

Unit 4: Technical Communication Skills

4.1 Interview

- It is an interaction between two or more persons for a specific purpose, in which the interviewer asks the interviewee specific questions in order to assess his / her suitability for recruitment, admission, or promotion.
- The person who answers the questions of an interview is called an interviewee.
- The person who asks the questions of our interview is called an interviewer.

Objectives of Interviews:

1. To select a person for a specific task.
2. To monitor performance.
3. To collect information.
4. To exchange information.
5. To counsel.

Types of Interview

1. **Structured Interview:** The interview in which pre-decided questions are asked by the interviewer. It is also known as a patterned or guided interview.
2. **Unstructured Interview:** The unstructured interview is one that does not follow any formal rules and procedures. The discussion is free flowing, and questions are made up during the interview.
3. **Stress Interview:** The employer commonly uses stress interview for those jobs which are more stress prone. A number of harsh, rapid fire questions are asked in this type. It seeks to know, how the applicant will respond to pressure.
4. **One to one Interview or Individual Interview:** The most common interview type, in which there are only two participants – the interviewer (usually the representative of the company) and interviewee, taking part in the face to face discussion.
5. **Group Discussion:** This involves multiple candidates and they are given a topic for discussion. They are assessed on their conversational ability and how satisfactorily they are able to have their own views and make others believe in them.
6. **Panel Interview:** Panel interview is one, in which there is a panel of interviewers, i.e. two or more interviewers, but limited to 15. All the members are different representatives of the company.
7. **Telephonic Interview:** Telephonic interview is one that is conducted over telephone. It is the most economical and less time consuming, which focuses on asking and answering questions.

8. **Video Interview:** An interview, in which video conference is being employed, to judge or evaluate the candidate. Due to its flexibility, rapidity and inexpensiveness, it is used increasingly.

4.2 Interview Skills

The Most Effective Interview Skills or Tips

1. **Research the company:** Gain basic information about the company, like vision and mission, key personnel, and recent milestones of the company.
2. **Analyze job description:** Read carefully the job description, and make a list of the points to justify how you are capable of achieving these specific duties.
3. **Brush up basics:** Whether you are a fresher or an experienced professional, you can expect certain tough questions. Brush up your subject fundamentals if you are a fresher.
4. **Be punctual:** Reach well in time to appear professional. People who arrive late are often rejected even before they appear for the interview.
5. **Be attentive:** Listen carefully to everything the interviewer is saying. This is not the time to daydream or be distracted.
6. **Speak clearly:** When communicating, speak in a calm and clear manner. Don't be in a rush to get all the answers out. If you do not know the answer, be honest about it.
7. **Maintain good body language:** A lot of communication is indeed non-verbal. So a positive and energetic body language should be maintained.
8. **Make eye contact:** When you talk to an interviewer, be sure to look at them. Don't look down or at the wall or the clock. This shows a lack of confidence.
9. **Know what and when to speak:** Keep in mind you are in a formal setting. Even if the interviewer is acting friendly, avoid giving informal answers.
10. **Do not waste time:** The interviewer probably has a very busy day planned. Do not waste their time. Be direct in your answers.
11. **Mention your strengths:** Be confident and informative when talking about your strengths but do not be arrogant or boastful.
12. **Stay motivated:** In case you feel the interview isn't going as well as you hoped, don't be sad or demotivated?. Continue to reply honestly and enthusiastically. Remember, a positive attitude can leave a good impression on the interviewer.

- 13. Show gratitude:** No matter how your interview goes, always take a moment to thank the interviewers for their time and consideration. A positive attitude and polite behaviour can go a long way in impressing people.

Factors responsible for failure in interviews

1. Arrogance
2. Lack of subject knowledge
3. Apathy
4. Lack of confidence
5. Lack of clarity
6. Lack of firmness
7. Lack of leadership skill

Preparing for the interview

1. Brush your subject knowledge
2. Know the organization and the job description
3. Prepare your suitable CV
4. Thorough knowledge on the claims made.
5. Know yourself i.e. proper self introduction, strengths, weaknesses and career objectives.
6. Proper dressing.
7. Anticipate possible questions of HR and technical round and prepare answer accordingly.

4.3 Group Discussion

Group Discussion (GD) is used to refer to an oral communication situation in which a small number of professionals meet to discuss a problem or issue to arrive at a consensus or to exchange information on a significant matter related to the function, growth or expansion of the organisation to which they belong.

Many corporate houses and even some education institutes use the GD for screening the candidates for recruitment and admission.

Importance Of Group Discuss

1. Enhances your knowledge
2. Stimulates your critical thinking
3. Discussion generates good questions
4. Improves your listening skills
5. Increases your confidence in speaking
6. Improves your leadership skills
7. Helps you understand your strength and weakness and retrieves your mistakes
8. Effective communication

Do's for GD

1. Define the topic or the issue.
2. Analyze its scope and implications.
3. Initiate and generate the discussion.
4. Listen to the views of others intently.
5. Encourage and provide reticent members to speak.
6. Intervene forcefully but politely, when the situation demands.
7. Summarize views of the others before presenting the point of view.
8. Be brief and to the point in the presentation of your views.
9. Concede to others' points of view, if they are reasonable.
10. Try to lead the group to a definite conclusion.
11. Emphasize the points you consider significant.

Dont's for GD

1. Don't be assertive in presenting the views.
2. Don't dominate the discussion.
3. Don't take over the discussion.
4. Don't make any personal remarks.
5. Don't jump to conclusions.
6. Don't speak continuously for a long time.
7. Neither raise your voice too high nor speak too softly.
8. Don't speak in monotone (unmodulated).
9. Avoid using speech mannerisms and time-fillers.

Objectives of GD

1. Collecting data.
2. Getting fresh ideas and taking inputs from a particular group.
3. Perception of common people on a particular topic.
4. Identify a solution to a specific problem or issue.
5. Selecting candidates after their written test for hiring in a company.
6. Selecting candidates for admission in an educational institute.

Types of Group Discussion

There are two types of Group Discussion, which are listed below:

1. Case Study Based Group Discussion

In such a discussion, a problem is given, and the participants are asked to resolve them. The panelists test the teamwork and decision-making skills of the participants.

The participants need to be active and updated with the things around them. It also tests the observation capability of the participants.

2. Topic-Based Group Discussion

There are few candidates in a group, where each group is given any topic.

The topic-based Group Discussion can be further classified as:

- a) **Controversial Topics:** The discussion on controversial topics becomes a debate. Such topics are given to judge the participants' temper and how they can handle the discussion without losing their calm. It shows that how a candidate can represent his/her views without arguing with other participants. The example of the controversial topics can be Triple Talaq, Reservation System, Religion equality, etc.
- b) **Knowledge-Based topics:** The participants should have a proper understanding of the topic before proceeding for a discussion. The information should be enough to convince the panelists. The essential thing is to be confident. Do not initiate the discussion if you are not aware of the topic. The examples of Knowledge-Based topics can be 'CAT vs. GATE' and 'Government jobs vs. Private jobs'.
- c) **Abstract Topics:** There is a growing trend of assigning abstract topics, i.e., topics which are vague or unclear. The abstract topics test the creativity and thinking of a candidate. It also tests the communication skills. Examples of such topics are 'Zero', 'One and one make eleven'.

4.4 Seminar/Conferences Presentation skills

.....Read from Unit 2 and Unit 3.....

4.5 Argumentation skills

- **Argumentation** is the process of forming reasons, justifying beliefs, and drawing conclusions with the aim of influencing the thoughts and/or actions of others.
- This is the thought process used to develop and present arguments.
- It is closely related to critical thinking and reasoning.
- The key concept here is "to convince the audience".

Devices Of Argumentation

Argumentative reasoning skills are required to resolve complex issues for which some devices are to be used listed below:

- **Analysis:** The speaker while presenting his theme has to analyze the arguments he has incorporated in his presentation. He has to consider the evidences given, conclusions and assumptions made.

- **Cohesion and Emphasis:** A cohesive argument is a series of logical reasons to support an idea. It is presented to convince others.
- The speaker may start by showing research points and giving some context for the issue, by doing this, he seeks the support of the listeners.
- Likewise laying **emphasis** on the key ideas is a part of the argumentative skill.

4.6 Critical thinking

- Critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally about what to do or what to believe, and understanding the logical connection between ideas.
- Critical thinking refers to the ability to analyze information objective and make a reasoned judgment.
- Critical thinking involves the evaluation of sources such as data, facts, observable phenomenon, and research findings.

Steps of Critical Thinking

1. **Identify the problem or question:** Be as precise as possible: the narrower the issue, the easier it is to find solutions or answers.
2. **Gather data, opinions, and arguments:** Try to find several sources that present different ideas and points of view.
3. **Analyze and evaluate the data:** Are the sources reliable? Are their conclusions data-backed or just argumentative? Is there enough information or data to support given hypotheses?
4. **Identify assumptions:** Are you sure the sources you found are unbiased? Are you sure you weren't biased in your search for answers?
5. **Establish significance:** What piece of information is most important? Is the sample size sufficient? Are all opinions and arguments even relevant to the problem you're trying to solve?
6. **Make a decision/reach a conclusion:** Identify various conclusions that are possible and decide which (if any) of them are sufficiently supported. Weigh strengths and limitations of all possible options.

Basic Critical Thinking Skills

1. **Analysis:** the ability to collect and process information and knowledge.
2. **Interpretation:** concluding what the meaning of processed information is.
3. **Inference:** assessing whether the knowledge you have is sufficient and reliable.
4. **Evaluation:** the ability to make decisions based on the available information.

5. **Explanation:** communicating your findings and reasoning clearly.
6. **Self-Regulation:** the drive to constantly monitor and correct your ways of thinking.
7. **Open-Mindedness:** taking into account other possibilities and points of view.
8. **Problem-Solving:** the ability to tackle unexpected problems and resolve conflicts.

4.7 Nuances

1. **Exposition:** A writing that attempts to inform the reader about something important or explain something to him/her (a process, a set of rules, the benefits of an activity, etc.). For example: business or technical writing, process writing, compare and/or contrast essays, and research-based essays, etc
2. **Narration:** writing that tells the reader about a particular event(s) that took place. Common narration writings: personal essays, short stories, novels, poetry.
3. **Description:** writing that uses vivid language to describe a person, place, or event so that the reader can picture the topic clearly in his/her mind. Fiction and poetry often use large amounts of descriptive writing, and sometimes only attempt to serve this descriptive purpose.

4.8 Effective Business Communication Competence

- **Communication competence** refers to the knowledge of effective and appropriate **communication** patterns and the ability to use and adapt that knowledge in various contexts.
- Communicative competence refers to both the implicit knowledge of a language and the ability to use it effectively. It is also called communication competence.
- In effective business communication the required competences are:

Grammatical Competence

- It refers to the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.
- The communicator should have the knowledge of the sounds and their pronunciation, the formation of words, the structure of sentences and also the way meaning is conveyed through language.
- Use of grammar rules develop a habit of thinking logically and clearly among the learners. This helps a learner to organize and express the ideas in his mind without difficulty.

Discourse Competence

- It is the knowledge of how to produce or comprehend oral or written texts in the modes of speaking/writing respectively.
- It is knowing how to combine language structures into a cohesive and coherent oral or written text of different types.
- It deals with organizing words, phrases and sentences in order to create conversations, speeches, poetry, email messages, newspaper articles etc.
- **Cohesive** refers to linking expressions, such as conjunctions or adverbial phrases, to connect ideas.
- For Example: In other words, As a result, For this
- A **Coherent** text is one that makes sense.
- For Example: "Air pollution is a serious problem. It causes health problems and harms environment."

Socio-linguistic competence

- It includes the knowledge of socio-cultural rules i.e. knowing how to use and respond to language appropriately. It indirectly means that the communicator has to know the codes of the other culture.
- Moreover, being appropriate depends on knowing what the restriction of the other culture are, what politeness indices are used in each case, what the politically correct term would be for something, how a specific attitude (authority, friendliness, courtesy, irony etc.) is expressed etc.

Strategic competence

- It is ability to recognize and repair communication breakdowns before, during, or after they occur.
- If the communication was unsuccessful due to external factors (such as interruptions); or due to the message being misunderstood, the speaker must know how to restore communication.
- These strategies may be requests for repetition, clarification, slower speech, or the use of gestures, taking turns in conversation etc.

4.9 Solution of communication problems with verbal and non verbal means.

Solution of communication problems with verbal means.

1. Think before speaking
2. Understand your audience
3. Be clear and concise
4. Vary your vocal tone
5. Pay attention to your body language
6. Be an active listener
7. Don't interrupt or redirect the conversation
8. Speak with confidence
9. Provide a suitable response

Solution of communication problems non verbal means.

1. Maintain comfortable eye contact.
2. Use your facial expressions.
3. Maintain an open body position.
4. Be considerate of personal space.
5. Mind your posture.
6. Reduce stress.
7. Look at Signals as a Whole