**CORPORATE BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

**MODULE 1**

**COMMUNICATION**

Is an essential component of every organization since it aids in the achievement of key objectives through information sharing between staff members and those outside the company.

**BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

Is a type of communication that aims to share information between employees and external parties in order to assist a business in achieving a key objective. It involves the creation, exchange, listening to, and comprehension of communications amongst various groups of people using both written and vocal formats. The manner in which employees interact and do business is crucial to the success of the organization in the marketplace. Business communication might take place internally, amongst coworkers, or externally, between businesses or consumers.

This internal and external communication can happen through verbal or non-verbal communication methods. Often these internal and external forms of communication come with barriers, which can prevent the receiver from understanding the information sent by the sender.

**Here are some key points about the concept of communication in a business context:**

**MEANING OF COMMUNICATION**

The root of the word "communication" in Latin is "communicate," which means to share or to make common. At the centre of our study of communication is the relationship that involves interaction between participants.

The first key word in this definition is **process**. A process is a dynamic activity that is hard to describe because it changes (Pearson & Nelson, 2000). Imagine you are alone in your kitchen thinking. Someone you know (let say is your mother) enters the kitchen and you talk briefly. What has changed? Now, imagine that your mother is joined by someone else, someone you haven’t met before—and this stranger listens intently as you speak, almost as if you were giving a speech. What has changed? Your perspective might change, and you might watch your words more closely. The feedback or response from your mother and the stranger (who are, in essence, your audience) may cause you to reevaluate what you are saying. When we interact, all these factors—and many more—influence the process of communication.

The second key word is **understanding**: “To understand is to perceive, to interpret, and to relate our perception and interpretation to what we already know.” (McLean, 2003) If a friend tells you a story about falling off a bike, what image comes to mind? Now your friend points out the window and you see a motorcycle lying on the ground. Understanding the words and the concepts or objects they refer to is an important part of the communication process.

Next comes the word **sharing**. Sharing means doing something together with one or more people. You may share a joint activity, as when you share in compiling a report. In communication, sharing occurs when you convey thoughts, feelings, ideas, or insights to others. You can also share with yourself (a process called intrapersonal communication) when you bring ideas to consciousness, ponder how you feel about something, or figure out the solution to a problem and have a classic “Aha!” moment when something becomes clear.

Finally, meaning is **what we share through communication**. The word “bike” represents both a bicycle and a short name for a motorcycle. By looking at the context the word is used in and by asking questions, we can discover the shared meaning of the word and understand the message.

**HISTORY OF COMMUNICATION**

**A Brief History of Communication**

**(i) Communication in Ancient Times**

The first means of communication was, of course, the human voice but about 3,200 BC writing was invented in Iraq and Egypt. It was invented about 1,500 BC in China. Other civilizations in central America like the Mayans also invented systems of writing. The next big step was the invention of the alphabet in what is now Israel and Lebanon about 1,600 BC. In the Ancient World many civilizations including Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Rome, and China had efficient postal systems to deliver messages to parts of their empires using relays of horses. In the Ancient World, people wrote on papyrus or parchment. However, the Chinese invented paper in about 200 BC. The knowledge of how to make paper passed to the Arabs and in the Middle Ages, it reached Europe.

**(ii) Communication 1500-1800**

The next major improvement in communication was the invention of printing. The Chinese invented printing with blocks in the 6th century AD but the first known printed book was the Diamond Sutra of 686. In Europe, in the mid-15th century, Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press, which made books much cheaper and allowed newspapers to be invented. William Caxton introduced the printing press into England in 1476. The first newspapers were printed in the 17th century. The first newspaper in England was printed in 1641. (However, the word newspaper was not recorded until 1670). The first successful daily newspaper in Britain was printed in 1702. Meanwhile, European monarchs set up postal services to carry their messages. In France Louis XI founded one in 1477 and in England Henry VIII created the Royal Mail in 1512. In 1635 to raise money Charles I allowed private citizens to send messages by Royal Mail, for a fee.

Meanwhile, the pencil was invented in 1564.

**(iii) Communication in the 19th Century**

Communication became far more efficient in the 19th century. In the early 19th century, the recipient of a letter had to pay the postage, not the sender. Then in 1840, Rowland Hill invented the Penny Post. From then on, the sender of the letter paid. Cheap mail made it much easier for people to keep in touch with loved ones who lived a long way off. In 1874 the Universal Postal Union was formed to coordinate postal services in different countries.

The first post boxes were installed in Paris in 1653. By the 19th century, they were common across France and other countries introduced them. In the Channel Islands, the first post boxes were installed in 1852. In mainland Britain, the first post boxes were installed in 1853. In the USA Albert Potts patented a mailbox designed to fit on a lamppost in 1858. Free-standing mailboxes were introduced in 1894.

The telegraph was invented in 1837. A cable was laid across the Channel in 1850 and after 1866 it was possible to send messages across the Atlantic.

Meanwhile, the first fax machine was invented in 1843. A Scot, Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876. The first telephone exchange in Britain opened in 1879. The first telephone directory in London was published in 1880. The first telephone line from Paris to Brussels was established in 1887. The first line from London to Paris opened in 1891. The first transatlantic telephone line opened in 1927. In 1930 a telephone link from Britain to Australia was established.

More useful inventions were made in the 19th century. Ralph Wedgwood invented carbon paper in 1806. Bernard Lassimonne invented a pencil sharpener in 1828. Therry des Estwaux invented a better version in 1847. The first successful typewriter went on sale in 1874.

In 1829 Louis Braille invented an embossed typeface for the blind and in 1837 Isaac Pitman invented shorthand. The first successful rotary printing press was invented by Richard M Hoe in 1846.

**(iv) Communication in the 20th Century**

Communication continued to improve in the 20th century. In 1901 Marconi sent a radio message across the Atlantic. Radio broadcasting began in Britain in 1922 when the BBC was formed. By 1933 half the households in Britain had a radio. Following the 1972 Sound Broadcasting Act, independent radio stations were formed. In the 1990s new radio stations included Radio 5 Live (1990) and Classic FM (1991).

Television was invented in 1925 by John Logie Baird and the BBC began regular, high-definition broadcasting in 1936. TV was suspended in Britain during World War II but it began again in 1946. TV first became common in the 1950s. A lot of people bought a TV set to watch the coronation of Elizabeth II and a survey at the end of that year showed that about one-quarter of households had one. By 1959 about two-thirds of homes had a TV. By 1964 the figure had reached 90% and TV had become the main form of entertainment – at the expense of cinema, which declined in popularity.

At first, there was only one TV channel in Britain but between 1955 and 1957 the ITV companies began broadcasting. BBC2 began in 1964 and Channel 4 began in 1982. Channel 5 began in 1997. In Britain, BBC2 began broadcasting in color in 1967, BBC 1, and ITV followed in 1969. Satellite television began in Britain in 1989.

Meanwhile, commercial TV began in the USA in 1941. TV began in Australia in 1956 and in New Zealand in 1960. Meanwhile, in 1960 the first communications satellite, Echo was launched. The laser printer was invented by Gary Starkweather in 1969. Meanwhile in Britain telephones became common in people’s homes in the 1970s. In 1969 only 40% of British households had a phone but by 1979 the figure had reached 69%. Martin Cooper invented the first handheld first cell phone in 1973. The first mobile phone call in Britain was made in 1985. The first commercial text was sent in 1992. Mobile phones became common in the 1990s. In Britain, smartphones were introduced in 1996.

**(v) Communication in the 21st Century**

In the early 21st century the internet became an important form of communication. Today email has become one of the most popular methods of communication. In the 2010s eBook readers became common.

**FORMS/TYPES OF COMMUNICATION**

Forms of communication vary in terms of participants, channels used, and contexts. The five main forms of communication, all of which will be explored in much more detail, are intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, public, and mass communication.

1. **Intrapersonal Communication**

Intrapersonal communication is communication with oneself using internal vocalization or reflective thinking. Like other forms of communication, intrapersonal communication is triggered by some internal or external stimulus. We may, for example, communicate with our self about what we want to eat due to the internal stimulus of hunger, or we may react intrapersonally to an event we witness. Unlike other forms of communication, intrapersonal communication takes place only inside our heads.

**Intrapersonal communication serves several social functions.**

* Internal vocalization
* Talking to ourselves
* Can help us achieve or maintain social adjustment. For example, a person may use self-talk to calm himself down in a stressful situation, or a shy person may remind herself to smile during a social event.
* Helps to build and maintain our self-concept. We form an understanding of who we are based on how other people communicate with us and how we process that communication intrapersonally. The shy person in the earlier example probably internalized shyness as a part of her self-concept because other people associated her communication behaviors with shyness and may have even labeled her “shy” before she had a firm grasp on what that meant.
* Sometimes we intrapersonally communicate for the fun of it. I’m sure we have all had the experience of laughing aloud because we thought of something funny.
* We also communicate intrapersonally to pass time. I bet there is a lot of intrapersonal communication going on in waiting rooms all over the world right now.

In both of these cases, intrapersonal communication is usually unplanned and doesn’t include a clearly defined goal. We can, however, engage in more intentional intrapersonal communication. In fact, deliberate self-reflection can help us become more competent communicators as we become more mindful of our own behaviors. For example, your internal voice may praise or scold you based on a thought or action. Of the forms of communication, intrapersonal communication has received the least amount of formal study. It is rare to find courses devoted to the topic, and it is generally separated from the remaining four types of communication. The main distinction is that intrapersonal communication is not created with the intention that another person will perceive it. In all the other levels, the fact that the communicator anticipates consumption of their message is very important.

1. **Interpersonal Communication**

Interpersonal communication is communication between people whose lives mutually influence one another. Interpersonal communication builds, maintains, and ends our relationships, and we spend more time engaged in interpersonal communication than the other forms of communication. Interpersonal communication occurs in various contexts and is addressed in subfields of study within communication studies such as intercultural communication, organizational communication, health communication, and computer-mediated communication. After all, interpersonal relationships exist in all those contexts.

* Interpersonal communication can be planned or unplanned, but since it is interactive, it is usually more structured and influenced by social expectations than intrapersonal communication.
* Interpersonal communication is also more goal oriented than intrapersonal communication and fulfills instrumental and relational needs. In terms of instrumental needs, the goal may be as minor as greeting someone to fulfill a morning ritual or as major as conveying your desire to be in a committed relationship with someone.
* Interpersonal communication meets relational needs by communicating the uniqueness of a specific relationship. Since this form of communication deals so directly with our personal relationships and is the most common form of communication, instances of miscommunication and communication conflict most frequently occur here.

1. **Group Communication**

Group communication is communication among three or more people interacting to achieve a shared goal. You have likely worked in groups in high school and college, and if you’re like most students, you didn’t enjoy it. Even though it can be frustrating, group work in an academic setting provides useful experience and preparation for group work in professional settings. Organizations have been moving toward more team-based work models, and whether we like it or not, groups are an integral part of people’s lives. Group communication is more intentional and formal than interpersonal communication. Unlike interpersonal relationships, which are voluntary, individuals in a group are often assigned to their position within a group.

Additionally, group communication is often task focused, meaning that members of the group work together for an explicit purpose or goal that affects each member of the group. Goal-oriented communication in interpersonal interactions usually relates to one person; for example, I may ask my friend to help me move this weekend. Goal-oriented communication at the group level usually focuses on a task assigned to the whole group; for example, a group of people may be tasked to figure out a plan for moving a business from one office to another.

You know from previous experience working in groups that having more communicators usually leads to more complicated interactions. Some of the challenges of group communication relate to task-oriented interactions, such as deciding who will complete each part of a larger project. But many challenges stem from interpersonal conflict or misunderstandings among group members. Since group members also communicate with and relate to each other interpersonally and may have preexisting relationships or develop them during the course of group interaction, elements of interpersonal communication occur within group communication too.

1. **Public Communication**

Public communication is a sender-focused form of communication in which one person is typically responsible for conveying information to an audience. Public speaking is something that many people fear, or at least don’t enjoy. But, just like group communication, public speaking is an important part of our academic, professional, and civic lives. When compared to interpersonal and group communication, public communication is the most consistently intentional, formal, and goal-oriented form of communication we have discussed so far.

Public communication, at least in Western societies, is also more sender focused than interpersonal or group communication. It is precisely this formality and focus on the sender that makes many new and experienced public speakers anxious at the thought of facing an audience. One way to begin to manage anxiety toward public speaking is to begin to see connections between public speaking and other forms of communication with which we are more familiar and comfortable. Despite being formal, public speaking is very similar to the conversations that we have in our daily interactions. For example, although public speakers don’t necessarily develop individual relationships with audience members, they still have the benefit of being face-to-face with them so they can receive verbal and nonverbal feedback.

1. **Mass Communication**

Public communication becomes mass communication when it is transmitted to many people through print or electronic media. Print media such as newspapers and magazines continue to be an important channel for mass communication, although they have suffered much in the past decade due in part to the rise of electronic media. Television, websites, blogs, and social media are mass communication channels that you probably engage with regularly. Radio, podcasts, and books are other examples of mass media. The technology required to send mass communication messages distinguishes it from the other forms of communication. A certain amount of intentionality goes into transmitting a mass communication message since it usually requires one or more extra steps to convey the message. This may involve pressing “Enter” to send a Facebook message or involve an entire crew of camera people, sound engineers, and production assistants to produce a television show. Even though the messages must be intentionally transmitted through technology, the intentionality and goals of the person actually creating the message, such as the writer, television host, or talk show guest, vary greatly. The president’s State of the Union address is a mass communication message that is very formal, goal oriented, and intentional, but a president’s verbal gaffe during a news interview is not.

Mass communication differs from other forms of communication in terms of the personal connection between participants. Even though creating the illusion of a personal connection is often a goal of those who create mass communication messages, the relational aspect of interpersonal and group communication isn’t inherent within this form of communication. Unlike interpersonal, group, and public communication, there is no immediate verbal and nonverbal feedback loop in mass communication. Of course, you could write a letter to the editor of a newspaper or send an e-mail to a television or radio broadcaster in response to a story, but the immediate feedback available in face-to-face interactions is not present. With new media technologies like Twitter, blogs, and Facebook, feedback is becoming more immediate. Individuals can now tweet directly “at” (@) someone and use hashtags (#) to direct feedback to mass communication sources. Many radio and television hosts and news organizations specifically invite feedback from viewers/listeners via social media and may even share the feedback on the air.

The technology to mass-produce and distribute communication messages brings with it the power for one voice or a series of voices to reach and affect many people. This power makes mass communication different from the other levels of communication. While there is potential for unethical communication at all the other levels, the potential consequences of unethical mass communication are important to consider. Communication scholars who focus on mass communication and media often take a critical approach in order to examine how media shapes our culture and who is included and excluded in various mediated messages.

**PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION**

In order to better understand the communication process, we can break it down into a series of eight essential components:

1. Source
2. Message
3. Channel
4. Receiver
5. Feedback
6. Environment
7. Context
8. Interference

Each of these eight components serves an integral function in the overall process. Let’s explore them one by one.

**Source**

The source imagines, creates, and sends the message. In a public speaking situation, the source is the person giving the speech. He or she conveys the message by sharing new information with the audience. The speaker also conveys a message through his or her tone of voice, body language, and choice of clothing.

* The speaker begins by first determining the message—what to say and how to say it.
* The second step involves encoding the message by choosing just the right order or the perfect words to convey the intended meaning.
* The third step is to present or send the information to the receiver or audience.

Finally, by watching for the audience’s reaction, the source perceives how well they received the message and responds with clarification or supporting information.

**Message**

“The message is the stimulus or meaning produced by the source for the receiver or audience.” (McLean, 2005) When you plan to give a speech or write a report, your message may seem to be only the words you choose that will convey your meaning. But that is just the beginning. The words are brought together with grammar and organization. You may choose to save your most important point for last. The message also consists of the way you say it—in a speech, with your tone of voice, your body language, and your appearance—and in a report, with your writing style, punctuation, and the headings and formatting you choose. In addition, part of the message may be the environment or context you present it in and the noise that might make your message hard to hear or see.

Imagine, for example, that you are addressing a large audience of sales reps and are aware there is a World Series game tonight. Your audience might have a hard time settling down, but you may choose to open with, “I understand there is an important game tonight.” In this way, by expressing verbally something that most people in your audience are aware of and interested in, you might grasp and focus their attention.

**Channel**

“The channel is the way in which a message or messages travel between source and receiver.” (McLean, 2005) For example, think of your television. How many channels do you have on your television? Each channel takes up some space, even in a digital world, in the cable or in the signal that brings the message of each channel to your home. Television combines an audio signal you hear with a visual signal you see. Together they convey the message to the receiver or audience. Turn off the volume on your television. Can you still understand what is happening? Many times you can, because the body language conveys part of the message of the show. Now turn up the volume but turn around so that you cannot see the television. You can still hear the dialogue and follow the story line.

Similarly, when you speak or write, you are using a channel to convey your message. Spoken channels include face-to-face conversations, speeches, telephone conversations and voice mail messages, radio, public address systems, and voice over Internet protocol (VoIP). Written channels include letters, memorandums, purchase orders, invoices, newspaper and magazine articles, blogs, e-mail, text messages, tweets, and so forth.

**Receiver**

“The receiver receives the message from the source, analyzing and interpreting the message in ways both intended and unintended by the source.” (McLean, 2005) To better understand this component, think of a receiver on a football team. The quarterback throws the football (message) to a receiver, who must see and interpret where to catch the ball. The quarterback may intend for the receiver to “catch” his message in one way, but the receiver may see things differently and miss the football (the intended meaning) altogether.

As a receiver you listen, see, touch, smell, and/or taste to receive a message. Your audience “sizes you up,” much as you might check them out long before you take the stage or open your mouth. The nonverbal responses of your listeners can serve as clues on how to adjust your opening. By imagining yourself in their place, you anticipate what you would look for if you were them. Just as a quarterback plan where the receiver will be in order to place the ball correctly, you too can recognize the interaction between source and receiver in a business communication context. All of this happens at the same time, illustrating why and how communication is always changing.

**Feedback**

When you respond to the source, intentionally or unintentionally, you are giving feedback. Feedback is composed of messages the receiver sends back to the source. Verbal or nonverbal, all these feedback signals allow the source to see how well, how accurately (or how poorly and inaccurately) the message was received. Feedback also provides an opportunity for the receiver or audience to ask for clarification, to agree or disagree, or to indicate that the source could make the message more interesting. As the amount of feedback increases, the accuracy of communication also increases (Leavitt & Mueller, 1951).

For example, suppose you are a sales manager participating in a conference call with four sales reps. As the source, you want to tell the reps to take advantage of the fact that it is World Series season to close sales on baseball-related sports gear. You state your message, but you hear no replies from your listeners. You might assume that this means they understood and agreed with you, but later in the month you might be disappointed to find that very few sales were made. If you followed up your message with a request for feedback (“Does this make sense? Do any of you have any questions?”) you might have an opportunity to clarify your message, and to find out whether any of the sales reps believed your suggestion would not work with their customers.

**Environment**

“The environment is the atmosphere, physical and psychological, where you send and receive messages.” (McLean, 2005) The environment can include the tables, chairs, lighting, and sound equipment that are in the room. The room itself is an example of the environment. The environment can also include factors like formal dress, that may indicate whether a discussion is open and caring or more professional and formal. People may be more likely to have an intimate conversation when they are physically close to each other, and less likely when they can only see each other from across the room. In that case, they may text each other, itself an intimate form of communication. The choice to text is influenced by the environment. As a speaker, your environment will impact and play a role in your speech. It’s always a good idea to go check out where you’ll be speaking before the day of the actual presentation.

**Context**

“The context of the communication interaction involves the setting, scene, and expectations of the individuals involved.” (McLean, 2005) A professional communication context may involve business suits (environmental cues) that directly or indirectly influence expectations of language and behavior among the participants.

A presentation or discussion does not take place as an isolated event. When you came to class, you came from somewhere. So did the person seated next to you, as did the instructor. The degree to which the environment is formal or informal depends on the contextual expectations for communication held by the participants. The person sitting next to you may be used to informal communication with instructors, but this particular instructor may be used to verbal and nonverbal displays of respect in the academic environment. You may be used to formal interactions with instructors as well, and find your classmate’s question of “Hey Teacher, do we have homework today?” as rude and inconsiderate when they see it as normal. The nonverbal response from the instructor will certainly give you a clue about how they perceive the interaction, both the word choices and how they were said.

Context is all about what people expect from each other, and we often create those expectations out of environmental cues. Traditional gatherings like weddings or quinceañeras are often formal events. There is a time for quiet social greetings, a time for silence as the bride walks down the aisle, or the father may have the first dance with his daughter as she is transformed from a girl to womanhood in the eyes of her community. In either celebration there may come a time for rambunctious celebration and dancing. You may be called upon to give a toast, and the wedding or quinceañera context will influence your presentation, timing, and effectiveness.

In a business meeting, who speaks first? That probably has some relation to the position and role each person has outside the meeting. Context plays a very important role in communication, particularly across cultures.

**Interference**

Interference, also called noise, can come from any source. “Interference is anything that blocks or changes the source’s intended meaning of the message.”(McLean, 2005) For example, if you drove a car to work or school, chances are you were surrounded by noise. Car horns, billboards, or perhaps the radio in your car interrupted your thoughts, or your conversation with a passenger.

Psychological noise is what happens when your thoughts occupy your attention while you are hearing, or reading, a message. Imagine that it is 4:45 p.m. and your boss, who is at a meeting in another city, e-mails you asking for last month’s sales figures, an analysis of current sales projections, and the sales figures from the same month for the past five years. You may open the e-mail, start to read, and think, “Great—no problem—I have those figures and that analysis right here in my computer.” You fire off a reply with last month’s sales figures and the current projections attached. Then, at five o’clock, you turn off your computer and go home. The next morning, your boss calls on the phone to tell you he was inconvenienced because you neglected to include the sales figures from the previous years. What was the problem? Interference: by thinking about how you wanted to respond to your boss’s message, you prevented yourself from reading attentively enough to understand the whole message.

Interference can come from other sources, too. Perhaps you are hungry, and your attention to your current situation interferes with your ability to listen. Maybe the office is hot and stuffy. If you were a member of an audience listening to an executive speech, how could this impact your ability to listen and participate?

Noise interferes with normal encoding and decoding of the message carried by the channel between source and receiver. Not all noise is bad, but noise interferes with the communication process. For example, your cell phone ringtone may be a welcome noise to you, but it may interrupt the communication process in class and bother your classmates.

**COMMUNICATION MODELS**

Models of communication simplify the process by providing a visual representation of the various aspects of a communication encounter. Some models explain communication in more detail than others, but even the most complex model still doesn’t recreate what we experience in even a moment of a communication encounter.

Models still serve a valuable purpose for students of communication because they allow us to see specific concepts and steps within the process of communication, define communication, and apply communication concepts. The three models of communication we will discuss are the **transmission/Linear, interaction, and transaction models**.

Although these models of communication differ, they contain some common elements. The first two models we will discuss, the transmission model and the interaction model, include the following parts:

* Participants
* Messages
* Encoding
* Decoding
* Channels

In communication models, the participants are the **senders and/or receivers** of messages in a communication encounter. The message is the **verbal or nonverbal content** being conveyed from sender to receiver. For example, when you say “Hello!” to your friend, you are sending a message of greeting that will be received by your friend.

**The internal cognitive process that allows participants to send, receive, and understand messages** is the encoding and decoding process. Encoding **is the process of turning thoughts into communication**. As we will learn later, the level of conscious thought that goes into encoding messages varies. Decoding **is the process of turning communication into thoughts.** For example, you may realize you’re hungry and encode the following message to send to your roommate: “I’m hungry. Do you want to get pizza tonight?” As your roommate receives the message, they decode your communication and turn it back into thoughts in order to make meaning out of it. Of course, we don’t just communicate verbally—we have various options, or channels for communication. Encoded messages are sent through a channel, or a sensory route on which a message travels, to the receiver for decoding. While communication can be sent and received using **any sensory route (sight, smell, touch, taste, or sound), most communication occurs through visual (sight) and/or auditory (sound)** channels. If your roommate has headphones on and is engrossed in a video game, you may need to get their attention by waving your hands before you can ask them about dinner.

1. **Linear model of communication**

The linear or transmission model of communication, as shown in Figure 2.2.1, describes communication as a linear, one-way process in which a sender intentionally transmits a message to a receiver. This model focuses on the sender and message within a communication encounter. Although the receiver is included in the model, this role is viewed as more of a target or end point rather than part of an ongoing process. We are left to presume that the receiver either successfully receives and understands the message or does not. The scholars who designed this model extended on a linear model proposed by Aristotle centuries before that included a speaker, message, and hearer. They were also influenced by the advent and spread of new communication technologies of the time such as telegraphy and radio, and you can probably see these technical influences within the model (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). Think of how a radio message is sent from a person in the radio studio to you listening in your car. The sender is the radio announcer who encodes a verbal message that is transmitted by a radio tower through electromagnetic waves (the channel) and eventually reaches your (the receiver’s) ears via an antenna and speakers in order to be decoded. The radio announcer doesn’t really know if you receive their message or not, but if the equipment is working and the channel is free of static, then there is a good chance that the message was successfully received.

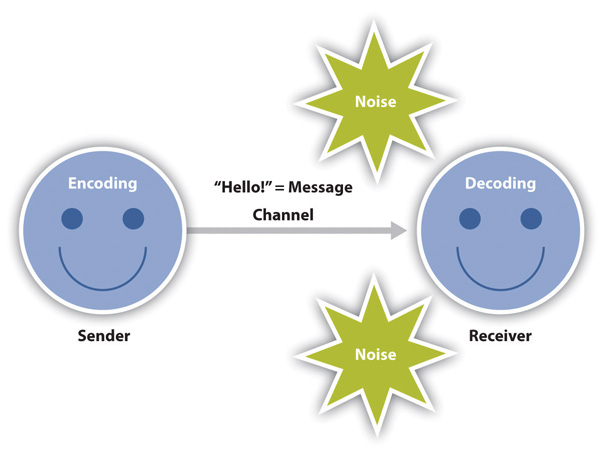


Figure 2.2.1 The linear model of communication

Although the transmission model may seem simple or even underdeveloped to us today, the creation of this model allowed scholars to examine the communication process in new ways, which eventually led to more complex models and theories of communication. Examples of Linear model of communication are:

* 1. Aristotle’s communication model,
  2. Laswell’s communication model,
  3. The Shannon-Weaver communication model, and
  4. Berlo’s S-M-C-R communication model.

1. **Interactive model of communication**

The interactive or interaction model of communication, as shown in Figure 2.2.2, describes communication as a process in which participants alternate positions as sender and receiver and generate meaning by sending messages and receiving feedback within physical and psychological contexts (Schramm, 1997). Rather than illustrating communication as a linear, one-way process, the interactive model incorporates feedback, which makes communication a more interactive, two-way process. Feedback includes messages sent in response to other messages. For example, your instructor may respond to a point you raise during class discussion or you may point to the sofa when your roommate asks you where the remote control is. The inclusion of a feedback loop also leads to a more complex understanding of the roles of participants in a communication encounter. Rather than having one sender, one message, and one receiver, this model has two sender-receivers who exchange messages. Each participant alternates roles as sender and receiver in order to keep a communication encounter going. Although this seems like a perceptible and deliberate process, we alternate between the roles of sender and receiver very quickly and often without conscious thought.

The interactive model is also less message focused and more interaction focused. While the linear model focused on how a message was transmitted and whether or not it was received, the interactive model is more concerned with the communication process itself. In fact, this model acknowledges that there are so many messages being sent at one time that many of them may not even be received. Some messages are also unintentionally sent. Therefore, communication isn’t judged effective or ineffective in this model based on whether or not a single message was successfully transmitted and received.

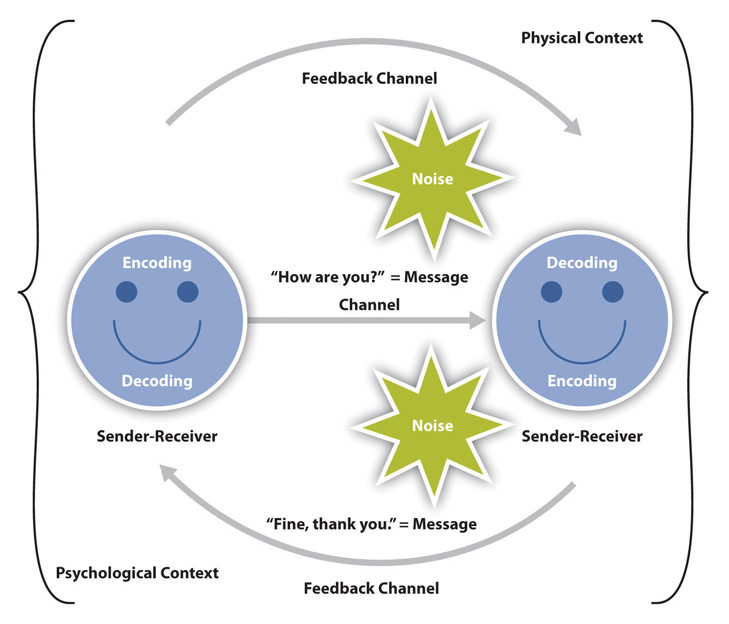


Figure 2.2.2 The interactive model of communication

The interactive model takes physical and psychological context into account. Physical context includes the environmental factors in a communication encounter. The size, layout, temperature, and lighting of a space influence our communication. Imagine the different physical contexts in which job interviews take place and how that may affect your communication. I have had job interviews over the phone, crowded around a table with eight interviewers, and sitting with few people around an extra-large conference table. I’ve also been walked around an office to unexpectedly interview one-on-one, in succession, with multiple members of a search committee over a period of three hours. Whether it’s the size of the room or other environmental factors, it’s important to consider the role that physical context plays in our communication. Psychological context includes the mental and emotional factors in a communication encounter. Stress, anxiety, and emotions are just some examples of psychological influences that can affect our communication. Seemingly positive psychological states, like experiencing the emotion of love, can also affect communication. Feedback and context help make the interaction model a more useful illustration of the communication process, but the transaction model views communication as a powerful tool that shapes our realities beyond individual communication encounters. Examples of interactive model of communication are:

1. The Osgood-Schramm communication model, and

2. The Westley and Maclean communication model.

1. **Transaction model of communication**

As the study of communication progressed, models expanded to account for more of the communication process. **Many scholars view communication as more than a process that is used to carry on conversations and convey meaning**. We don’t send messages like computers, and we don’t neatly alternate between the roles of sender and receiver as an interaction unfolds. We also can’t consciously decide to stop communicating because communication is more than sending and receiving messages. The transaction model differs from the transmission and interaction models in significant ways, including the

* Conceptualization of communication
* The role of sender and receiver
* The role of context

The transaction model of communication describes communication as **a process in which communicators generate social realities within social, relational, and cultural contexts.** In this model, which is shown in Figure 2.2.3, we don’t just **communicate to exchange messages**; **we communicate to create relationships, form intercultural alliances, shape our self-concepts, and engage with others in dialogue to create communities.**

The roles of sender and receiver in the transaction model of communication differ significantly from the other models. Instead of labeling participants as senders and receivers, the people in a communication encounter are referred to as communicators. Unlike the interactive model, which suggests that participants alternate positions as sender and receiver, **the transaction model suggests that we are simultaneously senders and receivers.** This is an important addition to the model because it allows us to understand how we are able to adapt our communication—for example, a verbal message—in the middle of sending it based on the communication we are simultaneously receiving from our communication partner.

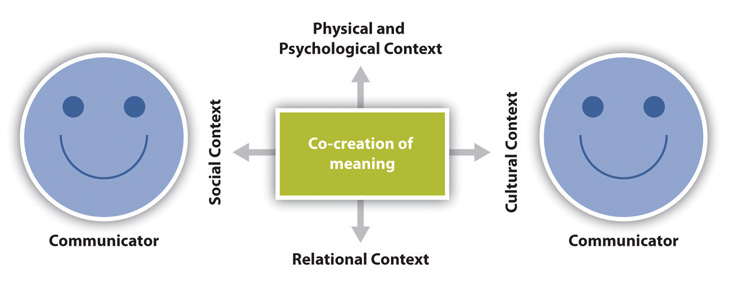


Figure 2.2.3 The transaction model of communication

The transaction model also includes a more complex understanding of context. The interaction model portrays context as physical and psychological influences that enhance or impede communication. While these contexts are important, they focus on message transmission and reception. Since the transaction model of communication views communication as a force that shapes our realities before and after specific interactions occur, it must account for contextual influences outside of a single interaction. To do this, the transaction model considers how social, relational, and cultural contexts frame and influence our communication encounters.

**Social context** **refers to the stated rules or unstated norms that guide communication**. Norms are social conventions that we pick up on through observation, practice, and trial and error. We may not even know we are breaking a social norm until we notice people looking at us strangely or someone corrects or teases us. Relational context includes the previous interpersonal history and type of relationship we have with a person. We communicate differently with someone we just met versus someone we’ve known for a long time. Initial interactions with people tend to be more highly scripted and governed by established norms and rules, but when we have an established relational context, we may be able to bend or break social norms and rules more easily.

**Cultural context includes various aspects of identities such as race, gender, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, and ability. We all have multiple cultural identities that influence our communication**. Some people, especially those with identities that have been historically marginalized, are regularly aware of how their cultural identities influence their communication and influence how others communicate with them. Conversely, people with identities that are dominant or in the majority may rarely, if ever, think about the role their cultural identities play in their communication. Cultural context is influenced by numerous aspects of our identities and is not limited to race or ethnicity. Examples of transaction model of communication are:

1. Barnlund’s transactional communication model, and

2. Dance’s Helical communication model.

**FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS**

* Informing and Instructing
* Persuasion and Influence
* Decision Making
* Job Control
* Motivation
* Information Exchange
* Emotional Expression
* Problem Solving
* Building and Maintaining Relationships

**IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS**

* Improving organizational practices and reducing errors
* Helping employees and management interact to reach organizational goals
* Enhancing relationships with staff, customers, and stakeholders
* Persuading prospects, clients, and partners to complete transactions
* Motivating employees to work more efficiently
* Facilitating decision-making
* Building better teams
* Preventing misunderstandings and conflicts
* Improving customer service
* Reaching agreements
* Sending and fulfilling orders
* Successful selling
* Effective meetings
* Providing feedback to employees and customers
* Boosting company performance and increasing productivity
* Maintaining effective interdepartmental communications
* Improving employee engagement
* Meeting goals and achieving results

**COMMUNICATION NETWORKS**

Communication networks refer to the directionality of the communication flow. Communication can flow in a variety of directions within the organization (internal communication) and can flow between the organization and its constituents (external communication).

**I. Internal Communication Networks**

Communication flows in many different directions within an organization.

Internal information can flow in four directions in an organization: downward, upward, horizontally, and diagonally. The size, nature, and structure of the organization dictate which direction most of the information flows. In more established and traditional organizations, much of the communication flows in a vertical—downward and upward—direction. In informal firms, such as tech start-ups, information tends to flow horizontally and diagonally.

1. **Downward Communication Network**

Downward communication is when company leaders and managers share information with lower-level employees. Unless requested as part of the message, the senders don’t usually expect (or particularly want) to get a response. An example may be an announcement of a new CEO or notice of a merger with a former competitor. Other forms of high-level downward communications include speeches, blogs, podcasts, and videos. The most common types of downward communication are everyday directives of department managers or line managers to employees. These can even be in the form of instruction manuals or company handbooks.

Downward communication delivers information that helps to update the workforce about key organizational changes, new goals, or strategies; provide performance feedback at the organizational level; coordinate initiatives; present an official policy (public relations); or improve worker morale or consumer relations.

1. **Upward Communication Network**

Information moving from lower-level employees to high-level employees is upward communication (also sometimes called vertical communication). For example, upward communication occurs when workers report to a supervisor or when team leaders report to a department manager. Items typically communicated upward include progress reports, proposals for projects, budget estimates, grievances and complaints, suggestions for improvements, and schedule concerns. Sometimes a downward communication prompts an upward response, such as when a manager asks for a recommendation for a replacement part or an estimate of when a project will be completed.

An important goal of many managers today is to encourage spontaneous or voluntary upward communication from employees without the need to ask first. Some companies go so far as to organize contests and provide prizes for the most innovative and creative solutions and suggestions. Before employees feel comfortable making these kinds of suggestions, however, they must trust that management will recognize their contributions and not unintentionally undermine or ignore their efforts. Some organizations have even installed “whistleblower” hotlines that will let employees report dangerous, unethical, or illegal activities anonymously to avoid possible retaliation by higher-ups in the company.

1. **Horizontal and Diagonal Communication Networks**

**Horizontal communication involves the exchange of information across departments at the same level in an organization (i.e., peer-to-peer communication)**. The purpose of most horizontal communication is to request support or coordinate activities. People at the same level in the organization can work together to work on problems or issues in an informal and as-needed basis. The manager of the production department can work with the purchasing manager to accelerate or delay the shipment of materials. The finance manager and inventory managers can be looped in so that the organization can achieve the maximum benefit from the coordination. Communications between two employees who report to the same manager is also an example of horizontal communication. Some problems with horizontal communication can arise if one manager is unwilling or unmotivated to share information, or sees efforts to work communally as threatening his position (territorial behaviour). In a case like that, the manager at the next level up will need to communicate downward to reinforce the company’s values of cooperation.

**Diagonal communication is cross-functional communication between employees at different levels of the organization**. For example, if the vice president of sales sends an e-mail to the vice president of manufacturing asking when a product will be available for shipping, this is an example of horizontal communication. But if a sales representative e-mails the vice president of marketing, then diagonal communication has occurred. Whenever communication goes from one department to another department, the sender’s manager should be made part of the loop. A manager may be put in an embarrassing position and appear incompetent if he isn’t aware of everything happening in his department. Trust may be lost and careers damaged by not paying attention to key communication protocols. Diagonal communication is becoming more common in organizations with a flattened, matrix, or product-based structure.

**Advantages Diagonal communication include:**

* Building relationships between senior and lower-level employees from different parts of the organization.
* Encouraging an informal flow of information in the organization.
* Reducing the chance of a message being distorted by going through additional filters.
* Reducing the workloads of senior-level managers.

**II. External Communication Networks**

Examples of channels that carry external communication include press briefings, fact sheets, press kits, newsletters, magazines, brochures, news releases, annual reports, invoices and purchase orders.

Communication does not start and stop within the organization. **External communication focuses on audiences outside of the organization.** Examples of external communication include press releases about the organization, public relations information, advertisements about the organization’s product. Senior management—with the help of specialized departments such as public relations or legal—almost always controls communications that relate to the public image or may affect its financial situation. First-level and middle-level management generally handle operational business communications such as purchasing, hiring, and marketing. When communicating outside the organization (regardless of the level), it is important for employees to behave professionally and not to make commitments outside of their scope of authority. External communication also includes interactions between employees of the organization and its customers.

**Directions of Communication**

Communication travels within an organization in three different directions, and often the channels of communication are prescribed by the direction in which the communication is flowing. Let’s take a look at the three different directions and types of communication channels used.

* + - 1. **Vertical Communication**

Vertical communication can be broken down into two categories: **Downward communication** and **Upward communication**.

**Downward Communication**

Downward communication is from the higher-ups of the organization to employees lower in the organizational hierarchy, in a downward direction. It might be a message from the CEO and CFO to all of their subordinates, their subordinates, and so on. It might be a sticky note on your desk from your manager. Anything that travels from a higher-ranking member or group of the organization to a lower-ranking individual is considered downward organizational communication.

Downward communication might be used to communicate new organizational strategy, highlight tasks that need to be completed, or they could even be a team meeting run by the manager of that team. Appropriate channels for these kinds of communication are verbal exchanges, minutes and agendas of meetings, memos, emails, and even Intranet news stories.

**Upward Communication**

Upward communication flows upward from one group to another that is on a higher level on the organizational hierarchy. Often, this type of communication provides feedback to organizational leaders about current problems, or even progress on goals.

It’s probably not surprising that “verbal exchanges” are less likely to be found as a common channel for this kind of communication. It’s certainly fairly common between managers and their direct subordinates, but less common between a line worker and the CEO. However, communication is facilitated between the front lines and senior leadership all the time. Channels for upward communication include not only a town hall forum where employees could air grievances, but also reports of financial information, project reports, and more. This kind of communication keeps managers informed about company progress and how employees feel, and it often provides managers with ideas for improvement.

* + - 1. **Horizontal Communication**

When communication takes place between people at the same level of the organization, like between two departments or between two peers, it’s called horizontal (or lateral) communication. Communication taking place between an organization and its vendors, suppliers, and clients can also be considered horizontal communication.

**BARRIER TO PROPER COMMUNICATION**

Barriers to proper communication can be classified into various types, including physical, psychological, semantic, and more. Here are some of the common barriers that can hinder effective communication:

**Physical barriers**

These are external factors that make it difficult for individuals to communicate effectively. Examples include:

* Noise
* Distance
* Poor lighting
* Technical issues in virtual communication

**Psychological barriers**

These barriers are related to the mental state of the sender or receiver, making it difficult to understand the information being conveyed. Examples include:

* Stress
* Anxiety
* Prejudice
* Distrust

**Semantic barriers**

Also known as language barriers, these obstacles arise due to differences in language or improper communication between the sender and receiver. Examples include:

* Misinterpretation of words/symbols with different meanings
* Technical jargon
* Faulty translations

**Organizational barriers**

These barriers are related to the structure and culture of an organization, which can hinder effective communication. Examples include:

* Inefficient communication channels
* Lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities
* Hierarchical structures

**Cultural barriers**

Differences in culture, values, and beliefs can create obstacles in communication. Examples include:

* Language differences
* Non-verbal communication variations
* Different communication styles

**Physiological barriers**

These barriers are related to the physical and mental well-being of individuals, which can affect their ability to communicate effectively. Examples include:

* Illness
* Hearing or vision impairments
* Memory loss

**Personal barriers**

These barriers are specific to individuals and can be influenced by their experiences, attitudes, and perceptions. Examples include:

* Lack of interest
* Inattention
* Resistance to change

**CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCIVE COMMUNICATION IN THE WORK PLACE**

**1. Encourage & facilitate constant feedback**

Providing constructive feedback is an important way for employees and employers alike to improve upon the way they operate and function in the workplace. By soliciting and encouraging feedback, the company sends a message that it’s open to constructive criticism and values everyone’s input and it helps everyone do their job better. All you need is a channel or medium to facilitate regular, helpful feedback.

**2. Get clear on your culture**

When we are talking about culture, we are referring on the following culture decks:

Company mission, Company values (and breakdowns of each), the kind of people you recruit and hire, what tools and styles of communication you use, your managing style and employee expectations and the company’s challenges (and how it faces them).

Culture decks are useful because they are visual, easy to refer back to and (hopefully) enjoyable and easy to read.

**3. Use visuals to communicate important ideas**

Always Visual contents have done right in work places. Therefore, the company is advised to use visual materials to communicate with people in the work place because it will help them to have greater understanding of the message communicated. For example, when a company needs to convey a lot of information to employees, a dense literature is not going to have a desired effect in the minds of the people.

**4. Post news & announcements on office displays**

The bigger your company gets, the more difficult it is for news to reach everyone. Emails don’t always get read.

An easier way to communicate with the whole team is by posting updates on your office displays. With TVs, you can share things like:

• Upcoming events

• New job openings

• Your favorite news feeds

• Your company’s social media posts

• Your homepage or blog

• Photos of your products

**5. Let your team know where the company stands**

No matter what your company is selling, everyone on your team should be on the same page in terms of where you stand on your latest developments. That’s where a product or project roadmap comes in handy. A roadmap is a great visual tool to help employees understand what still needs to be done before launching something new. A roadmap also provides context, showing each team member where their role fits in with the end goal, as well as a framework from which everyone can plan for the future of the product.

**6. Allow employees to self-report**

No one likes to be micromanaged, so allow your team to hold themselves accountable instead. Good employees want to get their work done and letting them check in at the end of every day or week is a much better solution than peering over your employees’ shoulders (not that you would). You can do this with daily or weekly updates via email etc.

**7. Regularly check in with every member of your team**

Nothing beats face-to-face meetings when it comes to fostering effective communication in the workplace, which is why key members of your company’s leadership should make regular check-ins a priority. Planned meetings for the sole purpose of checking in give employees a chance to bring up anything they might have been thinking about but haven’t yet found the opportunity to talk about.

**8. Have fun with your team**

Employees who will be happy and will get along with one another will be the best employees. And therefore, will make for the most successful companies. Don’t forget to take a break from the grind and bond with your team. After all, you spend eight (or 10 or 12!) hours with them every day. Some ways to inspire fun both in and outside of the office are:

• Team events (movie, bowling, rock climbing, etc.)

• Happy hours

• Free breakfasts

• Group volunteer outings

• Hobby-based clubs (like book clubs or sports leagues)

• Competitive cross-departmental teams

**MODULE 2**

**ORAL COMMUNICATION**

Oral communication also known as Verbal communication is the interchange of verbal messages between a sender and receiver. It is more immediate than written communication. It is also more natural and informal (Chaturvedi, P. & Chaturvedi, M., 2011).

Chaturvedi, P. & Chaturvedi, M. (2011) argue that in human development, speech precedes writing. Children first learn to speak, and then, much later, develop the ability to read and write. The ability to speak/articulate single word and later speak group of words in meaningful sequence comes to children in the course of their growth. This ability develops from listening to verbal sounds (words). As compared to written communication, therefore, the ability to communicate through the spoken word (speech) is a naturally developing ability (barring medical abnormalities).

**Components of Oral Communication**

• Understandable Language

• Word choice

• Inflection (pattern of stress in oral speech)

• Tone

• Body language

• Eye behavior

• Visuals (pictures, maps, charts, graphs, colors, signs, etc.)

• Auditory elements (sounds, tunes, whistles, etc.)

**Challenges of Oral Communication**

• Demands ability to think coherently while speaking

• A word once uttered cannot be taken back

• Hard to control voice pitch and tone, especially when stressed, excited, or angry

• Very difficult to be conscious of body language

• Do not know if the message has been understood or not

• Is more time consuming

• Immediate feedback is not available for correction on the sport

**Listening**

Listening is a process of receiving, Interpreting and reacting to a message received from the speaker. Listening cannot be done by ears. One can listen by his/her eyes, sense, mind, heart and imagination. Or it is a deliberate act of attentively hearing s person speak (Chaturvedi, P. & Chaturvedi, M., 2011). Listening is just more the hearing, which is just the physical act of senses receiving, sounds.

**Challenges of Active Listening**

There are many barriers of listening which act as challenges during the process of hearing. Below are some of them:

* Distractions
* Language barriers
* Lack of interest
* Personal filters and biases
* External and internal noise
* Speaker distractions
* L1 interference
* Limited vocabulary
* Pronunciation

**WHAT IS PUBLIC SPEAKING?**

Public speaking occurs when you give a speech before a live audience. It differs from other types of speaking, such as videos, which may be recorded. It's also different from online presentations, which are created and then uploaded to the Internet. Public speaking gives you [many opportunities.](https://business.tutsplus.com/articles/benefits-of-public-speaking--cms-30694) That includes improving your confidence level and giving you the opportunity to champion a cause you care about. Plus, having effective public speaking skills can help you find a job. Many jobs, such as an instructor or sales professional, require you to speak in public.

Even when a job doesn't include public speaking in the job description, employers still value the skill. In one survey, 600 employers said that [good communication skills were twice as important as managerial skills](https://www.mba.com/us/the-gmat-blog-hub/the-official-gmat-blog/2014/aug/employers-want-communication-skills-in-new-hires.aspx).

[](https://elements.envato.com/business-conference-line-design-illustration-G2KTB7S)Public speaking gives you the opportunity to champion a cause, advocate for your business, and so much more. (Graphic source: [Envato Elements.](https://elements.envato.com/business-conference-line-design-illustration-G2KTB7S" \t "_blank))

**ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF A GOOD SPEAKER**

Public speaking can be terrifying, but when you care about your career progression you need to find a way to get your voice out. Speaking is how you can share your ideas with a large number of people, stand out from the corporate crowd, and get visibility in your field. Unfortunately, if you’re public speaking skills are not up to par, it’s likely that no one will be focused enough on your presentation to really receive your message.

1. Confidence

2. Passion

3. Be Yourself

4. Voice Modulations

5. Keep it Short and Sweet

6. Connect with your Audience

7. Paint a Picture Through Storytelling

8. Repetition

9. Don’t Just Practice, Practice, Practice

**Effective Public Speaking Techniques**

You can learn to become a more effective speaker by using the right techniques and practicing your public speaking skills. Here are some techniques to follow:

* Fit the Message to the Audience
* Be Interactive!
* Care About Your Topic
* Remember Your Speaking Goal
* Support Your Main Points
* Use Presentation Tools Wisely
* Practice Your Speech
* Relax!
* Add Visual Aids
* Dress Comfortably, But Professionally
* Use Gestures (But Don't Overdo)
* Allow a Q&A
* Recap at the End

**THE CONCEPT NEGOTIATION**

**What is Negotiation?**

Negotiation is a method by which people settle differences. It is a process by which compromise or agreement is reached while avoiding argument and dispute. In any disagreement, individuals understandably aim to achieve the best possible outcome for their position (or perhaps an organization they represent). However, the principles of fairness, seeking mutual benefit and maintaining a relationship are the keys to a successful outcome.



**THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS**

The negotiation process can be broken down into **several stages**, which may vary in complexity and duration depending on the context and parties involved. Here is a general overview of the negotiation process:

1. **Preparation**

Before entering a negotiation, it is essential to gather information, define your goals, and understand the other party's perspective. This stage involves:

* Researching the issue at hand
* Identifying your priorities and desired outcomes
* Anticipating the other party's interests and potential objections
* Establishing your best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA)

1. **Discussion**

The negotiation begins with an exchange of ideas, proposals, and arguments. This stage involves:

* Presenting your position and supporting it with relevant information
* Actively listening to the other party's perspective
* Asking clarifying questions to ensure a mutual understanding of the issues

1. **Clarification of goals**

As the discussion progresses, it is essential to seek common ground and identify areas of agreement. This stage involves:

* Finding shared interests and values
* Exploring creative solutions that meet both parties' needs
* Identifying potential trade-offs and concessions

1. **Negotiate towards a win-win outcome**

In this stage, the focus is on reaching a mutually beneficial agreement. This involves:

* Maintaining a cooperative and problem-solving mindset
* Using effective communication and persuasion techniques
* Seeking compromises that address both parties' concerns

1. **Agreement**

Once the parties have reached a consensus, it is crucial to formalize the agreement and ensure that all terms are clearly defined. This stage involves:

* Putting the agreement in writing
* Reviewing the document with all parties involved
* Addressing any remaining questions or concerns

1. **Implementation of a course of action**

After the agreement is in place, both parties must fulfill their respective obligations. This stage involves:

* Monitoring the progress of the agreed-upon actions
* Addressing any issues or challenges that arise during implementation
* Maintaining open lines of communication for future collaboration

**THE ATTRIBUTES OF NEGOTIATION**

Attributes of negotiation refer to the skills, traits, and behaviors that contribute to successful negotiation outcomes. Here are some common attributes of effective negotiators:

* **Preparation and planning:** Good negotiators invest time and effort in researching the issue, defining their goals, and anticipating the other party's perspective
* **Communication skills:** Effective negotiators are skilled communicators who can articulate their thoughts clearly and actively listen to others' ideas and needs
* **Emotional intelligence:** Good negotiators understand the role of emotions in negotiation and can use them to their advantage
* **Flexibility and adaptability:** Successful negotiators are flexible and can adjust their approach to changing circumstances or new information
* **Problem-solving skills:** Effective negotiators are skilled problem-solvers who can identify creative solutions that meet both parties' needs
* **Patience and persistence:** Good negotiators are patient and persistent, recognizing that negotiation is often a process that requires time and effort
* **Integrity and trustworthiness:** Effective negotiators are honest and trustworthy, which can help build positive relationships and lead to successful outcomes
* **Judgment and general intelligence:** Good negotiators have strong analytical skills and can make informed decisions based on available information
* **Awareness of the other party's process and style:** Effective negotiators are aware of the other party's negotiation style and can adjust their approach accordingly
* **Ability to persuade others:** Good negotiators are persuasive and can influence others to see their point of view
* **Ability to think clearly and rapidly under pressure and uncertainty:** Effective negotiators can remain calm and focused under pressure, making quick decisions when necessary
* **Awareness of the negotiation process:** Good negotiators understand the stages of negotiation and can navigate them effectively
* **Ability to consider lots of options:** Effective negotiators can generate and evaluate multiple options to find the best solution

**MODULE 2**

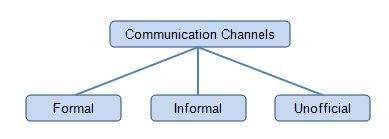
**COMMUNICATION CHANNELS**

In any organization, information flows forward, backwards and sideways. This information flow is referred to as communication. Therefore, **communication channels** refer to the way the information flows within an organization and with other organizations. In communication, a manager becomes a major factor because decisions and directions flow upwards or downward or sideways depending on the position of the manager.

For example, reports from lower-level manager will flow upwards. A good manager has to inspire, steer and organize his employees efficiently, and for all this, the tools used must be spoken or written words. Through communication be face to face conversations or an inter-department memo, information is transmitted from a manager to a subordinate and vice versa. Employees inform managers that they have understood the task at hand while managers provide employees with comments and directions on employee’s work. It is important for a manager to have an effective communication channel in organization because it helps him/her to handle the employees.

**Types of Communication Channels**

In order to make a manager’s task easier, the types of communication channels are grouped into three main groups: Formal, Informal and Unofficial.



**Formal Communication Channels**

A formal communication channel transmits information such as the goals, policies and procedures of an organization. Messages in this type of communication channel follow a chain of command. This means information flows from a manager to his subordinates and they in turn pass on the information to the next level of staff.

An example of a formal communication channel is a company’s newsletter, which gives employees as well as the clients a clear idea of a company’s goal and vision. Also, it includes the transfer of information with regard to memoranda, reports, directions and schedule meetings in the chain of command.

**Informal Communication Channels**

Within a formal working environment, there always exists an informal communication network. The strict hierarchical web of communication cannot function efficiently on its own and hence there exists a communication channel outside of the web. While this type of communication channel may disrupt the chain of command, a good manager needs to find the fine balance between the formal and informal communication channel.

An example of informal communication channel is lunchtime at the organization’s cafeteria/canteen. Here, in a relaxed atmosphere, discussions among employees are encouraged. Also, managers walking around, adopting a hands-on approach to handling employee queries is an example of informal communication channel.

**Unofficial Communication Channel**

Managers will recognize the fact that sometimes communication that takes place within an organization is interpersonal. While minutes of a meeting may be a topic of discussion among employees, sports, politics and TV shows also share the floor. The unofficial communication channel in an organization is the organization's 'grapevine.' It is through the grapevine that rumors circulate. Also, those engaging in 'grapevine' discussions often form groups, which translate into friendships outside of the organization. While the grapevine may have positive implications, more often than not information circulating in the grapevine is exaggerated and may cause unnecessary alarm to employees. A good manager should be privy to information circulating in this unofficial communication channel and should take positive measures to prevent the flow of false information.

An example of an unofficial communication channel is social gatherings among employees.

**IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS**

The importance of communication channels lies in their ability to facilitate effective and efficient communication, which is crucial in various aspects of life, including negotiation. Here are some reasons why communication channels are important:

* **Building rapport and trust:** Effective communication channels help in establishing a connection between the employers and employees, fostering trust, and building strong relationships.
* **Expressing ideas and needs:** Communication channels allow for the expression of ideas, needs, and propositions, which is essential in organization.
* **Understanding and addressing issues:** Clear communication helps organization to identify and address issues early in the process, leading to better understanding and problem-solving.
* **Conveying nonverbal cues:** Nonverbal communication, such as facial expressions and body language, plays an important role in organization. While some communication channels may not convey nonverbal cues effectively, others, like face-to-face meetings, are more suitable for this purpose.
* **Selecting the right channel for the context:** Different communication channels have their strengths and weaknesses. For example, face-to-face meetings are the most powerful but can be prone to costly mistakes, while email allows for careful crafting of messages but may lack immediacy and nonverbal cues.
* **Avoiding misunderstandings and conflicts:** Clear communication, active listening, and early issue identification, facilitated by appropriate communication channels, help minimize misunderstandings and conflicts during negotiations.

**WHAT IS CONFLICT?**

Actually, a lot of ways can be used to define conflict due to how it is used in many areas. Hence, to keep it simple for the layman, conflict pertains to the opposing ideas and actions of different entities, thus resulting in an antagonistic state.

Conflict is an inevitable part of life. Each of us possesses our own opinions, ideas and sets of beliefs. We have our own ways of looking at things and we act according to what we think is proper. Hence, we often find ourselves in conflict in different scenarios; may it involve other individuals, groups of people, or a struggle within our own selves. Consequently, conflict influences our actions and decisions in one way or another.

**SOURCES OF CONFLICT IN THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS**

Sources of conflict in the communication process can arise from various factors. Here are some common sources of conflict:

* **Lack of role clarification:** When roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined, it can lead to confusion and misunderstandings, resulting in conflict.
* **Poor processes:** Inefficient or unclear processes can lead to frustration and conflict, especially when deadlines are tight.
* **Communication problems:** Misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and poor communication can lead to conflict, especially when parties have different communication styles or cultural backgrounds.
* **Lack of performance standards:** When performance standards are not clearly defined, it can lead to disagreements and conflict over expectations and outcomes.
* **Limited resources/common resource pool:** When resources are scarce or shared, it can lead to conflict over access and allocation.
* **Task interdependence:** When tasks are interdependent, it can lead to conflict over priorities, timelines, and responsibilities.
* **Incompatible goals:** When parties have different goals or interests, it can lead to conflict over priorities and outcomes.
* **Personality differences:** When individuals have different personalities, values, or beliefs, it can lead to conflict over communication styles, decision-making, and problem-solving.
* **Structural conflicts:** When there are power imbalances or oppressive behaviors, it can lead to conflict over decision-making, resource allocation, and organizational culture.

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES**

1. **Accommodating**

This strategy, also known as smoothing, involves one party acquiescing, giving the opposing party exactly what it needs to resolve the problem. This method allows you to resolve a problem in the short-term while working toward a long-term solution. In some cases, accommodating can be an appropriate resolution to a conflict. For example, if your opinion on the matter is not very strong, it is often easier to comply.

1. **Avoiding**

This method involves simply ignoring that there may be a conflict. People tend to avoid conflict when they don’t want to engage in it. Avoiding allows them to ignore that there is a problem.

There are situations when avoiding conflict can be an appropriate response, such as when there is no clear solution or a frustrated party needs time to calm down before confrontation. However, avoidance can require more effort than merely facing the problem and can cause friction between the disagreeing parties. When conflict is avoided, nothing is resolved.

1. **Collaborating**

Like the compromising method, collaboration involves working with the other party to find a mutually agreeable solution to a problem. It’s known as a win-win strategy. For example, a salesperson and client may work together to negotiate contract terms until both parties find it agreeable.

1. **Competing**

Competing is an uncooperative, overly assertive method used by people who insist on winning the dispute at all costs. It’s known as a win-lose strategy. This method is not often identified as bringing satisfactory resolutions, as it doesn’t allow for collaborative problem-solving.

1. **Compromising**

This strategy, also known as reconciling, seeks a mutual agreement to settle a dispute. It’s known as a lose-lose strategy since both parties willingly forfeit some of their needs in the interest of reaching an agreement. This can be a quick way to resolve a conflict without it becoming a bigger issue. Compromise can also be used as a temporary method to avoid conflict until the parties involved can implement a more permanent solution.

It is appropriate to compromise when it would not be possible to make both sides completely happy while still moving forward.

**Various Samples of Conflicts in Business Environment and Apply Conflict Resolution Strategies to Solve Them**

Here are some examples of conflicts that can arise in a business environment and the conflict resolution strategies that can be applied to solve them:

**Conflict over resource allocation:** When resources are limited, conflicts can arise over their allocation. To resolve this conflict, the following strategies can be applied:

* **Collaboration:** The parties involved can work together to find a mutually beneficial solution that meets the needs of all parties involved. This can involve brainstorming creative solutions and identifying trade-offs that benefit everyone
* **Compromising:** The parties involved can find a middle ground where each party gives up something to reach a mutually acceptable solution. This approach can be useful when time is limited, and a temporary solution is needed

**Conflict over performance standards:** When performance standards are not clearly defined, it can lead to disagreements and conflict over expectations and outcomes. To resolve this conflict, the following strategies can be applied:

* **Clarification:** The parties involved can clarify the performance standards and expectations to ensure that everyone is on the same page. This can involve setting clear goals, timelines, and metrics for success
* **Collaboration:** The parties involved can work together to find a mutually beneficial solution that meets the needs of all parties involved. This can involve brainstorming creative solutions and identifying trade-offs that benefit everyone

**Conflict over personality differences:** When individuals have different personalities, values, or beliefs, it can lead to conflict over communication styles, decision-making, and problem-solving. To resolve this conflict, the following strategies can be applied:

* **Active listening:** The parties involved can actively listen to each other's perspectives, feelings, and needs to foster understanding and empathy
* **Collaboration:** The parties involved can work together to find a mutually beneficial solution that meets the needs of all parties involved. This can involve brainstorming creative solutions and identifying trade-offs that benefit everyone

**Conflict over task interdependence:** When tasks are interdependent, it can lead to conflict over priorities, timelines, and responsibilities. To resolve this conflict, the following strategies can be applied:

* **Collaboration:** The parties involved can work together to find a mutually beneficial solution that meets the needs of all parties involved. This can involve brainstorming creative solutions and identifying trade-offs that benefit everyone
* **Clarification:** The parties involved can clarify the roles and responsibilities of each party to ensure that everyone is on the same page. This can involve setting clear goals, timelines, and metrics for success

**MODULE 3**

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**What is a business meeting?**

A business meeting is a gathering of two or more people for the purpose of making decisions or discussing company objectives and operations. Business meetings are generally conducted in person in an office, however with the rise of video conferencing technologies, participants can join a business meeting from anywhere.

**What is a designed place for a meeting?**

A designed place for a meeting refers to a planned or drawn place produced to show the look and function or workings of a place, arrangements, or other objects before it is prepared. Therefore, the placed will be designed basing on the number of attendees, the status of the meeting etc. For example, the status of the Annual Organizational Conference will be quite different with the Departmental Meeting. The following are different designed places for meetings.



**Qualities of Good business meeting**

• Purpose

• Time

• Organization

• Clear arrangements

**LAYOUT OF A BUSINESS MEETING**

A professional and effective layout for a business meeting can help ensure a productive and organized event. The following are the step-by-step guide on how to prepare a layout for a business meeting:

* Define the Meeting's Purpose
* Choose the Meeting Venue
* Set the Date and Time
* Create an Agenda
* Seating Arrangement
* Audiovisual Equipment
* Materials and Supplies
* Signage
* Registration or Check-In Area
* Presentation Setup

**PREPARE FOR A BUSINESS MEETING**

To prepare for a business meeting, one is required to follow these steps:

* **Define the meeting purpose**: Determine why you are meeting, whether it's to brainstorm, discuss, or plan the next steps. Set one clear objective to make it easier to design an agenda for the meeting.
* **Specify the main goal**: Set a tangible meeting outcome and stick to it. For example, if the goal is to make a decision about something, don't leave the meeting without reaching a decision.
* **Create and share an agenda**: An agenda is an outline of all the activities and discussion points to cover during a meeting in order to reach the meeting goals. Design a bulletproof agenda that provides structure for the meeting.
* **Invite essential participants**: Holding meetings with a smaller group leads to faster decisions and more engaged employees. Make sure to invite only the necessary participants.
* **Assign agenda topics to participants**: Indicate who will lead each topic so people can prepare. This will help keep the meeting organized and on track.
* **Share the agenda with attendees**: Send the agenda before the meeting so participants know what will be discussed and have time to think about the topics. If that's not possible, create an agenda on the spot as the meeting starts to give the meeting focus.
* **Prepare meeting logistics**: Specify the date, time, and location of the meeting. Make sure participants are aware of any necessary preparations they need to make.

**MEETING DOCUMENTS (****NOTICE,** **AGENDA, MINUTES)**

**NOTICE**

The statement that contains the particulars of holding a meeting is known as notice. It is one kind of request to the members for attending the meeting. The date, time, place and agenda are informed through the notice. It may be oral or written. The following are the characteristics of a notice:

* It should be under proper authority.
* It should state the name of the organization.
* It should state the day, date, time, and place. Also, sometimes, how to reach the place.
* It should be well in advance. Some require seven days’ notice, some 48 hours.
* It should state the purpose and, if possible, the agenda.
* It should carry the date of circulation and convener’s/secretary’s signature.
* It should go to all persons required at the meet.
* It should mention the TA/DA etc. payable and the arrangements for this.

**PARTS OF BUSINESS MEETING NOTICE**

1. Company Name
2. Date
3. Participant Name
4. Main body of the Notice

* Date
* Time
* Location

1. Identification of the Agenda
2. Closing
3. Signature
4. Position/Title

**SAMPLES OF THE MEETING NOTICE**

**Sample 1: General Business Meeting Notice**

|  |
| --- |
| **[Company Name]**  **[Date]**  **Dear [Participant's Name],**  **This is to inform you that a general business meeting will be held on [Date] at [Time] in [Location]. The meeting is intended to discuss the business plans of the company to be implemented.**  **The agenda for the meeting is as follows:**  **1. [Topic 1]**  **2. [Topic 2]**  **3. [Topic 3]**  **Your presence and active participation in the meeting are highly appreciated.**  **Thank you.**  **Sincerely,**  **[Your Name]**  **[Your Position]** |

**Sample 2: Committee Meeting Notice**

|  |
| --- |
| **[Company Name]**  **[Date]**  **Dear [Participant's Name],**  **This is to inform you that a committee meeting will be held on [Date] at [Time] in [Location]. The meeting is intended to discuss the business plans of the company to be implemented.**  **The agenda for the meeting is as follows:**  **1. [Topic 1]**  **2. [Topic 2]**  **3. [Topic 3]**  **Your presence and active participation in the meeting are highly appreciated.**  **Thank you.**  **Sincerely,**  **[Your Name]**  **[Your Position]** |

**AGENDA**

Agenda is a document that outlines the contents of a forthcoming meeting. It is usually sent along with the notice of the meeting. Basically, agenda is a statement of business or assignment to be discussed in the meeting on which minutes and decisions are taken thereafter. Agenda should be specific and clear to all authorized person.

**Importance / Necessity of Agenda**

* **Clarity of Purpose:** An agenda clearly outlines the meeting's objectives and purpose. It sets expectations for what will be discussed, helping participants understand the meeting's relevance and importance.
* **Organization:** It provides structure and organization to the meeting. The agenda specifies the sequence of topics, the allotted time for each, and who will lead each discussion, which ensures that the meeting stays on track.
* **Time Management:** By allocating specific time slots for each agenda item, the agenda helps manage the meeting's duration. This is crucial in respecting participants' time and preventing meetings from running too long.
* **Preparation:** An agenda allows participants to prepare in advance. When they know what topics will be discussed, they can gather necessary information, data, or reports, enabling more informed and productive discussions.
* **Prioritization:** The agenda helps prioritize topics based on their importance and relevance. This ensures that the most critical issues are addressed first, and less important matters can be deferred if necessary.
* **Focus:** With a well-defined agenda, the meeting can stay focused on the main topics. This minimizes the risk of veering off-topic or getting bogged down in irrelevant discussions.
* **Efficiency:** The agenda encourages efficiency by ensuring that discussions are concise and to the point. It discourages unnecessary tangents and unproductive conversations.
* **Accountability:** It holds presenters and participants accountable. When someone is assigned to lead a discussion or present on a particular topic, they are more likely to come prepared and take ownership of that segment of the meeting.
* **Inclusivity:** An agenda allows for inclusive participation. It gives participants the opportunity to request agenda items or propose changes in advance, ensuring that important issues are not overlooked.
* **Documentation:** The agenda serves as a formal record of the meeting's intended content. It can be used as a reference point during the meeting and later for meeting minutes or reports.
* **Alignment:** It helps align the expectations of all participants. When everyone is on the same page regarding the meeting's objectives and content, it promotes a shared understanding among team members.
* **Decision Making:** For decision-making meetings, the agenda helps frame the options, considerations, and potential solutions. This makes the decision-making process more transparent and systematic.
* **Follow-up:** The agenda can include a section for follow-up items and action points, ensuring that decisions and tasks resulting from the meeting are clearly documented and assigned to responsible individuals.

**How to write meeting agendas**

**1. Identify the meeting’s goal**

When you start with your goal, you can make sure the purpose of the meeting is clear, and every task you want to cover is related to your objective. Set an achievable goal to keep your meeting as focused as possible. For example, a meeting goal to approve the company’s monthly advertising budget is more attainable than a goal to improve spending overall.

**2. Ask participants for input**

To keep your participants engaged during the meeting, ask for their input beforehand to ensure the meeting fulfills their needs. You can ask them to suggest what topics they would like covered or what questions they have. Once you have a list of ideas from the participants, you can review them and decide which items you’ll ultimately include.

**3. List the questions you want to address**

Once you know your meeting’s objective and have some ideas about the topics you want to cover, list the questions you need to answer during the meeting. Some meeting agendas simply list a topic as a phrase, for example: “rental equipment.” However, you can clarify each agenda item’s purpose by phrasing discussion points as questions. For example, you could write, “Under what conditions should we consider renting equipment instead of buying it?” These prompts can ensure you invite discussion and gather all the information you need for each agenda topic.

**4. Identify the purpose of each task**

Every task you complete during your meeting should have a purpose. Typically, the three main purposes are to share information, seek input or make a decision. As you’re going through your agenda, make note of the purpose of each task. This step will help meeting participants know when you want their input and when it’s time to make a decision.

**5. Estimate the amount of time to spend on each topic**

Next, estimate how much time you plan to spend on each task. This part of the agenda ensures you have enough time to cover all the topics you have planned for your meeting. It also helps participants adjust their comments and questions to fit the timeframe.

You can optimize your timeframe by giving more time to items you anticipate taking longer to discuss or scheduling items of higher importance earlier in the discussion to ensure vital topics are covered. If you have many people coming to your meeting, you may even limit time on certain topics to streamline the conversation, encourage a quick decision if needed and keep the meeting on schedule.

**6. Identify who leads each topic**

Occasionally, someone other than the meeting leader will lead the discussion. If you plan on having other people mediate topics during your meeting, you can identify them under their respective topics. This step helps keep the meeting running smoothly and ensures everyone is prepared for their responsibilities.

**7. End each meeting with a review**

Leaving time to end each meeting with a review can help participants better understand what decisions were made and what information was discussed so they can take any necessary steps after the meeting. During this review, you and your meeting participants should also consider what went well during the meeting and what needs improvement. By taking a few minutes to consider these questions, you can make sure your next meeting is even more effective.

**MINUTES**

Minutes are the official record of the proceedings or a meeting. It usually shows a concise and accurate record of decisions and resolutions. Minutes is a chronological written statement of resolutions taken in meeting. It is taken on the elaborate discussion of the agenda. It is a list of actions and resolutions adopted after detailed discussion of persons attended in the meeting, preserved it for decision making and policy implementation. It is to be mentioned that the minutes requires to be approved by the participating members of the meeting. The minutes must be concluded by the signatures of the Chairman, secretary, and other authorized person of the meeting.

**Who takes meeting minutes?**

The **secretary** most often takes meeting minutes. Nonprofits, government entities, schools, public companies, and trade unions are usually required to record official meeting minutes. However, many other companies also use meeting minutes to maintain an official record.

**Preliminary Items of meeting minutes**

* Name of the Organization
* Type of meeting (monthly, emergency, special)
* Place, date, and time called to order.
* Name of those attending including guests (used to determine if a quorum is present).
* Name of those absent and reasons for absence.
* Agenda items.
* Decisions that were made.
* Actions that need to be done. Include the deadline and who it was assigned to.
* Follow up meeting.

**How to write meeting minutes**

The style and content of meeting minutes will vary depending on the organization and how it’s structured. Regardless, you should always include the basics, like date, time, and participants. But many organizations will also benefit from having other, optional items like supplementary documents and action items. Read on to find out what to include in your meeting minutes.

**Why Meeting Minutes Are Important?**

* Meeting minutes offer legal protection
* Meeting minutes provide structure
* Meeting minutes drive action
* Meeting minutes act as a measuring stick
* Meeting minutes state ownership

**Difference Between Agenda and Minutes**

1. **Agenda** is an official list of things to be done or dealt with a particular meeting while **Minutes** is the official records of discussions held and decisions taken at a meeting are called minutes.
2. **Agenda** is drawn up by the secretary in consultation with the Chairman while **Minutes** are generally written by the secretary of the organizational reference.
3. **Agenda** gives the members an idea about the topics to be discussed while **Minutes** preserve the resolution of the meeting for future
4. The top-level management gets and thinks over the **agenda** while in **minutes** all members at the meeting discuss and take decisions.
5. At the beginning of the meeting, **agenda** is read out while at the next meeting, **minutes** is read out.
6. **Agenda** does not require to be approved earlier while **minutes** needs to be approved by the members at the next meetings.
7. **Agenda** is generally written in the notice board while **Minutes** is written in the company's minutes book.

Pal, R. & Korlahalli, J. S., (2011), Essentials of Business Communication, Sultan Chand & Sons, New Delhi.

**MODULE 4**

**BUSINESS REPORTS**

**What Are Business Reports?**

Business reports are actual documents that inform by summarizing and analyzing a particular situation, issue, or facts and then make recommendations to the group or person asking for the report. **The goal of these reports is usually one of the following:**

**• To examine potential and available solutions to an issue, situation, or problem**

**• To apply business and management theories to produce different suggestions for improvement**

**• To show your evaluation, reasoning, and analytical skills in recognizing and considering possible solutions and outcomes**

**• To make conclusions about an issue or problem**

**• To produce a range of suggestions for future action**

**• To present clear and concise communication skills**

**What Are the Types of Business Reports?**

There are five main types of business reports: informational reports, analytical reports, research reports, explanatory reports, and progress reports. Depending on the data turnaround, different teams within a company can decide how often they need to create business reports — **daily**, **weekly**, **bi-weekly**, **monthly**, or **annually**.

1. **Informational Reports**

You ask for this report when you want objective information on something. It presents non-biased facts without explaining the reasons and the possible outcomes of a situation. It is the ideal business report for learning things such as the number of employees, the role each of them plays in the company, or the departments the employees work in.

1. **Analytical Report**

This type of business report is usually required when a company is trying to make an important decision. An analytical report analyzes the company’s situation, presenting relevant information, explanations, and conclusions. It helps the company to make good decisions going forward.

1. **Research Report**

This is the most comprehensive type of business reports required when a company considers trying something new, such as going into a new geographical area, offering a new product, or using advanced tools for bulk URL analysis. A team of specialists or researchers are given a topic and asked to find all the relevant statistics and details obtained from an informational report, followed by a detailed analysis of the data found in the analytical report. The conclusion of the research report will be based on the available data obtained from the analytical and informational reports.

1. **Explanatory Report**

This report is required when you want to explain a topic or situation so that everyone can understand it. For example, you can write it to explain the research you’ve conducted. Along with the table showing the results, you should include the reason for the research, sample sizes, methodology, etc. After explaining the results, you should briefly summarize the findings.

1. **Progress Report**

You want this report to show how things are going at the moment. A progress report isn’t based on analysis or tons of research. Instead, they are an update for the person who needs it. One example of this could be a weekly report disclosing the progress made throughout the week and what tasks you're looking to work on in the upcoming week.

**PARTS OF BUSINESS REPORTS**

1. **Title Page**

Every business report should feature a title page. The title itself should clearly set out what the report is about. Typically, you should also include your name and the date of the report.

1. **Summary**

Most business reports begin with a summary of its key points. Try to include:

* A brief description of what the report is about
* How the report was completed (e.g., data collection methods)
* The main findings from the research
* Key conclusions and recommendations

A paragraph or two should suffice for this in shorter business reports. However, for longer or more complex reports, you may want to include a full executive summary.

1. **Table of Contents**

Short business reports may not need a table of contents, especially if they include a summary. But longer reports should set out the title of each section and the structure of the report. Make sure the headings here match those used in the main text. You may also want to number the sections.

1. **Introduction**

The introduction is the first part of the report proper. Use it to set out the brief you received when you were asked to compile the report. This will frame the rest of the report by providing:

* Background information (e.g., business history or market information)
* The purpose of the report (i.e., what you set out to achieve)
* Its scope (i.e., what the report will cover and what it will ignore)

These are known as the “terms of reference” for the business report.

1. **Methods and Findings**

If you are conducting original research, include a section about your methods. This may be as simple as setting out the sources you are using and why you chose them. But it could also include how you have collected and analyzed the data used to draw your conclusions.

After this, you will need to explain your findings. This section will present the results of your research clearly and concisely, making sure to cover all the main points set out in the brief.

1. **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The last main section of your report will cover conclusions and recommendations. The conclusion section should summarize what you have learned from the report. If you have been asked to do so, you should also recommend potential courses of action based on your conclusions.

If you are not sure what to suggest here, think back to the objectives set out in your brief.

1. **References**

If you have used any third-party sources while writing your report, list them in a bibliography after the main report. This could include other business documents, academic articles, or even news reports. The key is to show what you have based your findings and conclusions upon.

1. **Appendices (If Applicable)**

Finally, you may have gathered extra documentation during your research, such as interview transcripts, marketing material, or financial data. Including this in the main report would make it too long and unfocused, but you can add it to an appendix (or multiple appendices) at the end of the document. It will then be available should your reader need it.



**CITATION**

Refers to the way of acknowledging books, papers, articles and other unpublished materials that the writer uses in his/her writing.

**Reasons for citation**

* It shows the range and nature of the source materials the writer borrows.
* The ethics of academic writing requires citation. This is because it involves sound evidence which support and strengthen the writer’s own arguments.
* To show the right person who originates the idea.
* The academic value needs the writer to be able to trace the genealogy of ideas.

**IN-TEXT CITATION**

It refers to a reference within the body of the writing. It always indicates your reader exactly what you have borrowed from the source and specifically where they can find it.

**APA in-text Citation**

1. Mention the author’s name and the publication date in your sentence.

In 1993 study, Samwel Ebenezer found out that supervisor motivation helped research students reduce anxiety.

1. Mention the name author’s last name at the beginning of a sentence.

* Magasila (1983) suggested that.......
* Magasila (1983, P. 7) defines motivation as......
* Magasila, M (1983, p.7) defines motivation as........
* Magasila (1983: 7) defines motivation as....

**Note**: Sometimes colon is used to represent page

1. Author’s name or date of publication are not mentioned in the sentence (parenthetical referencing)

* A former study (Kanyama, 1983) shows that....
* A former study by (Kanyama, 1983) indicates that....
* ....... this is what was formerly proposed in earlier research (Kanyama, 1983b)

1. If a source has two authors, site both names every time

* Mabiki and Kikwala (1978) claim that....
* ........ a claim put forward by modern psychologists (Mabiki & Kikwala, 1978)
* Some scientists (Mabiki & Kikwala, 1978) have claimed....

1. If source has three authors or more cite all of them the first time and use ‘et al’ in subsequent citations. If you use ‘et al’ make sure you put in italics.

* ...... this is called politicking (Mneruka, Bwagile & Haule, 2007)
* Note: you are not allowed to put comma before ampersand
* ....... this is called politicking (Mnenuka *et al,* 2007)
* Baregu *et al* (2007) have argued that....

1. If a source has no author, cite it by the first three words of the title. Also, for articles use the first three words or shorten the title.

* In managing citations (2003), students get introduced to rules about....

1. If the source has no date use n.d

* Maze (n.d) claims that there is correlation between the size of the head and IQ.

1. If the information has more than one source by the same author(s), use commas to separate years of publication

* ....... this is evident from his recent publications (Rwechungula, 2003, 2004)

1. Citing from an indirect source use the phrase ‘as cited in’ (italicize)

* ......... (*as cited in* Livingstone, 1992, p.45), Kibonde observed, ‘while growing square tomatoes may seem to be engineering ingenuity’

**REFERENCE & BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Is a way of acknowledge the books, papers and other unpublished materials that you have used while researching your essay or report.

This acknowledgement has to be made twice. One in the body of your text (or sometimes in footnotes) and second with full details at the end of your work in a reference list or bibliography.

**Below are standard formats and examples for basic bibliographic information recommended by the American Psychological Association (APA).**

* Your list of works cited should begin at the end of the paper on a new page with the **centered title**, *References*.
* **Alphabetize** the entries in your list by the author's last name, using the letter-by-letter system (ignore spaces and other punctuation.)
* Only the initials of the first and middle names are given. If the author's name is unknown, alphabetize by the title, ignoring any *A, An*, or *The*.
* For dates, spell out the names of months in the text of your paper, but abbreviate them in the list of works cited, except for May, June, and July. Use either the day-month-year style (22 July 1999) or the month-day-year style (July 22, 1999) and be consistent. With the month-day-year style, be sure to add a comma after the year unless another punctuation mark goes there.

**Underlining/Italicize**

When reports were written on typewriters, the names of publications were underlined because most typewriters had no way to print italics. If you write a bibliography by hand, you should still **underline** **the names of publications**. But, if you use a computer, **then publication names should be in italics** as they are below. Always check with your instructor regarding their preference of using italics or underlining. Our examples use italics.

**Hanging Indentation**

All APA citations should use **hanging indents**, that is, the first line of an entry should be flush left, and the second and subsequent lines should be indented 1/2".

**Capitalization, Abbreviation & Punctuation**

The APA guidelines specify using sentence-style capitalization for the titles of books or articles, so you should **capitalize only the first word of a title and subtitle**. The exceptions to this rule would be **periodical titles and proper names** **in a title which should still be capitalized**. The periodical title is run in title case, and is followed by the volume number which, with the title, is also italicized.

**If there is more than one author, use an ampersand (&)** **before the name of the last author.** If there are more than six authors, list only the first one and use ***et al*.** for the rest.

**Place the date of publication in parentheses immediately after the name of the author.** Place a period after the closing parenthesis. Do not italicize, underline, or put quotes around the titles of shorter works within longer works.

**Format Examples**

**Books**

**Format:**   
Author's last name, first initial. (Publication date). *Book title*. Additional information. City of publication: Publishing company.

**Examples:**

* Allen, T. (1974). *Vanishing wildlife of North America*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society.
* Boorstin, D. (1992). *The creators: A history of the heroes of the imagination*. New York: Random House.
* Nicol, A. M., & Pexman, P. M. (1999). *Presenting your findings: A practical guide for creating tables*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
* Searles, B., & Last, M. (1979). *A reader's guide to science fiction*. New York: Facts on File, Inc.
* Toomer, J. (1988). *Cane*. Ed. Darwin T. Turner. New York: Norton.

**Encyclopedia & Dictionary**

**Format:**   
Author's last name, first initial. (Date). Title of Article. *Title of Encyclopedia* (Volume, pages). City of publication: Publishing company.

**Examples:**

* Bergmann, P. G. (1993). Relativity. In *The new encyclopedia britannica* (Vol. 26, pp. 501-508). Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica.
* Pettingill, O. S., Jr. (1980). Falcon and Falconry. *World book encyclopedia*. (pp. 150-155). Chicago: World Book.
* Tobias, R. (1991). Thurber, James. *Encyclopedia americana*. (p. 600). New York: Scholastic Library Publishing.

**Magazines, Newspaper & Articles**

**Format:**   
Author's last name, first initial. (Publication date). Article title. *Periodical title, volume number (issue number if available)*, inclusive pages.   
**Note:** Do not enclose the title in quotation marks. Put a period after the title. If a periodical includes a volume number, italicize it and then give the page range (in regular type) without "pp." If the periodical does not use volume numbers, as in newspapers, use *p*. or *pp*. for page numbers.

**Note**: Unlike other periodicals, p. or pp. precedes page numbers for a newspaper reference in APA style.

**Examples:**

* Harlow, H. F. (1983). Fundamentals for preparing psychology journal articles. *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology, 55*, 893-896.
* Henry, W. A., III. (1990, April 9). Making the grade in today's schools. *Time, 135*, 28-31.
* Kalette, D. (1986, July 21). California town counts town to big quake. *USA Today, 9*, p. A1.
* Kanfer, S. (1986, July 21). Heard any good books lately? *Time, 113*, 71-72.
* Trillin, C. (1993, February 15). Culture shopping. *New Yorker*, pp. 48-51.

**Websites & Webpage**

**Format:**   
**Online periodical:**

Author's name. (Date of publication). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, volume number, Retrieved month day, year, from full URL

**Online document:**

Author's name. (Date of publication). *Title of work*. Retrieved month day, year, from full URL

**Note:** When citing Internet sources, refer to the specific website document. If a document is undated, use "n.d." (for no date) immediately after the document title. Break a lengthy URL that goes to another line after a slash or before a period. Continually check your references to online documents. There is no period following a URL.

Note: If you cannot find some of this information, cite what is available.

**Examples:**

* Devitt, T. (2001, August 2). Lightning injures four at music festival. *The Why? Files*. Retrieved January 23, 2002, from http://whyfiles.org/137lightning/index.html
* Dove, R. (1998). Lady freedom among us. *The Electronic Text Center*. Retrieved June 19, 1998, from Alderman Library, University of Virginia website: http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/subjects/afam.html

**Note**: If a document is contained within a large and complex website (such as that for a university or a government agency), identify the host organization and the relevant program or department before giving the URL for the document itself. Precede the URL with a colon.

* Fredrickson, B. L. (2000, March 7). Cultivating positive emotions to optimize health and well-being. *Prevention & Treatment*, 3, Article 0001a. Retrieved November 20, 2000, from http://journals.apa.org/prevention/volume3/pre0030001a.html
* *GVU's 8th WWW user survey*. (n.d.). Retrieved August 8, 2000, from http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/usersurveys/survey1997-10/
* Health Canada. (2002, February). *The safety of genetically modified food crops*. Retrieved March 22, 2005, from <http://www.hc->sc.gc.ca/english/protection/biologics\_genetics/gen\_mod\_foods/genmodebk.html
* Hilts, P. J. (1999, February 16). In forecasting their emotions, most people flunk out. *New York Times*. Retrieved November 21, 2000, from <http://www.nytimes.com>References samples
* Booth, S.A. (January 1999). High-Drain Alkaline AA-Batteries. *Popular Electronics, 62*, 58.
* Dell, R. M., and Rand, D.A.J. (2001). *Understanding batteries*. Cambridge, UK: The Royal Society of Chemistry.
* Devitt, T. (2001, August 2). Lightning injures four at music festival. *The Why? Files.* Retrieved from http://whyfiles.org/137lightning/index.html
* Dove, R. (1998). Lady freedom among us. *The University of Virginia Alderman Library Electronic Text Center.* Retrieved from     http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/subjects/afam.html
* Fredrickson, B. L. (2000, March 7). Cultivating positive emotions to optimize health and well-being. *Prevention & Treatment, 3, Article 0001a.* Retrieved from <http://journals.apa.org/prevention/volume3/pre0030001a.html>
* Hilts, P. J. (1999, February 16). In Forecasting Their Emotions, Most People Flunk Out. *New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com

**MODULE 5**

**International Business Communication**

International business communication can be defined as a **business communication practice that occurs across international borders.** It can also be explained as a branch of communication studies concerning with the scope of ‘**government-to-government’**, ‘**business-to-business’**, and ‘**people-to-people’ interactions at a global level**. Or it is a cross cultural communication.

**Barriers to international business communication**

Ethnocentrism: belief that one’s own cultural group is superior to all other cultural groups.

* **Stereotyping:** widely held beliefs about a group of people and are a form of generalized.
* **Xenophobia:** fear of strangers and foreigners.
* **Legal and ethical differences:** legal systems and ethical standards differ from culture to culture.
* **Non-verbal differences:** hand shaking, kissing, keeping distance while conversing etc. differ from culture to culture.
* **Language:** use of multiple languages is also a barrier.

**Reasons for effective communication internationally**

* To maintain international relations
* To exchange administrative practices
* To exchange policies
* To invite investments
* Cultural exchange
* To exchange commercial products and services
* Business prosperity

**COMPANY PROFILE**

**A company profile is a professional introduction of the business and aims to inform the audience about its products and services**. A company profile is an effective **tool to introduce a business** to prospective customers and colleagues. Items typically included in a business or corporate profile are:

* Mission statement
* Summary of what the company does
* Company history, successes and milestones
* Awards and certifications
* Key personnel profiles
* Corporate governance
* Social responsibility
* Company culture and financial performance

**Importance of Company Profile**

1. Publicizing the company
2. To persuade investors or customers
3. Highlight what the company does
4. Shows the road to success
5. Attract new customers
6. Assurance of having a legal business

**CURRICULUM VITAE**

Curriculum vitae **is a summary** of a job applicant’s professional experience and educational background, along with other relevant information regarding the candidate’s qualifications including public presentations, academic writing and professional development.

**Main types of curriculum vitae**

1. **Chronological CV:** It starts by listing candidate’s work history, with the most recent position listed first.
2. **A functional CV:** It focuses on the candidate’s skills and experiences rather than on the candidate’s chronological job history.
3. **A combination CV:** It lists candidate’s skills and experience first. The candidate’s employment history is listed next.

**The major qualities of Curriculum Vitae**

* Clarity
* Relevancy
* Usefulness

**Importance of Good Curriculum Vitae**

* Reminding you on what you have done in your career
* Helping you to identify your weaknesses
* Helping to convince the employers
* Introducing you to others
* Expanding your opportunities

**Ordering of Information in a CV**

Ordering of information in a CV may slightly differ from place to place and in accordance to the purpose for which the CV is written. While some organizations provide a format to be followed others leave it at the discretion of the writer. Generally, CV should include these parts:

1. **Personal Details**

* Your name (in full)
* Full addresses (postal address and one or two telephone numbers)

1. **Academic Qualifications (usually appears in the reverse order-recent qualifications first)**

* Education: including formal degrees/ diplomas/ certificates; non – formal accomplishments e.g., short courses/ seminars/ conferences

1. **Work Experiences (usually appears in the reverse order-recent qualification first)**

* Company’s / employers name
* Employment dates – from joining to leaving the job
* Job titles – positions / capacities in executing duties
* Job responsibilities and how well they were executed

1. **Emotional Intelligence**

* This phenomenon is about emotional quotient which is given emphasis these days. It involves;
* Reading habits; social habits; interpersonal skills; personal development, awareness and general interest

1. **Professional Membership**

* Names of professional bodies
* Type of involvement e.g., members, etc.

1. **References**

* Names and addresses of people who would referee you during recommendations. Prior permission needs to be sought before including any names as reference.

**BUSINESS LETTERS**

These are written messages which are used to send and receive information from the director of the organization to the co-workers or to the clients and vice versa.

**Types of business letters**

There are many types of business letters depending on the purpose of writing these letters. The following are examples of some of them.

* Application letters
* Sales letters
* Order letters
* Resignation letters
* Acknowledgement letters
* Recommendation letters
* Complaint letters
* Tendering letters
* Adjustment letters
* Customer request letters
* Adjustment letters

**Main parts of a business letter**

The mechanical structure of a letter constitutes the different parts of letter that should have their customary place in it. The usual parts of a letter are as under: -

1. Heading/address;
2. Date;
3. Reference;
4. Inside address;
5. Salutation;
6. Subject line;
7. Main body/ Body of the Letter;
8. Complementary close; and
9. Attachments/enclosures.

**Meaning of Interview**

The word interview comes from Latin and Middle French words meaning to “see between” or “see each other”. Generally, interview means a private meeting between people when questions are asked and answered.

The person who answers the questions of an interview is called an interviewee, and the person who asks the questions of our interview is called an interviewer.

It is suggesting a meeting between two persons for the purpose of getting a view of each other or for knowing each other. When we normally think of an interview; we think a setting in which an employer tries to size up an applicant for a job.

Therefore, interview is an informal meeting between two people (the interviewer and interviewee) where questions are asked by the interviewer to obtain information, qualities, attitudes, wishes, etc. from the interviewee.

**Interviewer’s preparation for the interview**

* Interviewers are held with a fourfold objective in mind:
* To find out the most suitable candidate for the job.
* To give the candidates sufficient information about the job and the company so that they can decide whether the job will suit them.
* To create a sense of confidence and understanding in the selected candidate.
* To promote the goodwill of the company by giving the right kind of impression to all the candidates whether or not they are to be selected.

**Interviewee’s preparation before the interview**

If you are in an interviewee, you should prepare yourself on the following lines:

* Know yourself
* Know the company
* Prepare for the questions
* Prepare the questions that you would like to ask
* Be careful of your appearance. Dress decently.
* Prepare certificates and other relevant documents.
* Observe punctuality.

**How to conduct yourself during the interview**

* Remain standing until you are invited to sit
* Greet first before sitting.
* Greet the panel with respect.
* Show positive attitude towards the job.
* Be confident and face the panel.
* Be courteous: show respect and avoid chewing the gum, switch off your

phone.

* Listen carefully during the interview.
* Use formal language.
* Avoid blaming the previous employer.

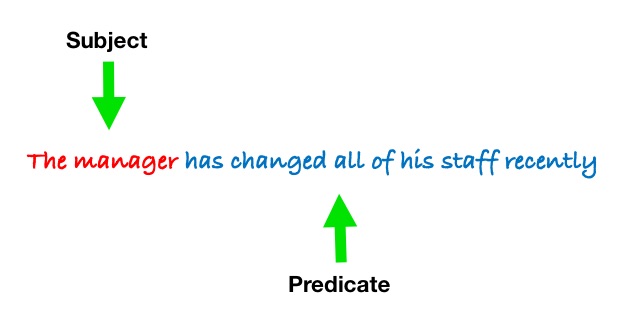
**MODULE 6**

**PARTS OF A SENTENCE**

The main two parts of a sentence are the **subject** and **predicate**, with the subject identifying **whom or what the sentence is about** and the predicate **giving more information about the subject**.

The elements within the predicate adding more detail or meaning are:

* Verbs
* Direct objects
* Indirect objects
* Subject complements



**Subject**

The subject of a sentence is the person, place, or thing that the sentence is about.

* If it comes before an action verb (e.g., climb, eat, build, say etc.) then it is the part of the sentence that shows whom or what is doing that action.
* If it comes before a [state verb](https://www.grammarwiz.com/stative-verbs.html) (e.g., is, see, smell) it tells us whom or what is in that state of being.
* It is usually a noun or pronoun and can also include modifying words, phrases or clauses. Here are some examples of subjects in a sentence:
* The woman...
* Cars....
* The boy in the red coat... (includes modifying phrase)

**Predicate**

The **predicate** is what is being said about the subject. It will always include a verb but will usually also include other elements. So, these are what it will/may include:

* Verb
* Direct Object
* Indirect Object + Direct Object
* Direct Object + Object Complement
* Subject Complement

In the examples below, the predicate is in bold.

* The woman **is hot**.
* Cars **are blocking all the parking spaces.**
* The boy in the red coat **is trying to find his toy.**
* She **is a police officer.**

Predicates as parts of a sentence can get a little more complex than this as there can be predicates within predicates when there are other clauses in the sentence (the ones above have just one clause) and there are also compound predicates.

**Objects**

The predicate always includes and starts with a verb, but it may also be followed by objects.

**Direct Object**

A direct object is the **receiver** of the action within a sentence, and it is usually a noun or pronoun. They are used with action verbs and are shown below in bold:

* He built **a cottage**
* The horse jumped**the fence**
* He ate **some dinner**
* I hit**him**

The complete predicate in this case is "*built a cottage*" and so on.

**Indirect Object**

Indirect objects can only be in a sentence if there is also a direct object. They indicate to whom or for whom the action of the sentence is being done. Again, the indirect object is usually a noun or pronoun.

They are shown below in bold (the direct object is now the last noun).

* He built **his family** a cottage
* She bought **them** some presents
* He gave **his girlfriend** a kiss

The complete predicate in this case is "*built his family a cottage*" and so on.

**Object Complement**

[Object complements](https://www.grammarwiz.com/object-complements-in-a-sentence.html) provide more information about or describe the direct object, and they can be nouns or adjectives.

* He built *the house* **shoddily.**
* Exciting films make *me* **happy.**
* The students elected *John* as **president of the student's union**.

So, to take the first one, the direct object is *'the house*' and it is being described as '*shoddily built*'.

The complete predicate is: *"built the house shoddily".*

**Subject Complement**

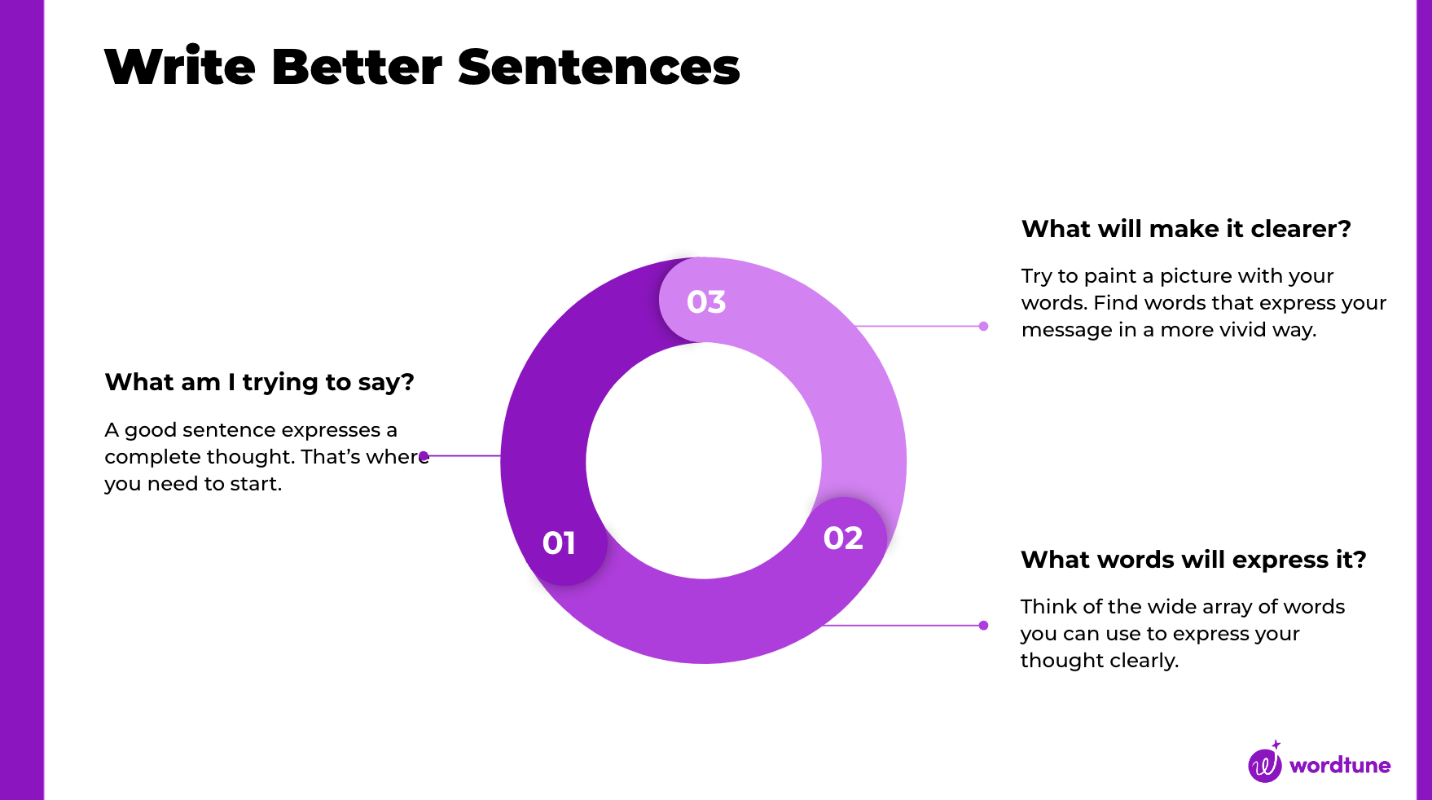
It was explained above that objects are used with *action verbs*. However, for *state verbs* (verbs that describe a state of being *e.g.* *is, see, hear, feel etc.)* [subject complements](https://www.grammarwiz.com/subject-complements-predicate-adjectives-and-predicate-nominatives.html) follow the verb.

A subject complement either renames or identifies the subject by including a noun - [predicate nominative](https://www.grammarwiz.com/what-is-a-predicate-nominative.html) - or describes the subject by having an adjective - [predicate adjective](https://www.grammarwiz.com/what-is-a-predicate-adjective.html).

* John is **a really nice** **person**
* She seems**happy**
* I was **impressed by the film**

The complete predicate in this case is "*is a really nice person*" and so on.

**TECHNIQUES OF CONSTRUCTING AN EFFECTIVE SENTENCE**



To construct an effective sentence, consider the following techniques:

* **Be specific and concrete:** Include relevant details and facts to make your sentence more engaging and informative
* **Create images:** Use descriptive language and vivid imagery to help your readers visualize the subject of your sentence
* **Evoke emotion:** Incorporate words and phrases that elicit an emotional response from your readers, helping them connect with the content
* **Make promises:** Engage your audience by offering them something valuable or intriguing in your sentence
* **Practice, practice, practice:** Improve your sentence-writing skills by regularly practicing and seeking feedback on your work
* **Emphasize the object of the verb:** Instead of always prioritizing the subject of your sentence, try highlighting the object to add variety and interest
* **Use relevant examples:** Include examples that clarify your point and remove any ambiguity for your readers
* **Vary sentence structure:** Experiment with different sentence types, lengths, and openings to keep your writing engaging and avoid monotony
* **Keep it simple:** While varying sentence structure is important, remember that clarity and efficiency are key. Sometimes, a simple sentence can be more effective than a complex one

**TECHNIQUES OF WRITING PARAGRAPHS**

**What is a paragraph?**

A paragraph is a unit of writing that consists of one or more sentences, all of which relate to the same topic. Paragraphs are essential for organizing long pieces of writing such as novels, papers, or even emails. Each paragraph should focus on a single topic.

**Parts of a paragraph**

Like other forms of writing, paragraphs follow a standard three-part structure with a beginning, middle, and end. These parts are the topic sentence, development and support, and conclusion.

1. [**Topic sentences**](https://www.grammarly.com/blog/topic-sentences/), also known as “paragraph leaders,” introduce the main idea that the paragraph is about. They shouldn’t reveal too much on their own, but rather prepare the reader for the rest of the paragraph by stating clearly what topic will be discussed.
2. The **development and support sentences** act as the body of the paragraph. Development sentences elaborate and explain the idea with details too specific for the topic sentence, while support sentences provide evidence, opinions, or other statements that back up or confirm the paragraph’s main idea.
3. Last, the **conclusion** wraps up the idea, sometimes summarizing what’s been presented or transitioning to the next paragraph. The content of the conclusion depends on the type of paragraph, and it’s often acceptable to end a paragraph with a final piece of support that concludes the thought instead of a summary.

**How many sentences are in a paragraph?**

Most paragraphs contain between three and five sentences, but there are plenty of exceptions. Different types of paragraphs have different numbers of sentences, like those in narrative writing, in particular, where single-sentence paragraphs are common.

Likewise, the number of sentences in a paragraph can change based on the style of the writer. Some authors prefer longer, more descriptive paragraphs, while other authors prefer shorter, faster-paced paragraphs.

When it comes to nonfiction writing, like [research papers](https://www.grammarly.com/blog/how-to-write-a-research-paper/) or [reports](https://www.grammarly.com/blog/how-to-write-a-report/), most paragraphs have at least three sentences: a topic sentence, a development/support sentence, and a conclusion sentence.

**Types of paragraphs**

Depending on the kind of writing you’re doing, you may need to use different types of paragraphs. Here’s a brief explanation of the common paragraph types most writing deals with.

* **Expository:**Common in nonfiction and all [types of essays](https://www.grammarly.com/blog/types-of-essays/), expository paragraphs revolve around explaining and discussing a single point or idea.
* **Persuasive:**Just like expository paragraphs, persuasive paragraphs focus on discussing a single point; however, they support opinions instead of facts.
* **Narrative:** When telling a story, a narrative paragraph explains an action or event. Each new sentence furthers or expands upon the action by providing new information.
* **Descriptive:**Also common in storytelling, descriptive paragraphs focus on describing a single topic, such as a person or an environment. Each new sentence adds a new detail about that topic.

The type of paragraph used usually depends on the type of writing. For example, if you’re writing a research paper, it would be difficult to justify a narrative paragraph.

**TECHNIQUES FOR WRITING EFFECTIVE PARAGRAPHS**

* **Unity:** Each paragraph should focus on one main idea or topic. This idea should be clearly stated in the topic sentence, which is usually the first sentence of the paragraph.
* **Coherence:** The sentences within a paragraph should be logically connected and flow smoothly from one to the next. Use transitional words and phrases to help readers follow your train of thought.
* **Organization:** Arrange your ideas in a logical order that makes sense to your readers. You can use different methods of organization, such as chronological order, order of importance, or cause and effect.
* **Development:** Use specific details, examples, and evidence to support your main idea. This helps to make your paragraph more interesting and persuasive.
* **Variety:** Use a variety of sentence structures and lengths to keep your writing engaging and avoid monotony. Varying the length of your paragraphs can also help to create a sense of rhythm and pacing in your writing.
* **Revision:** After you have written your paragraph, revise it carefully to ensure that it is clear, concise, and well-organized. Check for errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling, and make sure that your ideas are expressed clearly and effectively.

**What is an essay?**

An essay is a piece of writing on a single topic. While some essays serve to inform readers about a chosen subject, others aim to persuade readers into believing the author’s viewpoint. Essays typically include **an introduction**, **body** and **conclusion**.

**Different types of essays**

* **Descriptive essay:** In a descriptive essay, you provide readers with a description of something such as a place, person or experience. This type of essay aims to provide readers with a detailed description that they can use to create a mental picture of your topic.
* **Definition essay:** A definition essay explains a term or idea. You explain what the topic means to help readers better understand the topic overall.
* **Argumentative essay:** This type of essay allows you to investigate a particular topic. You collect and evaluate evidence, establish a position on the topic and provide concrete evidence to back up your claims.
* **Critical essay:** With this essay, you analyze and evaluate a body of text. Not only do you state the text's ideas, but you also support the claims it makes with evidence.
* **Personal essay:** Many jobs and colleges require personal essays from their applicants. For a job, a personal essay explains how you meet the job's requirements and what makes you the best candidate.

**Essay writing techniques**

* **Think about your reader:** Consider your audience and what they might be interested in reading about.
* **Use a clear structure:** Organize your essay into an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Each paragraph should have a clear topic sentence and support your thesis statement.
* **Develop a strong thesis statement:** Your thesis statement should clearly state your argument or main point. It should be specific and concise.
* **Use evidence and examples:** Support your argument with evidence from credible sources. Use specific examples to illustrate your points.
* **Be concise and clear:** Use clear and concise language to express your ideas. Avoid using jargon or overly complex language.
* **Revise and edit:** After you have written your essay, revise it carefully to ensure that it is well-organized, clear, and free of errors. Edit for grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes.
* **Use creative writing techniques:** Use techniques from creative writing, such as creating vivid imagery and using storytelling techniques, to make your essay more engaging and interesting.
* **Use transitional words and phrases:** Use transitional words and phrases to help your essay flow smoothly from one idea to the next.
* **Cite your sources:** Use proper citation methods to give credit to your sources and avoid plagiarism.

**SKILLS OF ORGANIZING EMAILS AND MEMOS**

Organizing emails and memos at work requires several skills, including:

* **Clear and concise subject lines:** Use a clear and concise subject line that summarizes the main purpose or message of your email or memo. Avoid vague or generic subject lines and use specific keywords that capture the attention and interest of your reader.
* **Logical structure:** Have a logical structure that guides your reader. The introduction should include introducing yourself, stating the purpose and context of your email or memo, and providing a brief overview of what you will cover. The body should provide the main information, arguments, or requests that support your purpose. Use headings, subheadings, or bullet points to divide your text into sections and sub-sections.
* **Professionalism:** Use professional language and tone in your emails and memos. Avoid using jargon or overly complex language. Your email or memo should reflect your respect and courtesy for your reader.
* **Brevity:** Be brief and to the point. Omit unnecessary words and use a clear format. Divide your message into brief paragraphs for ease of reading.
* **Specificity:** Be specific and provide relevant details to support your main idea. Use specific examples to illustrate your points.
* **Revision:** After you have written your email or memo, revise it carefully to ensure that it is well-organized, clear, and free of errors. Edit for grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes.

**Emails and Memos Structures**

Emails and memos have a typical structure that includes an introduction, body, and conclusion. Here are some structures for emails and memos:

**Email Structure**

* **Subject line:** Summarize the reason for writing.
* **Opening:** Start with a salutation, such as "Dear [Name]" or "Hello [Name]," depending on your level of familiarity with the recipient.
* **Body:** Keep your email brief and to the point. Use short paragraphs, headings, and bullet points to organize your information.
* **Closing:** Add a closing thought, any required action, or summarize the information. End with a closing phrase, such as "Best regards" or "Sincerely," followed by your name and contact information.

**Sample Email**

|  |
| --- |
| **Subject:** Meeting Reminder: Quarterly Review  **Greeting:** Dear team,  I hope this email finds you well. I wanted to remind you about our upcoming quarterly review meeting, which is scheduled for [**date**] at [**time**].  **Agenda:**   * Review of Q3 performance * Discussion of upcoming projects and deadlines * Team feedback and suggestions   Please come prepared with any updates or questions you may have. The meeting will be held in the [**location**], and a Zoom link will be provided for those who are working remotely.  If you have any additional agenda items you'd like to discuss, please let me know by the end of the day [**date**] so that I can add them to the schedule.  **Closing:**  Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to a productive meeting. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.  Best regards,  [**Your Name**]  [**Your Position**]  [**Your Contact Information**] |

**Memo Structure**

* **Header/Address Information:** Include the date, recipient, sender, salutation, and subject line.
* **Opening:** Explain your reason for writing and provide some context or background information.
* **Body:** Add supporting details for the reason stated in the opening. Use headings, subheadings, and bullet points to organize your information.
* **Closing:** Add a closing thought, any required action, or summarize the information. End with a closing phrase, such as "Best regards" or "Sincerely," followed by your name and contact information.

**Sample Memo**

|  |
| --- |
| **To:** All Employees  **From:** John Smith  **Date:** October 15, 2023  **Subject:** New Employee Onboarding Process  Dear Team,  I am writing to inform you about changes to our employee onboarding process. Effective immediately, we will be implementing a new process to streamline the onboarding experience for new hires.  The new process will include the following steps:   * Preparing a welcome package for new hires that includes information about our company culture, policies, and procedures. * Assigning a mentor to each new hire to provide guidance and support during the onboarding process. * Scheduling regular check-ins with new hires to ensure that they are adjusting well to their new roles.   We believe that these changes will help us to provide a better onboarding experience for our new hires and ensure that they are set up for success from day one.  If you have any questions or concerns about the new process, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.  Best regards,  **John Smith**  **HR Manager**  **j.smith@company.com**  **555-1234** |