

# Communication Skills for Professionals Lab

(ETHS – 351)



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# EXPERIMENT 1

## AIM : Listening and Comprehension Activities

Q1. Based on STEVE JOBS' Stanford commencement speech, mark the following statements as true and false as per your understanding of the text.

- i. Steve jobs graduated from Reeds college - false
- ii. Steve Jobs father never graduated from a college - false
- iii. Jobs was an adopted child. - true
- iv. In the speech jobs shares with his audience two stories. - true
- v. the first story is referred to as "love and loss" - true
- vi. Steve jobs returned coke bottles for 5 cents deposits to buy food with. - true
- vii. Steve Jobs walked 7 miles across town every Saturday. - true
- viii. Reed College at the time offered one of the best calligraphy instructions in the country. - true
- ix. Jobs Started Apple in his parent's garage. - true
- x. He started Apple when he was twenty one year old - true
- xi. in merely ten years apple turned into a two billion dollar company with over 3000 employs - true
- xii. Jobs got fired from Apple when he was 30. - true

Q2. Answer any five of the following questions in three to four sentences each

- i. What according to Steve Jobs should be one's approach to life?

- ii. Why Jobs says that dropping out from college was not all that romantic.
- iii. How his calligraphy lessons proved indispensable to his success.
- iv. How did Steve Jobs react when he was fired from Apple.
- v. What Jobs implies when he says looking backward it is easy to connect the dots.
- vi. Why Jobs dubs death as purely intellectual concept.
- viii. In what context Jobs suggests his audience "Keep looking. Don't settle."
- ix. Comment on Jobs concluding phrase "Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish."

### **Answers:**

1. According to Steve Jobs one must always trust in something. Be it guts, destiny, life, karma, hard work, or anything.
2. Dropping out from college was not all that romantic because he didn't have any such facilities at that time. He slept on the floor in friend's room, walked miles just to get a good meal once a week.
3. The calligraphy classes at Reed College taught Jobs about multiple typefaces. This enhanced his knowledge of typography and proved to be immensely useful for him while designing Mac.
4. In his speech to Stanford Graduates Jobs put it in this way:  
"I didn't see it then, but it turned out getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything."
7. "Keep looking, Don't Settle" - It means your work will fill a large part of your life and every way to be truly satisfied to do what you believe is a great work.

## EXPERIMENT 2 : Reading

### Exercise:

1. What tune/tone is suitable for Yes/No (Polarity type questions)?

: Rising tone

2. What tone/tune is considered suitable for Wh questions (starting with why, where, how, who, what) Non-Polarity Type Questions.?

: Falling tone

3. What pattern of tone/tune (intonation pattern) is usually followed for reading out a list (of items)?

: Rise, rise,....fall

4. While reading the passage from “The Happy Prince” where can we use falling rising intonation?

: When the happy prince shares his story with the bird

5. What is the significance of intonation in reading and speaking? Illustrate.

: Intonation tells about the feelings and thoughts of the speaker which helps the listener in understanding easily. It improves the communication.

6. Write the markers of the below mentioned intonation patterns with examples:

(i) Rising - pitch of the voice rises over time

(ii) Falling - pitch of the voice falls over time

(III) Falling rising – pitch of the voice falls and then rises.

7. What do you understand by pitch range? Comment on how your pitch changed when reading the passage from “The Happy Prince”

: Pitch range is the highness and lowness of a tone as perceived by the ear, it varies from person to person. While reading the passage “The Happy Prince”, my pitch was high in the beginning. In the middle it was sometimes low and high. At the end it was low.

8. Note and write about how and your voice /pitch changes at the first and final pause on the given sentence:

“ Towards the end of my visit, I went to the Wallops Flight Facility at Wallops Island in East Coast, Virginia.”

: Before the first comma my pitch was high then it decreases slowly and after final comma it was low.

## EXPERIMENT 3 : Conversation

**Aim:** Answer the following questions based on the discussion on Effective Discussion

**Questions:**

1. **Mention five features of a good conversation.**
2. Give some examples to justify advantages of effective conversations.
3. Underline, at least, five tips to better conversation.
4. Explain the role of pleasantries in conversation with two examples.
5. Give examples of to prove that asking questions and being polite and courteous lend impact to our conversations.

**Answers:**

1. Five features of a good conversation

- At the end of a good conversation, both the interlocutors should know something that they didn't know about at the beginning of the conversation.
- Both the interlocutors should listen (instead of just hearing) carefully to each other's responses and queries to effectively communicate.
- Both the interlocutors should clearly enunciate their points and words so that there is no unnecessary ambiguity.
- Ideas and thought should be concise and put forward as simply as possible, and jargon should be avoided if possible.
- Non-verbal language should be utilised properly as well in a good communication

2. Example to explain advantage of effective conversations:

A and B are discussing about controversial political topic. And unfortunately, they represent the two opposite sides of the topic – A in favour of the topic X, B is against it. In an effective conversation, what would happen is, both A and B would

- Listen to each other's ideas and arguments carefully
- Reiterate each other's idea in brief just so that there's no misunderstanding of what's being communicated
- Give an educated, well mannered response to the argument is being supporting/ criticising the argument. And the conversation goes on.
- In the end of the conversation, both of them agree that there were some things they didn't know before the conversation, and they don't judge each other for the ideas/thoughts that the other person holds, and let them have the freedom to express it.

3. Five tips to have a better conversation with anyone:

- Listen carefully to what the other person (or the group member) has to say. Don't think of your response while the other person is speaking.
- Reiterate what you understood by the other person's statement, so that there's no misunderstanding of each other's ideas/thoughts.
- Stay calm, even if the other person says something stupid or non-sensical. Kindly let them know what you're thinking about what they're saying.
- Maintain eye contact, but don't make it awkward. Maintaining eye contact is different from staring into someone's eyes.
- Non-verbal cues should be subtle and not too aggressive. You don't want to intimidate/aggravate someone by your posture or intonation.

#### 4. Role of pleasantries in conversations

Suppose A and B are friends, and are meeting after a long time. There are two ways in which a conversation can be initiated:

1. A greets B with a warm "Hi!" or "Hey B!", and B does the same to A as well. They shake hands (or hug), and start having casual talk about their lives, what they've been doing since they last met, and so on. In this example, the greetings/pleasantries help a conversation to smoothly transition from greetings phase to talking phase. The transition is smooth, and comfortable for both the parties.
2. A asks B "How is C? Have you heard from her? Its been a long time since we've talked". There is no greetings phase, and A straight up gets into the talking phase, which makes it awkward for B to process the conversation. In real world, if something like this happened, B would probably greet A first, and then answer the query that A asked.

In both examples, we see the advantage and disadvantage of having/not having pleasantries in a conversation. Evidently, initiating a conversation with greetings is the best way to start a conversation.

#### 5. Asking questions, being polite and courteous lands impact on our conversation:

1. Imagine A is a receptionist and B is a person having a query regarding X. B approaches A, and asks "Good morning, sir. I am B from college C, and I have a question about X, can you help me?".
2. B replies, "Good morning. I am not quite sure about X".
3. B asks again, "Okay, in that case, is there someone who can help me with this matter?"
4. A replies, "You can talk to F about this".
5. B again asks, "Okay, thanks for the information. Where can I find F?"

6. "She sits on floor Z, near the stairs", replied B.

So we see how staying calm, polite and asking question led to a successful conversation of A and B, and both of them have solved each other's problems. That's an example of a successful conversation.



# EXPERIMENT 4 : Oral Presentation

Topic: Global Warming

Content:

1. What is it anyway?

1. It refers to the recent uptick in the global mean temperature due to anthropogenic factors.

2. It is proved to be driven primarily by CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by man.

3. Collectively global warming and its effects are called climate change (including shifted rainfall patterns, extreme weather, arrival of seasons, etc.)

4. Some conservative think-tanks and organisations (especially in the USA) have been pushing the narrative that climate change either

1. Is not real

2. is natural

3. "Isn't as bad as they say"

but it is very much real, and there is a dominant consensus among climate researchers that anthropogenic factors are driving climate change.

2. How hard is climate change hitting us?

1. **Agriculture** may be affected due to wildfires (warm temperature, dry wood, better fuel), crops may fail or yield may decrease.

2. **Ocean acidification**: This process is caused by additional CO<sub>2</sub> being absorbed in the water, and may have severe effects on the entire oceanic food-chain.

3. **Melting glaciers**: many millions of people (one-sixth of the world's population) depend on fresh water supplied each year by natural spring melt and regrowth cycles and those water supplies – drinking water, agriculture – may fail.

4. **Sea level rise**: destroys crops, pollutes freshwater rivers and aquifers.

5. **Environmental**:

1. Positive effects include more greener rainforests and enhanced growth in Amazon, increase in plankton biomass in some parts of the ocean, nourishing marine fauna.

2. Negative responses may include further growth of oxygen poor ocean zones, contamination or exhaustion of fresh water, increased incidence of natural fires, increased risk of coral extinction, changes in migration patterns of birds and animals, changes in seasonal periodicity

3. Energy Sources: what kind is bad? (Major topic #1)

1. **Fossil fuels**: like coal, petroleum and natural gas, are hydrocarbons, and are formed by decomposition of animals and plants.

1. They're readily consumable sources of energy, and produce significant energy per unit mass. They're the best (in terms of energy efficiency) among all the known sources of energy.

2. Because they're non-renewable, they're limited. Burning of fossil fuels causes pollution in the atmosphere.

3. Recent developments in the renewable energy sector has now started to outperform fossil fuels in terms of economic feasibility.

2. **Nuclear**: fission of uranium produces nearly all economically significant nuclear power

1. Nuclear power is a low carbon power generation method of producing electricity. It is similar to renewable sources in a comparison of greenhouse gas(GHG) emissions per unit of energy generated.

2. Is the only energy-producing technology that takes full responsibility for all its waste and fully costs this into the product.

3. The amount of waste generated by nuclear power plant is relatively small compared to other thermal electricity generation technologies.

4. Safe methods for the final disposal of high-level radioactive waste are technically

proven.

5. Lives lost per unit of energy is less compared to fossil fuel and hydropower. However, the economic costs of nuclear power accidents is high, and meltdowns can take decades to clean up. The human costs of evacuations of affected populations and lost livelihoods is also significant.

6. Costs are likely to go up for currently operating and new nuclear power plants, due to increased requirements for on-site spent fuel management and elevated design basis threats

3. **Hydroelectricity:** the electric power generated by falling water (hydropower)

1. The cost of hydroelectricity is relatively low. Hydroelectric power plants have a considerably lower output level of the carbon dioxide than fossil fuel powered energy plants.

2. However, building dams interrupts the flow of rivers and can harm local ecosystems, and building large dams and reservoirs often involves displacing people and wildlife.

4. **Wind:** harnesses the power of the wind to propel the blades of wind turbines. These turbines cause the rotation of magnets, which creates electricity

1. They are a clean source of energy. They can be paired with Hydroelectric or Thermal power, to compensate for times when wind speeds aren't favorable.

2. Wind speeds aren't constant. So the power output is usually 15-50% of the total nameplate capacity. Also, higher bird and bat mortality rates have been reported near the wind turbines (the ecological impact may/may not be significant).

3. Can't be recycled, and constituent materials can't be repurposed (made of resin and fiberglass). Can't be dumped into landfills, as they're huge, required specialized cutting tools, and transportation costs will rise the cost of decommissioning of wind turbines.

5. **Solar:** radiant light and heat from the sun, is harnessed using a range of ever-evolving technologies such as solar heating, solar thermal electricity, solar architecture.

1. Solar energy can be harnessed at a small scale to fulfill electric power needs, hence cutting the dependence on the public energy distribution system.

2. Cutting-edge technologies will increase the efficiency of solar cells by using new semiconductor materials and improved designs.

3. Solar cells are peaking at their max efficiencies for power output, and cutting-edge technologies would require large-scale mining operations for rare-earth and semiconductor materials in ecological systems that have been undisturbed.

4. Also, Solar panels generate 300 times more toxic waste per unit of energy than nuclear power plants.

5. Solar panel use NF<sub>3</sub> in its construction, which is 17,000 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas.

6. **Geothermal:** Steam and hot water that is extracted from geothermal reservoirs. This can be used for geothermal heat pumps, water heating, and electricity generation.

1. Clean and renewable source of energy. Has a significantly smaller than fossil fuels, and compares similarly to other renewable sources, in terms of carbon footprints.

2. Places ideal for providing geothermal energy that can be converted into electricity are located in areas that are extremely tectonically active.

3. Without proper reinjection of used water back into the wells, there is not enough pressure to propel the steam and water upwards (hence, not unlimited).

4. Role of Government in mitigating climate change (Major topic #2)

1. Shifting the subsidies from fossil fuels to the renewable energy sector, promoting further adoption of these sources.

2. Investing more on renewable energy R&D sector, so that more cheaper and cost efficient means of energy production, storage and conservation.

## 5. Conclusion

1. There is no clear solution to global warming right now. Even if non-renewable energy resources like solar and wind are harnessed to their maximum potential, pretty much eliminating the green house gas emission, then it would be a waste management problem, because we already discussed solar panels and wind turbines are not to be dumped readily into dump grounds.
2. But taking the steps to reduce green house gas emission would really start the revolution of non-renewable energy resources, and make humanity progress further in terms of energy production, utilisation and storage.

Answer the following questions:

1. Discuss the importance of oral presentation
  1. As a business owner, you will sometimes need to give an oral presentation to potential investors, buyers and even employees. For example, you might give a presentation to convince potential investors that your product idea is viable and persuade them to give you money to begin the project. If you're involved in business-to-business software sales, the objectives of the oral presentation might be to show how your software would improve their businesses' efficiency and workflow.
  2. Oral communication and presentations are also a regular part of managing and communicating with your employees. You'll likely plan presentations to share company goals, discuss changes and even offer some employee training for new tools you use
2. What are some do's and don'ts of oral presentation?
  1. Do's
    1. Focus on your audience.
    2. Organize all information in 3-5 points. Audiences can only easily remember 3-5 points.
    3. Explain your points. Give clear explanations
    4. Use analogies and stories to explain complicated ideas and to build repetition.
    5. Summarize your points
    6. Maintain eye contact.
    7. Slow down your speech. We talk faster when we are nervous.
  2. Don'ts
    1. Don't turn your back on the audience to look at the visual in the presentation
    2. Don't use distracting gestures.
    3. Don't use fillers like ah, um, uh, like, I mean, okay...
    4. Don't underestimate the challenge of running a successful QA session
    5. Don't use badly formatted graphics in the presentation
    6. Don't mock basic or easy questions in QA session. Acknowledge the question
    7. Don't go into the presentation without rehearsal or preparation. Do the homework.

# EXPERIMENT 5 : PowerPoint Presentation

## Topic of PPT: Implementation of AES (Advanced Encryption) Algorithm

### Questions:

1. Comment of the use of statistics in slide.
2. What are the aspects of using body language during a PPT
3. What should be the mode of delivery of a PPT? Why?
4. Comment of writing style on the slide
5. Comment on the introductory and conclusion of a PPT

### Answers:

1. Use of statistics is recommended in a ppt. Numbers, charts, graphics and graphs makes the audience believe that the material is credible and scientific. Although excessive use of statistics is also not recommended as too many numbers, graphs can overwhelm the audience and make them lose interest in the presentation
2. Some elements of body language during a presentation are as follows:
  1. A smile can instantly change the perception we have about someone
  2. Don't slouch, as it makes you appear less confident.
  3. By letting your passion for your topic shine through with your facial expressions, your audience will be able to connect with you and trust you. Don't go overboard with your facial expressions either.
  4. Use of gestures is recommended, but make it look awkward either.
  5. Maintain eye contact, it shows you're confident and will make them feel like you're talking directly to them and will help keep them interested in your presentation.
3. The mode of delivery of a PPT is usually extemporaneous, i.e. pre-planned, rehearsed and researched content. This mode of delivery is considered the most professional, formal and natural. A well-prepared extemporaneous speaker will also know his topic very clearly and in detail, which will make him sound like an expert in his field, therefore gaining the trust of his audience.
4. Writing style of slides should be expository in nature, i.e. informational, and not creative. This is because anytime we write to describe or explain, we use expository writing.
5. Introductory slide of a PPT:
  1. Determines how receptive the audience will be to the rest of the presentation
  2. Establish credibility for the rest of the presentation
  3. Helps prepare the audience to hear the rest of the presentation.Also, conclusion of a presentation:
  1. is going to be memorable, because for the most part, audiences remember the starting and ending of a presentation.
  2. Should summarize the main points of the presentation and create a lasting impression in the minds of your audience.

## EXPERIMENT 6 : Making a Speech

Questions:

1. What is public speaking? What are the effective ways of public speaking?
2. Enumerate various strategies for handling stage fright.
3. What practices should be followed or confidence building for public speaking?
4. Highlight some features of an effective speech.

Answers:

1. Public speaking is a presentation that's given live before an audience. Public speeches can cover a wide variety of different topics. The goal of the speech may be to educate, entertain, or influence the listeners. Often, visual aids in the form of an electronic slideshow are used to supplement the speech and make it more interesting to the listeners. A public speaking presentation is different from an online presentation because the online presentation may be viewed and/or listened to at the viewer's convenience, while a public speech is typically limited to a specific time or place. Online presentations are often comprised of slideshows or pre-recorded videos of a speaker (including recordings of a live public speaking presentation).

**Effective ways:**

1. Care about the topic
2. Remember your speaking goal.
3. Support and substantiate your main points.
4. Tell a story.
5. Use presentation tools
6. Work with a coach.
7. Learn to be confident, eloquent and clear.
8. Develop content carefully

2. Tips to handle stage fright:

1. Remember who the performer is: The audience is there to see or hear you. And only you. It's your gift, your expertise, your unique ability to make the role yours that got them out of the house on a rainy night. Of all the people in the room at that moment, this performance, this work, than anyone else. Let your mastery of the moment be your guide.
2. Be a temporary broadcaster. Practice like you mean it. Replicate the intended space as closely as possible, and get used to the unique cues associated with practicing as if you're performing.
3. Visualize your mistakes: Accept the fact that they'll happen, and instead focus on how you'll instantly respond to ensure you can continue with a smooth and consistent performance. Set up specific speed bumps within your practice sessions to help you learn, innately, how to roll with the punches.
4. Slow Down
5. Buffer the performance

3. Practices to be followed for confidence building for public speaking:

1. Deal with negative past behaviour: stop replaying your past negative presentations, and focus on your present act.
2. Don't compare yourself to other speakers/presenters: There are always going to be people that will be better than you. It's never a fair competition. Compete with your past.

3. Know the difference between confidence and arrogance: there is a point in which the scale can tip from confidence to arrogance.

4. Practice: Rehearse your presentations/speeches well before acting out. The primary reason for being unconfident is the fear that what you're going to say is not going to be interesting. Make it interesting, and be confident!

4. Some features of effective speech are:

1. Clarity in speech
2. Definiteness of a message
3. Conciseness of a message
4. Interesting speech/presentation, with apt use of graphics, statistics and gestures.
5. Speaking slowly, with balanced amplitude and modulation

# EXPERIMENT 7 : Group Discussion

## Questions:

1. Define a GD, and elaborate its purpose.
2. How can we prepare for a GD?
3. What are the important aspects of participating in a GD?
4. Who should start/introduce the topic in GD? Why?
5. Comment on the ways of (how & when) interrupting during a GD.
6. What are the skill sets that are treated during a GD?

## Answers:

1. Group discussion is formed by combining two different words i.e. group and discussion. Here, group means a number of people or things that are put together considered as a unit whereas the word 'discuss' is derived from the Latin 'Discutere', which means to shake or strike. Thus 'discussion' refers to examine the topic thoroughly to reach a conclusion. Collectively, it is called Group discussion which means the exchange of ideas by participated candidates on a specific subject or topic. The whole concept is to bring collectively a unit of people on a common platform to share their ideas. The purpose of Group Discussion is:

1. To reach a solution on an issue of concern.
2. To generate new ideas or new approaches to a problem
3. For selecting candidates after the written test for employment
4. Allows to evaluate a person or topic from different perspectives

2. We can prepare for a GD by:

1. Build repertoire of knowledge: We can be confident in speaking if we have well-prepared knowledge of relevant facts and opinions on diverse topics.
2. Go through other GD topics: This will help us understand the different kinds of GD topics that are given and be better prepared for them.
3. Building necessary personal traits: Building communication skill is crucial for GD preparation. Only those who make the effort to understand the entirety of any issue will be receptive of new ideas and opposing ideas.
4. Clarity of thoughts and expression: clear thinking and presentation of ideas is the key to success in a GD. Rehearsing mock-GD with a group of friends and colleagues is considered a good idea before going into a real one.

3. Few essential aspects are:

1. You should successfully grab the attention of the audience or the panel of judges. In a GD, the first step is to make yourself in the panel of judges. Mere presence is not enough .
2. Assertive approach: It all depends on which direction do you take the group to, once it is stopped over a topic or point. This exhibits the leadership skills that are imbibed in a person.
3. Create your own chance: Participants of a GD often complain that they were not given enough chances to speak on the assigned topic. You do not have to wait for the chances, instead, you need to create chances for yourself.
4. Meaningful and sensible to the group: worthless talking in a GD is pointless. Sensible talking is required.

4. A person who has thorough knowledge about the given topic should start/introduce the topic in a GD. By beginning a Group Discussion, we not only get an opportunity to speak but also get to grab everybody's attention. Beginning a GD gives us an edge over other candidates as you get maximum uninterrupted time to share your views and skills to the examiner as other participants are still busy in understanding the topic.

5. There are high and low points in a GD, i.e. when the discussion is at its peak (high) or when the contestants have concluded their point (low). You have to target the low points and glide into the discussion effortlessly. When a participant is done putting up his or her point, you can jump into the conversation and talk about why you agree or disagree with their points and put forward your views. Putting forth unpredictable points is a crucial part of the GD. If you have a different take on the subject or have something new to present, you should put it forth very clearly with reasons.

6. Skills sets that are/may be tested through a GD are:

1. Reasoning
2. Speaking
3. Time Management
4. Listening
5. Presentation
6. Creativity
7. Paraphrasing/summarizing
8. Proactive
9. Public Speaking
10. Social Engagement
11. Memory and Recalling
12. Analytics



# EXPERIMENT 8 : Mock Interviews

Questions:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your strengths, and your weaknesses?
3. Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?
4. Why should I hire you?
5. Discuss and illustrate types of interview questions.
6. Define and analyse stress interview.
7. Comment on ways of approaching a questions like “introduce yourself/tell us something about yourself”.

Answers:

1. I am a CSE undergraduate interested in system programming and C++ application development, with relevant experience in Linux system administration, which I gained through extensively using Linux OS for about 5 years now. I like hacking open source software, and striving to make my home lab as efficient and automated as possible.
  2. My strengths are:
    1. great system administration skills
    2. knowledge about automation and scripting
    3. high commitment towards solving an assigned problem
- My weaknesses are
4. spending too much time automating the production environment
  5. investing more than required time in learning new tools and technologies
  6. sometimes procrastinating on doing hard tasks
3. I think I will be gaining a lot in 5 years through the experiences. I can have a responsible position in this company after 5 years and maybe I will lead in some projects. In general, I consider myself a 10 times more productive employee to this company.
  4. I have been working with Linux (Arch and Debian) from the past 3 years of my academic years. And I consider myself well versed with monitoring operations, automating trivial tasks and reporting errors in Linux systems. I have also worked on many system level utility implementations such as FTP, TCP/IP, Threading, Process management, Inter-process Communication, and Networking in C programming language.
5. Types of interview questions:
    1. **Experience Questions**
    2. **Credential Questions**- Questions regarding your course.
    3. **Opinion Questions**- Questions regarding strength/weakness
    4. **Innovative Questions**- Questioning the situations
    5. **Behavioural Questions**- Questions concerning your attitude.
    6. **Open Ended Questions**
    7. **Probing Questions**
    8. **Reflective Questions**
  6. A stress interview is used to put an interviewee in an awkward position and to throw them off balance. It is designed to reveal how a candidate acts under pressure, deals with stress, and handles workplace conflict. Stress Interviews can sometimes turn down a good candidate, The types of stress questions may vary. It can be asked from your resume, it can be asked from your ongoing interview experience. Stress interviews can depict the qualities of candidate working under pressure.
  7. Some tips to answer such questions:
    1. Start with intimation about interview
    2. Prepare all the related questions in advance.
    3. Clothes must be properly fitted and ironed.
    4. Clothes must be formal and a decent haircut.
    5. Improve your sitting and standing posture in advance.