**COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

The word communication skills is derived from the Latin word ‘communicare’ that means to impart to participate, to share or to make common .

Communicare originally means sharing of tangible thing e.g food and property. Today it is often applied to knowledge and information processed by living things or computers.

It is a process of exchanging facts and ideas, opinions and as a means through which individuals or organizations share meaning and understanding with one another. It is, therefore, transmission and interaction of facts, ideas, opinions, feelings and attitudes.

Communication plays a vital role in a particular country or a culture or linguistics group interact with and relate with people belonging to other countries or culture or linguistic groups. A communication adds meaning to life. It helps build relationships and foster love and understanding. It enriches human knowledge of the universe and makes living worthwhile.

Everyday of or lives communicating,whether it is by talking on telephone, face-to-face or sending and receiving letters r emails. It is essential to learn from our communication interactions. The more we speak and the more we write the more we improve our communication skills.

**DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATION**

Various people havedifferent definitions of the term communication and therefore it has no definite definition.

Some of the definitions include:

1. **Peter Litttle**: ‘’Communication is a process by which information is transmitted between

individuals and/or organisation so that an understanding response results.

1. **Keith Davis:** Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another.
2. **American Management Association (AMA**): Communication is interchange of thoughts or information between two or more meaning.

All the above definitions are based on the fact that in communication there is exchange and receiving of information. Communication is the exchange of facts ideas and ideas and viewpoints which bring about commonness of interest, purpose and effort. The main purpose of communication therefore is to inform or bring about a certain point of view or to elicit action

**THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS**

The term business communication is used for all messages that are sent and received for official purpose like running a business, managing an organization, conducting the formal affairs of a voluntary organisation and so on. Business communication is marked by formality as opposed to personal and social communications.

To a large extent the success of any business depends on efficient and effective communication. In business it takes place among all entities i.e. all stakeholders who include the market, various organisation owners and employees, buyers and sellers, service providers and the press. All such communication impacts on business and done with care, it can promote business interests.

Communication is the lifeblood of any organisation and its main purpose is to effect change to influence action. If mistakes occur in communication, order can be misunderstood and the receiver may not get what the senders had intended. When people within the organisation communicate such communication is referred to as internal communication. Internal communication occurs because the members work as a team so as to realize a common goal. Such communication could be formal or informal and takes place in form of face to face interactions , telephones calls ,meeting et

External communication is that which takes place between an organisation and others outside the organization:such people include suppliers, dealers, customers. Such people give meaning to an organization and enables it to succeed.

**PURPOSE OF COMMUNICATION**

1. **For Instructions**. The instructive function deals with the commanding nature. It is about giving directives. The communicator transmits the necessary directives and guidance to the next level so as to enable the staff accomplish a task. Instructions basically flow top to the lower level.
2. **For Integration:** Communication aims at integration of activities. It brings about inter- relationships among the various functions of the business organization. It helps to unify the

different management functions e.g finance, human resource, production, sales and marketing.

1. **For Information**: Communication function is to inform the individuals or group about the particular task or company policies and procedures etc. The top management informs the lower level staff on policies while the lower lever informs the top level on the reaction about the policies. As such, informing others or being informed is a core function of communication.
2. **For Evaluation**: Communication helps examine activities so as to form an idea or judgment on the worth of a task. Communication serves as an appraisal tool for the individual or team in an organisation. Evaluating ones input or others input requires effective communication.
3. **For Direction**: Communication helps issues directions by the top management or managers to the lower level. Employees can perform better when they are directed by the their seniors. Issuing directions can be done through writing or orally.
4. **For Teaching Or Training**: A complete communication process is required to teach and educate workers about work procedures and safety on the job. Personal safety on the job is greatly recognized. Teaching thus helps workers to avert accidents, avoid dangerous risks etc.
5. **For Influence:** Communication helps influence others or become influenced. An individual who has the potential to influence others can easily persuade others .
6. **For Image Building**: A business enterprise cannot isolate itself from the rest of the society. Goodwill and confidence are necessary and should be created among the public. The public image building can be done through the media which will project the image of the organization.

The organisation should aim at informing the public /society about its goals and objectives, activities, products and corporate social responsibility.

1. **For Employee Orientation**: When a new employee joins an organization, he/she does not know the programs, policies and culture among other things, thus communication helps to make new employee acquainted with co-employees, superiors with policies, objectives, rules and regulations etc of the organisation.

### For Decision Making: Efficient decision making is necessary in an organisation. Effective communication helps in the process of decision making. We communicate to decide on the course of action.

### ****TOP 10 COMMUNICATION SKILLS****

There are the top 10 communication skills that will help you stand out in today's job market:

**1. Listening**  
Being a good listener is one of the best ways to be a good communicator. No one likes communicating with someone who only cares about putting in her two cents, and does not take the time to listen to the other person. Instead, practice active listening. Active listening involves paying close attention to what the other person is saying, asking clarifying questions, and rephrasing what the person says to ensure understanding ("So, what you're saying is…"). Through active listening, you can better understand what the other person is trying to say, and can respond appropriately.

**2. Nonverbal Communication**  
Your body language, eye contact, hand gestures, and tone all color the message you are trying to convey. A relaxed, open stance (arms open, legs relaxed), and a friendly tone will make you appear approachable, and will encourage others to speak openly with you. Eye contact is also important; you want to look the person in the eye to demonstrate that you are focused on the person and the conversation (however, be sure not to stare at the person, which can make him or her uncomfortable).

Also pay attention to other people's nonverbal signals while you are talking. Often, nonverbal signals convey how a person is really feeling. For example, if the person is not looking you in the eye, he or she might be uncomfortable or hiding the truth.

**3. Clarity and Concision**  
Try to convey your message in as few words as possible. Say what you want clearly and directly, whether you're speaking to someone in person, on the phone, or via email. If you ramble on, your listener will either tune you out or will be unsure of exactly what you want. Think about what you want to say before you say it; this will help you to avoid talking excessively and/or confusing your audience.

**4. Friendliness**  
Through a friendly tone, a personal question, or simply a smile, you will encourage your coworkers to engage in open and honest communication with you. This is important in both face-to-face and written communication. When you can, personalize your emails to coworkers and/or employees - a quick "I hope you all had a good weekend" at the start of an email can personalize a message and make the recipient feel more appreciated.

**5. Confidence**  
It is important to be confident in all of your interactions with others. Confidence ensures your coworkers that you believe in and will follow through with what you are saying. Exuding confidence can be as simple as making eye contact or using a firm but friendly tone (avoid making statements sound like questions). Of course, be careful not to sound arrogant or aggressive. Be sure you are always listening to and empathizing with the other person.

**6. Empathy**  
Even when you disagree with an employer, coworker, or employee, it is important for you to understand and respect their point of view. Using phrases as simple as "I understand where you are coming from" demonstrate that you have been listening to the other person and respect their opinions.

**7. Open-Mindedness**  
A good communicator should enter any conversation with a flexible, open mind. Be open to listening to and understanding the other person's point of view, rather than simply getting your message across. By being willing to enter into a dialogue, even with people with whom you disagree, you will be able to have more honest, productive conversations.

**8. Respect**  
People will be more open to communicating with you if you convey respect for them and their ideas. Simple actions like using a person's name, making eye contact, and actively listening when a person speaks will make the person feel appreciated. On the phone, avoid distractions and stay focused on the conversation.

Convey respect through email by taking the time to edit your message. If you send a sloppily written, confusing email, the recipient will think you do not respect her enough to think through your communication with her.

**9. Feedback**  
Being able to appropriately give and receive feedback is an important communication skill. Managers and supervisors should continuously look for ways to provide employees with constructive feedback, be it through email, phone calls, or weekly status updates. Giving feedback involves giving praise as well - something as simple as saying "good job" to an employee can greatly increase motivation.

Similarly, you should be able to accept, and even encourage, feedback from others. Listen to the feedback you are given, ask clarifying questions if you are unsure of the issue, and make efforts to implement the feedback.

**10. Picking the Right Medium**  
An important communication skill is to simply know what form of communication to use. For example, some serious conversations (layoffs, changes in salary, etc.) are almost always best done in person. You should also think about the person with whom you wish to speak - if they are very busy people (such as your boss, perhaps), you might want to convey your message through email. People will appreciate your thoughtful means of communication, and will be more likely to respond positively to you.

**BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

The most successful organisation understands that if they are to survive in today’s business world, good communication at all levels is necessary.

Effective communication leads to **SUCCESS** in an organization.

**SUCCESS** in an organisation means

1. **S**trong in decision making and problem solving.
2. **U**pturn inn productivity
3. **C**onvincing and compelling corporate materials
4. **C**learer more streamlined workflow
5. **E**nhanced professional image
6. **S**ound business relationships
7. **S**uccessful response ensured
8. Satisfied repeat customers rather than unhappy ex-customers.
9. Well motivated employee rather than expensive industrial reputation.
10. A positive reputation in the wider market rather than an international boycott on products.
11. Innovative and creative strategies rather than inefficiency, indecision and resistance to change.

**N/B** Today’s workplace is constantly changing and developing. It is also faced with numerous challenges such as:

1. Advancing technology more and faster e.g More and Faster internet.
2. Global communication-communication at a global scale rather than national boundaries.
3. The information age – need to access more information.
4. Team bases business environment - the traditional hierarchy has changed and groups are working together ie teamwork.

In view of the above effective communication has become vital in order to overcome the numerous challenges. Learning more helps us to adapt to changing environment. Teams are the norm in today’s workplace. Effective communication is essentialto both the team membership and team leadership.

**THEORIES AND PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION**

Theory: an explanation brought forward to account for how something exists. It is a formal idea that is intended to explain a phenomenon.

Theory is a set of general prepositions used to study a series of phenomena. They deal with principles and methods and not the actual process.

**MODELS OF COMMUNICATION**

Theories developed by different people have been expressed through models to explain how communication worlds.

Model – a representation of an object, a subject or a process. A communication model is a simplified description of graphic form as a diagram. It identifies the elements of a communication.

Various models exist about communication using models. However, can be risky because oversimplified or in value concealed assumptions.

Different researchers have come up with different models. Some of the communication model categories include:

1. **The linear model**

source

Encode

Message

Destination

Decode

The linear model lays the elements of the process in a line as if communication is all about sending a message. This model lacks the element of feedback that is necessary to complete the communication process. This model is simple and generalized thus makes it deceptive.

1. **THE EXCHANGE MODEL**

It shows communication as a two way process . receivers and the senders and both encoders and decoders.

MESSAGE

MESSAGE

A

B

Encodes decodes

encodes

decodes

3. **CONTEXTUAL MODEL**

This is a liner model that includes feedback ad context. It stresses that communication context

Always affects the communication process.

source

Encode

Message

Destination

Decode

context

Context.

4. **THE LASSWELL FORMULA**

This Lasswel model is a widely quoted model of communication. Lasswel gave a formula for describing communication. The formula answers the questions:

Who says what?

Which channel?

To whom?

With what effect?

source

Encode

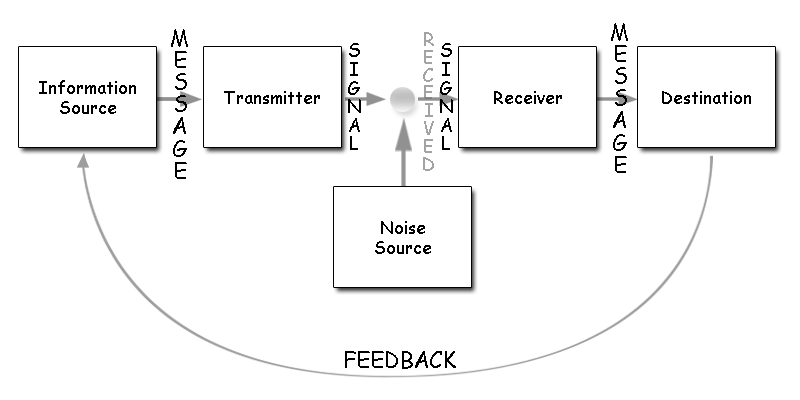
Message

Destination

Decode

5. **C. SHANON AND W. WEAVER (1941)**

They developed a model of communication to assist the construction of mathematical theory of communication of which they claimed would be applied in a variety of communication situations. Theirs was a linear process centered model. It focuses attention on the element of the communication process on how to control noise or its effects on the receiver.



**ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION**

1. **Information Source:** Material from which a message will be constructed it could be factually an ideas or an option.

2. **Sender:** The originator of the message and initiator of communication. This is the person conveying the message.

3. **The Message**: What is actually communicated is the subject matter.

4. **Medium:** The method used to send the message. The three main media are: written, oral and non-verbal and visual communication.

5. **The Channel**: Channel is the medium used to send message ie the physical means by which the message is conveyed eg notice boards, E-mail, post office, interviews, meeting and through the telephone.

6. **The Receiver:** Receiver is the person or group tthat who gets the message or the place where the message must reach. The receiver provides feedback according to the message

7. **Feedback:** The response the receiver sends to the sender.

8. **Noise:** Anything that hinders communication from taking place. Eg. The environment, receivers factors etc. It can be a physical disturbances like environment, people, etc. which does not let the message get to the receiver as what is sent.

**KEY STAGES IN THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS:**

Communication is a process and not a single act, because it can be broken into stages, involve a number of elements, it is difficult to fix a beginning or end and its dynamic. The basic questions to ask in communication interaction are when, why, who, what, where and why?

**THE STAGES**

1. **Conceiving The Message**.

Conceive- form a message. At this stage, an idea, though or feeling is formulated in the mind of the sender as a result of internal or external stimulus, motivations or thought process.

The sender defines the information tone sent by thinking about the aim of the communication process and the context to be conveyed.

It is at this point that the sender formulates the six basic questions of communication. when, why, who, what, where and why?

The message must be well organized so as to achieve the intended objective.

2. **Encoding The Message**

This involves putting the idea or information into a form which is suitable to the receiver and the aim of the communication.

The code i.e the language can be verbal or non-verbal. Ie the words or symbols can be best to encode the message into a picture or gesture.

An appropriate code which has the highest likelihood of being understood by the receiver should be selected. It must be suitable for both the receiver and the aim of communication in terms of tone and appropriateness.

**3. Selecting The Channel And Transmitting The Message**

The sender selects the most appropriate and effective means that eill deliver the messafe to the receiver. The channel is the link between the sender and the receiver. The channel could be inform of email, letter or meeting.

The channel can be either human or technological .

When selecting a channel various factors have to be considered eg

1. Cost – how much it will cost in terms of results expected. The channel must be cost effective.
2. **Confidentiality** – who is the message meant for and whether others are excluded.
3. Safety and security- think whether the channel will make the message safe as it goes to receiver.
4. **Urgency**-decide how soon the message should reach the receiver.
5. **Distance**- how far the message is going .
6. **Time and timeliness**- the most appropriate tine and right time.
7. **Influence**-the impression the message should create in the receives mind .
8. **Resources** – the resources available for sending the message. These include the staff and equipment.
9. **The recipient** – audience who receives the message in terms of humble social, economic status, education etc.
10. **Type of message** – weight, content, fragile perishable etc.
11. **Record for future reference** – whether there will be need to keep a record in case future reference is required . e.g contract, agreement etc.
12. **Speed** – how fast the message should be delivered. The channels should deliver the message within expected time.

4. **Decoding The Message**

This involves the physical reception of the message and assigning meaning to the language used. The receiver should take time to understand the meaning of the message sent.

The receiver should interpret the message to the words of the sender, sometimes the receivers understanding may create a different meaning from that of the senders intention due to noise.

5. **Interpreting The Message**

This is similar to what is loosely termed as reading between the lines. This means that the receiver should search for the underlying meaning in the message. The receiver aims at finding all the senders intention and meaning.

6. **Feedback**

The receivers first reaction to the message is known as feedback. Feedback refers to the signals sent back to the sender to help them know what the message was received . it included encoding the response in a language that the sender can understand. The receiver goes through the same process as the sender when providing feedback. Lack of feedback is a significant barrier to effective communication.

**PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION**

Principle – a guiding rule for personal behavior.

They are rules or aspects that must be taken into account in all forms of communication.

These principles may include:

1. **Clarity**- the basic principle of communication is clarity. The message must e as clear as possible. The message sent must be clear as possible. This is because clear objectives or aims form the backbone of effective communication. As a communicator, one should understand the why, what, when, where, how and who of the communication interaction. The message sent must be clear in terms of language, words, symbols, gestures, signs etc. and the context or subject matter e.g when sending gift, it must be cleat in terms of choice, the use and the aim or purpose of the gift.

The sender must have clarity of thought, ie think before transmitting a msg. use simple and straightforward words whose meaning is clear rather than complex technical language, jargon, ambiguity.

1. **Conciseness**- brevity. This aims at economy of words. It is the art of using as few words as possible to give as much information as possible. A receiver’s time is valuable. He should not feel that his time is being wasted by listening to the sender going or and on over the same thing. Be as brief as possible so as to win the receivers attention.

Brevity, however, does not mean that the efficiency of the communication interaction is sacrificed. It simply means economical use of words so as to express an idea as best as possible. Brevity can be enhanced by avoiding receptiveness and poor organisation of the message.

To ensure conciseness or brevity

1. Include all relevant facts while planning your communication.
2. Avoid receptiveness
3. Avoid wordy expression ie use of too many words when one word would do.

3. **Completenes**s

This refers to adequacy or being precise. It answers all the wh- questions.

Incomplete message causes misunderstanding and confusion. They keep the receiver guessing thus delaying action or response.

When ordering goods, include all the necessary details e.g weight, quality, quantity, colour, size, time wanted, delivery methods etc.

This will ensure the correct goods are delivered thus saving on cost that would be incurred if the goods have to be returned for exchange.

4. **Consideration**

Put the recipient into consideration when planning a communication interaction . This will ensure that a positive response is guaranteed. Emphasize on positive pleasant facts e.g when writing a letter of complaint, do so logically and positively so as to get a positive response.

When organizing a meeting put participants into considerations in terms of time, place and date, sitting arrangements, length of the meeting, refreshments etc. adopt a correct style of sending the message e.g the media that the best suites the type of message transmitted. Think about recipients age, education level, social-economic status, emotions, bias and prejudice etc.

1. **Correctness**: **accuracy**

All messages must be correct. To communicate effectively, ensure that the information is accurate. The information should be factual, up-to-date, varied and reliable. It should avoid unverifiable generalization that may lead to bias or prejudice. Be alert on areas or sources of misunderstanding e.g ambiguous or stereotyped statements e.g women are stupid, police officers are corrupt. Correctness can be enhanced by research or seeking clarification before communication.

The correct time of communication is also important. It ensures that a message is received positively outdated information is useless and involves wastage of time, money and human resource.

1. **Courtesy: politeness**

politeness is important in all communication interactions. Create friendliness e.g answer questions promptly and respond to letter promptly.

Avoid irritating manners when communicating. Send messages in the correct style. If apologizing, do it sincerely and promptly. All these will ensure good response.

Courtesy demands that you be considerate to the receivers e.g when complaining to a manger about poor services offered by the staff in his company, use polite language so as to positive results. Avoids irritating or annoying mannerisms like creaking the tongue or breaking knuckles or banging doors. Ask for a favor in a courteous manner without making it look like a command even when you expect action to be taken.

Do not use discriminatory expressions related to individual, race, ethics, origin or physical appearances e.g height, complexion.

1. **Correctness;**

Always use specific facts and figures.

The message must be definite and vivid. This will help create a clear picture on the mind of the receiver. Avoid exaggerations and always remember that the receiver may also have ideas about the topic and can identify with what is said.

Choose appropriate language which will not affect a particular individual, society, culture, nation etc.

**BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Even when communication is carefully planned, set backs or breakdowns will sometimes still occur. These setbacks or breakdowns are referred to as barriers to effective communication. It is any factor or problem than cause miscommunication. What the recipient understands by an encoded message may not always be what the sender intended. The message ends up either not being understood correctly or being distorted.

Distortion – this is the act of altering the original text or message so that it changes form.

**TYPES OF BARRIERS**

Barriers can sometimes be caused by the sender or the receiver . other factors beyond the two can be classified to as

**1.SEMANTIC BARRIERS**:

these are barriers related to language. These include use of foreign language that the receiver can not understand.

1. Use of excessive vocabulary outside the receivers experience.
2. Pronunciation- this can be offered by accent .
3. Faulty translation . a receiver interpret a message different form senders.
4. A word can have more than one meaning.
5. Faulty grammar

**2.ORGANIZATIONAL BARRIER**

The management may cause problem in communication through policies.

1. Policy – a plan of action e.g releasing a company vehicle to transport staff somewhere.

Some policies may be too rigid or discriminating. The management may be seen to favor some staff thus causing resentment in the organisation.

(b) rule and regulations- these must be too strict or too punitive . e.g locking workers inside a building to deter pilfering or desertion of duty e.g Saudi Arabian Cases.

(c) patterns of communication: the methods used may not allow the staff to get information. e.g downward flow may not reach all the workers at the bottom.

(d) status relationship – some top managers may have superiority that do not allow them to come down to the level of juniors. They may be to conscious of their status.

(e) complexity in organisation structure – the distance between management may be to wide or too far. Some managers do not accommodate juniors in their offices. Secretaries become go-betweens. Other offices are far spared this takes too long to get information.

(f) fear of challenge in the authority- some managers lack confidence or know they are not recognized or respected by the juniors thus keep a distance to avoid being challenged.

(g) Distrust and lack of confidence – some mangers do not trust those below them. They withhold information since it may be distorted or spread through the grapevine. E.g a sick manager may not disclose this to a junior.

**3.PSYCHO-SOCIAL BARRIERS**

These are also referred to as physiological or mental barriers. They occur as a result of what is in the mind of the communicator. They may include:

(a) attitude and opinion – if information follows a recipient, it is accepted but if it does not, it is rejected e.g if a change in policy or in the organizations is advantageous , it is taken positively and vice versa.

(b) emotions- strong emotions like fear, anger, worry can affect communication. The communicator will not be able to organize the message properly.

(c) Closed mind- this is a person who sticks to his beliefs and opinions and cannot change. Such a person is difficult to communicate with. He refuses to listen and can even become rude and does not heed any advice.

He is not open to conviction or persuasion. He does not adapt new ideas or changes in business even when they would be beneficial. He becomes critical and challenges authority. (d) Status consciousness – some people are ever conscious of their level or higher ranks and do not express themselves candidly.

(e) Prejudgment – some people have already formed an opinion over an idea or an opinion over an idea or a person even before the communication interaction is complete. This could be due to previous experiences or background knowledge which may be faulty.

(f) Premature evaluation – the communicator jumps into conclusion without listening to reason . they only hear or see what they want to.

(g) Distrust among communicator. Lack of trust may lead to lack of trust to withhold of information. Some communicators will not speak in the presence of others.

(h) Stereotyping and prejudice – some communicators have a bias towards individuals due to their origin, religion and color.

Stereotyping – treating different people as the same just because they share a common aspect like tribe, nation , religion etc.

Prejudice – a dislike or bias of people outside one’s set up e.g social economic status, religion, tribe etc.

(i) In-attentiveness – some people rarely pay attention to what is going on around them, thus could be due to feelings or too many competing interests.

(j) Lack of knowledge – the communicator may lack knowledge on a topic or issue thus unable to participate.

(k) Poor retention- some people are not able to store a lot of information and also have short memory spans.

(l) Lack of interest – a person may not be interested in what is happening around them thus fails to take part in a communication interaction.

(m) Malice and hatred – such emotions may lead to withholding information or even destroying it. Some issues remotely related to office matter may affect communication e.g jealousy over personal achievements.

(n) Lack of motivation – advice members may lack motivation due to poor terms and conditions of service, working environment.

(o) Competition for attention a person may be involved in too many activities to pay much attention to different situations. A busy social life can affect office productivity and vice versa.

**4 PHYSICAL BARRIERS**

These can be divided into two

1. physique- these come as a result of body size e.g heights, weight, appearance and feelings like hunger, sickness etc.
2. Environmental – these are barriers outside the person but within his surrounding e.g (i) Noise – this can be caused by human walking or talking loudly, vehicles passing near organisations , planes flying , animals e.g birds, cows, dogs etc. machine e.g welding, industrials noise, loud speakers and cradles in telephones.

(ii) Ventilation – poorly ventilated rooms are uncomfortable and make people

Keep on moving to seek comfort.

(iii) Poor lighting – lights may be too dim or too bright.

(iv) coloring – some colours make a room look dark and dull thus disorients

worker and make their spirit dull.

(v) time and distance – members may be too far away from each other and there may ne no time to communicate due to busy schedule.

(vi) space – a congested crowded office or too much space can affect message delivery due to many movements.

(vii) illegible handwritings, poor photocopy and grammatically wrong texts affect interpretation and reception of message.

**5. NON-VERBAL SIGNALS**

These are related to body signals. They include facial expressions, gestures, postures, eye contact etc.

These signals may mean different things to different people. They vary from culture to

culture, thus the message may not be understood or may cause negative reactions.

**6. CULTURE**

A culture is a share system of beliefs, attitudes, values expectations and set standards , norms of behaviors . culture affects communication in the following ways.

(i) social conformity- an individual changes his culture so as to fit in with the

culture of a wider group that he prescribes to. This is done so as to be

accepted and fit in the group e.g a punctual worker begins to report late since all his friends do so.

(ii) culture differences – an individual in a social group behaves differently since the culture of the bigger group conflicts’ his own culture. In the process he may become isolated thus does not get information.

(iii) Ethical Constraints (ties) – the way a person behaves is controlled by the wider organisation. The behavior beliefs and attitudes are determined by the moral values of the group e.g rules and regulations, beliefs, taboos etc of the group.

(iv) Ethnocentrism – the belief that one won culture is better or superior to other cultures. It brings about, superiority complex e.g my job is better.

(v) Stereotyping – risk of treating different people as the same just because they share a common culture e.g job, career, school or organisation.

(vi) prejudice – dislike or bias or distrust of people outside ones own set up e.g religion, tribe, profession etc.

All these can cause miscommunication or lack of communication.

**WAYS OF OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION**

An organisation should strife or aim at overcoming or reducing barriers to communication. This can be done in various ways e.g

**1. NOISE**

(a) through site selection – construct organisation its premises its premises away from high noise areas like markets, roads, airports, industries etc.

(b) Putting up notices – notices can be out up requesting people to maintain silence e.g do not hoot, lesson in progress, maintain silence.

(c) Sound insulation – use ceilings, carpets etc to reduce noise in rooms .

(d) Thermal insulation – contract high or low temperature e.g through fans , heaters, planting trees near buildings.

(e) telephone boosters – install boasters to reduce crackles or noise in the airwaves when making calls.

**2. HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS**

Improve the relationship among the members through:

(a) Creating a climate of trust and confidence in the staff.

(b) Encouraging and motivation the staff.

(c) developing proper leadership styles which inspire confidence in the staff e.g avoid favoritism and negative criticism.

(d) Creating teambuilding activities where members can be away from official stations and have tine together e.g a sports day, company roadshow, open days etc.

3. **MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION**

Use channels or media that has a high likelihood of ensuring message reach the recipients on tine and correctly.

4. **COMMUNICATION PROCESS**

Communication message at the right time using the best means possible to ensure everyone gets the information. Use a language that can be understood by all irrespective of their individual differences..

* Update staff or members on any policies or change as soon as possible.

**PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION**

In every organisation, there are formal and informal lines of communication. In most cases, these lines are strictly governed by the norms and policies of an organisation. The organisational charts (a diagram showing the inter-relationship between the members) indicate how the members communicate with each other. There are various ways in which members communicate in an organisation. They include formal and informal methods.

1. Formal Communication – this flows along prescribed channels which all members are obligated to follow.

**Advantages:**

(a) It passes through line and authority thus ensuring maintenance of authority and accountability.

(b) It helps develop inter-personal relationship between immediate boss and subordinates.

(c) It keeps uniformity in the dissemination of information.

(d) flows systematically and the information can be trusted.

(e) The source of information is known which creates harmony among the members.

**Disadvantages**

(a) it increases the workload of various manages since communication is transmitted through them.

(b) Widens communication gap between executives and employees at the lower level.

(c) It is time consuming as it follows a line of authority and the hierarchy must be adhered to while passim information.

2. **INFORMAL COMMUNICATION**

This supplements official channels. It is the most frequent and involves workers talking to each other as they go about their work in the offices or around the premises.

Sometimes during personal conversations, officials matters may be discusses it is more common in closed organisations.

**Advantages**

(a) It brings solidarity and cohesion

(b) Information flows very fast.

(c) It is not affected by official lines or authority.

**Disadvantages**

(a) Source of information may not be trustworthy since it thrives mainly on rumours ad gossip.

(b) It may spread baseless information

(c) It can cause resentment and anger.

(d) It has no laid down rules and regulations to be followed.

Whether formal or informal communication, there are various patters of communication in an organisation.

1. **VERTICAL COMMUNICATION**

It refers to communication flow up ad down the organizational structure. It takes place between people of different authority in an organisation.

Vertical communication is probably the most frequent form of communication. It follows a hierarchy and is the principal or official channel of communication.

It follows a chain of command situation e.g “reporting to : situation as reflected in the company’s organisational chart.

Vertical communication flows in two directions : upward and downward flow.

(a) **Downward Flow**

This describes the flow of information from the top decision makers to the people at the bottom who at one time or another have to take actions.

It consists of strategies, policies, instructions, directives , rules and regulations are passed to the lower level for action and implementation.

Usually, the information passed this way is highly regarded and is seen to offer the organisation a general view of performance.

Messages can be disseminated through formal meetings, interviews, memorandums, circulars, letters, notices, reports, policy, suggestion boxes etc.

**Advantages**

(i) It helps to explain to subordinates organisation plans, policies, programs and procedure, work methodology etc. all which are necessary performing the job.

(ii) It helps to convey to subordinates the expectations of management from them.

(iii) Acts as a mean to control the activities of the subordinates with active feedback.

(iv) I t provides motivation to the subordinates.

**CHALLENGES**

1. Distortion – sometimes the message may be distorted during transmission from one level to another.

2. Delays – in case a particular authority is absent, delays in transmission of message may occur.

3. Dissatisfaction – sometimes workload may be unevenly distributed which leads to some staff being overloaded or under loaded causing dissatisfaction among the staff.

4. Lack of confidentiality – information passing down the line may be seen by too many people thus lacks confidentiality.

5. Build-in-resistance – sometimes the offices at the top may become dictatorial and putting fear in the lower cadre of staff. Sooner or later, the organisation may suffer from poor morale- workers losing confidence and enthusiasm at work, low productivity , potentially explosive frustrations and reactions in employees e.g strikes, resignations , go slows etc.

6. Under-communication and over communication – too much or too little about a job. They may communicate the decision but withhold relevant details. Incomplete instructions may be communicated.

B. **Upward Flow**

This describes the routing of information form the people at the bottom to those at the top. It involves the routing of ideas, suggestions, grievances and criticism. Those at the top gather and consolidate the information who respond to problems and opportunities as they monitor progress. The reports from te bottom help the decision makers to make intelligent decision regarding what goes on in the organisation.

**METHODS OF UPWARDS COMMUNICATION**

1. **Open door policy** – the manger makes employees feel the doors are (i) open to them and (ii) they can walk in and talk to them.

2. **Complaints and suggestion boxes** – these are installed at convenient places in the offices. Employees are encouraged to use them and feedback is provided.

3. **Social gatherings** – these are frequently arranged in different departments. They offer an informal atmosphere in which employees shed their inhabitations and fee free to talk e.g sports day or dinner.

4. **Direct correspondence** – managers write directly to employees or vise versa.

5. **Reports** – employees may be requested to submit reports an=bout work progress.

6. **Counseling** – workers are encouraged to seek counsel from superiors on personal problems e.g lack of promotion.

**BENEFITS**

(i) provide feedback to the superiors. Helps introduce new schemes without too much opposition from subordinates.

(ii) helps promote harmony between the management and employees.

(iii) Helps address grievances.

**CHALLENGES**

(I) Fear from subordinates that their criticism may be interpreted as a sign of personal weakness.

(ii) By-passed superiors may feel insulted which lead to difference between relationships of superiors and employees.

(iii) Messages have a high likelihood of being distorted.

**HOW TO MAKE VERTICAL COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVE**

1. Managers should be duly informed .

2. Be clear about how much to communicate

3. Delegate responsibility to lower ranks t reduce delays in line of authority.

4. Pass information to the correct person using the correct channel.

5. Hold regular consultations.

6. Superior trying to get close to juniors.

7. Keeping communication lines short.

8. Addressing employees grievances on a timely basis.

2 **HORIZONTAL/ LATERAL COMMUNICATION**

This is communication that flows between people of the same level in an organisation e.g HODs, Directors etc. even when they work in different sections. Their common link is the need to share and cooperate which will help complete tasks within the organisation.

It allows them to share information about methods and problems, facilities, tasks and even help to manage internal conflicts. The amount of horizontal communication that occurs depends on the degree of independence between departments. If a department operates independently, official communication takes place in form of letters. Memos, coordinating meetings, conferences, informal meeting etc.

**BENEFITS**

* This pattern is marked by frankness and ease with which each group of similar levels interact and communicate with each other.
* Members are less inhibited by the chain-of-command situation which tends to be experienced by employees when they communicate with seniors.
* It develops mutual trust and confidence amongst employees of the same level which helps promote understanding between them.
* If employees at similar position communicate over a given task, it creates and develops the feeling of understanding and coordination among various departments.

**PROBLEMS**

1. Sometimes it creates attitudes of rivalry and jealousy which may affect members e.g one HOD may feel superior or that another is being favoured by the top management.
2. Inferiority and superiority complexes may occur e.g a clerk in the finance office may feel superior to the one in the store.
3. Due to close relationship, confidential information may leak out during informal gatherings. This is due to the close relationship that leads to freedom of expression.
4. Discrimination – some members of staff may favor each other and isolate another who is further in respect of space e.g Hr and Marketing may isolate manufacturing.
5. Bias – personal differences like religion, family background, personality etc can lead to a bias that shows a liking or disliking of employee.
6. Remote geographical locations like branch offices may prevent members from frequent communication e.g sales representatives in the field.

**3. DIAGONAL COMMUNICATION**

This occurs between members at different levels and sections. It occurs between people who work in different departments and different levels e.g a finance manger and ICT technician. Very often an organisation has tasks that involve more than one department and no obvious lines of authority e.g committees or task force created to solve problems or complete a specific project.

**BENEFITS**

1. It brings people from different sections and ranks together thus improves harmony.
2. People with different skills and experiences come together , thus tasks are completed faster.
3. There are no line of authority so people are free with each other.

**PROBLEMS**

1. Diagonal communication leans heavily on

* Reserves of corporations
* Respect among the members- if these elements are absent, tasks may not be completed.

1. Relationship are nurtured through previous proficient communication in informal setup e.g through greetings, friendly charts around the office, concern for each others welfare etc. if this has not been done, the meeting may be tense and rigid.
2. The employees working together have no direct authority or command link over one another. A such, they may feel under no obligations to complete a task or take orders from one another.
3. This communication relies on friendship, politeness, respect and kindness etc that may at time or another compromise the overall performance in the organist ion.

**4. CONSENSUS**

This occurs when a number of people irrespective of their status sit down and confer with one another t arrive at a decision acceptable to all. The format of this communication is predetermined and cannot be altered. Consensus involves consultation e.g a CEO take sup a problem and analysis it to understand, looks door ways of solving it, contacts the members individually, spells out the problem, listens to their views and they arrive at a solution.

**ADVANTAGES**

1. Decision are taken after consultation among various members thus they find it easy to accept them.
2. It promotes harmony among the members in the organisation.
3. Various ways of solving a conflict are explored as members seek ways of solving the problem, thus unnecessary and undesirable conflict are avoided.

**DISADVANTAGES**

1. Some members may be forced to subscribe to a view they do not believe in. Discontent may simmer below the surface and may erupt later.
2. Sometimes it may project a false image of the management since some members may think the managements is not able to handle the problem alone proficiently this the reason for consultations.
3. Conspiracies can occur where staff support each other wrongly at different times thus accommodation of interest.

**5. GRAPEVINE COMMUNICATION**

This is a totally unofficial communication system which is constantly changing. It occurs when correct lines of communication are not used. It is more common in closed rather than in open organisations. The flow of information is not shown in the organisation chart. It is quite common in periods of change, anxiety, excitement and uncertainty.

It is based on rumors and gossip and is a vehicle for distortion of truth.

It occurs mostly in organisations where correct lines of communication have not been used and no open lines are available.

Information in organisation has no set lines and no definite rules.

It spreads in all direction all the time and at a very fast rate.

Grapevine spreads false, incomplete and often exaggerated information. It is more common in horizontal than vertical communication.

It carries information that cannot be revealed in formal communication system.

**Sources Of Information**

The users and distributors of grapevine information may find their material in

1. Confidential documents left unattended on desks.
2. Careless or accidental remarks.
3. Loud voices from behind closed doors.
4. Sudden changes in established routine and unexplained absenteeism of an official or unusual inspections by an external team.
5. Insecurity of service, uncertainties over promotions, special increments to a particular employee, certain innovations.

**Benefit**s

Despite the harm it causes, if properly used, grapevine has a number of benefits.

1. It provides rich feedback. Managers are able to know what the employee feel and think about certain issues.
2. It is fast. Information moves at remarkable speed so it can be urgent when there is limited time to pass information.
3. Managers can use it to disseminate information that they do not wish to endorse officially.
4. It supplements other channels of communication like memo and letters.
5. It brings a kind of solidarity and cohesion among the workers since they are tied by a common problem e.g a rumor about closing down the company affects all workers despite their status.
6. It serves as a safety value. Workers are able to let out their fears, anger or frustrations. One feels relieved since they do not have to feel alone.
7. Quantity – it carries more information than the formal systems.
8. Sometimes it determines the course the organisation has to take – this is because it penetrates even the tightest company security system and deals with people who know.

**Demerits**

1. Inaccuracy – sometimes the information passed is often baseless and inaccurate.
2. Distorted – in most cases the information is distorted which could be harmful to an employee or organisation.
3. Low morale – the workers may lack the drive or energy to perform due to uncertainties.
4. Unfounded fears – people may fear that die to what is being said, they might for example lose their jobs.
5. Incompleteness – information is almost always incomplete. This leads to misunderstandings and misinterpretations.
6. Misplaced resentment – it may lead to unwarranted anger over the user or victim of the information.
7. Speed – it spreads very fast and causes serious damage before the management can control it.
8. Elusive – since it is orally presented and outside a formal set up, the managers find it hard to assess and control it. When they get it, it is often inconsistent and unreliable.

**HOW TO CONTROL GRAPEVINE**

The management may never be able to completely eradicate grapevine. However, steps can be taken to reduce its influence by

1. Carefully considering ways in which information is passed especially in times of uncertainty.
2. Cultivating open lines of communication. The organisation should operate an open-door policy which greatly reduces grapevine.
3. Providing accurate information and at the earliest time possible to the people concerned using the right channel.
4. Involving the workers in the final decision making process.
5. Limit access to confidential information e.g by putting it under lock and key.
6. Trying to spot the leaders and deal with then so that harmful information does not reach the rest of the employees.
7. Creating correct channels and venues of communication.

**TYPES OF COMMUNICATION**

There are various types of communication in an organisation. They include

1. Formal
2. Informal
3. Internal
4. External
5. Inter-personal
6. Intra-personal

1. **FORMAL COMMUNICATION**

Formal communication channels are where those in authority transmit information to the subordinates or to lower level employees. managers direct and control the activities of lower level employees by sending messages through formal channels e.g a formal meeting – notices, interviews – reports, memorandum – policy etc.

Letters, circulars.

**2. INFORMAL COMMUNICATION**

This is communication that does not arise out of the organizational needs, but it nevertheless an integral part of its communication system.

The junior employee may prefer to take order from an immediate assistant supervisor rather than the senior manager who is not close to them in hierarchy. This type of communication also occurs amongst staff at the same or different level as they go about their work where they share jokes, politics, family among other issues.

**3. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

This refers to the exchange of information or massage between persons and departments of the same organization e.g the employees and employers, the company and shareholders.

**BENEFITS**

1. Better understanding
2. Greater efficiency.
3. Effective coordination
4. Avoid losses.

**4. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

This refers to exchange of information or message between a particular organisation or office with outside persons or organization.

It includes communication with customers and suppliers, government department and service institutions.

**BENEFITS**

1. Good reputation.
2. Improvement of public relations.
3. Better business prospects.
4. Choice of customers.
5. Ability to deal with government departments

5. **INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

This is direct face-to-face communication between persons. It is a dialogue or conversation without the intervention of another person or a machine like a telephone.

**BENEFITS**

1. Direct and intimate
2. Allows maximum interaction and exchange in words and non-verbal signals.
3. It is personal.
4. The highest and most preferred mode of communication.
5. It is enhanced by on-verbal signals.
6. It allows for focused interaction.

6. **INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

This is an individual reflection, contemplation ad meditation. It helps the person to assess himself so as to find ways of improving his communication ability.

**FORMS OF COMMUNICATION**

1. Written communication
2. Verbal communication
3. Audio-visual communication
4. Non-verbal communication
5. Traditional forms of communication

**1. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

This form of communication can be used to disseminate information both internally and externally.

It takes place through letters, notices, circulars, memos, e-mail, telegrams, questionnaires, advertisement etc.

**Advantages**

1. It is better for facts and opinions.
2. Better for difficult, complicated and detailed messages e.g diagrams and figures e.g bank statements.
3. Can be retrieved later when needed.
4. Useful for reference purpose especially in the future when details are disputed or forgotten e.g appointment letters, minutes of a meeting .
5. Can be read when recipient has time
6. Can be carefully planned and considered before transmission.
7. Errors can be remove before transmission.
8. Useful when distance is a factor because it can be used to disseminate information to many dispersed receivers at a go e.g newspapers, e-mails and advertisements.
9. It forms a basis for contracts and agreements e.g contract letters, title deeds, etc.
10. The text arrives in the original form without being distorted.

**Disadvantages**

1. Consumes time to produce and execute.
2. It can be expensive e.g printing.
3. Instant feedback may not be possible or may be non-existence e.g letters, brochures etc.
4. Its formal and distant thus lacks warmth and individuality.
5. It can cause problems of interpretation due to different personal realities like illiteracy, language problems, prejudice etc.
6. Once dispatched the message cannot be modified.
7. Quick access may not be possible since the retrieval system may be complex e.g microfilm, email etc.
8. It lacks confidentiality since it can be read by unauthorized persons.
9. Reinforcement by non-verbal signals is absent.
10. Libel ( written defamation) maybe seen by a greater length of time thus arises heavier penalties than slander (oral defamation)

**ORAL COMMUNICATION**

Oral communication is the exchange of ideas and information through the spoken word.

It is the most common form of communication in organisations through the working day. It takes place through various meetings, telephone conversation, conferences, workshops, seminars, face-to-face interaction e.g dealing with clients, instructing staff etc

**ADVANTAGES**

1. Better for emotions and feelings
2. Saves time especially I an emergency.
3. It is generally economic e.g face-to-face interactions.
4. It allows for more physical proximity thus provides greater interaction.
5. It helps clear doubts since explanations and corrections cannot be made.
6. It is more persuasive ad therefore easier to convince others.
7. It is enhanced by non-verbal signals like gestures, facial expressions, tonal variations etc.
8. It allows for the contribution of all participants.
9. It is extremely useful while communicating with a large audience e.g during an AGM.
10. It helps a speaker to modify the message immediately.
11. It provides instant feedback.

**DISADVANTAGES**

1. It is not convenient when distance is factor .
2. It is not suitable for lengthy, complex ad detailed messages since some details can be forgotten.
3. There is no evidence or proof of the message especially in cases of disputes.
4. It is not suitable when future reference is required.
5. Oral message may not be retained for long.
6. It may be difficult to control a large audience.
7. The quality of decision making may be inferior since there is no written evidence of what was said.
8. Figures and diagrams are hard to describe orally.
9. Oral messages do not have any legal validity unless they are taped.
10. There are weak links in communication because distortion can occur e.g if the message is passed along the grapevine.

3. **NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

It is a combination of two forms of communication.

1. Visual communication – this is the communication where a message is conveyed through what can be seen. It appeals to the sense of sight.
2. Audio-visual communication – this is where messages are conveyed through sound e.g use of radio, music, tapes etc.

4. **AUDIO-VISUAL COMMUNICATION**

This is where messages are conveyed through sound and pictures in combination e.g tv, film, video etc.

**ADVANTAGES**

1. They reinforce oral communication i.e they provide additional visual stimulations.
2. They simplify the written or spoken word.
3. They qualify the message i.e ideas can be provided in numbers or figure form e.g tables, graphs etc.
4. They provide stimulation of senses.
5. They provide a visual record e.g a video or film.
6. They illustrate techniques and procedures.
7. Suitable for mass publicity e.g advertising.

**DISADVANTAGES**

1. If not reinforced the written or spoken word, they may not be understood unless additional skills of comprehension and interpretations are used e.g newspaper cartoon.
2. They can be costly/expensive to produce e.g video, movies etc.
3. They can be costly to disseminate and distribute.
4. Storage maybe expensive e.g hard discs.
5. They may not allow time for evaluation e.g a TV presentation.

5. **NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

This is closely associated with the power of observation. It takes place through various body signs e.g, gestures, facial expression, body appearance, eye motion etc.

**ADVANTAGES**

1. Provides immediate feedback to the sender.
2. Reinforce the spoken or written word.
3. Makes it easier to understand the sender.
4. Substitutes the spoken or written words.
5. Helps the sender to recognize potential communication problems.
6. Regulates the flow of discussions.
7. Helps understand those with specific problems e.g hearing impaired.
8. Simplifies written or spoken communication.
9. Quantifies ideas e.g height, size distance etc.

**DISADVANTAGES**

1. May be difficult to interpret without reinforcing the written or spoken word.
2. Meanings of signs vary from culture to culture so the message may not be understood.
3. It may cause interruption in the sudden movement or gesture.
4. It is not suitable for a large audience.
5. Not appropriate when distance is a factor.
6. The receiver may be inattentive so the message gets lost.

**TRADITIONAL FORMS OF COMMUNICATION**

In the past, before formal education, people used various methods to pass information. The traditional life had a very rich way of communication such as

1. Fire/smoke – fire would be lit in different places to pass message of distress, disaster or misfortune e.g a fire would be lit on a hilltop or at the beach to alert people of danger or misfortune.
2. Messengers – when messages were more personal, messengers were sent. The messengers sent were fast, strong and reliable persons who could ne trusted with information. Such messengers would either run, walk, ride on animals like donkeys or use sea vessels like boats. People would also pass information when they met at places like markets, hospitals, wedding or in church.
3. Gestures/body signs and expressions – these were used to pass messages such as direction, movements speed, height etc. These were especially useful when people did not share a common language or had speech handicaps.
4. Vocal communications – emotional sounds would help people guess a situation e.g-

a. Ululations – these would signal or express joy e.g at the birth of a baby, successful circumcision, a wedding etc

1. Whistling – these would be used to attract peoples attention e.g call people to a meeting, surprise or attraction.
2. Screaming – this would signal distress or danger, thus be a sign seeking help or warning others of danger.
3. Pictures/pictographs – drawings and paintings of images e.g on trees or caves could pass messages of people passing through such places. They could be used to give directions or a peoples culture. Marking like leaves, dropping seeds or flowers on path could give directions.
4. Arrow marks – these were used to show direction e.g a Maasai man would plant his spear outside a woman’s house to deter other men from getting inside when he was intimately engaged with the woman.
5. Counting strings, beads or sticks – these were used for counting thinking or recording events or sending a message e.g counting seasons or animals or explaining a persons status e.g married, leadership etc.
6. Drums/Blowing of horns – drums would be beaten and horns blown to pass various messages e.g death of a person, success or failure in war, celebrating a life e.g birth of a child or wedding.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

There are many occasions when written communication is the best method of communication e.g

1. When the message is fairly detailed, complex or requires careful planning.
2. When immediate feedback is not needed.
3. When a record for future reference or evidence of communication is necessary.
4. When interaction with the audience is not necessary or possible.
5. Legal requirement – it is evidence of communication.
6. To minimize incidents of distortion or errors.

**PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE WRITING**

1. **Unity** – unify the style and the message.
2. **Cohesive** – the message should make sense.
3. **Accuracy** – the subject matter must be correct.
4. **Brevity** – use as few words as possible.
5. **Correct Language** - use a language that has the highest likelihood of being understood.
6. **Apply The 7cs Of Communication** – i.e. clarity, completeness, conciseness, consideration, concreteness, correctness and courtesy

**WRITING TECHNIQUES**

1. Use simple clear words and expressions.
2. Short sentences and brief paragraphs are effective in conveying messages.
3. Choose the short over the long words. This communicates better.
4. Use technical words with caution – never assume your readers will understand the message.
5. Use words with the right strength and vigor, i.e. words that have strength. Avoid dull and weak words.
6. Use foreign words and phrases carefully so that the meaning is clear e.g per capita- per head, ad hoc – for this special meeting/purpose, bonafide – genuine, sine die- infidelity and in camera – in secret.
7. Avoid sexist language – use gender sensitive language that will not cause unfairness or annoyance especially to a woman reader e.g he to refer to her professional like doctors go for, he/his- their, man – people/human being/person, business man- business people.
8. Write effective sentences – use clear sentences. Short sentences are easier to read and understand.
9. Overall tone – write words that have the effect of a good conversation. Use courteous tone e. avoid biased, prejudiced and stereotyping statement.
10. Courtesy – this can be used through using polite language, choosing words carefully, avoid expressions that result into prejudice or stereotyping.

**TYPES OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

There is a wide range of official written communication that flows both internally and externally in an organisation.. the type of communication include

1. Official correspondence – these includes letters, memorandum, notices, e-mails, agendas, minutes, circulars etc.
2. Business Promotion Materials – among these are advertisements, posters, brochures, billboards etc.
3. Academic Writings – these includes essays, term papers, research papers, questionnaires, interview guides, reports etc.

**BUSINESS LETTERS**

Letters from one of the main means of communication both internally and externally. Letters are written to a purpose each with its own special aim.

**FUNCTIONS OF A BUSINESS LETTER**

1. Serves as a record for future reference.
2. To widen the area of operation for the business since it can reach anywhere.
3. It is used as a legal document.
4. It leaves a more durable impression on the receivers mind than an oral communication.

**TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS**

1. Routine Business letters – quotations, tenders, orders, request for payment, letter of appointment, apology ,estimates etc
2. Special Business Correspondence – goodwill, circular, sales, letter of application, voluntary offers.
3. Classified Business Letters – used for agencies, international trade, banking, transport, insurance.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF LETTERS**

1. Use short sentences – they keep the meaning clear and ensure understanding .
2. Choose simple words - they convey meaning more clearly.
3. Avoid wordiness – economy is vital but courtesy must be maintained.
4. Use appropriate tone – must be suitable to both the reader and subject matter.
5. Be precise – long enough to service the purpose but not much longer.
6. Be accurate – double check e.g dates, figures, prices, spellings etc.
7. Be consistent – e.g in layout, tone etc.
8. Write as you speak – letters are referred to as conversation on paper.

**ESSENTIALS OF AN EFFECTIVE LETTER**

1. All the 7Cs of communication.
2. Promptness – respond to letters as soon as they are received.
3. Knowledge of subject – e.g past correspondence, purpose of the letter, firm’s polices etc.
4. Appropriateness – vary the tone to suit the purpose of the letter.
5. Accuracy and completeness
6. Courtesy – be polite e.g asking favors, complaining, apologizing etc.
7. Tact – retain the goodwill of the recipient even when you have to turn down a request.
8. Persuasion – win peoples point of view without force.
9. Salesmanship – a letter must serve as the firms ambassadors. It enhances the company’s reputation.
10. The positive and pleasant approach – even when saying “no: use words that emphasize on pleasant and positive thing e.g another time etc.

**LAYOUT STRUCTURE**

1. Your address – this should be clearly written at the top. In companies, it is usually prepared in advance through letter heads paper.

* It enables the reader to identify the source and to respond appropriately.

1. Date – it comes a space below the address.

* It indicates when the letter was written especially for reference purpose.

1. Reference – not a must but can help in filing.
2. Inside address – this comes a space below the date.

* Includes the name or title and full address of the person you are writing to.

1. Salutation – it is followed by a comma. It is the formal opening of the letter, if the recipient’s name is used in the inside address, use a personal salutation e.g Dear Mr. Kamau/Dear Miss Odhiambo, if the used or gender is unknown you can use Dear Sir/Madam.
2. Subject Heading – this is the theme of the letter, it should be as short as possible. Written on capital letters and usually underlined. It gives a brief preview of the purpose of the letter. It is placed between the salutation and body of the letter.
3. The body – it contains all the information the sender wants the receiver to get. It should be written in clear expressive and grammatically correct language. The length is determined by the purpose of the letter.
4. Complimentary close – this is a courteous /polite close that tells the reader has come to an end. The most common closes are yours faithfully, yours sincerely.
5. Signature – this consists of the name, unique sign and designation (title of the sender)

Others – the following parts apply to some letters and are included for some specific purposes

1. Enclosure – refers to any documents that are sent to the receiver with the letter e.g certificates, testimonials, copies of previous correspondence etc.

* This is abbreviated as Enc.

1. Copies – the word “copies” indicate whom else one has shared or wants to share the information with a part from the main recipient.
2. Post script – this indicates that the writer had forgotten to include something important in the body of the letter. It is abbreviated as P.S

**PLANNING A LETTER**

**The 4 point Plan**

1. Opening paragraph – this helps to attract the readers attention and helps him to become interested and concentrate.

* It introduces the purpose of writing e.g refer to a previous letter, an advert, a meeting, an acknowledgment, expression of gratitude etc. e. g in response to your letter dated, we have noted the contents of your letter dated.

1. Details – these are in the main paragraph. This paragraph contains the subject matter of the letter. It should be brief and to the point but no relevant details should be left out. The writer should be absolutely clear about why he is writing the letter . give all the relevant details in a clear and logical manner.
2. Action – the writer tells the reader what action he wants him to take as a result of the message written or the message sent. The action must be gentle but firm .
3. Close – this is merely a polite way of ending the letter. Finish with a simple one line close or a relevant one liner.

* We look forward to your visit
* Your prompt response will be appreciated.

**MEMORANDUM**

Plural – memoranda

Short form – memo

Origin – Latin word memorare which means to remember.

Literally it means a thing to be remembered today, memos have a wider business use and have become the main means of internal communication.

**USES**

1. To provide information
2. To request information
3. To inform of actions or decisions
4. To communicate enquiries and instructions
5. They can serve as reports
6. Communication changes in the organisation
7. To request for actions or decisions.

**ADVANTAGES**

1. In expensive – they are circulated by hand within the organisation.
2. Convenient – some of the information can be pre-printed in standardized format.
3. They also take less time to write, transmit or read.
4. Future reference – they are stored in files or computer discs so can be referred to in the future.
5. Speed – they ensure quick and smooth flow of information in all directions. Interactions within the offices can take place without disturbing one another’s routine.
6. Fixing accountability – memos are records of facts and decisions so they establish accountability. As such, most organisations prefer to use memos even for small events and requests.

**FORMAT**

The memo format is different from that of a letter e.g there is no salutation or complimentary close.

The format can be pre-printed in a standardized format as follows.

1. To: whom is going to read the memo i.e recipient. The name or the title can be used.
2. From: who is sending the memo. Senders name or title can be used.
3. Date: it shows when the memo was written.
4. Reference: helps in filing and tracking.
5. Subject: it tells in summary what the memo is about. The subject can de underlined and written in capital letters.
6. Signature: signature and name of the sender.
7. CC – copies to any other person who needs to be informed.

To :

FROM :

DATE :

REF. NO :

SUBJECT……………………………………

SUBJECT :

SIGNATURE :

NAME :

COPIES TO :

**STRUCTURE**

1. Subject heading – give a brief introduction of the topic e.g SUBJECT: MISUSE OF STATIONERY. Write the heading in uppercase and underline.
2. Main body – it will contain all the details to be communicated. It includes
3. Information – give background i.e. reason for writing e.g response to earlier communication.
4. Details – include facts and figures where necessary. Different paragraphs can be used for separate items or aspects of the main theme.
5. Response – write an action statement e.g the action you want the reader to take , the actions you will take, deadline for action.
6. Closing – use a relevant one liner e.g I look forward to your response.

**STYLE**

1. No salutation or complimentary close is used.
2. Since receivers are well known, memos are usually written in an informal style.
3. Put your message as concisely as possible while being courteous, clear and correct.

**REPORTS**

Report is a document providing an account of something witnessed or examined or of a work carried out or of investigation together with a conclusion arrived at as a result of the investigation.

A report is a form of systematic presentation of information relating to an event, progress of action or some business activity.

A report carries information from someone who has it to someone who needs it.

**PURPOSE OF REPORTS**

1. To provide information e.g to share holders or customers.
2. To provide a record e.g for future reference.
3. To answer a given question on something that has happened.
4. To recommend a course of action or decision to be taken.
5. To influence an opinion e.g make people believe something one believes in.
6. To gain publicity i.e. make as many people as possible get information e.g a report on disease outbreak.
7. To meet statutory obligations i.e. the authority expects one to write a report on what one has experienced e.g after a visit or training.

**TYPES OF REPORTS**

Reports can be classified into various levels. These levels include

1. On the bases of legal formations
2. Informal report – it is written in form of a letter from one person to another.

* They do not follow any prescribed form or procedure.
* They are prepared according to the convenience and requirements of the organisation.
* They may be informative or recommendatory.

1. Formal report – they are prepared on a prescribed form.

* They are presented according to a prescribed authority . they include
* Statutory – a report prepared according to the form and procedure laid down by law.
* Non-statutory – formal reports which are required under any law but which are prepared to help the management in forming policies or taking other important decision.

1. On the basis of frequency of issue. They can be
2. Periodic or routine – prepared and presented at regular prescribed intervals. They may be submitted daily.
3. Special reports – they are relate to a single occasion or situation e.g on desire to open a new branch or unrest among staff.
4. On the basis of functions – these are informative reports. They present facts on an issue or situation.
5. On the basis of the subject dealt with – these include]
6. Problem – determining report
7. Fact finding report
8. Performance report.
9. Technical report etc.
10. On the basis of the number of persons interested with the drafting of report – these include
11. Report by individuals
12. Report by committees or sub committees.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD REPORT**

1. Unified – a report should be unified.
2. Completeness – all relevant information should be included.
3. Accuracy – it should contain correct and accurate information.
4. The presentation and subject matter should be clear.
5. Conciseness – it should be written in a simple, concise style that is easy to read and understand.
6. Intelligent – it should make sense to the reader even when they do not know the technical and other details of the subject matter.
7. Relevance – it should be relevant to the reader.
8. Reader oriented – it should be based on the needs of the reader.

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION IN REPORT WRITING**

1. People – through interviews, questionnaires etc.
2. Networking as friends and colleagues.
3. Libraries
4. Database and computers
5. Trade associations
6. Professional associations.

**FORMAT OF REPORTS**

If a report is not written on an a prescribed form or to a particular style, one may use any of the following formats.

1. Letter format – this is common in informal reports. Its main part is heading or title, date, address, salutation, body, close and signature.

* It contains introduction, findings and recommendations

1. Memorandum format – it is simpler than a letter format.

* The date is mentioned at the top, followed by the name of the recipient, the name of the writer and the subject report.
* The body is divided into paragraphs with headings and sub-headings.

1. Schematic format – this is a letter-text combination format. It is suitable for long reports . it is divided into:
2. Introduction
3. Body
4. End matters

**LAYOUT OF A SCHEMATIC REPORT**

1. HEADING – every report must bear a heading. there are two headings in a report.
2. The company name including contact
3. The heading of the report. It begins REPORT ON……e.g REPORT ON MISUSE OF INTERNET FACILITIES
4. **TERMS OF REFERENCE** (T.O.R) – this part states exactly why the report is being written and who initiated it. It states
5. Why the report is being written
6. What is requested.
7. When it was requested
8. Who requested the report.

Pattern: report on……… (Subject)……..as requested by ………….(name and title)………..on…………(date) OR to investigate customer complaints about delayed delivery of goods and to make recommendations as requested by…..(name and title)………(date)

1. **PROCEDURE** – this section gives a brief description of the methods used to collect information e.g
2. Conducting interviews
3. Making visits
4. Administering questionnaires
5. Making observations
6. Collecting and analyzing data.
7. An interview was held with Mrs. Omtata, the Production Manager on 26th June, year …..in her office.
8. Questionnaires were issued to 20 customers between the month of June and September year ……
9. Observations about the use of internet facilities in the offices were made for a period of three months.
10. **FINDINGS** – factual and verifiable information . this is the longest section of the report.

* The writer goes through the procedure point by point and states what information was gathered from each procedure.
* Numbers and sub-headings are used in this section. Under each heading the writer should state what information was gathered.

1. **CONCLUSIONS** – your own ideas based on the findings . no new facts are introduced in this section.

* The writer looks at the findings and states the logical implications of the findings e.g staff members were found to be using company internet for personal matters OR there were insufficient vehicles to deliver goods to the customers.

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS** – what writer wants done . no new facts are introduced in this section.

* Basing information on findings and conclusions, the writer makes suggestions for action e.g the System Administrator should block social sites from the company internet facilities OR more vehicles should be purchased so as to enhance delivering of goods.

NOTE: The writer of a report can only make suggestions for action to be taken but cannot

Make the final decision OR the writer only includes the recommendations in the report if requested to do so in the T.O.R

1. **CLOSING SECTION** – this is where the writer signs the report. It consists of the actual signature, name, title and date e.g

Sign

Mr. XYZ

Business Administrator Officer

Date 7th October, Year…….

**NOTICES**

Notices are used to bring special items of attention to the staff. They are posted on noticeboards.

**Purpose**

Notices may be posted about

1. New procedures e.g change in time
2. Social events e.g staff party
3. Advertisements foe internal appointments
4. Reports on matters of interest e.g a new insurance cover.
5. Reminds on company procedures
6. To invite people to a meeting

**ADVANTAGES**

1. They are convenient for urgent messages
2. They can be read by everyone in the office.
3. The save cost of writing and circulating memos.

**DISADVANTAGE**

1. They are easily ignored.
2. They lack feedback.
3. Can easily clutter noticeboards making them look untidy.

**DESIGNING NOTICES**

When designing a notice, the aim is to ensure that it is seen and acted upon when necessary.

The essential features of a good notice include:

1. The notice must have a clear heading. It must be large and vivid.
2. The message should be short and clear.
3. Space the text out.
4. Writing should be large enough to be seen from a distance.
5. Use different size print for emphasis.
6. Use sub-headings to break up the main information logically.
7. Use asterisks (\*/bullets (.) /arrows points to display points on separate lines.
8. Use the paper efficiently to display the notice attractively.

Color display and graphics designs can be used to attract attention.

1. Include the name of writer at the bottom as well as the reference ad date.

NB: ensure that you split the words appropriately otherwise you could change the meaning completely e.g electrically driven passenger carrying vehicle not allowing in

1. Passenger carrying vehicle.
2. Vehicle carrying passengers

**LAYOUT**

1. The word “notice” in caps bold and centered.
2. Subject heading e.g safety measures in workshop should be caps and bold. Can be underlined to stand out.
3. Body contents. If more than one item is presented use arrows, bullets, asterisks, numbers etc.
4. Signature name and reference.
5. Date.

SAMPLE

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION

WASHING MACHINES

Members are invited to the display room to view the latest washing machines in the market. Beginning this Wednesday from 2:00 pm

Offers can be placed through the H.R.M

Affordable

Easy to operate

Do your washing in seconds.

Saves time and energy

HURRY! HURRY! HURRY!

Limited stocks!

(*sign*

R. CLEMENTS

MARKETING MANAGER

RCLWN

15th June….

**ADVERTISEMENTS**

Press advertisements are audio or visual presentations which are used to promote good and services or to announce vacancies.

They are used to reach out specific market.

Many companies advertise in newspapers, magazines or trade journals.

**PURPOSE**

1. To advertise vacant posts.
2. To promote products and services.
3. To announce special events or functions.
4. To publicize changes in the organisation e.g management.
5. To maintain a company’s competitive edge in the market.
6. To maintain a high level of customer awareness about a company’s product.
7. To inform public about product development and innovation.

**TYPES OF ADVERTISING MEDIA**

1. T.V and films
2. Posters
3. Websites
4. Billboards
5. Radio
6. Newspapers and magazines.

**FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN MAKING AN ADVERT**

1. Cost of media
2. Distance to be covered e.g academic level, tastes, preferences etc.
3. Legal implications i.e that the advert meets legal (law) requirements.
4. Timing and seasonal demands.

**REQUIREMENTS**

An advert must be

1. Cost effective.
2. Clear and simple.
3. Appealing and colourful
4. Appealing to the needs and expectations of audience.
5. Honest. I.e should not contain false information.
6. Concise
7. Have responsive instructions.
8. Informative.

**LAYOUT FEATURES**

1. Heading should be large, bold, vivid and centered.
2. Text should be well-spaced out and centered.
3. Product details should be highlighted.
4. It should have a frame.

**TYPES OF LAYOUTS**

1. Small ad or line advertisement

* In this advert, information is run on from line to run often using the same font throughout, with no special layout.
* These can be found in local “classified ads section. They serve various purposes but most advertise goods for sale.
* Charges for the advert are made by the line or a set rule per word thus the need for brevity. There is normally a minimum charge for specified words or lines.
* They contain a description of the item, price and contain address and the telephone of the advertiser.
* If advertising a vacancy, they describe the job title e.g sales assistant, pay offered and contact information e.g

1. MR FIX It – we fix anything and everything (cars, electrical appliances, leaking roofs etc)

Enquiry 272 (TOWN) Tel. 0213654

1. Video coverage: weddings

Christerring, anniversaries

Call 0714744

1. Display advert

* These may incorporate a variety of font styles and sizes.
* Artwork or colour may be included.
* Charges will be bases on the number of columns centimeters often with a minimum size.
* They are usually a combination of a notice and small advert.
* They are designed to make them more eyes-catching than small adverts. They use more space.
* They can be referred to by the fraction of a page that they occupy e.g ¼ page which is quite large advertising a major product or 1/8 to advertise a job vacancy.
* Example

**AKIBA HOLDINGS**

Requires:

Supervisor For its customer service department

**Requirements**: pleasant, diplomacy, ability to cope with pressure

Academic qualifications:…………………………………

**Benefits** e.g free housing, car

**Contact**: applications should be sent to:HRO….

Deadline☺(D…………)

**WRITING STYLE**

* When compiling an advert pic put the main points or features o what is being advertised and then put then in an interesting attractive manner.
* Aim to be seen even when it stands next to lots of other advertisements.
* Apply the **AIDA** principle when designing an advert.

1. **ATTENTION** – you must attract the reader’s attention e.g use company logo, compose specific heading, put special information in boxes or shaded sections.

**I – INTEREST** – get the reader’s interest by mentioning something that will appeal to them e.g be persuasive, use simple language, short sentences.

**D - DESIRE** – arouse the reader’s desire to buy, to attend a function, to find out more or to contact the writer e.g attend a function, to find out more or to contact the writer e.g make everything sound interesting and point out the benefits.

**A - ACTION** – make the audience want to o something as a result of reading AIDA objectives.

NB: to achieve these AIDA objectives, the following guidelines are useful.

1. Use company logo, prominently displayed.
2. Compose a catchy heading and display it prominently.
3. Use spacing to advantage, giving special items prominence.
4. Categorize the information using sub-headings, bullet points.
5. Clearly state the action you want the reader to take e.g call, write, visit etc

**QUESTIONNAIRES**

They are a special type of form designed to record opinion or suggestions from different groups of people.

**USES**

1. Foe researching the preferences of consumers.
2. For investigating public attitude or opinion to major issues.
3. For requesting the opinions of staff on issues like flexible working hours, welfare association.

NB; questionnaires can be used in part of the research undertaking when preparing a report.

**CHALLENGES**

1. Taking too much of peoples time.
2. Asking difficult or sensitive questions that people find hard to answer.
3. Asking vague questions
4. Asking people to commit themselves on issues which perhaps they do not feel it is possible to be definite without considerable qualifications.
5. Asking people to commit themselves i.e permanently on a paper.
6. If used by an amateur, they may not produce credible results and results may not be valid.

**CHECKPOINTS**

1. Make sure the questionnaire is the best method of getting information needed.
2. Frame the questions in a neutral fashion so that you do not influence answers.
3. Write short questions. Avoid long, complicated questions.
4. Ask direct questions. Avoid ambiguity.
5. Be specific in the information you are seeking.
6. Frame your questions in such a way that simple responses are given e.g ticking yes/no answers. Make the answers you receive easy to work with.
7. Arrange your questions on the questionnaire in a logical manner.
8. Select your sample (those when you want to give the questionnaires with care and attention required in sampling.)
9. Test your questions on a pilot group i.e a small group similar to those you are going to use, but not be included in the actual survey. This helps test the design of your form.
10. Use an attractive but straightforward layout. This helps your questions to be easily read, answered and returned.

**REQUIREMENTS**

1. Use a clear and attractive questionnaire.
2. Use simple direct language
3. Use words that will create a food relationship with the reader.
4. Include only essential questions to reduce length.
5. Begin with a polite request to the reader to complete the form. Briefly mention why the information is needed.
6. Include an assurance that the information will be treated confidentially.
7. Thank the reader for completing the form.
8. Include instructions about where to send the form once completed.

**SAMPLE**

**CATERING SATISFACTION SURVEY**

Please tick the appropriate box

**Excellent good average poor**

Menu

Service

Presentation

Length of wait

Quality

Quantity

Charges

Overall rating

**FORMS**

* form filling is almost an everyday occurrence in organisations.
* They are usually pre-printed and issued when required.

**PURPOSE**

1. To collect data in procedures that are standardized.
2. To ensure that every piece of information requires is completed by the form-filler.
3. To include the sequence of information in printing order.
4. To act as computer data input source.
5. To provide useful source of reference.
6. To enable design new forms that easily meets new policies or revised procedures.

**DESIGN FORMS**

1. CONSIDER – Who fills the form

* Who needs the information
* Why the information is needed
* How to effectively present the information

1. Make a checklist of all the information needed e.g name, address, telephone /fax number, age, date of birth, sex, nationality.
2. Divide the checklist into appropriate sub-sections and choose titles for each section.
3. Decide on a logical structure for the form, according to priority
4. Design your draft form ensuring that

* Questions are worded carefully,
* Option boxes for responses are given
* Sufficient spaces for responses are there.
* Instructions and questions are given.

1. Try out the form on colleagues and ask for positive criticism. Make amendments based on response.
2. Print the form out but monitor the first few forms completed. Check that users understand the requirements.
3. Monitor the forms, regularly asking yourself

* Whether the form is essential
* Simple and straight forward to fill
* Logical in sequence of questions
* Printed in appropriate font/colour/quality
* Whether relevant
* Whether suitable for the purpose it is intended.

**CHALLENGES WITH FORMS**

* The form is too long and asks for too much information. It ends up

1. Boring and irritating thus incomplete answers or left blank.
2. The form tries to cover too many possibilities, resulting to confusion, difficult to complete.
3. The form is boldly designed resulting to ambiguous e.g do you intend to have children?
4. The form is badly laid out e.g too much space for some answers and not enough for others.
5. The forms ask the wrong questions resulting to the wrong information being given and often unusable.

**CIRCULARS**

* A circular letter is one that is sent out to many people at the same time.
* It may be prepared once and then duplicated. Modern technology e.g printing copies can make each letter look personalized and original.

**USES**

1. Introduce new products lines.
2. Announce the opening of a new office/ branch
3. Inform staff of new policy matters.
4. Advertise special offers.
5. Announce company restructuring.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

1. Keep it brief, otherwise it may not be read.
2. Ensure it is informative and direct.
3. Use individuals terms eg ”you” instead of “all of you” use names to personalize it e.g Dear Mr John/Dear Subscriber/Dear Customer/Engineer etc.

**LAYOUT**

1. Reference and date (month of the year only) e.g ST/EF

NOVEMBER 20…

1. Recipient e.g Dear Customer/parent/student

(use singular expressions here)

1. Body content of what you want the recipient to know.
2. Complimentary close e.g yours sincerely, faithfully
3. Name of sender and designation

**ORAL COMMUNICATION**

The 7Cs of oral communication

1. Clear
2. Concise
3. Complete
4. Correct
5. Concrete
6. Courtesy
7. Candid

**ESSENTIALS OF EFFECTIVE ORAL COMMUNICATION**

1. Clear pronunciation – words should be pronounced clearly and correctly.
2. Brevity – avoid talking for too long so that the message is not lost due to distractions, boredom or information overload.
3. Precision – give the exact information e.g exact time, date or amount. e.g avoid in thousands say two thousands, early tomorrow – 8 o’clock tomorrow

* Next month – state exact date.

1. Conviction – the speaker’s confidence in what he/she says provides confidence. It comes from sincerity of approach, thinking and placing.
2. Logical sequence – arrange all ideas in their logical sequence to avoid confusing the listener.
3. Appropriate words choice – be careful with choices of words. Use words that the listener is familiar with or explain any foreign terms.
4. Avoid hackened phrases and clichés – these are overused terms that interrupt the flow of the speech and hinder quick grasp of meaning. They include;

* What I mean
* Do you follow
* You see
* Isn’t it?

1. Natural voice – avoid cultivating an affected voice in an attempt to appear sophisticated. A natural voice is impressive and convincing. Tone down any unusual accent, speak clearly and naturally.
2. Use the right register – adjust your language knowledge and experience to the level of the listener.

**PERSONAL QUALITIES OF A GOOD SPEAKER**

1. CLARITY – use simple clear language
2. Accuracy – give correct information
3. Empathy – putting yourself together in the other person’s place.
4. Sincerity – be humble and honest. Do not show off or be rude.
5. Maintaining eye contact – it helps pay attention.
6. Appearance – dressing and grooming
7. Posture – the way one sits or stands
8. Voice qualities e.g speed, pitch, volume, choice of diction and accent.

**LISTENING SKILLS**

Real listening is an active process. It involves the following:

1. Hearing – hearing is a biological process through the auditory organ i.e the sense of hearing - the ear.

* Hearing means listening enough to catch what the speaker is saying.

1. Understanding – this is the next part of listening. It happens when one takes what one has heard and understands it in own way.
2. Judging – after one is sure they understand what the speaker said, they should think about whether it makes sense. One should ask themselves whether they believe what they have heard and what to do with the information.
3. Response – the listener reacts to the message by providing feedback. This can be done through words or body language e.g nodding the response lets the speaker know whether the listener has got what was said abd their reaction to it.

The process therefore is as follows:

Hearing –interpretation-judging/evaluation-response.

**ADVANTAGES OF LISTENING**

1. It helps to know the organisation
2. It helps to make better policies.
3. It mollifies (sooth, appease) complaining employees.
4. It is important for the success of open-door policy.
5. It helps to spot sensitive areas before they become explosive.

**GUIDELINES OR PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE LISTENING**

1. Eye contact – look at the speaker. It indicates one is attentive in listening. It helps on the information.
2. Bodily exhibitions – non-verbal signals can be used to exhibit affirmative head nodes and appropriate facial expressions, eye contact etc which convey certain things to the speaker.
3. Avoid distracting actions or gestures- actions like looking at ones watch, playing with pen, reading a newspaper etc could signal lack of interest in the speaker or the message.
4. Ask questions – an effective listener asks questions - an effective listener asks questions , seeks clarification of doubts, seeks explanations and ensures clear understanding. It helps the speaker to know that one is listening.
5. Put the speaker at ease – the listeners attitude helps the speaker to become relaxed and aware of the listener.
6. Avoid premature arguments – do not interrupt to ask questions or argue about facts. A good listener. Interrupt the speaker once he completes a speech.
7. Listen patiently – listen patiently even when you feel the speaker’s approach is wrong.
8. Avoid personal bias or pressure – drop any personal bias or attitude about a speaker or his views when listening. It is a wrong habit and makes the speaker uneasy eg using mannerism like whistling.
9. Observe non- verbal cues - Observe non- verbal signals like pitch, here, physical gestures, a pause, silence etc. these may convey meaning to the message. They also help in the flow of the conversation.
10. Avoid fake attention 0 fake attention can be thorough fixing eyes steadfastly on the speaker in pretence of being a good listener. Faking listening makes one miss out on many points made by the speaker.

**ACTIVE LISTENING**

Active listening means that one is paying attention or fully concentrating on what is being said by the speaker.

It involves listening with all senses.

Active listening can be conveyed to the speaker by using both verbal and non-verbal messages e.g nodding ones head, smiling, paralinguistic sounds e.g mmh, aha, hmm.

**NON – VERBAL SIGNALS OF ACTIVE LISTENING**

1. Smiling
2. Maintaining eye contact.
3. Posture e.g leaning slightly forward/sideways, slight slant of the head or resting head on hand.
4. Nimering – facial expressions used by speaker can be seen in listener e.g to show sympathy and empathy.
5. Avoidance of distractions e.g through fidgeting, looking at clock, playing with pen or nails.

**VERBAL SIGNS OF ACTIVE LISTENING**

1. Remembering - e.g details, concepts from speakers.
2. Questioning – asking the speaker questions.
3. Reflecting – closely repeating or paraphrasing what speaker has said.
4. Clarifications – asking speaker questions to ensure correct message has been received.
5. Summarization – repeating summary of what is said by the speaker using ones own words.

**CONDUCTING MEETINGS**

**Outline:**

1. Definition of terms
2. Role of meeting and minutes
3. Types of meeting
4. Planning and conducting meetings
5. Minutes writing
6. Challenges in meeting
7. Documents used in meetings
8. Advantages and disadvantages of meeting.

Meeting definition – a meeting is a gathering of two or more people at a certain place, in a defined period of time with a certain purpose.

**ROLE OF MEETINGS IN AN ORGANISATION**

1. To report on past activities.
2. To plan future activities.
3. To involve members in decision making.
4. To give information to members.
5. To give instructions to staff members.
6. To enhance interpersonal relationships.
7. To pass management policies to staff.
8. To deal with conflicts and solve problems so as to reduce tension in office.
9. To design new organizational policies, systems, regulations and procedures etc.
10. To unite conflicting groups.

**TYPES OF MEETINGS**

There are two major categories of meeting in an organisation.

These include:

1. Formal meetings
2. Informal meetings
3. Formal meetings – these follows rules set down in statutes (law) constitutions, standing order or by-laws.

* The records of these meetings are properly kept and they help guide subsequent meetings, documentation which include notices, agenda motion and minutes.
* Such meetings include:

1. Company general meeting
2. Executive committee meetings
3. Board of directors meetings.

**Annual General Meeting\**

* These are meetings held once in a year to assess the trading of an organisation over the year.
* They are attended by all the shareholders.

**Statutory Meetings**

* These are held so that directors and shareholders can communicate and consider special reports. They are mandatory by law.

**Board Meetings**

* These are held as often as an individual organisation may require. They are attended by al the directors under the chairmanship of the chairperson of the directors.

**Executive Committee Meetings**

* These is a meeting held by a smaller group selected from the parent body in an organisation.
* - its power is specified by the parent body and it is required to give an account of its activities at regular intervals.
* The executive committee is empowered to take decisions in day to day matters in the light of the broader organizational goals.

1. **INFORMAL MEETINGS**

* In this meetings, there are no formal rules or procedures. There is a group leader rather than a group of officials. Documentation is not formally done and notes, rather than minutes maybe written.
* Informal meetings include:

1. Brainstorming
2. Working party/ ad hoc
3. Advisory
4. Departmental

**Departmental Meetings**

* These are called by the head of the department or a section manager.
* All staff members in the department are invited so that information can be passed to all.

**Working Party**

* These may be set up to work together on a specific project e.g sudden crisis like war etc.
* Members to such a meeting could be appointed to deal with the specific task and the groups disbanded once the task is over.
* Members can be appointed on the basis of expertise, religion and gender etc.

**Ad Hoc Meetings**

* These are held by a group of people from different sections to solve a particular problem or deal with a task after which it is disbanded.

**Brainstorming Meetings**

* This is a meeting between staff members for a free exchange of ideas to come-up with a new strategy.

**Committee Meeting**

* A committee is a group to whom certain powers are committed by a parent body. They deliberate on certain matters with a view to action while representing the larger body.

PREPARING FOR A MEETING PG 155

CONDUCTING A MEETING PG 155 KASNEB

**ADVANTAGES OF A COMMITTEE**

1. They offer expert opinion.
2. They help generate new ideas.
3. They utilize talents, experiences and create abilities of the members.
4. They share responsibility for decisions made so that no one shall bear sole responsibility.
5. They help improve employer – employee relationships since they are representatives of both.
6. They promote co0ordination of activities.
7. They help check authoritarian trends since they prevent concentration of authority on one person. Power is thus not concentrated on one person.
8. They help compromise conflicting groups so that extreme decisions e.g strikes are avoided.
9. They give valuable training to junior executives. This is because, junior officers who are appointed to such committees gain useful knowledge and experience.
10. They safeguard employees interest. This is because employees can put their case to a representative body rather than an individual.

**DISADVANTAGES OF A COMMITTEE**

1. Delay – a committee will take longer to explore the various options as compared to when the managers would have made the decision.
2. Irrelevant discussions – members often tend to drift into trivial and irrelevant discussions that are of no benefit to the main agendas.
3. High operational costs – committees can be expensive time-wise and financially – this is because meetings can ne spread over months and members are sometimes paid some allowances like travel, subsistence etc.
4. Undesirable compromises – members can sometimes compromise since they work as a group. the final decision may favor the group but not the organisation.
5. Abrogation (abolishing/cancelling) of individual responsibility. An individual responsibility cannot be rewarded for a good decision or blamed for a bad decision since there is collective responsibility.
6. Group pressure – mob psychology may result to poor decisions. This is because some members put pressure on others to accept a decision. This may result in mediocre, (low quality) outcomes. This is because compromises through the process of accommodation and consensus take place.
7. Minority tyranny – some members are seen =to have more authority due to their status and roles in the organisation. As such, their presence and opinions intimidate others into going their way.
8. Talk-rather-than-action groups. Some committees spend a lot of time talking but never substitute the talk into action. They discuss a problem but never solve it.

**PROCEDURE FOR MEETINGS**

* In order to achieve success in meetings:

1. Clearly define the purpose of the meeting.
2. Distribute the agenda among the members.
3. Provide all the facts.
4. Restrict the number of invitees i.e who should attend the meeting.
5. Determine the location and time.
6. Arrange for refreshments if necessary.
7. Ensure the setting of the room is comfortable and suitable e.g in ventilation, lighting, temperature etc.
8. Determine the seating needs e.g chairs only table and chairs.
9. Begin and end the meeting on time.
10. Control the progress of the meeting by following the agenda, recommendations
11. Encourage full participation.
12. Sum up decisions, actions and recommendations .g as you vote through the agenda and restate the main points at the end.

**PARTICIPANTS IN A MEETING**

1. The chairperson
2. Secretary
3. Other members.

**Duties And Responsibilities Of :**

1. Chairperson
2. Preside over a meeting
3. Officially opens a meeting
4. Guides the direction of a meeting and ensures the agenda is followed.
5. Controls the order of a meeting.
6. Maintains discipline
7. Signs minutes of meeting after confirmation
8. Gives the casting vote of decision.
9. Guides the casting votes when there is voting deadlock.
10. Adjourns the meeting.

**HOW TO CHAIR A MEETING**

1. Observe punctuality – start the meeting on tine and do not wait for those whop have not arrived. Do not think of those absent but consider those present if you begin on time you will finish on time.
2. Clearly define the purpose of the meeting. Let the agenda be the guide .
3. Begin with a positive approach – the opening remarks set the pace of the meeting. Make the members feel they are going to make useful contribution to the meeting.
4. Be brief – do not make lengthy briefs that may cause delays or bore the audience.
5. Remain impartial – even in confrontations or conflicts arise during discussions take a neutral position.
6. Control emotional build-ups. Try to control emotional tensions by being humorous.
7. Draw contributions from members encourage even those members who are shy to express their views.
8. Control the meeting – allow only one person at a time to speak. Do not allow private discussions among small groups since they cause disunity and conflict. They also undermine the confidence of a speaker and cause distractions.
9. Clarify contributions – make sure each member’s contribution is understood by others e.g by asking questions, pulling out details, asking members for clarification or rephrasing statements.
10. Make frequent summaries. Summaries serve to check which points have been completely discussed and resolved and which points need more attention. Point out the decisions reached in the meeting.
11. The Secretary
12. In charge of all correspondence relating to meetings.
13. Prepares in consultation with the chairperson the notice of the meeting.
14. Prepares an agenda.
15. Reads the minutes of the previous meeting to members.
16. Signs the minutes after acceptance.
17. Prepares the minutes of the meeting.
18. Other Members
19. They form a quorum. Quorum is the minimum number of elope who must be present for a meeting to take place.
20. They contribute ideas.
21. They elect officials.
22. They vote for motions.
23. They form sub-committees
24. They debate on motions.

**HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE PARTICIPANT**

1. Go to the meeting prepared. Study the agenda carefully and prepare any information that may help you to contribute in discussions. Be punctual.
2. Study the other members who are attending the meeting. Study their strong points, likes, dislikes and the way they speak.
3. Speak at the most appropriate time.
4. Control your negative impulses e.g being unreasonable, rude, biased or prejudiced.
5. Be accommodating. Be flexible to accept other’s point of view that may oppose your own when it is rightfully to do so.
6. Avoid lecturing, patronizing or condemning such actions may breed inferiority in others and will cause resentment in them.

**DOCUMENTS USED IN MEETINGS**

Written communication for meetings prepares members for effective participation. The written documents include:

* Notice of the meeting.
* Agenda
* Minutes of the meeting.

**THE NOTICE**

* The notice informs the members as to the day, date, time and venue of the meeting. It is dispatched at least a week(7-14days) in advance so as to give the members time to prepare to attend. It can include the agenda.
* The notice can be in form of a postcard which is pre-printed for all meetings and only the date, time and venue are inserted. It can also be in form of a letter or a memorandum. It consists of :

1. Day
2. Date
3. Time
4. Venue(place of meeting)

**THE AGENDA**

* An agenda is a list of the topics to be covered in a meeting.
* An agenda helps the chairperson to direct the business of the meeting and also ensures members are fully prepared to participate. It can be sent with the notice of the meeting.

**IMPORTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

1. If circulated in advance, it helps the members to come prepared to the meeting.
2. Since it has a set order, it helps the chairperson t conduct the meeting smoothly.
3. It ensures that every point is taken up for discussions.
4. It ensures only matters relevant to the meeting are discussed.
5. It facilitated the preparation of the minutes.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD AGENDA**

1. It must be clear and explicit.
2. It should be in summary form.
3. The routine items should be put first .
4. All matters of similar or allied character should be placed near each other.
5. All simple items should be out first in the agenda since they will be cleared quickly.
6. Consensus items should be brought early since all members will agree with them and deals with them speedily.
7. Late arrivals or early departures will affect as motion should be considered in the agenda.
8. Sensitive items should be brought towards the end of the meeting since they can cause outburst that might lead to an adjournment due to chaos or tempers.
9. Less important or less urgent matters can be deferred to a subsequent meeting.
10. The agenda should be within the scope of the meeting.

**FORMAT OF THE AGENDA**

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matters arising
4. New business
5. Any other business
6. Date of the next meeting.

NOTE:

It is economical to combine the notice and agenda of the meeting in one document to be dispatched to the members.

Sample: **THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF WATAMU SHAREHOLDERS WILL TAKE PLACE ON FRIDAY 17TH NOVEMBER...(YEAR) AT 10:00AM IN THE MAVUNO CONFERENCE HALL**

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Chairperson’s report.
5. Capital investment
6. Relocation of headquarter office.
7. Dividends of the year ending.
8. Election of new officials.
9. Any other business.
10. Date if next meeting.

Kindly plan to attend and be punctual.

*Signature*

Name

secretary

**Minutes Of The Meeting**

Minutes – they are the official written records of the proceedings a meeting.

* Minutes constitute a permanent record of the decision and actions arrived at in the meting.
* They are written by the secretary.
* Once approved and signed, they are acceptable in a court of law as evidence of the proceedings.
* In companies, it is a legal requirement to maintain records of the proceedings if every general meeting and board of directors meeting.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF MINUTES**

1. Verbal minutes – these are word-of-word recordings of the proceedings e.g a court case of parliamentary proceedings. They provide an accurate and unbiased record of the meeting.
2. Minutes of narration – they are a detailed summary of the discussion they are somewhat similar to a report. They give a brief account of the discussion and the voting pattern is also included.
3. Minutes of resolution – these are the briefest minutes. They only state the resolutions arrived are in a meeting. No response is made to any discussion preceding the resolution. No mention is made to even the movers or seconders of the resolutions.

* They are, however, complete and clear.

**Wording of Minutes**

1. They are written in past tense.
2. Reported speech is used e.g it was resolved that all members ….
3. Teach minute is numbered. This helps in location of any particular decision.

Layout Of Minutes

Heading – it contains the date, time and venue of the meeting. It is usually written in capital letters and underlined e.g **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN MONDAY 6TH MAY – (YEAR) IN THE BOARDROOM AT 3:30PM**

Minute 1; Attendance record

1. Members present – usually begins in hierarchy i.e chairperson, secretary, then others.
2. Apologies for absence
3. No apologies for absence

Minute 2: Confirmation of the last minutes

Matters arising from the minutes.

Chairperson report

New business - computer security

* Re-location of offices
* New salaries scheme

Any other business

Date of the next meeting

Closing of the meeting states the time of the end of the meeting.

**Challenges In A Meeting**

1. A very lengthy agenda
2. Lack of preparation in both the officials and members e.g venue, time etc.
3. Dictatorial approach with the chairperson.
4. Poor communication e.g late notice and no accompanying agenda.
5. Inadequate or large membership
6. Lack of quorum
7. Emotional outbursts
8. Patronizing and prejudiced approach
9. Undesirable or incompetent membership.

**PLANNING AND CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS**

Definition:

**Interview is a meeting of two or more people to achieve a predefined objective through mutual interrogation.**

It is any planned and controlled conversation between two or more people which has a purpose for at least one of the participants and during which both speak and listen from time to time.

Inter- between, view – sight

A meeting between persons for the purpose of getting a view or to know each other.

**PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWS**

1. For employment purposes.
2. To get information e.g from workers or the management.
3. To give information e.g on periodic evaluation.
4. To evaluate a person.
5. To handle confidential matters.
6. To seek behavior change e.g in counseling or sales interviews.
7. To interact and improve relationships.
8. To solve problems and make decisions
9. For research and discovery of new information e.g academic and market research.

**Types On Interviews**

1. **Recruitment/selection interviews**

* This takes place when a person decides to look for a job or when an employee decided to hire a new employee for a vacant position.
* It is used to find the most suitable candidate for the right job. It also ensures that each candidate understands the job and any future prospects so that the candidate is able to decide whether to take the job or not.
* Apart from the oral interview, the candidate could be able to go through a written interview or a tour of the company premises and informal discussions with other members of staff.

1. **Promotion interview –** this one takes place when an employee has applied for a job at a higher level within the organisation or in another organisation. It can also take place when the management wants to elevate or raise an employee to a higher level than the one currently held.

* This interviews is conducted in the dame way as the selection interview to establish whether the candidate has the necessary qualifications and abilities to perform the job. The interview serves as an induction into new responsibilities and duties.

1. **Appraisal / assessment interviews**

* This interview is sometimes called update interview.
* It provides an opportunity for the employee to review with their manage work performance and progress. It serves as a periodical assessment of the employees performance.
* This interview is usually conducted on yearly basis.

1. **Instructional interview**

* This is conducted to issue instructions to staff on new procedures. It involves explanations an demonstrations of the procedures concerned . it can be conducted by a senior or junior employees or by external resource persons.

1. **Disciplinary interview**

* This is one of the least pleasant type of interview.
* It is a response to the problematic behavior of an employee i.e when an employee has committed a breach of regulations e.g on absenteeism,. Underperformance, lateness e.tc.
* The interview should be conducted on basis of sound factual knowledge, the objective being to find the truth about the employees problematic behavior. The reasons for the employee poor performance can be found in face-to-face talk which may be due to domestic problems, health problems, lack of training etc.
* The interview aim at seeking a solution to the problems identifies because if ignored they can affect production and performance. It aims at seeking the employees commitment to behavioral change, acknowledging a problem and seeking ways of overcoming the problem e.g through professional counseling.

1. **Grievance procedure**

* This takes place when an employee/ employer fee that another member of the organisation has treated them wrongly.
* It is a reaction to complaints from employee who are dissatisfied with the way the things are in an organisation e. g poor terms and conditions of service, harassment by another staff, lack of motivation etc.
* The interview should be conducted on the basis of sound factual knowledge, the objective being to arrive at the truth. The interview should seek solutions to the complaints like mass exit of staff or extreme reactions like strikes which would all eventually affect performance and production in the organisation.

1. **Exit interview**

* This occurs when an employee has resigned or is leaving the organisation. This interview helps the organisation to

1. Find out why the employee is leaving.
2. Give the exiting employee information on what dues can be paid.
3. Get feedback from the employee on his opinion about the organisation policies and procedures.
4. Give the employee information on the final pay package.
5. Check out all records on what the employee was issued with so as to hand over.

* This interview is a good opportunity for the management to seek ways of improving the organisation since the exiting employee may not be inhibited by fear of challenging the authority in areas of weakness.

**INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES/METHODS**

* Various methods can be used to conduct an interview either separately or in combination. Such methods include:

1. **Screening** – since a position may attract many applicants, organisation screen the candidates so as to weed out the unsuitable ones. The initial screening can be through failure to adhere to position requirements e.g minimum qualification or attaching required documents.

* Only the very few who are called for the interviews. This process is referred to as short listing.

1. **Random appearance**

* In this technique all applicants are called for the interview. The interview then judges each of them by personal appearance rather than on the basis of application.
* This is because some interviewer’s believe in the process, some really brilliant candidates may emerge from the group. this is however, a very expensive method.

1. **Tests**

* Some companies resort to tests either written or oral designed to judge the candidates intelligence, general knowledge, language, proficiency etc.
* Candidates who in this test are then invited to the final interview.

1. **Experience**

* Some employers believe that practical experience is more important than paper qualifications. They select their candidates on the basis of work experience so they do not call fresh graduates for interview.
* This is not a very credible policy since it eliminates fresher’s who might even be better than those with years of experience.

**PREPARATION FOR THE INTERVIEW**

* Both the interviewer and the interviewee need to prepare adequately for the interview. This is because an interview is held with a fourfold objective in mind i.e.

1. To find the most suitable candidate for the job
2. To give candidates sufficient information about the job and the company so that they can decide if they are suitable for the post.
3. To create a sense of confidence and understanding in the candidate.
4. To promote the goodwill of the company by giving the right kind of impression to the candidate whether they are selected or not.

**CANDIDATE’S PREPARATION**

* In an interview, a candidate is assessed in all areas i.e. physically, mentally and psychologically as such the candidate must be fully prepared in all areas.

1. Physical preparation

Be properly groomed. A clean neat appearance will create a positive impression. Wear neat, well fitting clothes an neat footwear. Find out in advance, something about company’s dress code to guide you. Harmonize your colours and accessories .

* Avoid strong colognes and perfumes and use cosmetics with care.

1. Posture the way a candidate sits, walks, stands or holds the body reveals a great deal about him. Practice on self confidence while avoiding nervousness. Take care to avoid and stop any bad habit e.g cracking knuckles, chewing gums, playing with pens or bag straps, scratching certain parts of the body etc
2. Good etiquette – a candidate must exhibit good manners at all times.

* Do not offer to shake hands unless offered by interviewer.
* Do not sit unless offered a seat. If offered do not move the chair from where it is set, and avoid dragging chair while seating or standing. Sit comfortably and with good posture.
* If you have a briefcase, put it down on the floor near your chair. If a handbag, hold it on your lap.
* Do not pull elbows or hands on the table.
* Maintain a comfortable posture all through.
* At the end of the interview, thank the interviewers and leave in a dignified manner. Do not bang the door on the way out or hang around the company premises talking to staff.

1. Mental preparation
2. Revise on concern subjects. Have some knowledge in the field of specialization and keep up-to-date on current trends in the field.
3. Check on your bio-data and be prepared to give more information about current interests.
4. Be up-to-date with the current affairs in your country, and the world. Read newspapers and magazines, watch TV etc.
5. Get as much information s possible on the company where you are going for the interview e.g its goals and objectives, board of directors, products or services, market value etc.
6. Psychological preparation
7. Practice on honesty and openness when answering questions. Dishonesty creates a bad impression. Admit inability to answer a question rather than pretend or guess.
8. Inability to discuss a topic creates a negative impression. Read on possible areas and discuss with friends.
9. Be prepared to discuss the pay package without looking like you are bargaining or being driven by defeat.
10. Have a clarity of purpose and determination to know your prospects in the organization prepare to discuss on duties working time benefits, future prospects etc.
11. Self- evaluation
12. Be prepared to make a good self evaluation . know your strengths and weaknesses. This will help to gain confidence.
13. Ask family relatives and friends to assess your strengths and weaknesses and give you correct feedback.
14. Come to terms with your faults and seek ways of dealing with them. Seek ways of using your talents and skills in preparation for the interview. These adds a great deal of self confidence and improve on personality.

**ON THE INTERVIEW DAY**

1. Dress appropriately – ensure suitable clothes and proper grooming is done.
2. Carry all your certificates and testimonials.
3. Be punctual. Arrive for the interview in time. If you arrive at least an hour of half an hour earlier, you will be able to relax and know your way to the interview venue.
4. In the interview room, pay attention to what the interviewer says without interrupting. Respond at the appropriate time and in an appropriate manner.
5. Do not seem to show off your knowledge or ability. Be modest even when talking about exceptional achievements.
6. Remain calm even when provoked. Do not provoke or annoy the interviewer.
7. Exit from the room in a dignified manner.

**INTERVIEWER PREPARATION**

1. Once candidates have been sorted, scrutinized and informed about the interview, the interviewer must then make preparations for the interview.
2. Select a suitable interview panel
3. Determine the interview venue and resources needed e.g stationery, furniture etc.
4. Organize for a waiting room for the candidates and the personnel to guide the candidates in and out of the interview room.
5. Organize with the panel, the interview process e.g method and type of questions to ask.

**DURING THE INTERVIEW**

1. Create a relaxed atmosphere for the candidate to ease e.g by greeting them and offering them a seat.
2. Conduct a brief conversation unrelated to the interview by using the interviewers name. this will help put the candidate at ease.
3. Explain the purpose of the interview to the candidate. Do not be patronizing or intimidating.
4. Ask the right questions and encourage the candidate to provide response e.g by listening before putting in any word.
5. Let the candidate do most of the talking so as to gather as much information as possible.
6. Give your entire attention to the interview. Ensure there are no external interferences e.g phone calls.
7. At all times, accept the candidates words even when wrong. Do not use expressions that might discourage the candidate to proceed.
8. Avoid the impulse to cut off the applicant off or change the subject abruptly.
9. Do not argue with a candidate.
10. Make notes during or after the interview so as to make a judgment.
11. At the end, encourage the candidate and make a promise to provide feedback.

**ADVANTAGES OF INTERVIEW**

1. Immediate feedback
2. Highly interactive i.e. ideas can be exchanged.
3. Non-verbal signals can be observed.
4. Encourage honesty and openness.
5. Help change behavior.
6. Useful for handling conflicts.
7. Useful for confidential matters.

PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN INTERVIEWS

1. The interviewee may be nervous.
2. Limited time for the interview. This is especially caused by poor planning e.g too many candidates in a day.
3. Artificial since both parties are on their best behavior.
4. Lack of training in interviewing and counseling.
5. Lack of honesty in the interview.
6. Lack of preparation in the interviewer e.g the right questions to ask or suitable venue.
7. The interviewer might be prejudiced , judgmental overbearing or patronizing.

**IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION**

1. It empowers people to make choices in areas of development.
2. It opens up closed communities to understand the outside world.
3. Accessible information is the backbone of development
4. Free flow of information in both urban and rural area inculcates industrial thinking among the people. It develops industrial and commercial culture especially among workers and consumers.

**STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL OF INFORMATION**

* A storage and retrieval system is a means of keeping documents and records of all types and information contained in any form in such way that the information can be accessed when the need arises.
* A storage system includes the location, equipment, method of arrangements, procedure for storage and retrieval, control of access and retention policy.

**PURPOSE OF STORING INFORMATION**

1. Security – the documents are safe from damage e.g by water, fire, excessive lighting or people.
2. Prevention from industrial espionage – confidential /secret information in an organisation cannot be accessed by a spy from another organisation.
3. Lasting value – properly stored information can last for long e.g. old documents are highly valued by historians and archeologists.
4. Easy retrieval – it is easy to access stored information when needed.
5. Time saving – one safes time to retrieve stored information.
6. Adding and subtracting - one can expand on filed information or remove what is unnecessary.
7. Cost reduction – it helps to minimize on the cost of processing fresh documents all the time.

**STORING RECORDS**

**DEFINITION: RECORDS** – It is a set of information about categories of things or people.

An organization has various records that need to be stored. These include:-

1. Correspondence – e.g internal and external letters, memos, e-mails, etc.
2. Minutes of meeting, notices etc.
3. Notes on internal meetings or conversation
4. Reports
5. Financial records e.g. budget forecast payment vouchers etc.
6. Legal documents e.g. insurance policies, title deeds, leas agreements etc.
7. Plans, drawings, charts etc.

Such information can be stored in form of:

Cards, radio tapes, books, CDs, diskettes etc.

**FILING AND RETRIEVAL OF RECORDS**

* This is the systematic arrangements of records for ease of reference. Filing can be departmental of centralized in an organisation.

**FACTORS THAT DETERMINE FILING SYSTEM**

1. The value of the information.
2. Te duration of the information needs to be kept.
3. The speed at which information needs to be retrieved for use.
4. The department that may need to use the records.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD FILING SYSTEM**

1. Simplicity - the system should be easy to understand and operate.
2. Economical – it should be cheap in terms of purchase, installation and operation.
3. Efficiency – it should be systematic and orderly for ease of reference.
4. Flexibility – it should allow for future expansion.
5. Compact – no space should be wasted.

**ADVANTAGES OF A GOOD FILING SYSTEM**

1. It prevents duplication of records.
2. Creates a uniform ad systematic method of storing records.
3. Provides data security.
4. Prevents loss of documents
5. Ensures data is stored for future reference.
6. Maintains documents in good conditions,

**IMPACT OF A POOR FILING SYSTEM**

1. Duplication of documents.
2. Inadequate management of work
3. Loss or damage of documents
4. Time wastage looking for documents or preparing other copies.
5. Insecurity due to access by unauthorized persons.
6. Cost implications due o replacement of lost documents

**FACTORS THAT DETERMINE CHOICE OF FILING EQUIPMENT**

1. Vertical filing –

* This is where files are kept in an upright position, side by side.
* Files can be suspended in drawers. The drawers can be made of metal and are lockable, thus providing security for documents.

1. Lateral filing

* Files are back to back where labels can be seen from the side

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | B | C | D | E |
|  |  |  |  |  |

* This method can store more files than the vertical and the files are visible at a glance..
* The cabinets are lockable for security.

1. Horizontal filing

* Documents are kept in a horizontal position one on top of the other using a horizontal filing cabinet.
* The cabinet has a shallow wide drawer which is suitable for large documents like maps plans and drawings.
* The documents are kept in a flat position to protect them from damage.

**TYPES OF FILING SYSTEM**

* There are two major categories.

1. Paper information filing system

* Information here can be in form of letters, memos, reports , notices, minutes etc.
* These documents can be stored in envelopes, folders, files books etc.

1. Non paper filing system

* Filing can be done in using electronic information system which includes

1. Computers – records or documents are entered into the computer and stored on back-up discs.
2. Microfilm – documents are photographed and reduced to a micro size and stored as a film. These documents can be read using special equipment called microfilm reader.

**ADVANTAGES OF PAPERLESS FILING**

1. Reduces amount of paperwork in the office.
2. Reduces need for storage space.
3. Reduces efforts and labour.
4. High speed in data retrieval.
5. Creates security of records.

LIMITATIONS

1. Costly – the method requires high investments and maintenance cost.
2. Data can be destroyed due to machine breakdown or computer viruses.
3. May need specialized, well trained personnel to operate.
4. Some methods like micro film may limit the adding or reducing of information.

CLASSIFICATION OF FILING SYSTEM

* There are five broad systems of classification records.

1. Alphabetical filing – documents are arranged using the alphabetical order i.e. the letters of the alphabets A-Z e.g customers, clients surnames are usually used instead of Christian names.
2. Geographical filing – names of localities are used e.g town or country.

* This is common in sales and marketing filing. Each sales representative is given an area e.g property, estate, etc.

1. Subject filing – the title of a document i.e. what it is dealing with is used in filing e.g minutes of meeting, pension, salaries, budget, insurance etc. files bear the subject title and are filed alphabetically.
2. Chronological - order of occurrence of events. Documents are filed in order of the occurrence of an event e.g use of date in terms of months or years when an event occurred,. The most recent date comes on top.
3. Numerical – documents are given a number and stored in numerical order i.e 1,2,3,4 etc.

**CENTRALIZATION IN FILING**

* This is the process of keeping files in one common place i.e in a central room.
* Centralization occurs in organisations where filing is great and all documents are kept in one room.

**ADVANTAGES**

1. Uniform filing procedure e.g in the method, order and equipment for filing.
2. Better control and supervision of staff.
3. Enables employment of skilled staff. i.e the organisation develops specialists filing personnel.
4. Improved supervision and control of documents by the management.
5. There is fixed responsibility for filing i.e who is responsible for what.
6. Convenient in terms of location of correspondence on one subject.
7. Elimination of unnecessary duplication of files.
8. It discourages hoarding of documents on the part of individuals.
9. Safety and security measures of documents are more easily incorporated.

**DISADVANTAGES**

1. The staff may not posses enough filing knowledge.
2. There may be delays due to rigid access or filing procedures.
3. The more files stores the longer it is likely to take to find files unless proper retrieval procedures are adopted.
4. It can be problematic where filing staff may be absent e.g due to illness.
5. It restricts the opportunity for junior staff to learn about filing.
6. Location of the filing station may be distant from certain departments thus delay occurs.
7. Staff can get bored easily due to monotonous work procedures.
8. It can bring about premature fatigue and lead to incidences of error in filing.

**DECENTRALIZED FILING**

* This is where each department files its own documents.

**ADVANTAGES**

1. High security is provided for confidential documents.
2. Reduced risk of damage to files e.g through fires or other accidents.
3. Reduced expenditure on filing clerks.
4. Faster access to documents.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Wastage of storage space.
2. Irregular filing methods will be used.
3. Greater expenditure on filing equipment
4. Duplication of records.

FILING PROCEDURE

1. Sorting of incoming documents.
2. Distribution of outgoing documents.
3. Correct filing of documents on top.
4. Indexing (generating an identification code) of file classification.
5. Preparing cross reference cards.
6. Retrieval of documents from files.
7. Preparing a register to record the files on loan.
8. Opening of new files and correct labeling.
9. Closing and disposal of dead files (about 6-8 months)

FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION

* It occurs in a wide range of situations.

1. Private discussions in offices.
2. Encounters along the corridors.
3. Taking part in meetings.
4. Selling across the counter.
5. Conversations over tea or coffee breaks.

NOTE: such discussions could be formal or informal. The participants could be conversing to advise, direct, inform, instruct, persuade, congratulate etc

REASONS FOR FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION

1. Provides participants with a total impression in a way that other means e.g a telephone conversation may not. This is because non-verbal signals improve the dialogue.
2. It permits instant feedback e.g one asks a question and gets an answer immediately.
3. Many tools of communication are working together thus providing much fuller and often more accurate impact of any given message e.g oral, written and non-verbal communications.

TIPS ON FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION

1. Plan beforehand e.g support documents or notes.
2. Explore opposing points of view.
3. Check out the location of the contact it helps to be familiar with the contact environment.
4. Exclude interruption and distractions e.g frequent calls or people movements.
5. Select a mode of speaking appropriately in the situation e,g formal , familiar.
6. Check your appearance dressing signals the way we want to be accepted.
7. Consider context of message e.g a formal, informal or confidential message.
8. Arrive on time
9. Be a good listener, polite and courteous.
10. Present the message logically, give appropriate feedback and control non-verbal signals or unpleasant habits.

MERITS OF FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION

1. Facial expressions and gestures help to communicate better. The message is reinforced by tone and other forms of non-verbal communication.
2. It is suitable for discussions. This is because there is immediate feedback even in situations where status relationships occur, feedback is provided since non-verbal signals provide more feedback than the spoken word .
3. It provides the speaker with much better opportunity for adjustment in a situation where a speaker realizes that the listener has not understood, his message is not welcome, the speaker will notice this through non-verbal signals and will be able to adjust the message accordingly.

* Adjustments is only possible in face to face communication.

LIMITATIONS OF FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION

1. Difficult to practice in large organisations. This is especially the case in organisations that have various departments and sections and people are not able to meet frequently.
2. Not effective in large gatherings when a speaker is communication with a large audience, not all the non-verbal signals are seen since the speaker cannot see all the people and neither can the whole audience see the speakers.
3. Lack of listeners attention. If the listener is not attentive and gets distracted, then the speakers signals are lost.

**NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

It concerns the many ways in which people communicate in face to face situations.

* It can occur consciously or unconsciously and the response in many instances is voluntary. Meanings vary from culture to culture.
* Non-verbal communication is anything other than words that conveys a message. It is what is contained in the meaning of a word whether spoken or written.
* It can also be referred to as body language and it can tell much about a person with whom one is communicating to.
* It enables communication to absorb 75% of information through the sense of sight. 60 – 70% of face to face communication is non-verbal or body language.
* Everything about a person that is taken into account when interpreting what someone is saying over and above the actual word is referred to as meta communication.
* Meta is a Greek word meaning “beyond/in addition to hence:
* Meta communication is something in addition to or beyond the spoken word.

**BENEFITS OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

1. Provides immediate feedback to the sender.
2. Reinforces a spoken message.
3. Helps to understand someone better.
4. Completes the communication process.
5. Substitutes a written or spoken message.
6. Useful for the hearing impaired and the illiterate.
7. Helps the sender to recognize potential problems in a person.
8. Regulates the flow of discussion.
9. Secure audience attention

**DIVISIONS**

* Non – verbal communication is divided into three categories

1. Kinesics (kinetic) – energy on the move.

* Energy for movement

1. Facial expressions e.g smile, narrowed eyes, frown, direct eye contact.
2. Gestures – fingers, shaking, thumbs up etc.
3. Movements – pacing up and down fingers, drumming, strolling leisurely.
4. Proxemics (proximity) – state or act of being near something or somebody in space and time.

* It refers to the distance between communications.

1. Positioning – keeping a respectable distance looking over the shoulders, sitting close to someone.
2. Physical contact – shaking hands, prodding with finger, patting on the back, holding hands.
3. Posture – standing straight and erect, seating with legs closed, leaning against the wall, leaning forward and sitting spread over the seat.
4. Para linguistics

* Para means alongside
* Linguistic means language.
* Therefore – alongside language
* They are used to express feelings and emotions such as anger, annoyance, surprise, amazement, pleasure, fear etc.
* When written down the sound is followed by an exclamation mark and when spoken the voice is raised i.e the stress is high – phewh! Wwoh! uuuh!

**TYPES OF NON – VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

**1.Gestures**

* This was one of the man’s earliest means of communication, long before speech. Gestures are body movements and their meanings are many and varied e.g shaking finger, nodding, winking etc.
* Gestures can be used to :
* Replace speech completely e.g in a noisy environment, when at a distance or speaking to a speech impaired person.
* Support speech – e.g while speaking and moving hands, body or head continuously. These movements are closely coordinated with speech and form part of the total communication.
* Express self-image – e.g standing straight and erect, or when sprawled against a seat.
* A communicator may convey the image of oneself by body movements and gestured.

NOTE: Some gestures are universal (generally used) while others are restricted to specific cultures e.g waving hands, nodding the head, pointing with the finger. It is therefore important to use gestures with care.

Examples of gestures

* Shaking fist shows anger
* Sweeping hands – excitement
* Nodding the head – agreement
* Shaking the head – disagreement
* Folding hands – disappointment
* Hold hand then grip hard – aggression causes pain
* Vice hand grips – dominating

**2.Facial expressions**

* Of all body movements, facial expressions are the ones we most able to control.
* Facial expressions communicate a wide range of emotions and attitudes e.g friendliness, anger, affection, dislike suspicion etc.
* Example smile – warmth, recognition, friendliness welcome, humour.
* Frown – doubt, upset, worry
* Raised eyebrows – questioning, disbelief.

**3.Eye contact and eye movement**

* Eye contact is said to be the most important component of the message delivery.
* Eye contact and eye movement can signify depression, excitement, fear, interest, boredom, fatigue e.t.c
* Example – direct eye contact – oppress, keenness, attentive, interest, confidence.
* Looking away shifting eyes – uncomfortable, shyness
* Fixed gaze – withdrawal, lost attention, strayed attention etc.
* Minimal eye contact – disinterested, shifty, afraid.
* Holding someone’s gaze – aggression
* Winking – interested, humour.

**4.Posture**

* This is the way we stand and sit. How we position ourselves can influence communication and signal our attitudes. Body posture can communicate involuntary social status and desire to be dominant or submissiveness.
* People have different style of walking, standing and seating which may reflect past and present roles .
* Posture can also communicate emotions as well as attitude.
* From posture the speaker can detect disinterest in the listener, defiance, pride seriousness or defiance.
* Examples – tap fact or drum table with fingers - nervous, impatient etc.
* Sit back in the chair, legs crossed at ankle, comfortable, relaxed confident.
* Sitting with head down and gloomy – depressed ,dejected.
* Fidgeting with hands – nervous, despair, turning away or holding back.
* Standing straight and tall – military bearing, dominance and confident.

**5.Appearance** – in every culture the way people dress plays a role I how others perceive them. People make generalization based on a present dressing and grooming.

* It is hard to prescribe appropriate dress code and grooming but it is important to get familiar with audiences and organisations standards and expectations.
* Many organisations have a prescribed dress code that guides the members dressing and grooming e.g the military, the clergy, medical staff and company dress code.
* One’s dress code should therefore be compatible with the purpose, audience and occasion.

**6..Distance and space**

* Each person has a space they feel is their own and it becomes guarded territory and personal space.
* It can be indicated by the length of the arms around the person. It can be identified by comments such as “ my chair, my bed”
* The distance can vary accordingly to how well we know someone and the activity or type of communication taking place e.g workers pulling a rope or supporting a machine.
* A friend or relative telling us something intimate can be close but we become wary of a total stranger sitting or standing close to us.
* Space can also indicate status in that the higher the organizational ladder people go, the more square feet they have in office.
* Distance and space can be seen in the way people sit and stand for example in a crowded bus, people who are unfamiliar with each other look away or out of the window. Even when sitting close in the vehicle, we put an invisible walls around us.
* Standing close to someone can be seen as aggressive, intimate or overly familiar.

Example

* Foot tapping, crossing and re-crossing the legs or defensive gestures like folded arms diagonally across the body or fiddling with a bracelet or watch strap could signal restlessness and boredom.
* Hunching up shoulders or dropping the chin are methods of withdrawing.
* Sitting at a desk or table with someone directly opposite- confrontational
* Round tables – democratic
* Sitting at the head of the table with too much space in between – dominating.

**7..Body contact**

Body contact is closely related to personal space. Body contact can be the most effective method of communicating warmth, friendliness, love, intimacy, sympathy protection, feelings moods etc. Body contact can be classified into:

1. **Affective** – This is intimate contact e.g. touching, caressing, kissing.
2. **Aggressive** – kicking, slapping prodding with fingers.
3. **Symbolic** – shaking hands, patting on the back, laying hands on someone, etc.

* Touching conveys warmth, reassurance, support, encouragement and comfort. In some cultures, because touching implies intimacy and familiarity, there are strict rules that govern who may touch, when and how.
* These norms of behavior may change according to age, status and cultural background. In today’s workplace touching has become a contentious issue as it could be construed as sexual harassment.

**8..Silence** – it can communicate a number of responses e.g communication gap between two strangers, suspense, anticipation, refusal, disapproval etc.

**VISUAL COMMUNICATION**

Visual communication conveys the message through sense of sight (vision). It refers to the presentation of information by use of diagrams, pictures, charts etc without the use of words in order to reinforce the word. Visual communication usually accompany word.

IMPORTANCE

1. Visuals brings clarity to the message.
2. Promote quicker learning and understanding due to simplified format.
3. Stimulates audience attention and captures their interest as compared to lots of words or lengthy explanations.
4. Simplify complex and also shorten messages e.g figures and diagrams are more easily absorbed.
5. Communicates instantly ad forcefully e.g pictures.
6. Enable comparisons to be made and recognized easily.
7. Charts and diagrams can be easily transferred to overhead transparencies for presentations to large groups.

**Tips on Visual Aid**

1. Do not read your visual aids while talking about something else. The audience cannot do two things that are completely unrelated at the same time e.g look at the visuals and listen. Therefore, give them time.
2. Do not use too many different visuals at the same time.
3. Decide exactly what visual aids and equipment you are going to use.
4. Check that your equipment is available and functional before you start working on the visuals.
5. Ensure that you are fully conversant with the visuals and the equipment to be used.
6. Organize the layout of the stage yourself.
7. Visuals should not be too detailed.
8. Visuals should be large enough for all the members of the audience to see.
9. Do not leave visual aidsup too long. They tend to be irrelevant and distracting.
10. Always be incontrol of visuals. Plan when and how to use them and always be prepared for disaster e.g power failure, wrong slide or crashing of a laptop. In such situations ensure that your presentation is not hindered by disaster in visible.
11. Do not use live models in a presentation.

Types of visual Aids

* They include tables, charts eg.organisational charts(organograms), graphs, pictographs, diagrams tc.

**Organizational charts**(organograms),

* These are diagrams which show the whole organisation structure.
* They may indicate functions, departments and their sections and posts. They may be presented in a vertical or horizontal format.

**Uses of Visual Aids**

They help to:

1. Define who is responsible for what.
2. Define formal relationships of people in an organisation.
3. Coordinate and complete activities.
4. Members to predict and stabilize relationships.
5. Communicate line of authority and reporting to situations.
6. Communicate lines of communication which ensure message are channeled to those who will understand the issues involved.

**BENEFITS**

1. You can tell how the organisation is decentralized. you can identify the levels of management.
2. You can identify the staff positions and whom they support.
3. You can identify the level of management.
4. New staff members are able to identify their positions.
5. They clarify the “reporting to ”relationship.

REF. mastering communication chapter 18

Nicky stanten pgs 323 – 359

**SUMMARY WRITING**

Summary is also referred to as pre’cis in French definition.

Summary is conveying all or most of a section of a text using a reduced number of words.

Business Summary

* They may be written in form of an advertisement, notice, article to the staff members.
* Summaries pick out relevant and important information then present it in an appropriate manner.

**METHODS OF SUMMARIZING**

1. **Reducing phrases**

* There are many expressions in the English language that are long winded and could be expressed in a simpler and shorter form e.g in the near future – soon, put up with-tolerate, always bear in mind – remember.

1. **Using synonyms**

* Synonyms are words with the same meaning .
* Suing the words that have the same meaning as theses in the text is useful when complex words and expressions are used. A summary should not only be brief but clear. This can be done by using simpler words and expressions e.g gigantic – huge/large, obnoxious – annoying/irritating.

1. **One word for many**

* One word can be used to replace a group of words. This is possible when saying the same thing but not in so many words e.g she is involved in tennis, swimming , hockey and basket ball you can say she is involved in sports.
* He brought pen, papers, rubbers, - stationery:

1. **Retaining or removing details**

* One should be able to find or remove unimportant details as well as be able to choose which details to retain.
* A lot of information that can be categorized and is often given in such cases e,g additions, rephrasing through “clue” words

Definition ---this is

Additions ---- especially, in addition.

Rephrasing …in other words, that is….

1. **Removing reasons**

* If writing a text, sometimes reasons for doing something can be comfortably left out. This is especially useful when giving instructions e.g always use your safety belt – it can save your life.

**SUMMARIZING SKILLS NECESSARY**

1. The ability to organize the answer in a logical manner.
2. Competence in sentence and paragraph construction.
3. A thorough knowledge of punctuation.
4. Possession of and the judgment to use a large vocabulary so that you can condense the passage being summarized and choose the appropriate words to reflect its spirit and the writers intention.

**TYPES OF SUMMARIES**

1. **Pre’cis or full length summary:** pre’cis is an adjective meaning precise, accurate.

* Precise therefore is an accurate or precise summary.
* It is that which is written according to the exact number of words stipulated in the examinations instructions.
* It makes the passage shorter.
* Usually, the expected number of words is stated in two ways:

In about maximum 250 words OR in exactly 250 words.

1. **Selective summary**

* One is expected to select a certain idea in the passage.
* The subject is specified.
* The passage may deal with more than one main theme and the instructions could be based on either one or two main themes.
* E.g benefits of a money economy or importance of trees in society.
* Challenges of a money economy or problems brought about by deforestation.

NOTE: In selective summary, the material for answering the question may be spread all over the passage or confined in specific paragraphs. It is therefore important to read the whole passage first.

1. **Short summary questions**

* These usually occur in form of comprehension questions, set on a given passage.
* Responding requires the same mental processes as type A and B. they take longer number of words than the normal comprehension question e.g 60 – 70 as compared to ordinary comprehension of about 20 words.

**SUMMARIZING STAGES**

1. Get the gist of the passage

* Read through the passage once concentrating on what seems to be the main theme.
* Read through for the second time bearing in mind the main idea as discovered during the first reading.
* Pay attention to the spirit of the passage. Note key words and phrases.
* Open up your mind to the deeper meaning as well as the outer meaning.
* Get the authors intention noting what is said and how it sis said.
* Track the stages of the writers subject matter.

1. Get the spirit of the passage and authors intention

* Deepen your understanding on the authors intention.
* Note key words, phrases and sentenced that enhance that spirit.
* They can be done by underlining or writing them down.

1. Structure of passage

* This is an analysis of the passage. Mark the areas where the answers will come from.
* Start a draft of the answers to the questions.
* Rearrange ideas into a coherent structure.

1. Selecting key points

* Decide what items to include in your précis and the order in which you want to present them.
* Refer to the brief statement on the gist of the passage in stage 1.
* Decide whether to include the minor ideas into the main ones so as to strengthen your answer.

1. Making a plan for the précis

* Write out a plan in note form from which you will write your précis.
* NOTE: - use your own words as much as possible.
* Include sufficient details to enable you write the first draft without referring to the passage.

1. Pruning and polishing the first draft

* Count the number of word
* Check that your draft is connected and readable i.e. do the words flow.
* Check out errors of any nature e.g spelling, punctuation, wrong words.
* Check that you have stated accurately the number of words t use in your précis.
* Write the final copy.
* Indicate the number of words at the end in brackets.

**TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION**

* Despite the advert of advanced information technology, the telephone continues to be the most common means of communication in the business and social world.
* It is used to place orders, exchange urgently needed information, make appointments and bookings, call meetings etc. one of the major benefits of the telephone is speed. Speed is the hallmark of the modern world . it supplies information to customer.

**ADVANTAGES OF THE TELEPHONE**

1. Speed – it is one of the fastest means of communication.
2. Time saving – it enables communicators to save time as they can get instant information without leaving their offices.
3. Immediate feedback – communicators are able to get immediate feedback since errors cab be corrected and clarifications made immediately.
4. Cost – it can be cost effective since one does not have to travel to get the information required.
5. A great focuser – it removes social and emotional barriers and distractions that are common in face to face interactions.
6. Levels people – along the telephone line, all people are equal since status, physical appearance and surroundings do not show.
7. It allows people to remain at the desk so that they ca refer to documents when the need arises.
8. Modern telephone service are more available like trunk calls, particular person service, proximity call service, intercom, telephone extension etc. these enable the receive to choose which call to prioritize on.

**DISADVANTAGES**

1. It lacks a written record of the actual conversation so cannot be referred to in future.
2. It lacks confidentiality especially if one is talking in a public place.
3. Delays in corrections may occur especially in organisations where a caller is put on a menu before pressing a button to talk. A call can also be passed through many departments.
4. The person required may not be available
5. It lacks the reinforcement of non-verbal communication.
6. It deprives the speakers of vital information since the feedback provided by non-verbal communication is not available.
7. Loss of time – a lot of time is wasted when wrong numbers are contacted or talking to a chatty speaker.

**HOW TO USE TELEPHONE EFFECTIVELY**

1. CALLING

* Know how to use the equipment e.g accept, hold and transfer.
* Know why you are making the call e.g the information needed, what you need to persuade the other person and what confirmation or assistance you are seeking.
* Know what results you are aiming at. Decide the required outcome of the call and how to get it e.g through use of persuasive communication.
* Know who you are talking to. Request to speak to the person you need since there are times you can be left hanging when being passed from department to department.
* Keeping names and extensions in a notebook on your desk can be a useful way of getting the person needed, it is also important to know who else can assist you in case your first choice is absent.
* Make notes before placing a call so that you can cross off points as you cover the so that you can end the conversation confident that you have not missed out something you meant to say.
* Have all the relevant documents that you may need to refer to as you make yhe call.
* Keep a notebook and pen ready so as to take down points.

1. Receiving calls

* Always be prepared to receive A call, give and to receive information. Have a paper and pen to write notes.
* Have documents near you so that you can refer to then when the need arises e.g a catalogue on sales department.
* When you pick the phone the call, you should first introduce the company, department or yourself if desirable. Say a pleasant good morning, afternoon or hello so as to add a cordial response.
* Listen carefully, without interrupting the caller.
* If a part is not clear, ask the caller for clarification politely. It can save your company a lot of expense later.
* If on a switchboard line transfer the caller to the required section or department without unnecessary delays.

**TIPS WHEN MAKING CALLS**

1. Prepare mentally before dialing a number. Be clear what you want to communicate.
2. Verify that you are dialing the right number and dial it carefully.
3. When someone picks the call, wait till they have introduced themselves. This enables you to know whom you are speaking to.
4. Speak clearly and concisely.
5. If you hear words like “pardon” “could you please repeat”..it is an indication you have not been understood so adjust your voice appropriately.
6. Ensure that you have delivered all the details of the message and that the message has been understood. You can do this by requesting the person to repeat a part of the message e.g a name, number or figure.
7. End the call on a positive and polite note e.g “goodbye” or “thank you”

**SPEECH WRITING – ORAL PRESENTATION**

* In the work environment, oral presentation are made all the time.
* Purpose is to inform, explain, persuade the audience or present a point of view.
* It may introduce a product, a process or narrate an experience.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SPEECH**

1. It is clear – a good speech is clear. It should convey to the audience the ideas, emotions facts or arguments that you want to present. The audience should instantly grasp your point.
2. It is like an informal talk – a good speech is close to a personal and informal chat between two intimate friends. When you speak, there should be a perfect rapport between you and your audience.
3. It is vivid and concrete – the speech should be vivid. Include concrete facts that at easy to comprehend and visualize.
4. It is brief – the speech should not be too long as to lose audience concentration. It should only be lengthy if the audience is motivated to know more.

* To achieve brevity – only include a few points in your speech and avoid lengthy elaborations.

1. It is interesting – a speech should be made interestingly through touches such as quotations.
2. It is audience oriented – a good speech should always be written with the audience in mind.

* This is achieved through conducting an audience analysis e.g of age, sex, level of education, gender, religion, political and economical views and prejudice.etc.

Preparation of the speech

1. Audience analysis

* It is useful to know the people you are going to speak to e.g shareholders, visiting delegates etc. search for characteristics that could affect how you present your message, e.g sex, age, education level, motivation, attitudes, beliefs, values and knowledge of subject etc.
* During presentation, analyze audience reaction so as to adjust accordingly.

1. Select the topic

* The topic may be assigned or you may be given a free hand.
* Three basic factors guide choice of topic

1. Your knowledge and background – choose a topic you are comfortable and proficient with.
2. Audience interest – pick a topic that will interest the audience and be of benefit to them.
3. The occasion – the occasion helps to guide the choice of topic e.g a prize giving day, graduation, memorial etc.
4. Determine the purpose /objective of the speech

* When preparing for a speech, it is important to know the purpose of the presentation e.g to entertain to educate, to inform, etc.

1. Gather the information you need for your speech

* A good speech is determined by the quality of information it provides.
* Research on your topic e.g by reading or asking others for information so as to gather as much information as possible.
* Getting interesting statistics and facts.
* Aim at details that will hold the audience attention and interest.
* Identify credible sources of information bearing in mind that your audience may have prior knowledge of the information you are presenting.

1. Draft the speech

* The draft of the speech should contain the following basic elements

1. Introduction – this is the opening of the speech. It should aim at arousing audience interest e.g through a story, humor a startling statement of facts or ideas to awaken the mind of the audience. It also helps in the opening to thank the people who invited you, acknowledge the presence of those attending and t=greeting them.

* A simple suitable beginning can be “ ladies and gentlemen” this is referred to as the minimum introduction. After acknowledging the audience, introduce yourself by giving necessary background information about yourself, then introduce the topic and its purpose in a dramatic manner e.g “this afternoon, I intend to let you know…”

1. The body – this takes 80% of allocated time, this is referred to as the discussion.

* This is where you develop your arguments and convince your audience. This should come from your research on facts and statistics.
* Quote facts, provide information from authorities or credible sources, use logical arguments and support your arguments with examples.
* Keep examples on a personal level because peole want to listen to your story and not a heap of dry facts.

1. Conclusion – audience tend to remember the beginning and the end of a speech more than the body. As such, make the conclusion interesting and memorable.

* Use a term that shows that your speech is coming to a end e.g as I conclude, to sum up, etc. this helps the audience to pay attention. They are referred to as “signposts” words. You can end your speech in various ways

1. Repeating important facts/points
2. Ending with a bang e.g a story, a memorable expression or a video clip.
3. Make a clear call for action e.g change of behavior or attitude.

* Finally, thank the organisation and the audience and give your contacts if necessary.

1. Prepare visual aids

* Visual aids focus audience attention. It is important to consider the visual aids that may be used to enhance the presentation.
* Visual aids help to create interest and illustrate points that may be hard to explain using words alone.
* They also help to the speaker to remember details of the presentation. If use alone, they also enhance the speaker’s professional image.
* Visual aids also help the speaker to take a break in between a presentation since the speaker can sit as the audience look at eh visuals.
* Some of the visual aids that can be used include
* Whiteboard
* Projectors
* Models or samples
* Computer
* Power point etc.

1. Break down your draft

* Break out your notes into a number of simple, easy to remember points e.g write a single word or statement, a memorable phrase or a symbol. These will help you to remember what to say.

1. Practice your speech presentation

* Beginners have to practice actual delivery of the presentation. No matter how much time you spent preparing the speech, the actual presentation is the most crucial part and is responsible for the success of the presentation.
* Practice until you are conversant and comfortable with the material. It is rare for anyone to remember a speech perfectly so rehearsal helps to make it interesting and memorable. The more the rehearsals, the better you become. Just like in practicing for a play.
* Practicing or rehearsing helps you to become less dependent on your notes so that on the actual presentation day you will just be glancing at the notes to ensure you are presenting in the right order.
* Practicing also helps to check on timing so that you do not finish too early or too late.
* Do not learn the speech by heart. It created dependence and if you forget even a single line it can cause you great confusion and embarrassment.
* Practice before a mirror, another person, or do the voice recording.

1. Appearance and posture

* Your physical appearance and personality make an important impact.
* The audience notices your body language even before you begin to speak, just as much as your appearance does.
* Prepare what to wear on the day of presentation. Be formally dressed and be well groomed from head to toe.
* Practice standing comfortably, being still and being quiet.
* Decide what to do with your hands e.g holding a paper or note booking appoint . do not put hands in your pocket.
* Relax your face through enough practice.
* Practice on eye contact and casting your eyes on the entire audience in five seconds. Remember it helps to tale in everyone in a singe glance.
* Take good care of your health. If you are in good health, you will need to be energetic, enthusiastic and confidence. Good health also affects the throat, tongue and the entire speaking apparatus.

**THE ACTUAL DELIVERY OF THE SPEECH**

* Arrive in good time so that you can be familiar with the venue ad the setting. You can request to have the room reorganized depending on the visuals you are using during the actual delivery.
* Be confident
* Show mastery of topic.
* Be emphatic with audience mood.
* Watch the body language of the audience .
* Be professional
* Use a good pace and drive by controlling your voice and enthusiasm.
* Keep your head up and make appropriate paused to give the audience time to digest your words.
* Avoid mannerism and expressions that can cause annoyance or irritation e.g. swaying from side to side.
* Do not leave visuals on for long even when they are not needed because they cause distractions.
* Finish with a bang! Go out on a high note. Ask the audiences for action and leave the audiences with a smile and a desire to hear more from you.

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION**

* Some speech presentations allow for audience to ask questions.
* Be prepared to answer the questions. If unable or afraid to answer a certain question handle it by referring it to another person or by requesting to answer it later.
* You may want to leave the question to the end of the presentation or inform the audience that you will take the questions as you go along, although the end is the best so that it does not take you away from your planned presentation.
* Answer the question by looking not only at the person who asked but also to the audience.
* Regard the question time as an opportunity and not as a threat.

**TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION**

1. Know your audience. They do not want to be lectured to but want an expert to facilitate their learning.
2. On the actual delivery day, preview present and review. Open with an overview of the topic, tell them why each section is important, demonstrate with examples and close with a summary.
3. Use relevant humor but ensure that they learn even as they laugh.
4. Do not read directly from slides or text. it will put the audience to sleep ad you lose your credibility as a professional.
5. Make eye contact. It helps to see audiences reaction and get feedback in your progress.
6. Take care of language barrier- speak in a language that is understood.
7. When using visuals, stand near them as you paint but do not block them or speak on something unrelated t the visuals.
8. Disclose information progressively so that you capture audience attention. Use suspense.
9. Produce special work rather than copies that the audience may already be familiar with. It could lead to boredom and lack of interest.
10. Do not make apologies “e.g I could not prepare” or “ I am a last minute replacement for …”
11. Involve your audience e.g through humor, discussions or asking ad answering questions.

**QUALITIES OF A GOOD SPEAKER**

1. Lively – enthusiastic and interested. He treats the audience as a group of living people. He makes sure that he is keenly interested in the subject he is speaking about and ensures that his audience is also interested.
2. Earnest – he does not just speak fir the sake of speaking in order to show off or to impress audience.
3. Has a sense of responsibility to his listeners. He realizes that time is precious and tries to say something with the time being spent by his audience.
4. Has a sense of responsibility to others on the programme – he does not take more time than what is allocated to him at the expense of other speakers.
5. Sense of responsibility to his subject. He handles the subject to the fullest extent possible.
6. Ha a sense of leadership – he is I control of the situation and speaks with authority as a leader should.
7. Has a sense of control – he is not carried off by his over-enthusiasm or over confidence.
8. Has a sense of humor. He ensures that he creates a light moment in the delivery so that the audience is not bored.

**FORMAT – DRAFT**

1. Speech delivered by name and title, on day and date, occasion
2. Salutation e.g ladies and gentlemen
3. Opening remarks e.g history of…
4. Body - points
5. Conclusion

**ETIQUETTE, DIPLOMACY AND PROTOCOL IN COMMUNICATION**

**ETIQUETTE –**

Due to the changes taking place in communication in the business world, for example, faster and more communication across different channels communication styles are being overstretched. As such, it is important that managers of incoming/outgoing information and responses receive undivided attention, in order to maintain optimal efficiency and effectiveness.

Communicating well, with clarity, precision and effectiveness, especially in business setting goes a long way towards supporting positive impressions, productive work among groups and lasting relationships.

Abuse or ignorance or proper communication etiquette can be severely damaged to business career and reputation.

**ETIQUETTE can be defined as**

1. The customary code of polite behavior in society or among members of a particular profession or group.
2. Rules indicating the proper and polite way to behave.

The foundation of etiquette is basically behavior that is accepted as gracious and polite on social situations.

It can be acquired through decent behavior. In the course of time etiquette can become a part of unconscious behavior and appear as a persons responsibility.

* Etiquette may differ from culture to culture in society I.e every culture may have what constitutes acceptable behavior . e.g in west Africa eating while standing may be seem as offensive, ill mannered behavior and an insult to the host. (it is refereed to as eating with the devil)
* In China taking the last item of food from a common plate without offering it to others at the table maybe seen as a glutton who is insulting the hosts generosity.
* Traditionally, if guest do not have left over food in front of them at the end of a meal may be a dishonor to the host i.e the host did not serve enough to satisfy the guest and have leftovers. Contrally to this, in the USA a guest is expected to eat all the food given to them as a compliment to the quality of cooking.
* Etiquette is important because

1. It helps forge relationships with people
2. It shows respect for others and in turn earns love and respect from them.
3. It can mean the difference between success and failure in many aspects.

**TYPES OF ETIQUETTE**

1. Family etiquette
2. Social etiquette e.g invitations, courtesy
3. Business /office – professional etiquette
4. Computer etiquette e.g internal , social
5. **FAMILY ETIQUETTE**

* It begins at home with the family. One is taught how to get a long with family members.
* Children who are taught good manners and to respect parents take their lessons out to the world.
* The basic etiquette rule for family members include
* Respect each other’s belongings. Do not interrupt when others are talking
* Be on time for meals
* Say “please and “thank you
* Eating manners e.g no phone calls while eating or don’t talk with food in the mouth.
* Pick after yourself so that someone else does not have to do it.
* Listen to parents and do what they say.

**2.SOCIAL ETIQUETTE**

* Social etiquette involves how one behaves out in the public, with friends and strangers, whether at someone’s home or in a restaurant. If you treat your friend and neighbors with respect, you are more likely to remain on their lists of people they trust, care about and invite to parties. It also prevents you from being embarrassed later by behavior that was unbecoming or offensive.

**Basic social etiquette rules include**

1. Always be on time for dates and get-togethers . showing up late is rude and shows lack of respect for other people’s time.
2. Make eye contact when in a conversation with someone . avoid looking over the other person’s shoulder unless there is potential danger.
3. Do not gossip about others.
4. Assist those in problems e.g opening doors for the elderly or children.
5. If invited to a party, carry a gift.
6. If sick and contagious let other know e.g by postponing or rescheduling meetings until you feel better.
7. If inviting people, specify the type of event, name of the person invite. It is polite to indicate when gifts are not accepted on the invitation card e.g please no gift.

**3.PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE**

* Following professional etiquette e.g in the office or in business allows others to see that you are a polite, civilized co worker. Lack of manners can run your reputation or prevent you from being promoted .

Basic Professional Etiquette Rules include:

* Always arrive on time.
* Dress appropriately for the office/business environment.
* Never interrupt conversation.
* If eating at desk, avoid foods strong in odor.
* Praise others for work well done.
* Don’t raise your voice or yell.
* Refuse to join in an argument.
* Respect other people belongings and personal space.
* Never take credit for other peoples work.
* Be friendly to clients, visitors and colleagues.
* Maintain a professional image when decorating your office.
* When socializing with co-workers don’t do anything you don’t want mentioned in the office later.

**4.COMPUTER/ INTERNET ETIQUETTE**

* Today the use of the computers has become an indispensable part of society. One of the challenges we face in the increasing use of computers and electronics devices is de-personalization and human frustrations in using machines.

**SOME BASIC COMPUTER RULES**

* Do not use all CAPS for messages.
* Be very careful with humor – some people may find the humor offensive.
* Be extra careful with spelling and grammar – leaving a word out may change the meaning or ruin your professional image.
* Use polite and courteous language e.g thank you, have a nice day etc.
* Respect each other right to privacy e.g do not read emails of not logged out.
* Make messages short and clear.
* Indicate your feelings and emotions e.g by using emotions graphics used to enhance a message visually.
* Do not say something you would not wish your boss to se e.g sending questionable materials to friends or colleagues.
* Keep your personal e-mail personally. Separate the office and personal things.
* Leave your workplace neat e.g exit all programs, straighten keyboard and mouse.
* Use only your assigned computer unless you have permission to use another person’s.
* Only visit approved sites and o not download anything without permission. Print only with permission.

**PROTOCOL**

* It is unwritten rule or guideline that is peculiar to every culture or organisation and are supposed to be observed by all parties in the conduct of business, negotiations, politics.
* A rule which describes how an activity should be performed especially in the field of discipline.
* A code of conduct or a form of etiquette observed by diplomats. These are rules that make it easier for nations and people to live and work together.
* **Communication protocol** –is a formal process that outlines the types of information to be communicated to an organisation as well as identifying the persons responsible to communicating.
* In general, protocol represents the recognized and generally acceptable system of international courtesy.
* Protocol specifies the proper and generally accepted behavior in matters of diplomacy e.g showing appropriate refusal to arrest President Bashir of Sudan while on a visit to Kenya when the ICC wanted him for criminal charges.
* Protocol incorporates two factors

1. The promotion of a meaningful exchange of information.
2. The building of relationship with partners and key stakeholders.

* Communication protocol covers phone, meetings, email and other means. E.g responding to a call or a letter as soon as possible.
* An organisation needs an overall communication protocol in order to establish effective communication interactions with an effective communication protocol in place.
* It helps them to make progress and adjust accordingly.
* A communication protocol should be displayed in all common areas e.g conference rooms, reception to ensure that communication align with the company’s strategic priorities.
* Protocol represents a set of company’s commitments to employees these commitments include:

1. Leaders will be held accountable for fulfilling their communication responsibility and will be assessed on the effectiveness and timelessness of their communication.
2. Employees will receive regular updates about the progress, initiative and changes that affect them.
3. Each communication milestone provides an opportunity for employees to ask questions, contribute ideas and five or receive feedback.

* All employees are responsible for sharing information and giving feedback to help the company reach its goals, thereby enforcing the desire for employees to communicate.

**BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTING COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL**

1. Define communication expectations for both the employer and the employee.
2. Builds consistency in communicating the organisation mission, vision, values and strategies.
3. Creates alignment with employee at all levels.
4. Builds a circular communication i.e communication between those in a traditional hierarchy e.g bosses and subordinates as well as between business units and departments.
5. Ensure shared accountability from top to bottom.
6. Helps in ensuring that messages are fully communicated.
7. Helps connect all levels of the organisation with your brand.

**DIPLOMACY**

Comes from Greek word meaning making a deal with other countries .

- Diplomacy is the art and practice of conducting regulations between representative of states.

- The ability to assent your ideas or opinions, knowing what to say and how to say it without damaging the relationship by causing an offence.

- Diplomacy aids effective communication especially during negotiations and when attempting to be persuasive pr assertive.

- Using diplomacy appropriately can leas to improved relationships with other people and which can turn into successful outcomes and less difficult or stressful communication.

**SKILLS FOR SUCCESSFUL DIPLOMACY**

1. Attentive listening – there is need to listen to what is being said and how its being said in order to understand and react appropriately to others.
2. Emotional intelligence – people with higher emotional intelligence use diplomacy more naturally in communication
3. Showing empathy – empathy is the ability to see the world from another perspective. At work , empathy can be shown by assisting one overworked colleague to complete a task.
4. Assertiveness – this helps to persuade or influence others to think or behave in a certain way. Assertiveness helps to improve self- esteem and personal confidence.
5. Rapport – this is a state of harmonious understanding with another individual or group that enables easier and greater communication,
6. It is getting on well with others by having things in common which makes communication easier.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS AND CUSTOMER CARE**

* Public relations can be defined as the practice of managing the information between an individual and the publics

or

* It is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organisations and their public.
* It is the practice of managing communication between an organisation and its public.

**ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS**

* Almost all large organisations have a PR Department or outsource their PR needs to a company. PR helps mane company’s image and to communicate its message to its customers, investors and the general public.
* The pr department has the following roles
* Tell a brand’s story through traditional and new media channels e.g letters, brochures, adverts etc.
* Manage investor relationship and communication
* Builds relations with media, bloggers and industry influences.
* Help create strategies to address the next crisis e.g a propaganda on media.
* Guide companies and organisation through those crises when they occur.
* Monitor and manage reputations or and offline.
* Coach clients in how to handle on camera interviews and technology.
* Measure and evaluate the effectiveness of each campaign and initiative and translate data into understandable language.
* Educate clients and co-workers on new tools and technology.
* Create content growing number of format e.g written video, audio and visual means.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS SKILLS FOR INTERPERSONAL AND HUMAN RELATIONS**

* Time /task management – the PR specialist should be able to handle all clients or all tasks and recognize deadlines as well as high versus low priority tasks.
* Organisation – the PRO should be able to organize themselves as well as his/her superiors success in this area can help one rise to a high position on the organisation
* Computer skills – typing is a must as PRO will be doing a lot of emails, proposals and press release.
* Phone communication skills – this is the ability to speak eloquently, professionally and with an awareness of when to direct a conversation to someone more capable. Even when the PRO is not able to answer a callers question.
* An eye for detail – pay close attention to document or facts for article verification and have the ability to be patient and pay attention to all details.
* Need for speed – the PRO should be able to act with speed and especially when dealing with a crisis that might harm the organization.
* A good researcher – the PRO should be able to gather information knowing that date matter and ability to provide information when it is needed. He/she should also be able to make better and faster decisions.
* Ability to keep up with /adapt to changing technology – there is a fast rapid increase in technology in communication. Social media keeps on changing every other day this the PRO needs to keep up to speed.
* Ability to be flexible – flexibility has always been a hallmark of solid leadership. With changing technologies and the information age era, pressure at work will increase and requires flexibility in outlook and temperament.
* Willingness to be bold – clients care less and less about where good ideas come from especially about advertising. What they care for are results. As such the PRO should be bold enough to handle any situation that might arise in an organisation.
* Strong vision and ability to see what’s ahead – leaders need one eye focused like a microscope on where their people are right now and an eye like a telescope on what is coming.
* Desire for personal growth and accelerated learning- one must keep on learning in order to succeed. The leader must have a timeless and powerful vision, impeccable character and taking opportunities.

**OTHER BENEFICIAL SKILLS**

* Speaking clearly to convey information effectively.
* Active listening
* Time management for oneself and others
* Coordination so as to adjust actions in relation with other’s actions.
* Ability to write clearly and correctly.

**CUSTOMER CARE**

**Customer** - Also known as client or purchaser is the recipient of good service, product or idea obtaining from a seller, vendor or supplier for a monetary or other valuable consideration.

**Customer care** – it is the ability to ensure that the customer is satisfied which in turn helps develop a loyal customer base and improve relationships with the organisation.

**CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

* This is managing the perceptions of ones customer and giving them a positive experience of doing business with you. This can be achieved through staff being friendly and professional . products and services being of high quality and standards.

**TYPES OF CUSTOMERS**

1. **Loyal customers**- these are less in number but promote more sales and profit as compared to other customers. They revisits the organisation over time and so need to be treated with respect, attention and dignity.
2. **Discount customers** – these are also frequent customers but are only part of the business went there are offers /discounts on regular products or brands.
3. **Impulsive customers** – these customers are difficult to convince. They do not have a specific item on their product list but buy what they find good and productive at that point in time. Handling them is a challenge especially because they want to see different products so that they can buy what they like from that display.
4. **Need –based customers** – these have a specific product and tend to buy only items they need. They are frequent customers but do not become a part of buying most of the time so it is difficult to satisfy them. They should be treated positively and shown ways and reasons to switch other similar products and brands.
5. **Wandering customers** – these are less profitable as they themselves are not sure what to buy. They are normally new in the industry and usually visit to investigate features of most prominent products in the market but do not buy.
6. **Disinterested** – they do not want what you are providing.
7. Detached – they lack loyalty even after you win them. They simply see you as another supplier. They move on to other businesses.
8. **Delighted** – you have exceed expectations with these customers, usually through personal touch, a smile, punctual deliveries etc.
9. Disappointed – these are a result of things having gone wrong e.g a poor product or service e.g cold or stale food in a hotel, or a dress of wrong color.
10. Draining – they can drain your money time and energy and yet unprofitable in business. You have to really work hard to turn them into profitable ones e.g sacrifice your time to humor them.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD CUSTOMER CARE**

1. Promptness – delivery of goods or services on time. Avoid delays and cancellations.
2. Politeness – use good manners whether a customer purchase or not. E.g greet them with a smile, thank them for visiting.
3. Professionalism – treat all customers professionally by using competence or skills expected of that profession. Professional conduct shows the customer that they ar cared for and respected.
4. Personalization – use a customers name where known. Customers love doing business where they are known personally and given the attention they need.

**IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER CARE**

1. Help maintain revenue even when the economy is bad. Satisfied customers will come back even when you are forced by bad economy to adjust prices upwards.
2. Improves the organisation – this can be achieved through acting on customer feedback and providing customers need as well as exceeding expectations.
3. Development of a network of trusted customers – these ones can be used to test new products and their feedback helps you to develop or adjust the product .
4. Improvement of sales process – when you meet the needs of your customers, your sales go up because satisfied customers keep coming back and also recommending your business to others.

**CHALLENGES IN CUSTOMER CARE**

1. Unresponsive/negative social media – media of communication may not provide you with feedback or they could be a platform for propaganda that may damage your business reputation. A company that does not treat media well may find itself on the wrong side of the media.
2. Unsatisfactory phone calls – customers hate being passed from department to department or being put on a voice menu or recorded music.
3. More customer choice – customers want more choices on how they can communicate with an organisation e.g use of email, live chat, social media etc.
4. Digital capability – digital technology is becoming essential in any customer service department. Companies must find ways of keeping up to speed with advancing technology.
5. Data collection and analytics evaluating customer service today involves a lot of data. A lot of information must be analyzed to check customer satisfaction.
6. Lack of knowledge/information - customer care attendant may lack knowledge on how to handle certain clients on the company has not provided sufficient details on a client. This can cause embarrassment or loss of reputation.
7. Items being unavailable –the company maybe unable to supply all items that are customers demand. One must be careful what language to use to let the customer know it is not available so as to retain their loyalty.
8. Favors that cannot be done – some customers want you to bend the rules or make demands on request that cannot be met e.g order in a hotel a fruit that is out of season or receptionist to take a visitor round the factory leaving customer care desk unattended.
9. Defective products – sometimes a purchase may have a defect and could cause customers annoyance. It is important to show the customer empathy and explain how the problem can be solved.
10. Severely angry customers – some customers project their anger on you when they are carrying emotional baggage. The company could also be the cause of the anger. In such a situation apologize sincerely, accept responsibility and prepare to help.