compassionate leader.

15.2.2 Listening as a team member

Listening, whether as a team member or as an employee, is equally important for the proper functioning of any organization. Each member should therefore practice the most effective form of listening as described by an effective leader.

Some tips for the team members are as follows:

- i) Encourage the speaker, ask questions, and be considerate.
- ii) Give and take effective feedback and acknowledge.
- iii) Try to understand others' perspectives before responding.
- iv) Be more empathetic and don't rush to take a decision.
- v) Actively listen and see the body language of the people around.
- vi) Be more open to learning from others.
- vii) Show verbal and non-verbal signs of interest.

15.2.3 Improving listening skills

Listening skills can be improved by practising active listening. Active listening involves three main elements: attention, attitude, and adjustment.

- i) **Attention:** We know now that attention is the fundamental difference between hearing and listening. Paying attention to what a speaker is saying requires intentional effort on your part. The listener should quickly ascertain the speaker's central premise or controlling idea. Once this is done, it becomes easier for the listener to discern what is most important. Distinguishing the speaker's primary goal, grasping the main points, and the structure of the speech, all are easier when the listener listens with an open mind.
- ii) **Attitude:** Approaching the task of listening with a positive attitude and an open-mind makes listening much easier.
- iii) **Adjustment:** Often when we hear someone speak, we don't know in advance what he or she is going to say. Therefore, we need to be flexible and willing to follow the speaker. If the audience members are more intent on reacting to or are intent on anticipating what is going to be said, they will be poor listeners.

Active listening requires the listener to hear, evaluate, and interpret the content of speech. Four types of active listening are:

- 1) **Paraphrasing:** Paraphrasing is when the listener repeats the essence of the message spoken by the communicator but in different words. As an active listening strategy, paraphrasing is important because it demonstrates that the listener is concentrating on and understanding the speaker's talk.
- 2) **Reflecting Feelings:** Active listeners reflect the feelings of the communicator in their consideration of the message and their response to the speaker. The communicator will feel validated by the emotional response of the listener and the listener will feel that the message is personal and relevant.
- 3) **Reflecting Meaning:** Reflecting meaning focuses upon the factual message of the speaker. Reflecting meaning allows the listener to confirm his or her understanding of the speaker.
- 4) **Summative Reflection:** Summative reflection confirms the content of the message of the speaker. It combines the elements of paraphrasing, reflecting meaning, and reflecting emotion to illustrate the listener's considered evaluation of the speaker's message. Summative reflection requires the listener to incorporate his or her personal views in the description of the speaker's message.

15.3 Uses of Active Listening Strategies to Encourage Sharing of Ideas

15.3.1 The importance of active listening in the workplace

Active listening is a skill that can be acquired. Active listening:

- i. **Builds trust:** It is very vital to have trust in each other for a healthy work experience.
- ii. **Enhances productivity:** Active listening has countless benefits when it comes to employee productivity. Proper feedback and actively considering the employees' views and ideas are vital for a healthy workplace and performance.
- iii. **Resolves conflicts:** Conflicts and mishaps are inevitable in any workplace. Active listening will help people to understand others' perspectives before responding or reacting hastily.
- iv. **Builds strong work relationships:** It is important to form healthy work relationships in the workplace for healthy work experience. People who listen to understand form better work relationships and are more empathetic in their approach. The more members in a workplace follow this approach, the better work relationships they form.
- v. **Helps self-empowerment:** When people practice active listening and understand what is beneficial for them in the workplace, they become more aware of their work environment and communicate with ease and confidence with the other members of the organization.
- vi. **Develop acceptance:** Employers and employees both must be aligned with the common goal for the success of an organization. Therefore, they need to accept each other for their respective parts and actively listen to each other while carrying out their work duties.

15.3.2 Strategies for improving active listening skills to encourage sharing of ideas

- i. **Full and undivided attention:** The speaker wants the undivided attention of the listeners. Therefore, the listeners should keep all distractions aside while listening, face the speaker, and try to be present in the conversation.

- ii. **Focus the mind:** The listener should focus his or her mind on the key points and make mental notes during a meeting or in any conversation. The mind will do it; just allow it to act and be present. Try to concentrate even if it is boring. If tending to get distracted or start daydreaming, immediately bring back the focus to the conversation.
- iii. **No interruptions:** Any interruption during a conversation, gives the speaker the impression that the listener is not interested. Interrupting is not only rude but self-righteous. Sometimes the listener may need to interrupt the speaker to ask a question, but it must be done politely. Take permission before interrupting.
- iv. **Ensure understanding:** Understand the purpose of a conversation and the speaker's intention. This understanding is crucial for effective communication and to send across the right message without diluting the original topic.
- v. **Be empathetic:** Being empathetic allows the listener to be present with the speaker emotionally and understand him or her. It enables the listener to feel the speaker's emotions whether sad, joyful, or fearful. The listener has to make the effort to be present and always concentrate on the present moment.
- vi. **Listen to tone and voice modulation:** Listening to the tone and voice modulation of the speaker helps the listener in sharing ideas.
- vi. **Recapitulate points:** This will help in giving feedback to the speaker to clear doubts and keep the conversation transparent.

Assessment

1. Written evaluation.
2. **Through role play:** Learners can play the role of a leader and team members and practice listening skills. The faculty member can observe the performance of learners (as a leader and team member) and assess them.
3. **Self-evaluation of listening skills:** Learners may be asked to visit a few following websites given in the references to know about their listening skills. They may develop their own listening profile and address the challenges of listening effectively.

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

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2. Smith, L. (2021, June 29). *8 types of listening you need to know and use*. A Conscious Rethink. <https://www.aconsciousrethink.com/9861/types-of-listening/>.
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Module 5: Brainstorming

1 Hour

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Describe group and individual brainstorming techniques for idea generation and showcase the principles of documentation of team session outcomes.
- Generate, share and maximize new ideas with the concept of brainstorming.

Expected Outcomes:

The learners shall be able to:

- Generate, share and maximize new ideas with the concept of brainstorming.
- Document key critical ideas/thoughts articulated and action points to be implemented with timelines in a team discussion (as through a MOM) in identified applicable templates.

Module Outlines:

16.1 Brainstorming as a Technique to Promote Idea Generation

16.1.1 Brainstorming: The Meaning and Process

16.1.2 Procedure for Conducting Brainstorming

16.1.3 Importance of Using the Brainstorming Technique

16.1.4 Types of Brainstorming

16.2 Learning and Showcasing the Principles of Documentation of Team Session Outcomes

16.1 Brainstorming as a Technique to Promote Idea Generation

The faculty member can start a discussion on brainstorming as a technique by asking the following questions to learners:

- What is brainstorming?
- How many of you have participated in a brainstorming session?
- How is it conducted?
- How it is beneficial to an organization in taking any decision?

Learners will note down their answers. Watch the following video before starting a discussion on brainstorming.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXZamW4-Ysk>

(Brainstorming Techniques to Create New Innovative Ideas (includes challenge))

The faculty member may describe the concept of brainstorming and various techniques to conduct brainstorming.

16.1.1 Brainstorming: The Meaning and Process: The term brainstorming was popularized by A. F. Osborn in the 1953 book *Applied Imagination*. Brainstorming is primarily a group technique used to find a solution for a specific problem. In this technique a group of people

at a meeting think more freely and they encourage sharing as many spontaneous new ideas as possible to deal with a specific problem. All these ideas are noted down without any criticism. These ideas are evaluated after a brainstorming session and a solution is arrived at.

16.1.2 Procedure for Conducting Brainstorming: Osborn suggested that the focus of brainstorming should be to: reduce social inhibitions among group members, stimulate idea generation, and increase the overall creativity of the group. According to Osborn, these four general rules of brainstorming should be followed for effective outcomes:

- **Invite more ideas:** The assumption is that the greater the number of ideas generated, the better the chances of producing a radical and effective solution. This rule aims at enhancing the divergent production of ideas.
- **Avoid criticism:** Members of the group should not criticize any idea of the members. Participants should focus on extending or adding to an idea. In the absence of criticism, the participants feel free to generate unusual ideas.
- **Welcome wild ideas:** Wild ideas should be encouraged to get a good and wide range of ideas/ suggestions. They can be generated by looking from new perspectives and suspending assumptions. These new ways of thinking might give better solutions.
- **Combine and improve ideas:** As suggested by the slogan “1+1=3” it is believed to stimulate the building of ideas by a process of association.

According to Osborn, brainstorming should address a specific question rather than addressing multiple questions. Further, the problem must require the generation of ideas rather than judgement. He suggests examples such as, “generating possible names for a product as proper brainstorming material, whereas analytical judgments such as ‘whether or not to marry’ do not have any need for brainstorming.”

16.1.3 Importance of Using the Brainstorming Technique: As compared to conventional group problem-solving techniques, brainstorming provides a free and open environment that encourages everyone to participate. Original and sometimes unusual ideas of members are welcomed and built upon. All members are encouraged to contribute fully and freely. This helps in developing a rich array of creative solutions. It increases the richness of ideas explored, which means better solutions to the problems are obtained. While brainstorming can be effective, it is important to approach it with an open mind and a spirit of non-judgment.

16.1.4 Types of Brainstorming: Brainstorming can be done individually or in a group.

- **Individual Brainstorming:** In individual brainstorming, the individuals generate ideas on their own more freely and creatively. They do not have to worry about the reaction of other members. However, in individual brainstorming, it is not possible to develop ideas as fully as in a group. The group members have wider experience which is shared in group brainstorming.

Individual brainstorming produces more ideas and sometimes better ideas than group brainstorming. It is most effective when a simple problem needs to be solved, a list of ideas to be generated, or a broad issue is to be focused on.

A comfortable and peaceful place to sit and think should be selected for an individual brainstorming session. Using ‘Mind Maps’ to arrange and develop ideas helps.

- **Group Brainstorming:** Group brainstorming is often more effective for solving complex problems. In group brainstorming, one can take full advantage of the experience and creativity of all team members. The creativity and experience of group members is shared more efficiently in this situation. Ideas can be developed in greater depth with group brainstorming than with individual brainstorming.

Sometimes group members do not strictly follow the rules of brainstorming, and bad behaviours creep in. Some members pay so much attention to the ideas of other members that they do not generate their own ideas. Sometimes there is a ‘blocking’. It means members forget these ideas while they wait for their turn to speak.

Size of Groups: The size of the group should be small. Osborn suggests groups of around 12 participants, including both experts and novices. If the participants are from a wide range of disciplines, it makes the session more creative. In group brainstorming, every member feels that he or she has contributed to the solution, and it gives an idea to people that others have creative ideas to offer. It helps in team building. Participants are encouraged to provide wild and unexpected answers. Ideas receive no criticism or discussion. The group simply provides ideas that might lead to a solution and apply no analytical judgement as to the feasibility. The judgements are reserved for a later date.

The leader has to conduct the session tightly as sometimes unusual suggestions may appear to lack value at first sight. It can be risky for individuals.

Activity

Demonstrate a brainstorming session using the following steps:

- ✓ Define the problem clearly and lay out any criteria to be met.
- ✓ Keep the session focused on the problem.
- ✓ Ensure that no one criticizes or evaluates ideas during the session. Criticism introduces an element of risk for group members when putting forward an idea. This stifles creativity and cripples the free-running nature of a good brainstorming session.
- ✓ Encourage an enthusiastic, uncritical attitude among members of the group. Try to get everyone to contribute and develop ideas, including the quietest members of the group. Let the people have fun brainstorming. Encourage them to come up with as many ideas as possible, from solidly practical ones to wildly impractical ones. Welcome creativity.
- ✓ Ensure that no train of thought is followed for too long.
- ✓ Encourage people to develop other people’s ideas, or to use other ideas to create new ones.
- ✓ Appoint one person to note down ideas that come out of the session. A good way of doing this is to use a flip chart. This should be studied and evaluated after the session.

Wherever possible, participants in the brainstorming process should come from as wide a range of disciplines as possible. This brings a broad range of experience to the session and helps to make it more creative.

Using computer-based tools for group brainstorming is an option worth exploring. If you are reasonably quick with a keyboard and mouse, these tools significantly improve the quality and effectiveness of a brainstorming session.

Learners may be asked to explore other brainstorming techniques and use different techniques in brainstorming. They can visit the following link:

<https://business.tutsplus.com/articles/top-brainstorming-techniques--cms-27181>

They can also watch the following videos to get a better understanding:

Six Creative Ways to Brainstorm Ideas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAidvTKX6xM>

Brainstorming Done Right!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9K8W4ooygUU>

How to Brainstorm Alone

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ja8HqSAIQVE>

Brainstorming with Mind Maps in a Group

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0IEj2d-ipE>

After the session, the groups are required to present the outcomes as generated during a brainstorming session followed by a discussion on each group presentation. Other groups can be observers and at the same time give their remarks on the session once the session is over.

Activity

- ✓ Ask learners to visit the following website and similar ones to learn documentation of team session outcomes. They may be asked to present the outcomes of their sessions using a particular technique of brainstorming.

<https://www.mindtools.com/brainstm.html>

Brainstorming is a great way of generating radical ideas. During the brainstorming process, there is no criticism of ideas, as free rein is given to people's creativity (criticism and judgement cramp creativity). This often makes group brainstorming sessions enjoyable experiences, which are great for bringing team members together. Individual brainstorming is best for generating many ideas but tends to be less effective at developing them. Group brainstorming tends to develop fewer ideas, but takes each idea further. Group brainstorming needs formal rules for it to work smoothly.

16.2 Learning and Showcasing the Principles of Documentation of Team Session Outcomes

Once the brainstorming session is finished, a huge pile of post-it notes to work with is left. Some of the ideas will never see the light of day. Now the task is to find, "the one most workable". The challenge often lies in determining how to incorporate the relevant ideas gathered during the session into actionable insights that will result in meeting the needs of the organization/business. It is easy to facilitate a brainstorming session but requires a lot of analysis, and possibly, more brainstorming to be done to identify the best way forward.

After the meeting, the faculty member should document the outcomes.

The documentation process is a secondary review and creates the opportunity to ensure that the ideas are clear and support the objectives. This serves as an artefact memorializing the meeting and forms the basis for subsequent work. The document should include:

- Meeting objective,
- Synthesis of brainstorming,
- Summary of important ideas, and
- Appendix with all cards listed along with the number of votes received.

Often, the meeting summary is sent to the participants for their review. The review is a “cold wash” where participants have the opportunity to contemplate the outcomes

Assessment

- Written evaluation.
- Peer observation reports of the behaviour and participation of each learner during a brainstorming session. The faculty member may develop some criteria with the help of learners to assess the knowledge and learning of skills.
- Self-learning report of each learner about their experience and reflection during a brainstorming session.

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

1. Osborn, A. F. (1963). *Applied imagination: Principles and procedures of creative thinking* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons.
2. Wikimedia Foundation. (2022, November 16). *Brainstorming*. Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brainstorming>.
3. Rudy, L. J. (2020, April 23). *19 top brainstorming techniques to generate ideas for every situation*. Business Envato Tuts+. <https://business.tutsplus.com/articles/top-brainstorming-techniques--cms-27181>.
4. What is brainstorming? (n.d.). Infinite Innovations Ltd <http://www.brainstorming.co.uk/tutorials/whatisbrainstorming.html>.
5. Mind Tools Content Team (n.d.). *Brainstorming*. Mind Tools <https://www.mindtools.com/acv0de1/brainstorming>.

Video References:

1. Sprouts. (2017, November 28). *Brainstorming techniques: How to innovate in Groups*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXZamW4-Ysk>.
2. Investis Digital, Formerly Vertical Measures. (2013, May 28). *Six creative ways to brainstorm ideas*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAidvTKX6xM>.
3. Ed Muzio. (2011, November 30). *Brainstorming done right!* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9K8W4ooygUU+%28Brainstorming+Done+Right%21%29>.
4. Investis Digital, Formerly Vertical Measures. (2015, January 16). *Brainstorming with mind maps in a group*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0IEj2d-ipE>.

Module 6: Social and Cultural Etiquette

2 Hours

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Describe social and cultural etiquette in improving interpersonal relationships.
- Describe the role of social and cultural etiquette in an organization.

Expected Outcomes:

The learners shall be able to:

- Use social and cultural etiquette in an organization for better teamwork.
- Use social and cultural etiquette for effective interpersonal relationship

Module Outlines:

17.1 Etiquette:

17.1.1 Meaning

17.1.2 Need for Effective Interpersonal Relationships*

17.2 Aspects of Social and Cultural/Corporate Etiquette in Promoting Teamwork

17.2.1 Social Etiquette

17.2.2 Cultural Etiquette and its role in promoting teamwork

17.2.3 Corporate/Professional Etiquette

17.1 Etiquette

17.1.1 Meaning: Etiquette is a code of behaviour that delineates expectations for social behaviour according to contemporary conventional norms within a society, social class, or group.

Etiquette is a set of customs and rules, that control accepted behaviour in particular social groups or social situations.

The foundation of proper etiquette is behaviour that is accepted as gracious and polite in social, professional, and family situations. Good manners can mean the difference between success and failure in many aspects of life. Knowing and exhibiting proper etiquette is essential to any civilization.

17.1.2: Need of Effective Interpersonal Relationships: Our lives as social beings are founded on interpersonal relationships and communication skills. To this end, our success and failure as individuals in a community depend on these skills. We need to learn these skills to live and work meaningfully with other people. We can begin with family members at home, classmates and friends in schools and colleges, co-workers in the workplace, and extend to other known and unknown people in different places and at different stages of our lives. Etiquette plays an important role in maintaining an effective interpersonal relationships.

* Refer to Modules 1 Listening, 7 Communication, and 12 Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Skills

Etiquette:

- Makes a person a cultured individual who leaves his or her mark wherever he or she goes.
- Teaches the way to behave in society.
- Is essential for developing healthy interpersonal relationships with superiors, parents, fellow workers, and friends. Etiquette helps individuals to value relationships.
- Enables individuals to earn respect and appreciation in society. Etiquette inculcates a feeling of trust and loyalty in the individuals, and they become more responsible and mature.

17.2 Aspects of Social and Cultural/Corporate Etiquette in Promoting Team Work

17.2.1 Social Etiquette: Social etiquette involves the behaviour of an individual with people in society, friends and others. Practising social etiquette in interacting with people helps in developing trust and better interpersonal relationships. It also prevents people from being embarrassed later because of any unbecoming or offensive behaviour.

i) Basic social etiquette rules

Activity

Organize a brainstorming session on social etiquette. Ask learners to prepare a list of social etiquette people practice in social settings. After the brainstorming session, cross-check whether learners have identified all etiquette listed below. If they have left any, describe them.

- ✓ Always be on time for get-togethers to show respect for other people's time.
- ✓ Make eye contact during a conversation. Avoid looking over the other person's shoulder unless you see potential danger.
- ✓ Never interrupt the other person unless it is very essential.
- ✓ Give and receive compliments graciously.
- ✓ Don't gossip with and about friends. After all, if you share gossip with someone, that person will wonder what you are saying behind his or her back.
- ✓ Hold doors for anyone who seems to be struggling, including physically challenged people and parents with young children.
- ✓ Always carry a gift for the host or hostess, if invited formally.
- ✓ Do not visit friends or others during illness to avoid their exposure to illness.
- ✓ Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze.
- ✓ Pay your share when you are with a friend or group. If you stiff your friends, they may not invite you again. This includes tipping.

ii) Basic social media etiquette rules^{*}: In the present times, almost all people in all age groups use social media for interacting with each other. However, they need to be well aware of following etiquette or rules during the interaction.

- Never post anything on any forum that you wouldn't want the world to see.
- Avoid put-downs, regardless of how witty they may sound.

* Refer to Module 5: Digital Literacy and Social Media; and Module 6: Digital Ethics and Cyber Security

- Don't divulge too much information about yourself or your family to protect your family.
- Self-promotion is okay in limited amounts. There are others who need your attention, so take some time to respond to their posts and offer praise when needed.
- If you make a mistake on social media, own it. Offer a sincere apology and avoid doing it again.
- Follow the rules of the social media that you are using.

iii) Role of social etiquette in promoting teamwork: Workplace etiquette improves work relationships. It shows your team that you care about them, their work, and their value to the team.

Following are seven ways you can use workplace etiquette and courtesy to set you and your team apart in any economy:

- **A positive attitude is the key:** Have a great positive attitude like your job depends on it. Always express a positive attitude about the organization and the team. Professionals appreciate being acknowledged by teammates when they arrive at work.
- **Mark nonverbal communication***: Always make good eye contact in interaction with people to show you are listening. Avoid crossing the arms over your chest as this can indicate you are not approachable. Greet your team with a good handshake or any other friendly gesture.
- **Be punctual:** It is important to be on time or a few minutes early for work and meetings regardless of age, job title, or level in the team hierarchy. Punctuality shows your team that you respect them and their time. Try to complete tasks and projects on time, too; don't let the team down with excuses.
- **Use proper tech etiquette:** These include timely replies to the emails and phone calls of the team members, if possible or within 24 hours.
- **Provide support to team members:** It is always appreciated to help and show support to a teammate if he or she has a heavy day and deadlines to meet and you don't, step up and offer to help.
- **Contribute value to team meetings:** Focus on the meeting, not on side conversations or the phone. Be open to others' ideas and points of view. Let others finish speaking before sharing your thoughts or ideas.
- **Show appreciation:** Sincerely appreciate the team members using appropriate words and gestures to thank them as often as possible, both publicly — when appropriate — and privately. If your boss congratulates you on a job well done and you got help from your team members, be sure to tell your boss so they too can receive credit. This indicates fair-mindedness and honesty of purpose. The team members will appreciate you more and will happily work with you on the next big project.

The practice of this workplace etiquette and courtesy leads to job success and promotion as well as to the success of the team.

* Refer to Module 7: Nonverbal Communication

17.2.2 Cultural etiquette and its role in promoting teamwork: Cultural norms or etiquette vary from country to country, and even from community to community. There is a diversity of social etiquette across cultures. One must learn which rules and norms apply to a particular location.

Activity

- ✓ Ask learners to share their experiences with culturally divergent people. Whether they felt any problems? If yes, how did they resolve it?

We live in a world with a globalized workforce where many organizations have teams that span different offices, time zones, and continents. It can be challenging for a team leader to manage a culturally-diverse team. Even for a company that operates in one country, the movement of labour across borders means that cultural diversity is becoming a normal facet of the workplace. Managers and leaders are facing some issues like dealing with cultural differences, language barriers, and remote team members.

The following five tips may help in strengthening the cross-cultural team.

- i) **Acknowledge and respect cultural differences:** Cultural diversity in a team can manifest itself in different ways: language, culture, behavioural differences due to norms and values, and even different meanings or significance attached to words, ideas or actions. So it is important to learn what those differences are because one's cultural background informs how we interact with others.

One way to encourage this understanding of cultural diversity is to discuss cultural differences in a team meeting where everyone can share cultural backgrounds and expectations about communication and working style. This can be done informally through activities such as “ice breakers”. Select activities where team members get to learn more about each other by asking questions and sharing information about their backgrounds.

For a better understanding of cultural differences, learners may be asked to visit the following link

<https://www.geert-hofstede.com/national-cultural.html.dimensionmodel>

(Geert Hofstede's cultural dimension model)

This model provides a starting point for understanding what drives people from different cultures, and how we can adapt our working and communication styles to work better together in a cross-cultural team.

- ii) **Establish norms for the team:** Each team needs to set its own rules and norms depending on its makeup and other factors that affect collaboration. Issues such as standard operating procedures (SOPs) for timely replies to emails, proper email and document templates to ensure clear communication, frequency of team meetings, the structure of team reporting, and so on may be considered. Building norms that are specific to a team improves the ease of collaboration and optimizes team performance.

After establishing the team norms, it is important to regularly check with the team to see how effective these norms are. Modify the norms that are not working well.

- iii) **Develop a team identity and outline roles and responsibilities:** Everyone in any team must know what they are working toward, especially in a cross-cultural team.

Having a shared goal and a common vision of how to achieve it gives the team an identity that can unite its members and promote teamwork.

Developing a team identity helps in finding commonalities between team members. Encourage the team members to get to know each other in a social context. Personal connections within the team make working together much easier.

Breaking down the common goal into actionable steps and assigning each individual his or her role and responsibilities reduces the chance of misunderstandings. Everyone in the team knows the importance of his or her contribution. It sets expectations for what needs to be done, by whom and when. Clarity of each team member's contribution also makes it easier to address the team's performance as a whole.

iv) Over-communication: Over-communication is a good thing especially with a culturally diverse team. Most of the time, we take it for granted that colleagues or team members with the same frame of reference or cultural background completely understand what we say. But team members of different ethnicity, nationality, or background need extra and clearer communication to avoid any misunderstanding.

Use simple and clear language when using electronic communication media, and check that the other party fully understands what is said. Ask them to rephrase to confirm their understanding by cultivating an environment where the members can ask questions and clarify any doubts. Give everyone the bigger picture and the clear information they need to successfully do their part. This will reduce conflict and team dysfunction.

v) Build rapport and trust: A safe environment should be created where the team members can collaborate better with each other. Respecting differences, following through on group norms, and having a common goal help build unity within a team.

It is crucial to provide some time for face-to-face interaction especially for cross-border or remote teams where employees spend most of the time separate from their team members. Real-life interaction provides nuances such as tone of voice, eye contact, and body language that make communication easier. If meeting in person is not possible, occasional video calls can help.

vi) Leverage cultural diversity: Having a cross-cultural team presents opportunities for creativity, innovation, and learning from others of a different background. Accepting differences, new perspectives, and different ways of doing things. The challenges of having cross-cultural teams can be handled successfully with sensitivity and respect for other cultures. Most people understand and accept cultural differences in their workplace, there is a need to institute a framework that makes it easier to understand each other and collaborate.

17.2.3 Corporate and/Professional Etiquette: An employee needs to follow professional etiquette to allow others to see that he or she is a polite, civilized coworker who knows how to be nice and can positively represent the company. This contributes in creating a good image and helps in the promotion. Basic professional etiquette rules are:

- Always arrive on time.
- Dress appropriately as per the office environment.
- Use appropriate ways of greeting people from different backgrounds.
- Never interrupt conversations unless there's an emergency.
- Remove papers from the copier, fax machine, and scanner after you are finished with the task.

- Don't disturb other people unnecessarily while they're working.
- Praise others for a job well done.
- Never take credit for other people's work.
- Be friendly to clients, visitors, and guests. Offer them a seat if they have to wait.
- Use appropriate volume and tone of voice and avoid raising the voice.
- If someone else is angry, refuse to join in an argument or rave and rant in return.
- Don't touch other people's personal belongings.
- Observe proper etiquette regarding personal space.
- Keep office correspondence brief and avoid interjecting personal opinions unless it is necessary.
- Maintain a professional image when decorating the office or cubicle.

Activity

- ✓ Learners may visit a corporate office or any other organization and observe whether the above corporate/professional etiquette codes are being practised by the employees or not. They can also interview the employees and the managers. A report can be prepared and presented in class.

Assessment

1. Written evaluation.
2. **Role play:** Practice social and cultural etiquettes during role play in the classroom in small groups — observation and evaluation by the faculty member and peers.
3. **Self-reporting:** Record of practising social etiquettes with friends and peers, seniors, teachers and family members by maintaining a diary.
4. Evaluation of the report of the visit to any corporate/professional organization to observe etiquette being practised by the employees.

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

1. Lyon, S. (2022, September 22). *How to be socially acceptable in all situations*. The Spruce. <https://www.thespruce.com/what-is-etiquette-and-why-is-it-important-1216650>.
2. Wagner, R. (2017, August 11). *Workplace etiquette: 7 tips to build teamwork in any economy*. Rachel Wagner | Etiquette & Protocol. <https://www.etiquettetrainer.com/workplace-etiquette-build-teamwork/>.
3. Bentley University. (2022, December 7) *7 ways to promote diversity in the workplace*. <https://www.bentley.edu/news/7-ways-promote-diversity-workplace>.

Videos

1. SkillActz. (2019, August 7). *Modern Social Etiquette You Should Follow / skillActz / Personality Development Training*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nEvKZ4SG2c>.
2. K A (2019, February 4). *Basic social etiquettes* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88zGGAjCh4o>.

Module7: Internal Communication

1 Hour

Objectives:

The objectives are to help learners

- Understand the need for effective internal communication.
- Describe the tools for effective internal communication.

Expected Outcomes:

The learners shall be able to:

- Use common technology messaging tools that are used in enterprises for the flow of information and transition from command and control to informal communication during an online/offline team session.
- Actively use and operate online team communication tools: Webinar, Skype, Zoom, Google hangout and many more.

Module Outlines:

18.1 Internal Communication: Meaning and Need

- 18.1.1 Meaning
- 18.1.2 Need for Internal Communication

18.2 Use of Various Channels of Transmitting Information to Team Members including Digital and Physical

18.1 Internal Communication: Meaning and Need

18.1.1 Meaning: The transmission of information within an organization is known as internal communication. Effective internal communication plays an important role in the proper functioning of an organization or institution. It is the sharing of information, knowledge, ideas, and beliefs between the members of the organization or institution.

Internal communication can be formal or informal. It depends upon the persons with whom one is communicating. The informal or not-so-formal language is generally used in communications between colleagues. The language used in communication with seniors is formal. The conditions for effective internal communication are:

- There should be an open and clear reason for communication.
- There should be an understanding of the need of the employees.
- Communication should be consistent and regular.
- The language of communication should be clear, to the point, and brief.
- Two-way communication should be allowed.
- The use of vocabulary should be good.

18.1.2 Need for Internal Communication: Internal communication is very important for the growth of any organization/institution. The role of internal communication is as follows:

- Increases productivity.

- Leads to effective and responsive customer service.
- Facilitates easy attainment of goals.
- Reduces day-to-day conflict between team members.
- Enables fast response.
- Helps in fast decision-making.
- Helps in motivating the employees.

18.2 Use of Various Channels of Transmitting Information to Team Members including Digital and Physical*

Common Tools/ Techniques of Internal Communication are:

i) Online communication tools

- Webinar
- Skype
- Zoom
- Google hangout
- Facebook
- Whatsapp
- Company blogs
- Twitter
- E-mails within an organization

ii) Offline communication

- Group meetings
- Employee training within an organization
- Personal meetings
- Telephonic conversation between employees
- Inquiry of employee
- Staff communication through circulars/notices/memos
- Company newsletter.

Assessment

The learners may be asked to visit any organization/institution and:

- Find out the tools used for internal communication within the organization/institution.
- Learn the strengths and weaknesses of each tool (may take feedback from employees and employer/ seniors)
- Prepare the write up and present it for discussion in the classroom. This will help to understand the effectiveness of the types of communication tools in making communication more functional and productive within an organization.

* Refer to Module 5: Digital Literacy and Social media; and Module 6: Digital Ethics and Cyber Security

Assessment

1. Written evaluation.
2. Evaluation of the write up on the visit to the organization/institution and presentation in the classroom. The faculty member may develop criteria with the help of learners to assess the knowledge and learning of skills.

Suggested Readings & e-Resources:

1. Sinclair, S. (2021, February 8). *This is why internal and external communication should work in Harmony*. Employee Engagement App. <https://www.talkfreely.com/blog/internal-and-external-communication>.
2. Team, H. C. (2022, November 14). *12 reasons why Internal & External Communications go hand-in-hand*. Haiilo. <https://haiilo.com/blog/12-reasons-why-internal-external-communications-go-hand-in-hand/>.
3. Gomez, R. (2021, November 11). *Kickstart your internal communications strategy with these best practices*. Sprout Social. <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/internal-communications-guide/>.