

Effective Communication Skills for Engineers



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Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

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Syllabus

Sr. No.	Topics	Teaching Hours	Module Weightage
1	Dynamics of Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition and process • Kinesics • Proxemics • Paralinguistic features • Importance of interpersonal and intercultural communication in today's organizations 	6	20%
2	Technical Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report writing • Technical proposal • Technical description • Business letters (sales, order, complaint, adjustment, inquiry, recommendation, appreciation, apology, acknowledgement, cover letter) • Agenda of meeting, minutes of meeting • Resume writing 	8	25%
3	Technical Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public speaking • Group discussion • Presentation strategies • Interview skills • Negotiation skills • Critical and creative thinking in communication 	6	20%
4	Ethics in Engineering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope of engineering ethics • Accepting and sharing responsibility • Responsible professionals and ethical corporations • Resolving ethical dilemmas • Making moral choices 	4	12%

5	Etiquettes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telephone etiquettes• Etiquettes for foreign business trips• Visits of foreign counterparts• Etiquettes for small talks• Respecting privacy• Learning to say NO• Time management	5	16%
6	Self-development and Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change, Grow, Persist, Prioritize, Read, Learn, Listen, Record, Remember, Asses, Think, Communicate, Relate, Dream.	3	7%

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Preface

Communication is no more limited only to academic skills but it has been accepted worldwide as a professional skill, life skill and one of the 21st century skills which facilitates successful survival in professional and personal lives. Today, communication is a force that is capable of nurturing as well as destructing lives. The word ‘communication’ not only encompasses the use and understanding of effective and appropriate use of language but also encloses apt attitude, values, and mindset while processing a particular situation.

In view of the increasing importance and need for developing the right set of skills and attitude, the present book makes an effort to sensitise the budding engineers towards various facets of communication by incorporating topics that would help them to build the right set of skills, mindset and attitude. The book is divided into six parts which focus on the basics of communication, writing and speaking skills, career skills, manners and etiquette expected from a professional, life skills and values that are needed to be fostered.

Each part assists students in journeying from lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) to higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). The journey of learning is made interesting through relevant images, exhibits, authentic illustrations, quotes, data and figures from various sources. The exercises too, assess various levels of learning i.e., from ‘Remembering to Creating’. They also offer a scope of teamwork, fieldwork and application of various concepts. Many of them are a kind of self-help activities that would help students garner confidence and understand themselves better.

The authors hope that, much like their previous books, this book too, will be a handbook for teachers as well as students.

**Parul Popat
Kaushal Kotadia**

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About the Authors

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Kaushal Bharatbhai Kotadia is an Assistant Professor working at NA & TV Patel Arts College managed by the Charutar Vidya Mandal, Vallabh Vidyanagar. Having got the experience of teaching the students coming from the rural background with the vernacular medium as well as those from the urban area with English medium background, he has got the knack of making things easier and interesting for all students.

Part A

Rudiments of Communication

1

Dynamics of Communication

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- define the concept and detailed meaning of communication.
- explain the process of communication.
- discuss the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication.
- define the concept and detailed meaning of non-verbal communication.
- classify different components of non-verbal communication.
- infer varied non-verbal signals and the meanings they are likely to convey.
- demonstrate the understanding of interpersonal and intercultural communication.

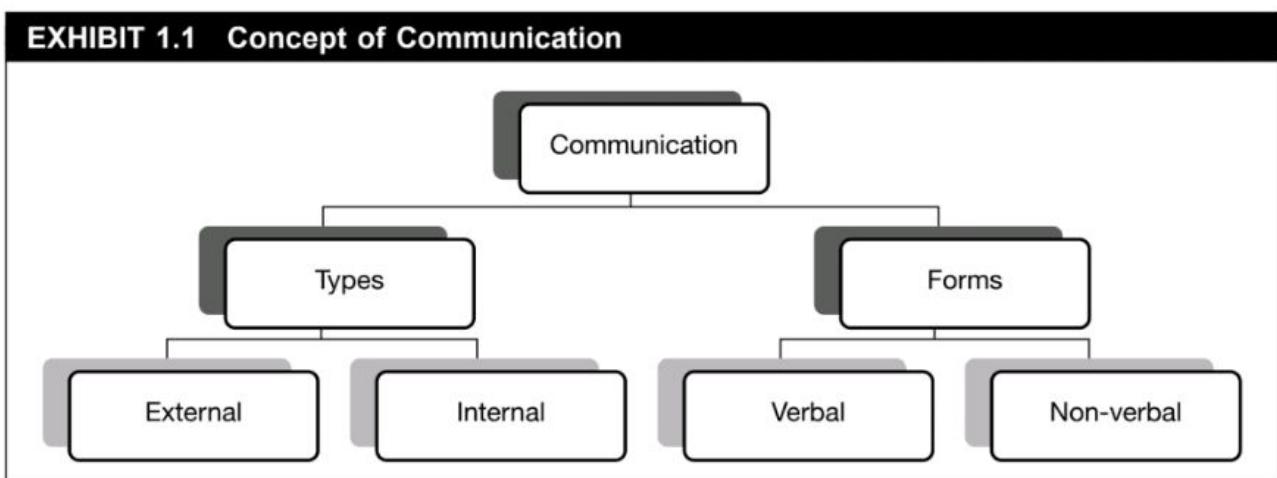
1.1 INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

Communication that must have begun with the birth of mankind, has acquired a considerable significance in today's world. It is used in day-to-day life by everyone; the literate or the illiterate, the rich or the poor, the employed or the unemployed, the young or the old, man or woman. From a peon to the president, everyone communicates. Nevertheless, the difference lies in forms, methods and styles. Some communicate to survive, whereas others to succeed. In a way, life and communication are two sides of the same coin. We communicate by talking, listening, reading, writing, drawing, making gestures and what not. Actually, we communicate 24 × 7 round the year either consciously, subconsciously or unconsciously.

Simply putting, communication means to exchange or share our thoughts, feelings, ideas, information, etc., through various means and channels. It is a two-way traffic, i.e., giving and receiving. The word communication has been derived from the Latin word 'communis' that means to share or make common.

1.2 DEFINITIONS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is undertaken to influence the other parties' thoughts, views and conduct. Today, communication has become the most important thing in our life spreading across all the walks of life. Effective communication is all pervasive, whichever field one chooses, true success is not possible without communication. It is defined in various ways. A few definitions for communication are given below.



Louis A. Allen: ‘Communication is the sum of all things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding.’

Newman and Summer: ‘Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinion or emotion by two or more persons.’

Chappel and Read: ‘Communication is any means by which thought is transferred from one person to another.’

Keith Davis: ‘Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another.’

I. A. Richards: ‘Communication is the exchange of meanings between individuals through a common system of symbols.’

On analysing the above definitions, the following common things can be learnt which help us learn about communication in a better way.

1. It requires a sender and a receiver.

For communication to take place, both sender and receiver are required.

1.1 A person himself or herself can be both sender and receiver. For example, thinking about something.

1.2 Two or more persons can also be involved in a communication in the following manner.

One to one (two friends talking to each other).

One to many (a manager addressing a group of employees).

Many to one (workers presenting their problems to the manager).

Many to many (two groups of workers arguing on an issue).

“‘To communicate effectively, we must all realise that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.’ —Tony Robins.

2. It is a transmission or exchange of ideas, opinion or emotions between individuals.

The sender and receiver exchange information or opinion on various matters. This exchange can be personal or professional. Here, the proper understanding of what to transmit, when to transmit, whom to transmit and how to transmit plays a vital role as the success of communication depends on the correct answers to all the questions.

3. The transmission is done through a common system of symbols.

Passing of information can be in the form of signs or symbols, which are understood, by both the sender and the receiver. The signs or symbols can be different languages, non-verbal actions, pictures or any coded language. The transmitted information should result into understanding on the part of the receiver and he or she should be able to give some feedback to the sender.

4. It involves a systematic and continuous process.

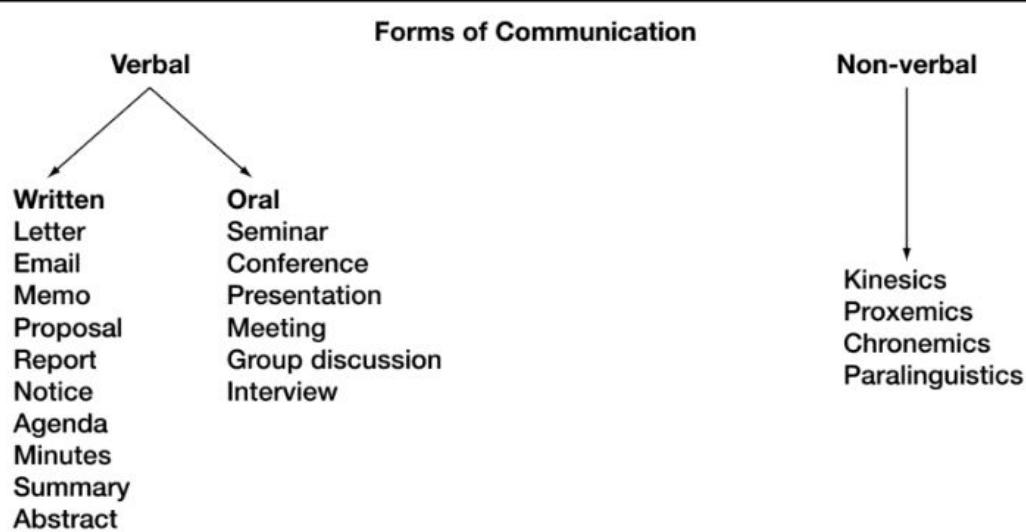
Communication is a process. In other words, whether one is listening, speaking, reading or writing and in any form, communication is more than a single act. It is a chain of events. The process has five steps as listed below.

- The sender has an idea.
- The idea becomes a message.
- The message is transmitted.
- The receiver receives the message and tries to decode.
- The receiver responds and sends feedback to the sender.

5. It is a process of speaking and listening, reading and writing.

It implies the forms of communication. Communication can be done in various forms. As a sender, one can do it either by speaking or writing and as a receiver, it can be done by listening or reading. Even non-verbal signals and signs are also very much used. Thus, communication has various types and forms. Exhibit 1.2 would make types and forms very clear.

EXHIBIT 1.2 Forms of Communication



1.3 PROCESS/CYCLE OF COMMUNICATION

Communication, many believe, is very simple. However, it is not so. It is a complex process as it has several steps. It is also known as cycle of communication.

1.3.1 The Sender has an Idea

The sender is the person who starts communication. He or she has an idea that he or she wants to send to the receiver. The major burden is on his or her shoulder. The sender should be very clear about what to convey, whom to convey, why to convey and how to convey. The clearer the sender is about the idea, the better would be the communication.

For example, a branch manager wants to inform the employees about the new incentive policy of the company.

1.3.2 The Idea Becomes a Message

In order to convey his or her idea, the sender puts the idea in the form of a message. In other words, the message is the encoded idea. The formulation of the message is very important. An improper choice of words or symbols can be harmful for communication. Thus, the message should be based on the requirements and ability of the receiver. The choice should depend on the subject, the purpose, the audience and the ability of the sender as well as the receiver. It should leave a desired impact on the receiver. This can happen only if the message is encoded properly.

For example, the manager does the necessary homework and learns the ins and outs of the incentive policy. He or she keeps in mind the employees while formulating the message.

1.3.3 The Message is Transmitted via Channel

When the idea becomes the message, it is sent to the receiver. Here, the medium or channel is very important. There are number of ways to send one's idea across. While constructing the message, the sender should give a thought to the medium that is proper for the receivers. The transmission channel and the medium depend on the message one wants to convey and on factors such as the location of your audience, the need for speed and the situation. If the message is sent in written form, the sender should be careful about the characteristics of a good written message.

For example, keeping in mind the number and level of employees, the manager would choose the mode of communication. If the number of employees is 10, he or she would prefer to call all of them to the meeting room and would make a small presentation on the topic. He or she may also give some written material for study purpose.

1.3.4 The Receiver Receives it and Tries to Decode

The receiver receives the sent message. He or she tries to understand the message. Many factors play an important role in decoding of the message. If the message is of the level of



'The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.'
—George Bernard Shaw

the receiver and interest to him or her then he or she will decode it successfully. If there is any problem during the transmission of the message or the receiver is not in a mood to receive it, he or she fails to decode it properly. The decoding of the message is successful only when the receiver understands what the sender wants to convey.

For example, all the employees would try to understand the incentive policy as it would be of their benefit. However, each one of them might receive it in different ways. Some may welcome it and will have positive outlook, whereas some will have doubt with regards to its benefit to them.

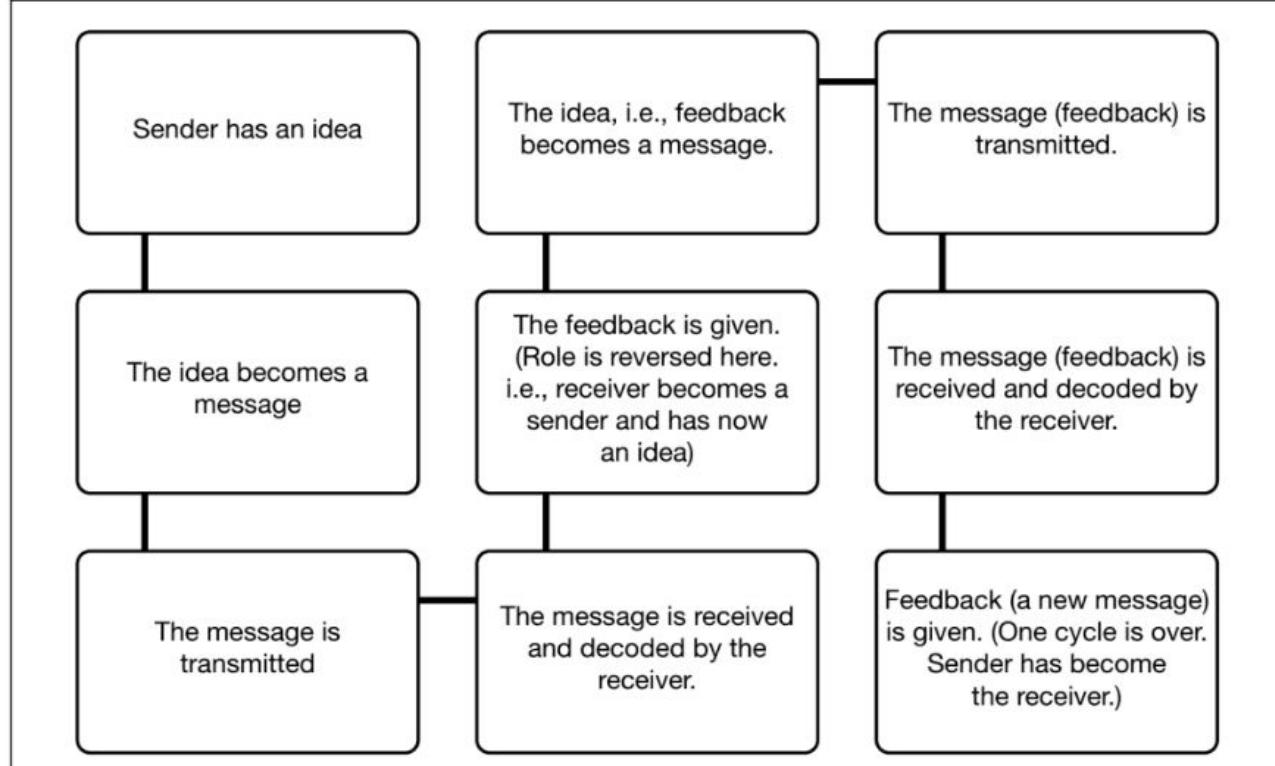
1.3.5 The Feedback is Given

Feedback is probably the most important stage in the process of communication. It is the final link in the chain of communication. It reverses the role, i.e., here, the receiver becomes the sender and the sender becomes the receiver. Thus, feedback is the response given to the sender.

It can be naturally positive or negative, deliberately positive or negative, real or fake. Positive feedback encourages the sender and negative feedback can discourage or gives some indication to change the way of formulation or transmission of the message. In whatever manner the feedback is given, one should filter it and receive it objectively.

Feedback is also a kind of communication. It can be in the form of a smile, a long pause, a spoken comment, a written message or some sort of an action. Even a lack of response is

EXHIBIT 1.3 Process of Communication



1.8 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

a feedback. Effective communication takes place if there is feedback. Lack of feedback may result in miscommunication.

Sometimes, deliberately positive or negative feedback is given. At other times, it can also be partially positive or negative. The intentions behind all the feedback can be either good or bad. For effective communication to take place, feedback should be taken at all the levels.

For example, while the presentation is going on, facial expressions, nod and other gestures and postures are the feedback that the manager receives. After the presentation, queries raised by the employees are a feedback that informs the manager about the attitude and understanding of the listeners.

Thus, communication is the primary element in our day-to-day life. With the help of communication, one can influence and impress others. It can be intentional as well as unintentional. As it keeps on changing and growing, it is dynamic in nature.

1.4 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION AND ITS COMPONENTS

As discussed, we learn and communicate many things either by listening or reading, speaking or writing but we do learn and communicate things without using words as well. Research shows that only a small portion of communication is carried out by using words and majority of communication is done without using words.

Any interpersonal communication done without using words is called non-verbal communication. Non-verbal signals indicate people's emotions and intentions.

It can be intentional or unintentional. In other words, sometimes, people are conscious about their non-verbal communication, sometimes, they unknowingly communicate something. Therefore, one needs to study and understand it so that, it can help him or her to convey right message and understand the message correctly too.

You would agree that following situations communicate something. Look at the situations, and confirm their meanings by applying them to the situation and people around you.

Sr. No.	Situation	Meanings likely to be conveyed
1.	The distance between a sender and a receiver in face-to-face communication.	Intimacy in the relationship.
2.	Listening to someone with folded arms	Defensive attitude
3.	Sitting erect while listening	Attention and/or interest
4.	Wide open eyes on listening something	Surprise or shock
5.	Your regularly reaching late to office	Disinterest
6.	Your rising tone while calling someone	Anger/excitement
7.	A student biting finger nails during an exam	Nervousness/tension
8.	Your generally reaching in time for a meeting	Punctuality

“

'The biggest communication problem is, we do not listen to understand. We listen to reply'.

—unknown



Sitting erect while listening shows listener's interest



Biting nails while doing something indicates nervousness or doubt

1.10 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

However, you should remember that every act of communication can be understood in the right manner if seen in the context. Non-verbal signals too should be seen and understood. For example, scratching head or itching nose may suggest thinking or doubt. However, it may be the case that the person has dandruff or some other problem with the scalp. Hence, non-verbal communication too is contextual.

Another important thing is that, it can vary from culture to culture. What is acceptable in one culture may not be acceptable in another. For example, ways of greeting, *Namaste* is more acceptable in India, whereas shaking hands is more used in western countries. Thus, one needs to learn and be conscious about cultural characteristics of people while communication.

Non-verbal communication can be classified in the following ways:

- A. Kinesics
- B. Proxemics
- C. Chronemics
- D. Paralinguistics

1.4.1 Kinesics

Kinesics

Body movements or body language are part of kinesics. These movements include gestures, postures, facial expressions and eye contact.

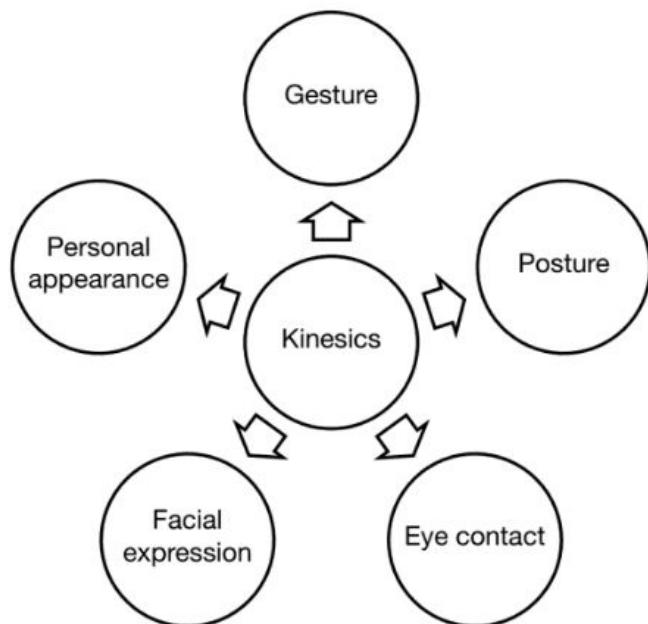
Gestures

They are hand or head movements. They include:

- a. **Emblems:** These gestures serve the purpose of words. Some emblems are common all over the world, whereas in some cases meaning vary. For example, open hand held up means '*stop*' everywhere in the world. However, forming a circle by joining the thumb and the first finger means '*good*' in India but means '*worthless*' in Germany.
- b. **Illustrators:** Gestures that explain the verbal message through sign or symbols are called illustrators. For example, showing two fingers while referring to two things and stroking stomach while one is hungry.
- c. **Affect displays:** They reveal the state of mind. They can be displayed through the emotions that are seen on the face. They include happiness, sadness, anger, joy, shock, surprise, fear, terror, disgust, interest, etc.
- d. **Regulators, i.e. Use of non-words:** Non-words like *uh-huh*, *mm-mm*, *hummm* are clues that inform the speaker whether you agree or disagree. For example, *hummm* followed by a full stop shows agreement, whereas *hummm* followed by a question mark shows doubt or disagreement.
- e. **Adaptors:** Non-verbal behaviours like scratching heads or biting nails are called adaptors.

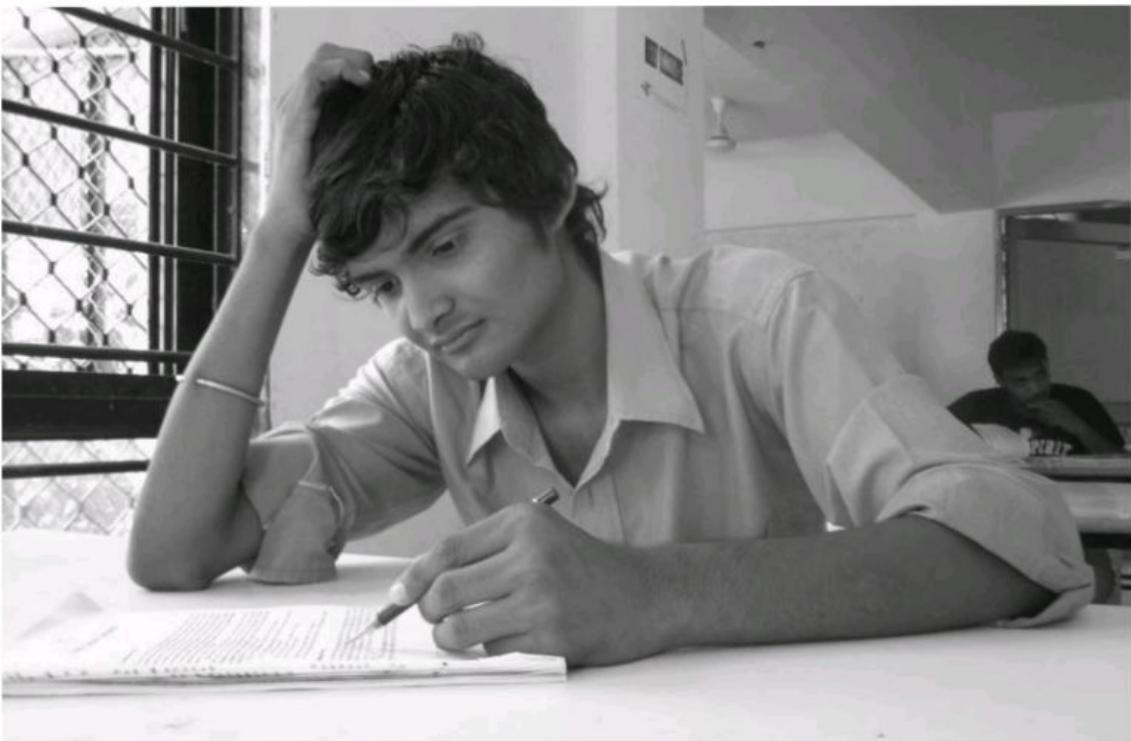
“Effective communication also requires a mutual understanding of needs, desires and wants.”
—Kirk Hezlett

EXHIBIT 1.4 Forms of Kinesics

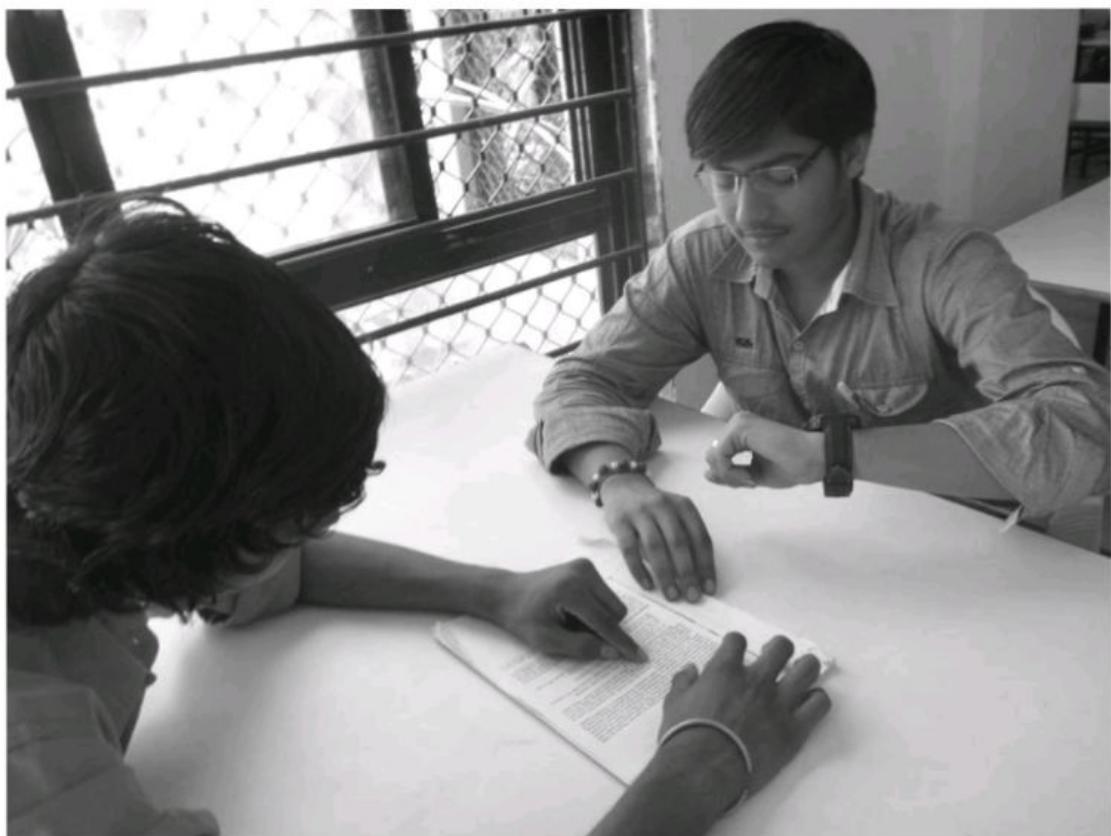


Sr. No.	Gestures	Meanings likely to be conveyed
1.	Fiddling with pen or ear lobes	Inattentiveness
2.	Yawning while listening to someone	Disinterest in the talk
3.	Scratching your head	Doubt or thinking something
4.	Looking at watch	Disinterest in the talk
5.	Nodding your head	Agreement or disagreement
6.	A handshake	Warmth, lack of interest, superiority, trust, etc.
7.	Frowning with crossed arm	Indicates disapproval
8.	A weak handshake	Inferiority or disinterest
9.	A warm hug	Friendliness
10.	A patronizing pat on the head	Support and encouragement
11.	A controlling grip on your arm	Dominance/authority

Gestures and their meanings are universal as well as culture specific. Universal gestures include hand signals such as waving for good-bye, the “V” for victory sign, **the “high five” signals victory**. Taking a culture-specific example, the zero shape made by the fingers stands for “OK” in the United Kingdom but is considered a vulgar expression in South American cultures.



Scratching head while reading or writing is an indicator of thinking process



Looking at watch while listening to someone conveys disinterest in the talk

“

'Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools, because they have to say something'
—Plato



A controlling grip on your arm shows dominance or authority

Postures

Your style of sitting and standing is known as posture. Your postures too say more than the words you speak.

Sr. No.	Postures	Meanings likely to be conveyed
1.	Sitting with crossed legs in a meeting	Defensiveness
2.	Sitting with folded arms in a seminar	Disinterest or doubt
3.	Sitting in a slouched manner	Disinterest or tired
4.	Steeple fingers while speaking	Confidence
5.	Sitting/standing in erect position	Attention or interest
6.	Scratching head	Thinking
7.	Biting nails while listening to somebody or thinking	Nervousness or tension
8.	Sitting at the head of the table	Power
9.	Walking impatiently with head down	Upset and annoyance
10.	Avoiding eye contact with others	Lack of confidence or a lie
11.	Sitting squarely on a chair	Paying attention
12.	Leaning slightly forward	Paying attention



Sitting with crossed legs during formal communication shows defensiveness



Sitting with folded arms in formal communication may suggest disinterest

“‘The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.’ —Mark Twain



Sitting in a slouched manner indicates tiredness/disinterest



Steeple fingers while speaking indicates confidence



Avoiding eye contact with others suggests lack of confidence or lie



Leaning slightly forward is a sign of paying attention



'The way we communicate with others and with ourselves ultimately determines the quality of our lives.'
—Anthony Robbins

Facial Expression

Face is the mirror of heart. Your feelings get reflected on your face. One can send as well as receive feelings through facial expression. A friendly smile and a calm face generate positive waves, whereas raised eyebrows and frowning eyes generate negative waves. Facial expressions include smile, frown, raised eyebrow, yawn or sneer, anger, disgust, fear, surprise, etc.

Sr. No.	Facial expressions	Meanings likely to be conveyed
1.	Pulling a face	Disappointment or unhappiness
2.	Raising an eyebrow	Doubt
3.	Smiling	Approval and/or welcome, friendliness
4.	Concentrating hard on something/somebody	Troubled mind
5.	Smiling (if appropriate) as a greeting or parting	Positive

Eye Contact

Eye contact is important for both the sender as well as the receiver in face-to-face communication. It sends and receives feedback. It expresses emotions and gives instructions. Not maintaining eye contact indicates lack of confidence on the part of speaker and disinterest on the part of listener.

Sr. No.	Types of eye contact	Meanings likely to be conveyed
1.	Not looking at a person	Lack of confidence or disinterest
2.	Unblinking eye gaze	Indicates disapproval
3.	Reduced pupil size	Doubt about the content being delivered
4.	Deliberately avoiding eye contact	Dislike or falsehood
5.	Normal eye contact	Confidence and/or interest
6.	The direct stare of the speaker	Honesty or openness
7.	Downward glances	Modesty
8.	Eyes rolled upward	Sign of fatigue

Personal Appearance

Personal appearance too is an important aspect of non-verbal communication. It is your external image perceived by people. When you meet people or speak in public, your appearance not only contributes to building your image but also the image of the organization you represent. Generally, appearance makes people assume certain things about you and your organization. Your unshaven face, unpolished shoes and unironed clothes, untrimmed nails create a negative impression, whereas nicely combed hair, appropriate dressing make you likeable among the people you work with.

1.4.2 Proxemics

The term 'Proxemics' deals with the study of space and how it makes a person to feel comfortable or uncomfortable. It was coined by an anthropologist named 'Edward T. Hall' in his book 'The Hidden Dimension'. In this, Hall discusses about space, how people structure it and how the space influences the communication. According to him, each of us has a 'space bubble' which varies in size depending on our cultural values. Hall classifies these 'space bubbles' or distances into four types (each with a close phase and a far phase) and they are described below.

Intimate Distance: (Touching-1½ feet)

This is the distance where two persons hug, comfort and protect each other. It is used for very confidential communications. It also conveys a unique level of comfort shared by two persons. You are likely to feel a great deal of discomfort or embarrassment with the third person who enters into the intimate zone because you are not comfortable with him or her.

Personal Distance: (1½-4 feet)

This distance is reserved for family members, close friends and affable colleagues. The space is little more than the intimate space and touching is permissible. Here too, if a stranger enters, it makes the person to feel uncomfortable.

Social Distance: (4-12 feet)

This space is reserved for business deals while meeting new people as well as meeting a group of people known to you. Here, the situation decides the distance. People interacting in this distance are aware of the presence of one another but they do not disturb each other unless they are unfairly near. However, the preference of distance again may vary across cultures.

Public Distance: (12-25 feet or farther)

Public distance keeps a person outside the circle of involvement. This distance is kept for public speakers and for public officials. Political rallies, motivational seminars and award functions are the instances of such distance.

Thus, proxemics is the space maintained by a person between himself and his fellows which he builds in and around his office. Primarily, space is the means by which a person conveys who is important and who has a certain privilege. How much space has been given to you and how much space you can access in your office defines your power.

For example, the boss will have a larger space for his/her cabin. S/he does not require anybody's permission to go anywhere in the office. On the other hand, depending on the designations, employees in an office are given space. Some may work in a separate offices whereas, some may work in cubicles. The peon will have a stool or chair as his or her space. Also, in a meeting, which space is reserved for whom, tells the importance of the particular member.

Power of space works in various professional activities like meeting, seminar, conference, etc. The knowledgeable and most important person for the occasion occupies a place on the dais in seminars and conferences whereas others are off the dais. When you are off the dais, the row that you have given or chosen by you also suggests your position and interest respectively. Moreover, in a meeting, the one who heads the meeting sits at the head of the table. Your distance with the person sitting at the head of the table shows your importance in the meeting.

More nearer you are, the more important role you are likely to play and the more farther you are, the less important is your voice.

1.4.3 Chronemics

The term ‘Chronemics’ deals with the study of the use of time in communication. Time is perceived differently in different parts of the world. Based on this perception of time, cultures are categorised into two types namely, polychronic and monochronic.

Polychronic Culture

The people who follow polychronic culture do not require the activities to be scheduled in advance. They are more flexible and may engage in several activities at a time. They do not find anything wrong in watching TV while cooking food or checking WhatsApp messages during a meeting. African, South Asian and Arab countries follow polychronic system of time. The qualities of polychronic people are listed below.

- They are more relationship oriented people and being late for a meeting does not matter much.
- They value relations more than a meeting.
- They also believe in building relationships through meeting.
- They change their schedule and plan easily and they are very flexible with it.
- They tend to do many things at a time.
- They may complete the task as per their perception and not as per the authority’s expectations.

Monochronic Culture

The people who follow monochronic culture believe in scheduling their activities more strictly. They prefer to do only one thing at a time. For example, time is very precious in the United States. Therefore, the Americans plan the utilisation of time. According to them, time can be bought, saved, wasted and also measured. They view time as a commodity and as a result of this, the Americans and other monochronic cultures place a paramount value on schedules, tasks and getting the job done. Countries like Canada, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, Turkey, South Korea, Taiwan, Japan and Jamaica fall under the category of monochronic culture. The qualities of monochronic people are listed below.

- They are usually on time for meetings.
- They try to complete the assigned task in time.
- They plan in advance and follow the schedule.
- They are not very flexible with their time.
- They prefers to do one thing at a time.

One’s orientation to time (polychronic or monochronic) influences his or her social realities and how he or she interacts with others. Confusion is likely to creep when people from two different cultures happen to work in a group. Owing to different perceptions of time, people of one culture are likely to feel disrespected and misunderstood. Thus, it is necessary to learn your counterpart’s orientation of time. Knowing different breeds and higher tolerance makes it easier for one to adapt to the need of others.

1.4.4 Paralinguistics

The study of the role of non-verbal clues is called paralinguistics. It is about various aspects of voice. This includes volume, speed of voice, intonation, tone, pronunciation, articulation, pause, etc.,

Volume

It is not just, what you say; it is *how* you say it. When you whisper something, it conveys that you want to hide something. When speaking something aloud, you want it to be heard by all. Moreover, the way you whisper or say things aloud conveys something. While addressing an audience, if your volume is not loud enough, it suggests lack of confidence or shyness. While talking to someone on phone your speaking loudly is suggestive of your lack of good manners and etiquette as well as irritable.

Speed of Voice

The speed of voice should be such that the listener can follow everything that you are speaking. If you speak very fast, they may not connect the previous idea with the next one. Moreover, in live talk they cannot even rewind. Similarly, if the speed is very slow then also it is likely that listener loses connection.

Intonation

It tells the listener if the message is in the form of a question, statement or exclamation. The emphasis laid on a particular word in a particular manner would decide the meaning.

Read the given sentence aloud and every time emphasize the word/s in italics. You will see that though the words remain the same, the meaning changes.

He has not invited me to the party this year. (Someone else has invited me to the party.)

He has not *invited* me to the party this year. (I have come without an invitation.)

He has not invited *me* to the party this year. (I have not been invited but others have been.)

He has not invited me *to the party* this year. (I have been asked to come for different work.)

He has not invited me to the party *this year*. (I have not got invitation this year only. Last year, I had it.)

Tone of Voice

The tone tells about the attitude of the speaker. The tone can be sarcastic, aggressive, critical, nervous, monotonous, disappointed, friendly, enthusiastic, vivid or persuasive.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the first thing that people notice during conversation. For correct pronunciation, knowledge of phonetics is essential. A person should know the difference in the pronunciation of various sounds like /e/ and /æ/, /ɪ/, /ə/ and /u:/, //, etc.,



'Of all of our inventions for mass communication, pictures still speak the most universally understood language.' —Walt Disney

Bad /bæd/
Bed /bed/
Go /gəʊ/
Paper /peɪpə/
What /wɒt/
Vote /vəʊt/

Articulation

Articulation is the clarity in your voice. You should speak in such a way that all the words are understood by the listener. If you speak sloppily or mispronounce the words, the listener easily gets distracted and sometimes the meaning also gets changed. Clearly articulated message indicates competence and confidence.

Pause

The break a person takes while speaking and its duration is known as pause in paralinguistics. Different meanings are conveyed by pauses. A pause can have two different functions:

1. **A temporary vocal inaction:** indicates the speaker's uncertainty, hesitation, tension or uneasiness.
2. **A pause:** shows favour or disfavour, agreement or disagreement.

Punctuation Marks

Punctuation marks are very helpful in written form. Appropriate use of punctuation marks brings clarity to the content and prevents confusion. Given hereunder are some instances that show the complete change in meaning with the change in the place of punctuation mark.

Instance one:

- Woman without her man is nothing.
- Woman: without her, man is nothing.
- Woman, without her man, is nothing.

Instance two:

**વર્ગિનારને મોબાઇલ વાપરવો નહીં,
મોબાઇલ વાપરનારને દંડ થશે.**

**વર્ગિનારને મોબાઇલ વાપરવો,
મોબાઇલ વાપરનારને દંડ થશે.**

EXHIBIT 1.5 Components of Para-linguistics

Volume: Loudness or softness of the voice
Speed of voice: The pace with which something is spoken
Intonation: Rise and fall in the voice
Tone of voice: Feelings added while speaking
Pronunciation: The manner in which a word is uttered
Articulation: Clarity in the voice
Pause: A break taken while speaking
Punctuation marks: The use of conventional symbols and spacing in communication

Instance three:

रोको मत, जाने दो

रोको, मत जाने दो

It is rightly said, '*Action speaks louder than words.*' Thus, your style of sitting and standing, smiling and speaking say more than the words you are speaking. Sometimes people do not know what they convey through their body language, hence, convey wrong message unintentionally. Thus, they should know and understand what the body language means and communicates. If they know the meaning of a body language, they can even make their communication effective and understand the communication of others in a better way. Sometimes, the body language conveys the opposite meaning deliberately.

For example,

Clapping enthusiastically despite not enjoying the speech

Smiling at a person though you are angry with him/her

1.5 IMPORTANCE OF INTERPERSONAL AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN AN ORGANISATION

Tremendous changes had been seen and experienced in the last few years in the way we live, work and communicate. The term 'Global village' is becoming a reality for a multitude of people. Advancement in technology and liberalisation has helped companies to develop their business all over the globe. As new opportunities are evolving continuously, business



'The two words information and communication are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.' —Sydney Harris

and work are no more restricted by borders. Nowadays, it is very common to see that Indian businessmen or representatives of a particular organisation visiting foreign countries for trade purposes and vice versa. It is also very common to find employees of one organisation staying in a particular country for months or years for some project purpose or people from two different cultures working within an organisation. During negotiations and meetings, they require to meet their counterparts and sign necessary deals. The success of the negotiations and meetings depend not only on the mutually beneficial terms and conditions but also on the way it is communicated to the opposite party.

Communication between two or more individuals is called interpersonal communication. When the communication is done between people from two different cultures, it is called intercultural or cross-cultural communication. Effective interpersonal and intercultural communication help an individual or an organisation to survive, grow and prosper. The undercurrents of interpersonal and intercultural communication can be either advantageous or adverse and the same can always be felt in every organisation.

The denotative meanings of the terms 'Cross-cultural' and 'Interpersonal communication' are very simple but their effective use is extremely complicated. These can have an immense impact on the international workforce and international business operations. According to a report by Industrial Management, about 60–80 per cent of cross-cultural mergers fail and the key reasons are cultural factors and the lack of preparation among them. It is stated that, a considerable amount of time and money are spent on legal and administrative issues but potential difficulties deriving from cross-cultural differences and hidden cultural rules are often neglected. Varied values, attitudes and behaviour between the home and the host culture create misunderstandings and dissatisfaction between the client and the organisation in international business. The ill effects of such issues can be subsided or resolved through competent interpersonal and intercultural communication.

Thus, there is no exaggeration in stating that the desired outcome of the business can be achieved through strategic communication. Dealing with a foreign counterpart especially requires effective cross-cultural and interpersonal communication.

Guidelines for Effective Intercultural Communication

Effective cross-cultural communication requires an understanding of different cross-cultural decision making styles, perceptions of hierarchy, attitudes toward the concept of time, etc.

Intercultural Concept of Authority and Decision Making Styles

Every culture has a different concept of authority and decision making styles. While dealing with people from different culture, an understanding of their concepts and styles helps you to understand them better and foresee things and plan accordingly.

For example, people in Australia, Israel, Netherlands believe that the job of the authority is to facilitate but not to dominate. It is not wrong to disagree with the boss. On the other hand, in the countries like China, India, Japan, Korea it is inappropriate to contradict the boss or senior people. The notions of hierarchy differs across cultures thus, resulting in different decision making styles. For example, in countries like Japan or Sweden, a lot of people are involved in the decision making process. It takes a long time. However, once it is fixed, it does not change. As a contrast, in countries like the USA, Russia or India, decisions are made quickly. If required, they change it too.

Intercultural Perceptions of Hierarchy

Hierarchy is all about the structure of the positions and the respect shown by juniors towards seniors. It is also about how the authority is granted and how it is used and understood. It also includes the perception of expectations of one from the other.

Hierarchy is valued more in non western cultures whereas, equality is valued more in western cultures. Hence, when a westerner visits a non westerner for business purpose, he or she should not get startled when he or she is honoured and should accept the honour respectfully. Similarly, when a non westerner meets a westerner, he or she should get ready to be treated equally.

In Japanese culture, people show high respect for their senior or team leader and they expect the same from their juniors or subordinates. Titles are used while addressing the seniors. The boss or seniors are expected to have most of the answers. As a contrast, in the USA, one can address the boss by his or her name.

Intercultural Attitudes toward the Concept of Time

You must have noticed the difference in the concept and utility of time among your family members and friends. A similar thing can be noticed, when you start working across cultures. You will be many times surprised to see the way how your international clients manage their meetings and other activities. The study of people's concept of time is called chronemics. Different cultures have different interpretations of being on time. One should be aware about the concept of time, prevailing in different cultures.

For example, people from the United Kingdom, Germany, South Africa, USA, Australia and Switzerland may prefer to have a detailed agenda of their meetings and regular milestones throughout the life cycle of a project. Flexible approach frustrates them. According to them, time is equal to money therefore, they value the time a lot. The characteristics of the people who value their time the most are listed below.

- They do one thing at a time.
- They value time and punctuality.
- They focus on logic, efficiency and speed.
- They demand that deadlines are met.



'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.' —Nelson Mandela

People from India, Pakistan, Italy, Argentina, Brazil and Greece have a flexible approach towards time. They do not always take the deadline seriously. They do not prefer to be the slave of time. Some of the characteristics of such people are missing the deadline, rescheduling the meeting or being late for the meeting. The characteristics of the people who have a flexible approach towards time are listed below.

- They do multiple things at a time.
- They believe that deadlines are guidelines.
- They value relationship more than time.

Intercultural Concept of Greetings and Meetings

A misunderstanding occurs when people of different cultures do not have any idea about the cultural values of their counterpart. For example, greetings between a North American and a Latin American person. The people of Latin America prefer less spatial proximity during meetings and greetings. Hence, probably they find that the North Americans are rude as they do not maintain much distance during the interaction.

'Dealing with the Japanese can be a painstaking experience', says Harsh Goenka. When they say yes, it need not always mean the end of the negotiation. One needs to have patience with them and just cannot offend them. The Americans, on the other hand, have a direct approach. The British are more concerned about the protocol and about what is the right thing to do. The Germans are more mechanical and process driven.

Today, the world has not only become a global village but also a global market. Therefore, it is dangerous to ignore the fact that the people of different cultures have different beliefs regarding gestures, postures, time, space, paralinguistic aspects which they consider appropriate in a given situation. The necessity for effective intercultural communication can be felt in every aspect of a business.

RECAP

Concept and Meaning of Communication

- Communication means to exchange or share our thoughts, feelings, ideas, information, etc. through various means and channels.
- Communication happens 24×7 round the year consciously, subconsciously or unconsciously.
- It is a two-way traffic, i.e., giving and receiving. Thus, it is a process.

Non-verbal Communication

- Interpersonal communication that is not expressed verbally is called non-verbal communication.
- It can be intentional or unintentional.
- It is contextual.
- It can vary from culture to culture.

Non-verbal communication can be classified in the following ways:

- Kinesics: The study of body movements
- Proxemics: The study of space in communication
- Chronemics: The meaning conveyed by the use of time
- Paralinguistics: The study of the role of non-verbal clues while speaking

Inter-Personal and Inter-Cultural Communication in an Organisation

- Communication between two or more individuals is known as interpersonal communication.
- Communication between people from two different cultures is known as intercultural communication.

During intercultural communication, the sender and the receiver should learn the following things.

- Concept of authority and decision making styles.
- Perceptions of hierarchy.
- Attitudes toward the concept of time.

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

Communication in Real Life

A teacher teaching maths to seven-year-old Vyom asked him, “If I give you one apple and one apple and one apple, how many apples will you have?”

Within a few seconds, Vyom replied confidently, “Four!”

The dismayed teacher was expecting an effortless correct answer, *three*. She was disappointed. “Maybe the child did not listen properly.” – she thought.

She repeated, “Vyom, listen carefully. If I give you one apple and one apple and one apple, how many apples will you have?”

Vyom had seen the disappointment on his teacher’s face. He calculated again on his fingers. However, within him he was also searching for the answer that will make the teacher happy. His search for the answer was not for the correct one, but the one that will make his teacher happy.

This time hesitatingly he replied, “Four.”



'Communication is everyone's panacea for everything.' – Tom Peters

The disappointment stayed on the teacher's face. She remembered that Vyom liked strawberries.

She thought maybe he does not like apples and that is making him lose focus.

This time with an exaggerated excitement and twinkling in her eyes she asked, "If I give you one strawberry and one strawberry and one strawberry, then how many will have?"

Seeing the teacher happy, young Vyom calculated on his fingers again. There was no pressure on him, but a little on the teacher. She wanted her new approach to succeed.

With a hesitating smile young Vyom replied, "Three?"

The teacher now had a victorious smile. Her approach had succeeded. She wanted to congratulate herself.

But one last thing remained. Once again she asked him, "Now if I give you one apple and one apple and one more apple how many will you have?"

Promptly Vyom answered, "Four!"

The teacher was aghast. "How Vyom, how?" she demanded in a little stern and irritated voice.

In a voice that was low and hesitating young Vyom replied, "Because I already have one apple in my bag."

Communication is Very Much Like What Happens in a Story

- We try to convey something to get the desired response.
- However, that does not happen always. Either the message is not expressed suitably or is not received appropriately.
- Like the teacher, when we feel that receiver does not understand what is said, we try to find out the right reason.
- Much like the teacher, an effort is made to inform the same thing differently.
- If everything goes well, we succeed. In addition to the above stated things, one very important thing to remember and learn from the story about communication is

When someone gives you an answer that is different from what you expect, do not think they are wrong. There shall be an angle that you may not have thought about yet.

Apple's CEO's Apology

When Apple CEO Timothy D. Cook apologised to Apple customers in China for problems arising from Apple's warranty policy, he promised to rectify the issue. In a negotiation research study, Professor William W. Maddux of INSEAD and his colleagues compared the reactions

to apologies in the United States and in Japan. They discovered that in ‘Collectivist cultures’ such as China and Japan, apologies can be particularly effective in repairing broken trust, regardless of whether the person apologising is to blame.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com>

EXERCISES

Read the following statements. State if they are true (T) or false (F). Justify your answer in about 150 words

1. Communication is a two-way traffic.
2. Communication is a 24×7 activity.
3. Feedback is always given verbally.
4. The meaning of non-verbal signals remains the same in every situation.
5. For an effective communication, common system of symbols is needed between sender and receiver.
6. Eye contact is important for sender in face-to-face communication only.
7. The time taken to respond to a message or a mail conveys something.
8. It is not words but the tone that gives meaning to a sentence.
9. Feedback should be filtered and received objectively.
10. Communication is a complicated process.

Observe, analyse and answer in about 150 words

1. Observe someone (a businessman, a political leader or an actor) delivering a speech. Analyse the features of verbal communication and non-verbal communication and the interrelation between them.
2. Recall your last experience of listening to someone in a formal situation. What difficulties did you face in receiving and decoding the message? Make a list of the reasons for each difficulty. Think of the measures that you need to take to be a better listener.
3. Share your experience of giving feedback to someone. Have you always given genuine feedback? Justify your answer offering appropriate reasons.
4. Which component of non-verbal communication has affected your communication positively? When and how?
5. Which component of non-verbal communication has affected your communication negatively? When and how?

Answer the following questions:

1. What is ‘communication’? Explain the process of communication with the help of a diagram.
2. Define the term ‘communication.’ Explain communication cycle with diagrammatic presentation in detail.
3. Explain the process of communication.
4. Discuss the main elements/components of non-verbal communication.
5. Explain the term ‘paralinguistic features’ with reference to a presentation and exemplify various paralinguistic features.
6. ‘You cannot communicate...you communicate just by being.’ Explain the statement in light of ‘kinesics’..
7. Discuss the importance of interpersonal communication by citing suitable examples.
8. Explain the care that one should take during intercultural communication.

Part B

Writing Skills

2

Report Writing

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- state Concept and Importance of Report Writing.
- determine the Structure of a report.
- identify various types of report and their content.
- illustrate the steps to follow while writing a report.
- prepare a report on the topic/situation known to them.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A report is something written for a particular audience with a particular purpose which is supported by adequate evidence. The need for skilled report writing is greatly increasing in today's rapidly changing world.

Any written communication is meant to be read and so is the case with report writing as well. There are no absolute rules for report writing. They have to be adapted to the need of the reader. However, the thumb rule is that a good report is as succinct as possible and caters to the need of the authority that commissioned it.

2.2 OBJECTIVES OF REPORT WRITING

1. To inform about the recent development in the company/product/market
2. To show the potentialities of a new product
3. To show the feasibility of a plan
4. To persuade the management for various facilities/grievance-redressal

2.4 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

Before writing a report, think about it from the reader's perspective to have as much clarity as possible of the work you are required to do. Following questions can help:

Learn about the readers...	Questions for you before you start the word.....
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What do they want to know?2. How much do they like to know?3. Why do they need this report?4. Which type of presentation would be more appropriate from the readers' point of view?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What am I asked to do?2. What do I need to know to carry out the task?3. How many details do I need to know to prepare the report?4. From where would I get the information?5. How should I collect the information?6. How should I organize the information?

2.3 PARTS OF A TECHNICAL REPORT

Reports are designed for quick and easy communication of information. Moreover, they are written for selective people and vary in purpose. Depending upon the requirement of a report, optional parts are included in the report.

Compulsory Parts	Optional Parts
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Title Page2. Introduction3. Body of the Report4. Conclusion/Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Acknowledgement2. Letter of Transmittal3. Table of Content4. List of Abbreviations and/or Glossary5. Executive Summary/Abstract6. Bibliography7. Appendices

2.3.1 Compulsory Part

Title Page

- **Meaning:** Title is the name of the report, which becomes its identity. The title should be precise and clearly indicate what the report is all about. It should also inform about the writer/s and the recipient/s. The writer should avoid fancy fonts, effect or clipart in the title.
- **Content:** The title of the report

The details of the person/agency to whom the report is submitted

The details of the person/agency submitting the report

The month and year of the submission

- Example

<p>A Report</p> <p>on</p> <p>Canteen Automation System: A Desktop Application</p> <p>submitted to</p> <p>Department of Computer Engineering</p> <p>Anand Engineering College,</p> <p>Sector - 21, Gandhinagar</p> <p>by</p> <p>Joshi Pooja (110120117010)</p> <p>Mehta Malay (110120117011)</p> <p>March, 2013</p>

Introduction

- **Meaning:** It is, in a way, shorter version of the report. It gives the background information that clarifies the context of the report. In a way, it is the first acquaintance with the purpose of the report.
- **Content:** Problem statement
 - Purpose of the report
 - Reason for researching the issue discussed in the report
 - The scope of the report
- **Example:** Given below is an example of introduction from the report on:
Smoking and Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults

Introduction

Nearly all tobacco use begins during youth and young adulthood. Tobacco contains nicotine, a highly addictive drug that causes many young people to progress from smoking occasionally to smoking every day.

Each day, more than 3800 youth under age 18 smoke their first cigarette .Today nearly one in four high school seniors and one in three young adults under age 26 smoke.

Most young people do not consider the long-term health consequences associated with tobacco use when they start smoking. Because most high school smokers are not able to break free from the powerful, addicting effects of nicotine, about three out of four will smoke in adulthood. Among those who persist in smoking, one-third will die about 13 years earlier than their non-smoking peers.

The causes and the consequences of tobacco use among youth and young adults by focusing on the social, environmental, advertising and marketing influences that encourage

youth and young adults to initiate and sustain tobacco use. For the first time, through this report, tobacco data on young adults as a discrete population have been explored in detail. The report also highlights successful strategies to prevent young people from using tobacco.

This report may be a useful resource for organizations and individuals that work in the area of youth tobacco prevention and control. Identifying factors associated with youth smoking is a key to developing tobacco prevention and cessation efforts that focus on those students most in need of intervention.

Body of the Report

- **Meaning:** It gives the meaningful division of the information presented in the report. There cannot be a common style or strategy for this purpose. It can vary based on the report and the person presenting it.
- **Content:** This includes all the necessary information such as information, analysis, graphs, charts, tables, figures, etc. that would help a reader in understanding the report. There are no hard and fast rules for the content arrangement. However, it should be logically and meaningfully arranged and adequately explained.
- **Example:** A college is situated on the outskirts of Gandhinagar. Many students of this college regularly commute from Ahmedabad. However, they face great challenge during commuting. The authority is thinking of starting a transportation service for them. Given below are points likely to be included in the body of a feasibility report to be prepared on **Starting Transportation Service for the Students commuting from Ahmedabad**
 - The current scenario
 - The need and importance of transportation service for the students commuting from Ahmedabad
 - Challenges to overcome
 - Availability of different options
 - Comparative analysis of these options
 - Recommendations

Conclusion

- **Meaning:** As the name signifies, conclusion refers to the main take away points. It is of great interest of all specially to seniors/decision and policy makers as they would be more interested in findings than the process.
- **Content:** Outcome of the work done
 - Summary of the main points
- **Example:** Given below are conclusions included in a Research Report on B-schools in India and Placement Scenario

Conclusions

The report punctures the myth that a B-school degree guarantees a fat pay packet. Following are the conclusions:

- a. The average annual salary offered to students during placements in close to 40 per cent of B-schools across the country is less than Rs 3 lakh.
- b. Students from just 1 per cent of the 4500 institutes across the country the top business schools that command Rs 12–15 lakh as course fees are offered an annual salary upwards of Rs 9 lakh during campus placement.
- c. 60–80 per cent of students in around 52 per cent of the B-schools are offered an average salary of Rs 3–5 lakh.

It is thus concluded that B-schools that focus on quality and forging tie-ups with industry will continue to do well; however, the rest will have to reorient or shut shop.

2.3.2 Optional Parts

Acknowledgement

- **Meaning:** It is a kind of thanks giving to those who helped the report writer/writer in one or the other way in the process and completion of the work. This person/s may be either from the parent or other organization/s.
- **Content:** Names and designations of all the persons with a brief description of the nature of help.
- **Example**

Acknowledgement

It gives us immense pleasure and satisfaction in presenting this report of System Design Practice undertaken during the 5th semester of B. Tech. This dissertation would not have been possible without combined efforts and guidance of many.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to several people, without whose help and encouragement, it would be unfeasible for us to have carried out the desired work.

Our sincere thanks go to our Head of Department Prof. S. D. Patel and our guide Prof. S. M. Mehta who gave us an opportunity to undertake such a challenging work. We are grateful to them for their guidance, encouragement, understanding and insightful support in the development process.

We are also grateful to Tech Solutions Ltd for providing us an opportunity to develop the project in the company.

Our sense of gratitude also goes to Mr M. K. Parmar, the canteen owner for allowing us the trial of the system.

Last but not least, many thanks to Mann, Hiya, Riya, Rajvi, Kahan, our friends whose support always instilled enthusiasm in us.

Joshi Pooja
Mehta Malay

Letter of Transmittal

- **Meaning:** It is a letter to the person that commissioned the report. It is the formal handover of the work done.
- **Content:** A salutation
 - Reference to the work assigned
 - Major findings
 - Acknowledgement of help
 - Expression of gratitude
- **Example**

Letter of Transmittal

March 1, 2013

Dr SD Patel

Head

Department of Computer and IT

Anand Engineering College

Gandhinagar (Gujarat)

Dear Sir

We have great pleasure and satisfaction in submitting the report on Canteen Automation System as a partial fulfilment to the Gyan Technological University curriculum.

This application is about reducing manual labour in canteen management. It allows a software user to handle customers' orders and let the administrator do inventory control for canteen. The system maintains record of all the items available for sale, items sold as well as their quantity. It can also provide the analysis of the items sold highest and lowest as well.

Thus, this system is very user friendly and can permit a canteen owner to use all the functions of the system effectively to speed up his/her work and making maintenance an easy job.

We hope that this system will be useful for proper canteen management.

With regards

Yours truly

Joshi Pooja

Mehta Malay

Table of Contents

- **Meaning:** If a report is longer than 10 pages or so, it is useful. It is the chronological arrangement of the titles of the content of the report. It helps a reader to find out which information is available on what page. It is done after the completion of the report.

- **Content:** Headings and subheadings
Appendices with title and number
Correct number against each heading
- **Example:** Given below is an example of the Table of Contents of the report on *Canteen Automation System: A Desktop Application*

Table of Contents	
Certificate	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose	2
1.2 Scope	3
1.3 Objective	4
1.4 Technology and Platform Review	5
2. Project Management	6
3. Software Requirement Specification	9
4. Implementation	11
5. Testing	12
5.1 Testing Plan	14
5.2 Test Cases	16
6. Conclusion	19
7. Future Extension	21
8. Bibliography	23

Abstract

- **Meaning:** It is an essence of the report. It helps the reader decide whether to read the entire report or not. Though, it appears first in the report, it is written in the last. In a way, it is an overview of the report that outlines the main points.
- **Content:** Context of the report
 - Purpose of the report
 - Significant findings
 - Major conclusions
 - Important recommendations
- **Example:** Abstract of Canteen Automation System: Desktop Application

Abstract

The application picked up for this project is a Canteen Automation System-Desktop Application. This application allows a software user to handle customers' orders and allows

administrator to do inventory control for canteen. The system maintains information about all items available for sale.

It also allows the admin user to change and modify the item details anytime according to the availability and addition of the item. The user can view daily sales report and monthly sales report. The same information can be further used to increase profit by analysing the same in terms of most ordered item and least ordered item and thus making necessary changes in quality, taste and of course prices.

It does not only maintain information about items but it also records details of each order in database. Order details include order id, items included in order, price for each and quantity of each item in order. Application provides easy user interface to understand the system.

Thus, the system can prove a boon to every canteen owner helping him/her know the taste of the visitors and boost the sale as well as to speed up his/her work and make maintenance easy.

List of Abbreviations and/or Glossary

This section is a brief explanation of the meanings of certain technical terms and abbreviation. It is particularly helpful if the writer is addressing a multiple audience that includes readers who may not be familiar with abbreviations or technical vocabulary used in the report. It is always presented in an alphabetical order.

- **Content:** List of technical terms and abbreviations used in the report writing.
- **Example:** Given below is a list of some of the words used in computer and IT fields.

Acronym	Full Form
ADC	Analog-to-Digital Converter
ADF	Automatic Document Feeder
ADSL	Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line
AGP	Accelerated Graphics Port

Bibliography

The bibliography is the list of all the published sources referred to in the report in an alphabetical order. There are different styles of using references and bibliographies.

- **Content:** List of the resources, documents or content referred to while preparing the report.
- **Example:** Given below is a list of work used for some work in Mechanical Engineering.

Bibliography

1. Anthony, F. M., D. R. McCarter, et al. (2003). "Frit bonding: a way to larger and more complex silicon components." Proceedings of SPIE 5179: 194.

2. Barraza, J., D. Shu, et al. (1994). "Front-End Support Systems for the Advanced-Photon-Source." *Nuclear Instruments & Methods in Physics Research Section a-Accelerators Spectrometers Detectors and Associated Equipment* 347(1–3): 591–597.
3. Barraza, J., D. Shu, et al. (1995). "Support Systems for Optics in the Experiment Stations at the Advanced Photon Source." *Review of Scientific Instruments* 66(2): 1630–1632.

Appendix (Plural: Appendices)

It provides a convenient way to convey information that is too bulky to be presented in the body of the report. It includes maps, large technical diagrams or charts, computations, supporting documents, etc. Each appendix must be referred to in the report. One should never include something as an appendix if it is not discussed in the main body. An appendix should be given a number (or letter) and title as well as referred to by number (or letter) at the relevant point in the text.

- **Content:** Technical data, tables, sketches, charts, leaflets, questionnaire, etc.
- **Example**

Appendices

- a. Example Plan Drawings
- b. Mathematics for Landfill Operations
- c. Field Measurements for Landfill Operations
- d. Sample Written Examination Questions—Operator's Module
- e. Sample Written Examination Questions—Manager's Module

2.4 REPORT WRITING: THE STEPS TO FOLLOW

All reports need to be clear, concise and well structured. The key to writing an effective report is to allocate time for planning and preparation. With careful planning, the writing of a report will be much easier. The researcher/report writer should consider how long each stage is likely to take and prepare the timeline for the different stages. The time for final proof reading and checking should never be forgotten. The essential stages of successful report writing are described hereunder.

Step One: Understanding the Purpose and Scope of the Report

This is a very important stage as it brings clarity to the report writer regarding what and why of the report. A report writer needs to understand the requirements of the report. If there is any query, it should be resolved through the discussion with the authority that commissioned the report.

Step Two: Data Collection

Having got the clarity about the purpose of writing the report, the report writer needs to gather the needed information. There are various sources and methods of data collection. Thus, the source and method of data collection solely depend on the type and purpose of

2.12 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

the report. Before the data collection starts, the report writer should be very clear about what s/he wants, in what quantity and in what form as well.

Step Three: Organization of the Material

After collecting the necessary data, the crucial task is its appropriate organization. However accurate and relevant data is, if it is not organized in a suitable manner, it will not yield appropriate analysis and hence would lose its relevance.

Step Four: Analysis of Material

After organizing the material, the most important task is to analyse the material. The analysis offers the conclusions/recommendations on the basis of the facts and evidences that the report writer has collected. The report writer, here, will also learn if there are any limitations or flaws in the evidences.

Step Five: Report Writing

Having completed the organization and analysis, the report writer starts writing the report. However, a report cannot be written in the sequence as it appears to the reader in its final form. It is advisable to write the summary and content page at the end when the report writer knows exactly what is to be included. The report writing should be done in direct and precise language. One should be as clear as possible. Following suggestions would be of good help:

- Introduce the main idea of the chapter/section/paragraph
- Explain and expand the idea, defining any key terms
- Present relevant evidence to support your point(s)
- Comment on each piece of evidence showing how it relates to your point(s)
- Conclude your chapter/section/paragraph by either showing its significance to the report as a whole or making a link to the next chapter/section/paragraph

Step Six: Reviewing and redrafting

It is good to start early without waiting for the work to complete. There should be three to four rounds of revision. Refinement is a necessary step for a qualitative report. This can be done with the help of peer feedback. Steps for refinement:

- Get the first draft of your report much in advance, at least before 15 days or a month
- Once the report is ready, leave it aside for a couple of days or a week
- After that, go through it critically making necessary changes
- Get it peer reviewed

Step Seven: Presentation

However good and nutritious a dish is, if it is not presented in an attractive manner, it does not get its full value. Thus, all the efforts put in the previous steps would go in vain if the content were not presented in a proper manner. Following is the checklist to go through to make an effective presentation of the report:

2.5 CHECKLIST FOR A GOOD REPORT

1. Title is precise.
2. The abstract makes sense.
3. All the relevant questions are answered in the introduction.
4. The structure of the report is meaningful.
5. Headings and subheadings are properly written and numbered.
6. The format is consistent and appropriate.
7. Conclusions are logically drawn.
8. Wherever necessary, graphics, tables, charts and illustration are employed.
9. Tables and diagrams are relevant, labelled and drawn accurately.
10. The report is informative and learner-centric.
11. Each page is numbered properly.
12. It is proofread in terms of spelling, grammar and factual data.
13. There is an adequate use of white space in the report.
14. Generous spacing is kept between two parts.
15. Bullets and numbers are appropriately used.
16. Formal language is used.
17. Consistency is maintained in numbering chapters, sections and appendices.
18. All the sources are acknowledged and referencing is done correctly.

2.6 FORMATS OF A REPORT

2.6.1 Standard Format

This is generally used in long reports. However, depending on the requirement, it can also be used in short reports. In this kind of report, the report begins with the title page. Other components, i.e., standard parts remain the same. Optional parts can be used as per the requirement.

2.6.2 Letter Format

A letter report is a report written in the form of a letter. It should carry all the qualities of a business letter. While drafting a report in letter format, all the standard parts are a must. However, optional parts can be used as per the requirement.

For example, Feasibility report on selecting a suitable site to set up a new plant of Honda Company in Gujarat is written in letter format.

2.6.3 Memo Format

A memo report is a report in memorandum format. Memo reports are used to communicate short reports where a formal technical report is not required. They use only the standard parts of a report. If there are any supporting documents, they are included in the form of an appendix/appendices.

For example, The progress report on Ahmedabad – Gandhinagar Metro Rail Project is written in memo format.

- **Date:** Always includes the date on which the memo was written. The date is never abbreviated. Unacceptable forms are: 9/1/03, Sept. 1, 2013, or 1 SEPT 13. The acceptable forms for writing the date are business style (September 1, 2013) or (1 September 2013.)
- **To Line:** As most memos are filed for reference, complete information may be needed at a future date by another person. The ‘To line’ includes the full name of the person to whom the memo is being sent. As a courtesy, the complimentary title—Ms, Mr, Dr—may precede the name. For clarity, the business title and often the department follow the name. If the writer plans to send the memo to several people, they are listed alphabetically (if they are equal in status in the organization) or by rank (with the highest ranking person first).
- **From Line:** The ‘From line’ includes the full name, title and department of the writer.
- **Subject Line:** The subject line concisely gives the memo’s subject. It contains sufficient information so that the recipient has a clear idea of the message’s purpose.
- **Copy to Line:** This includes the names of the people who would be receiving the copy of the memo. Send copies to them who would be directly affected by the memo or need to know the progress of correspondence.

2.7 TYPES OF REPORT

In business or organizations, occasions frequently arise when an engineer or an executive is called upon to write a report. There is no limit to the subjects on which a report can be written. Given below are some of the major types of report.

- 2.7.1 Progress Report
- 2.7.2 Incident Report
- 2.7.3 Trip Report
- 2.7.4 Inspection Report
- 2.7.5 Feasibility Report
- 2.7.6 Investigation Report

2.7.1 Progress Report

These are usually short reports. They keep the management informed about the progress of a project under way.

Content of the Report Includes

- Reference to the planned work
- Details of the work done
- Information about the problems encountered
- Further plan to complete the project
- Discussion about the action taken

Ahmedabad – Gandhinagar Metro Rail Project was proposed in 2005. There is another change in the alignment of metro rail route, which has confused the real estate developers. The developers believe that flip-flop on the route creates fluctuation in the real estate market. The Real Estate Developers' Association of Ahmedabad has assigned you the task of preparing a progress report of the project in memo format. Do the necessary investigation and prepare a report to be submitted to the Chairman, Developers' Association of Ahmedabad.

Developers' Association of Ahmedabad

Triveni Arcade, Navrangpura

Ahmedabad

Date : 20 June 2014
 To : Mr P Chandarana, The Chairman, Real Estate Developers' Association of Ahmedabad
 From : Mr Mahesh Rana, Architect
 Subject : Progress Report on Ahmedabad – Gandhinagar Metro Rail Project

As per the decision taken in the meeting to discuss the fluctuation in the real estate market due to the flip-flop on the route of Ahmedabad – Gandhinagar Metro Rail Project on 12 June 2014 and responsibility given to me to prepare the progress report of the stated project, I present my report as under:

Ahmedabad – Gandhinagar Metro Rail Project was undertaken with a view to providing safe, fast and ecofriendly rail based mass transit services to the people of Gujarat at an affordable rate. The project aims to integrate with AMTS, BRTS, Railways and other modes of public transport system.

Mooted in 2005, the project has not seen any construction due to some problems. On investigation, following things have been revealed:

Problem Faced

1. The state government has given approval but the central government has not given the permission.
2. The project is delayed due to the changes not only in terms of the detailed project report (DPR) but also in terms of project cost and route alignment.
3. It is learnt that previous route alignment for the phase one between Ahmedabad and state capital was not economically viable and technically feasible.

Future Course of Action from the Government

1. With the new Prime Minister from Gujarat, it is now expected that the project would soon get the approval from the centre.
2. The new route alignment may be a criss-cross section between East-West and North-South regions of Ahmedabad city.
3. A fresh survey will be conducted with the help of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), reputed for its expertise in constructing the metro rail.

A request is already made to the Government of Gujarat to reveal the 10-year vision on development of the project.

I hope that very soon there will be some revelation from the government.

(Mahesh Rana)

2.7.2 Incident Report

Introduction

An incident report is also known as an occurrence report. It describes an event that has happened. It explains how and why it has happened, shows its effect and at the end suggests the future course of action. The future course of action may include corrective or precautionary measures.

Content of the Report Includes

- What happened? i.e., description of the incident
- Where did it happen? i.e., location of the incident
- When did it happen? i.e., the time of the incident
- Why/How did it happen? i.e., logical reasons for the occurrence
- What could be done? i.e., future course of action in terms of corrective or precautionary measures

Write a report on the serious accident in a factory (standard format)

A Report on

A Serious Accident in the Factory at Kutch

Submitted by

Mr Chandrakant S Patel

Manager

Submitted to

The Directors

Raheja Group of Companies

Mumbai

May 2014

Introduction

In accordance with the instructions given to me by the Directors in the letter dated 1 May 2014 to report about the accident that occurred in the factory in Kutch, I not only visited the fatal site but also talked to people working there and the civil engineer who had done the last inspection.

Details of the incident

I regret to inform that on 27 April 2014, the roof and northern wall of the premises, which contained the company's warehouse, collapsed all of a sudden around 4 pm. In this accident one security guard was crushed under the debris, whereas two were badly injured. The injured were immediately rushed to the nearby hospital.

The collapse was completely unexpected. The building was recently inspected by a civil engineer who was of the opinion that the minor cracks visible on the wall were no sign of any threat.

An architect was called to find out the cause of the collapse. According to him, the fundamental structure of the building was defective. The foundations were not deep enough and as a result the walls could not stand the continuous vibrations caused by heavy machinery. The earthquake would have also played the role in weakening the foundation and the result was the sudden collapse.

In addition to every possible assistance to the kin of the deceased security guard, the company has already paid Rs 1,00,000 as compensation as per the company's policy.

It is estimated that the damage to the structure of the building will approximately come around to Rs 5,00,000. The damage to the machinery totals up to Rs 20,00,000 and the damage to the raw material amounts to Rs 1,50,000. However, we are fully insured against all these risks and insurance claims will be filed in a week. All the insurance companies have been already informed about the details of the accident.

Conclusions

I would suggest that once again a thorough inspection of the building be carried out and on the basis of the suggestions received necessary changes should be done in the structure.

I hope this report would help the company have a clear picture of the accident and decide the future course of action.

2.7.3 Trip Report

Such reports are written, whenever people leave their usual place of work to do something at other places. Trip reports can be of various types. They include

- a. Installation or modification of equipment
- b. Assistance on field project
- c. Attendance at a conference, seminar or workshop
- d. Repairs to a client's equipment or field instrument

Content of the Report Includes

- What the report writer set out to do? i.e., purpose of the trip
- When and where was the assignment given? i.e., duration and location of the trip
- What was actually done? i.e., result of the action
- What could not be done, and why? i.e., problems encountered and/or follow-up action
- What else was done? This is important as people on field trips often find themselves doing things beyond the purpose of their assignment. For example, a technician visited a lab of a college to repair some computers for which the complaint was received. However, during his visit to the college, he was to repair computers of the other lab as well. Thus, the time and energy spent on this extra work should also be recorded and described in the report.

Write a report on the seminar/workshop attended by you (standard format)

A Report on
A Two-Day Workshop on
LabVIEW
 Submitted by
 Aarini Pandya
 130130731003
 Bio-Medical Department
 ME Programme
 Submitted to
 Prof Ragini Patel
 Department of Communication Skills
 As a partial fulfilment to the tutorial work
 March 2014

Introduction

With virtual instrumentation, engineers use graphical programming software to create user-defined solutions that meet their specific needs, which is a great alternative to fixed-functionality traditional instruments. Additionally, virtual instrumentation capitalizes on the ever-increasing performance of personal computers. For example, in test, measurement and control, engineers have used virtual instrumentation to downsize automated test equipment (ATE) while experiencing up to a 10 times increase in productivity gains at a fraction of the cost of traditional instrument solutions.

About the Software LabVIEW

National Instruments LabVIEW is an industry-leading software tool for designing test, measurement and control systems. By using the integrated LabVIEW environment to interface with real-world signals, analyse data for meaningful information and share results, participant

can boost productivity. Because LabVIEW has the flexibility of a programming language combined with built-in tools designed specifically for test, measurement and control, participants can create applications that range from simple temperature monitoring to sophisticated simulation and control systems. No matter what project is, LabVIEW has the necessary tools to make you successful quickly.

About the Workshop

With a view to enhancing students' skills, a two-day workshop on LabVIEW was organized by the Biomedical Engineering Department of Anand Engineering College, Gandhinagar on 12th-13th October, 2012.

It was attended by ME 1st semester and 3rd semester BME students. Students from other colleges like UV Patel College of Engineering, DE Engineering College too took advantage of this workshop.

The Principal, Dr Gauri Sharma, Anand Engineering College, Gandhinagar offered her valuable guidance and support in organizing the LabVIEW workshop. Prof N. D. Shastri, Head, Bio-Medical Department and other staff members contributed by planning and designing the workshop in an effective manner.

The panel of experts included Mr Vyomesh Pujara, Assistant Technical Manager of Nanda Instruments LabVIEW and Mr Pratik Parekh, Senior Application Engineer of Raheja Instruments Products and Mentor Graphics Products.

The specific objectives of the workshop were:

- To use LabVIEW to create applications
- To understand front panels, block diagrams and icons and connector panes
- To use built-in LabVIEW functions
- To create and save programs in LabVIEW to use them as subroutines
- To create applications that use plug-in DAQ devices.

The workshop covered the topics like Setting up Hardware, Navigating LabVIEW, Troubleshooting and Debugging Vis, Implementing a VI and Developing Modular Applications.

The feedback was extremely positive. The presentation of the background paper and the range of contributions from external experts were particularly valued. Participants also enjoyed the opportunity of being able to share and discuss practical issues with the experts.

The resources, provided to the participants, were very much valued. Keeping in mind the request of the students it was decided to make resource material available on the GECG website. The workshop ended with the students' expectations to have more such workshops.

Appendices

- a. Detailed Programme
- b. List of Participants
- c. Expenditure and Income Statement

2.7.4 Inspection Report

An inspection report is similar to a field trip report as here too the writer has usually gone somewhere to inspect something. Situations requiring an inspection report to be written include

- a. Examination of a building to determine its suitability as a storage facility
- b. Inspection of construction work, such as a culvert, bridge, building or road
- c. Checks on manufactured items, to assure they are of the required quality
- d. Inspection of goods ordered for a job, to check that the correct items and quantities have been received

Content of the Report

- What was the inspection for? i.e., purpose of the inspection
- Who assigned to the job? i.e., the authority for whom it was performed
- When and where was the inspection done? i.e., time and location when the report was carried out
- What was the result? i.e., the findings or conclusions
- What next? Recommendations

Write a report on the inspection of the language lab/physics lab/computer lab of your college. Use letter format.

Mr Pranoy Mukharjee
Technical Education Department
Mahatma Gandhi Bhavan
Gandhinagar

Date: 5 May 2014

The Commissionarate of Technical Education
Technical Education Department
Mahatma Gandhi Bhavan
Gandhinagar

Sub: A report on the functioning of DELL in Anand Engineering College, Gandhinagar

Dear Sir

With reference to the last meeting held on 15 January 2014 by the Technical Education Department regarding the measures to be taken to improve the English language proficiency of engineering students and as one of the measures, it was decided to provide DELL to all

the Government Engineering Colleges. I was entrusted with the responsibility to visit Anand Engineering College, Gandhinagar and prepare an inspection report.

I visited Anand Engineering College, Gandhinagar on 3 May 2014 and had an interaction with the Principal, Lab Coordinator as well as the students. Following are the outcomes:

Observations

- The DELL has been fully functional from April 2014.
- The lab is used not only for regular courses offered to students as a part of curriculum but also to train students in courses offered by SCOPE.
- On an average 120 students visit the lab and have advantage of ICT-based education.
- The students are happy with the way they are exposed to English language learning.

Issues

- The college, however, has only one regular faculty member teaching communication skills. Thus, it is difficult for the college to help students have the maximum advantage of the lab.
- The faculty of English is not well versed with the technical knowledge regarding hardware and software management. Hence, she finds it difficult to manage technical problems.

Measures

- To meet the students' requirements and for the better functioning of the DELL, it is suggested to appoint two more faculty members in English.
- To help the English faculty member with the management of the lab, it is suggested to provide a lab assistant.

I hope this report would be useful to the Technical Education Department in forming future policy and take necessary action.

Yours truly

(Pranoy Mukharjee)

2.7.5 Feasibility Report

This is probably the most common kind of technical writing. A feasibility report can be defined as the preliminary study that is being conducted to examine whether a certain project is capable of being done in a practical and useful way or in other words in an efficient and effective way. The outcome of this study helps in the decision whether to proceed with the project or not. To look at the thing from a different perspective, the report examines the possible problems or challenges likely to be faced and measures or alternative solutions to arrest the same.

Content of the Report

- The need for the plant in Gujarat
- Suitability of the site
- Transport facility

- Competitive incentives
- Power and water supply
- Raw material
- Availability of the labour
- Conclusion

Swift Scooter India Pvt Ltd plans to set up a new plant in Gujarat. You have been entrusted with the task to select a suitable site. Prepare a report to be submitted to the Board of Management (use letter format).

Swift Scooter India Pvt Ltd
Plot No. xxx Sector yy/yy,
Greater Noida,
Dist Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.) 201306

Date: 25 June 2014

The Managing Director
Swift Scooter India Pvt Ltd
Greater Noida
Uttar Pradesh

Sub: Feasibility Report on selecting a suitable site to set up a new plant in Gujarat

Dear Sir

As per the decision taken in the meeting of Board of Directors on 5 March 2014 and in accordance with the instruction given to me to suggest a suitable site to set up a new plant in Gujarat, I visited the state and did the necessary survey. Given below is the report:

Gujarat, today, is one the fastest growing states in India in terms of business and investment. There are many companies, which are growing at a rapid speed. Ahmedabad, Baroda, Surat, Rajkot and Kutch are the cities, which have become industrial hubs of Gujarat. Having reviewed various possibilities and considerations, I would suggest Sanand as the right place.

Suitability of the site

Sanand is located at about 24 km from Ahmedabad city on the Ahmedabad–Viramgam Highway. It is today best known as the automobile hub of Gujarat. Sanand is part of the dedicated Viramgam Special Investment Region of Gujarat. Sanand has become one of the booming entrepreneurial centres in India.

Transportation

As it is located near the city of Ahmedabad, Sanand is about 70 km (40 miles) from a recently rebuilt international airport. It is also linked to Ahmedabad and Kutch by state highway 17. The state highway 17 joins India's National Highway 8. Through this, the city is linked to many of the major industrial, economic and cultural regions of India. It is also connected by a modern highway to Mundra Port, a fully operational and one of the fastest growing seaports in Southeast Asia. In addition to modern highways, Sanand–Viramgam has an operational broad gauge railway network connecting it to major industrial centres located in Gujarat.

Competitive incentives

Sanand offers the following competitive incentives to companies seeking to set up operations within Sanand region.

- Income tax incentives
- 10 year corporate tax holiday on export profit—100 per cent for initial 5 years and 50 per cent for the next 5 years
- Exemption from dividend distribution tax
- Indirect tax incentives
- Zero customs and excise duty
- Exemption from central sales tax
- Exemption from service tax

Power and water supply

The local municipal authorities have agreed to facilitate water supply at the time of construction as well as during production process. The officers of Uttar Gujarat Vidyut Company Ltd (UGVCL) have also agreed for the regular supply of electricity.

Raw material

It would not be difficult to manage raw material, as there are many companies manufacturing automobile parts in Gujarat.

Availability of the labour

The skilled and unskilled labour will easily be available. The labour wages are also not very high as compared to the other states of India.

On basis of the above information, I would suggest that Sanand is the suitable place to start our manufacturing plant in Gujarat.

Truly yours

(JP Trivedi)
Secretary

2.7.6 Investigation Report

Investigation reports are those that examine a problem or situation, identify the cause and suggest corrective measures or ways to improve situation and also evaluate the feasibility of each suggestion.

Content of the Report

- What was to be investigated? i.e., a summary statement that identifies the problem
- Who assigned the task? i.e., the authority that commissioned the report
- Why was it to be investigated? i.e., the reason behind the investigation
- What was the result? i.e., The result of the investigation and the steps taken to find a remedy as well as further recommendation

It has been observed by Discourse India Ltd that there has been considerable decline in the sale of Discourse Excel 200. You have been entrusted with the task to investigate the causes of decline and steps to arrest the decline. Follow letter format.

**Discourse India Ltd
IT City, 2nd Floor, Tower C, Plot No 346
Dundahera, Udyog Vihar Phase-2
Gurgaon 122 016**

Date: 10 May 2014

The Managing Director
Discourse India Ltd
IT City
Gurgaon

Sub: A report on the decline on sales of Discourse Excel 200

Dear Sir

With reference to the instructions given to me in the meeting of 15 April 2014 to inquire the causes of decline in the sales of Discourse Excel 200, I submit the report along with the measures to be taken to arrest the decline.

Features appreciated

- It is slimmer, lighter and a nice looking phone with a decent screen.
- It has a fairly generous display and is powered by 1GHz dual-core Snapdragon S4 Processor.
- It comes with live tiles, hence, the thumbnails of contacts images are shown by People tile, whereas the calendar displays upcoming events.
- It gets decent phone signals and the integration of contacts with social network is excellent.
- It is great for calls and messaging.

Causes of decline

- Mobile users very much fond of different types of apps, Windows Store is not so rich as Android as still a few prominent apps are missing.
- It is very common and normal to use mobile for web browsing and listening to music. However, in our case our phone battery needs charging everyday even at low usage and permanent battery save mode.
- The RAM is another cause of concern. The phone comes with only 512 RAM, whereas users are looking for more.
- HD video does not work nicely with the phone. Moreover, there is no video store so one could get video content from elsewhere and copy it to the phone or micro SD card.
- The screen gets fingerprints and smudges more than other phones. This leaves it looking blurred and dirty soon.

Remedies

- Windows Store should be rich enough to meet the need of the mobile users, especially youth of today.

- It is strongly recommended to do necessary research to for a long battery life.
- The RAM should be increased.
- The WiFi and 3G performance need to be worked upon.
- Necessary improvements should be done to avoid complaints about the fingerprints and smudges on the screen.

I hope the above stated observations and opinions would help the company to boost the sale of the phone.

Yours truly

(HT Tripathi)
Sales Manager

RECAP

- A report is something of a written form of communication.
- It is written for a particular audience with a particular purpose and is supported by adequate evidence.
- The reports are written with objectives to inform about the recent development in the company/product/market, to show the potentialities of a new product, to show the feasibility of a plan or to persuade the management for various facilities/grievance-redressal.
- Report writing usually follows the following steps:
 1. Understanding the purpose and scope of the report
 2. Data collection
 3. Organization of the material
 4. Analysis of material
 5. Report writing
 6. Reviewing and redrafting
 7. Presentation
- Reports can be written in report format, letter format and memo format
- Reports are of following types:
 1. Progress report: It informs about the progress of a project/work underway.
 2. Incident report: It informs about an event or happening like fire or serious accident at a place, etc.
 3. Trip report: It informs about a field trip that was undertaken for either for a seminar/workshop and/or customer care for various purposes.
 4. Inspection report: It refers to an inspection carried out to verify the working of a lab/branch office/goods received, etc.

5. Feasibility report: It analyses and suggests whether an event or project can be conducted in a practical way or not.
6. Investigation report: This type of report is carried out to examine a problem and understand the cause and suggest corrective measures.

EXERCISES

Write reports with the help of the following details, invent necessary details

1. As the sales manager of a watch manufacturing company, you conducted a market survey and found that there is a considerable decline in the sales of your watch. Write a short report on your market survey and also suggest steps required to boost the sales of your product.
2. Your company is thinking of establishing a factory in your town. You have been given the task to write a report on the suitability of the place for the establishment of this factory. Submit your report.
3. Government of India is worried on the migration (from India) of the doctors, engineers, government officials and academicians to United Kingdom, the United States, Germany and other countries. It also wishes to retain this trained and high skilled manpower in India. As a research scholar you are asked (by the Ministry of HRD) to find out reasons and to suggest some remedy to stop their migration. Collect the data (of the last three years) of their migration and on the basis of that data prepare a report investigating the reasons and also give your suggestions. You need to prepare title page, introduction, data analysis, conclusion and your recommendations only.
4. You are an assistant engineer. There has been a fire in the factory and three of the workers have been badly burnt and hospitalized. You are asked to send a report to the manager. Write the report using memorandum form.
5. Micatronics Ltd, Andheri, Mumbai wants to open a factory at Baroda. As a consultant engineer, write a feasibility report on establishing a factory in Baroda.

Lab Activity

As an organizing secretary, write a report, to be submitted to the principal of your college, on an activity (co-curricular or extra-curricular) organized by your college.

3

Proposal Writing

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- explain the meaning and the purpose of a technical proposal.
- define the basic steps in preparing a technical proposal.
- discuss the various components required to prepare a proposal.
- identify the factors that influence the quality of a proposal.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A proposal is a document that lists and defines the technical requirements of a project elaborating the proposed plan to execute a project. It is written with a view of persuading the receiver to grant or approve the necessary fund. In short, it is a document that states a problem, identifies a need, suggests a roadmap for the solution by specifying the cost to meet the expenditure. Being a persuasive document, it should address the problems faced by the authority and suggest a feasible solution or a remedy to make the situation better. It should convince the authority that the idea is worth to invest.

An effective proposal writing requires the presentation of your views in the most appealing way as well as ensuring that the provided details do not create any trouble for you. A proposal, hence, should be good enough to win the approval as well as realistic enough to work on it for the proposed outcomes.

The primary and the most important purpose of the proposal writing is to get a nod from the concerned person or agency for the objective whatever was written. It must convince the authority that the identified need is important and the investigator or researcher has the capacity and an appropriate approach to achieve the results within the proposed or approved time frame. To get the consent of the authority, the proposal should provide an adequate description of the activities with the expected outcomes.

3.2 TYPES OF PROPOSAL

Proposals are classified into solicited proposals and unsolicited proposals. Which is discussed in the subsequent sections.

3.2.1 Solicited Proposals

As the name suggests, solicited proposals are invited proposals. In other words, the awarding organisation invites the proposals from interested individuals or parties. The awarding organisation should only sanction the requirements that the proposal should contain. In many cases, a standard format is prescribed for the parties to submit their proposals. Government agencies routinely ask for proposals from potential suppliers.

3.2.2 Unsolicited Proposals

As the name suggests, unsolicited proposals are sent by the investigator. They should catch the receiver's attention. They require a detailed background information and they should convince the reader of its suitability.

In addition to the above, proposals can be researchable which include the details about the research topic, its relevance and the required budget.

3.3 PARTS OF A TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Depending on its nature and type, the proposal can be either in the form of a letter or in the predefined format of the organisation. Most agencies provide proposal formats as well as they provide related guidance about the expected content under each heading and subheadings and as well as the process to submit the proposal. The elements listed above are common in many proposals. Depending upon the need, the investigator may include them to make the proposal effective. However, it is always ideal to follow the guidelines provided by the funding agency.

3.3.1 Cover Page or Title Page

A cover or title page should include the title of the project, the sponsor's name and address, the principal investigator's (PI) name and address, the authorising official or contact's name, the amount requested, the dates of the project and the date submitted.

3.3.2 Abstract or Summary

An old cliché says 'Well begun is half done'. This is applicable in writing the abstract or summary of a proposal. It is the most important part of the proposal as it creates the first impression. Reviewers learn the potential of the proposal with the help of the summary and may determine whether the rest of the proposal is to be reviewed or not. The abstract or summary precedes the detailed description but it should be written last so that the entire

content of the proposal can be reflected accurately. The abstract or summary briefly explains the project (depending on the length), in not more than 500–1000 words or one page. This part includes the most relevant details about the background and significance, the objectives, the methodology to be used and the evaluation.

3.3.3 Table of Contents

If the proposal is longer than four or five pages, a table of contents is required. It lists the different sections contained in the proposal and provides page numbers to learn where each section begins. This provides reviewers with easy reference to the specific information and presents an overview of how your proposal is organised.

3.3.4 Description of Problem

Here, the investigator or researcher should define the problem that he or she wishes to investigate. The problem that was identified should be in relevance with the vision, mission and goals of the funding agency. This information helps the sponsor to understand the need for the project in the right perspective. It also hints at the direction of the research as well as the skills of the researcher.

3.3.5 Objectives of the Project (Brief and to the Point)

Here, the investigator should present the purposes or objectives of the proposal. They should bear some link with the requirement of the sponsor or funding agency. In the case of a solicited proposal, the objectives should be linked with the topic for which the proposals are invited. In the case of the unsolicited ones, the objective should interest the sponsor. This can be done by highlighting the advantages of the project.

3.3.6 Review of Work Already Done

Review of the work should incorporate the specific details based on the reading and analysis of the work already carried out in the chosen area. This highlights the research gap/need identified by the investigator/researcher.

3.3.7 Rationale (Reasons) for Taking Up the Project

The rationale should clearly specify the logic behind the selection of the topic. This helps the reader to understand the need for the investigation. The rationale should be in sync with the vision, mission and goals of the funding agency.

3.3.8 Relevance to State or Organisational Priorities

Based on the details shared earlier, a comparative analysis should be presented to demonstrate the correlation between the rationale for the project and the relevance of the priorities of the funding agency.

3.3.9 Work Plan

This should present the phase wise plan of action detailing time schedule and milestones. If required a relevant chart/s may also be attached. This is a kind of roadmap detailing step by step activities to achieve the target.

3.3.10 Challenges and Constraints

Here the strengths and weaknesses of the implementers with regard to the current project should be provided. This should be with reference to technical expertise, team building, past record, etc. Details should also be provided about the perceived opportunities and threats. This should be followed by the investigator's plan to capitalise on the opportunities and avert threats.

3.3.11 Output of the Project

Quantifying output with measurable parameters should be provided here. This may also include the possible impacts that the project will have in future.

3.3.12 Other Organisations

Working in this Area

This will help the sponsor or funding agency learn the relevance and need of the project as well as for the competitors if it is about any business.

3.3.13 Appendix

Any supporting information relevant to your proposal may be included as an appendix towards the end of the proposal.

3.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE PROPOSAL

- It should state the purpose of the project clearly.
- It provides sufficient background information to convince the sponsor or funding agency about the need and the relevance of the proposal.
- It persuades the sponsor or funding agency that the problem is important.
- It is persuasive enough to convince the sponsor that the objectives are achievable.
- It effectively describes the roadmap to achieve the objectives.
- It lists all the required resources, provides the timelines with the list of targets as well as the deadline.
- It has the provision of legal protection, in case, due to some unavoidable reasons or unexpected circumstances the investigator and if the co-investigator cannot deliver the promised things.

- It provides necessary details about the qualification of the investigator or the team members to persuade the funding agency that the investigator can complete the project successfully.
- It gives necessary details regarding budget and costs and the same is divided under necessary headings like recurring and nonrecurring expenditures.
- It ends on a positive note with the summary of the key points.

3.5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON PROPOSAL WRITING

1. Read and follow sponsor guidelines carefully, if any.
2. Make sure that the ideas are novel, innovative and would be of interest to the sponsors.
3. Take your interest and abilities into account .
4. Make a list of the ideas and learn their relevance.
5. Define, describe and document the problem.
6. Suggest the strategy (activities required to meet the needs) to be followed to rectify the defined problem.
7. List the potential obstacles and share the contingency plan.
8. Share the plan to analyse the data and interpret the results.
9. Avoid the use of excessive jargon, acronyms or abbreviations.
10. Ensure clarity. Get the proposal reviewed by a reliable friend or a colleague. Understand their questions about the content and make the necessary modifications in your proposal.
11. Use a positive tone and realistic approach by providing necessary shreds of evidence.
12. Prepare an accurate, clear and concise summary or abstract to make the reviewer read more.
13. Prepare the budget very carefully and justify the need of every penny requested.
14. Meet the deadline for submitting the proposal.

Last but not the least, never give up. A proposal may have to be submitted several times (with certain changes each time) before it is funded. If your application is unsuccessful, read the reviewers' comments. It may be worth rewriting and submitting in the next submission cycle.

3.6 SAMPLE PROPOSAL

ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. wishes to redesign its website. Proposals are invited from the interested agencies. Given below is one such proposal submitted by XYZ Web Shops, a web designing consultant.

3.6 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

Neev Patel
Web-Designing Consultant
XYZ Web Shops
Ahmedabad

Date: 14 November 2018

Mr Aarav Kothari
Managing Director
ABC Company Pvt. Ltd.
Ahmedabad

Sub: A Proposal on redesigning the website

Dear Mr Kothari

Greetings from XYZ Web Shops!!!

With reference to our meeting on 10 November 2018 at your office and the related telephonic communication thereafter, we are pleased to submit a detailed proposal to redesign the website.

We assure you that our experience and creativity will make your visualisation an exquisite and alluring reality. However, do contact us for any query or confusion.

With the wish to have an opportunity to redesign your website.

Yours sincerely

(Neev Patel)

Encl: Detailed proposal

A Proposal
on
Redesigning the Website of ABC Company Pvt. Ltd.

Submitted to:
Mr Aarav Kothari
Managing Director
ABC Company Pvt. Ltd.
Ahmedabad

Submitted by:
Neev Patel
Web-Designing Consultant
XYZ Web Shops

November 2018

Introduction

It is a great opportunity to submit a proposal to redesign the website of ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. With a credible experience to our credit, we assure you to create a site that is simple to navigate and has a professional yet welcoming design. Based on our preliminary discussion at your office, we have identified and listed below the needs and solutions that we can and would like to address in this project.

Needs

ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. needs a website.

- To reach out to the community.
- To serve and support the current ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. clients.
- That can be maintained by the employees of ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. , without any help of an external agency in future.
- That makes it easier for the employees of the company to add and revise both texts and photos as well as additional pages if necessary.

Proposed solution

XYZ Web Shops will provide ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. with a fresh new web design that is easy to navigate and provides useful information to current subscribers. The design will also convey the potential subscribers that ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. is a professional and a reliable company.

The design will integrate the current logo and colour palette to maintain a familiar look for the current subscribers and at the same time show them that ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. is improving its web presence in order to serve them better.

A. Content management system

Central to the new design from XYZ Web Shops, there will be a robust Content Management System (CMS) that will allow ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. to make changes easily to the website, without requiring a dedicated workstation or an additional software. This CMS will not only save ABC Company Pvt. Ltd.'s website revision costs but will also ensure that the website stays fresh and up to date.

B. Website organisation

The five main landing pages of the new design are listed below.

1. Home Page
2. About/Contact
3. Gallery
4. Portfolios
5. Blog

These five pages will be 'hardwired' into the new design by XYZ Web Shops and the URLs of them will appear in the horizontal menu bar at the top of the page (below the logo and other header content). On each of these pages, we will include a left side column that ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. can use to create links to as many 'subpages' as they wish. Therefore, the CMS allows as many pages as necessary, without incurring any additional cost beyond the original design and landing pages fee.

Workflow

A. Preliminary design

Working in conjunction with ABC Company Pvt. Ltd., XYZ Web Shops will provide the company a preliminary design concept for the new website. That design concept will include the basic layout, colour palette, font choices, etc. ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. can, at that point, request one round of design revisions within the scope of the fee schedule (see below). If more revisions are deemed necessary at that point by ABC Company, the work will be done at our hourly rate of ₹400/- (This is rarely necessary, especially for a simple website project such as this, but if necessary this will be discussed fully before any fees are assessed.)

B. Integration of content management system

Once the design is approved, then XYZ Web Shops will incorporate the content management system into the design.

C. Training

XYZ Web Shops will then run a training session of two hours for the employees of ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. showing them how to use the content management system. This can be done on-site or online.

D. Launch

When ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. has finished incorporating all the content they wish to have at launch, they will ask XYZ Web Shops to move the website from the development sub-directory to the main root level of the domain, thereby making the site to go live.

Fee Summary

Website Design and Setup	₹15,000/-
---------------------------------	------------------

Includes:

- Work with client to create a custom website interface namely, layout, colours and fonts.
- Set up website architecture and navigation system.
- Implement nameplate or logo placement and design.
- Create a website mirror for beta testing purposes.
- Integrate content management system.

Website Pages – 5 @ ₹1000	₹5000/-
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Using the webpage template developed during the initial design phase, this includes integration of the main landing pages into site architecture and navigation:

- Home Page
- About/Contact
- Gallery
- Portfolios
- Blog

Free One Year Hosting	₹0 /-
------------------------------	--------------

As part of our current CMS package, we are offering a free hosting for the first year.

Free Domain Name Registration**₹0 /-**

As part of our current CMS package, we are offering a free domain name registration for the first year.

Project Total**₹20,000 /-****Payment Schedule**

If ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. wishes XYZ Web Shops to go forward with the project, here is the schedule for the payments of the fee:

- 50 per cent due upon acceptance of the proposal before the work commences.
- 25 per cent due upon delivering the completed design with the content management system in place.
- 25 per cent remaining amount plus any additional hourly fees no later than 30 days from when the completed design was delivered to ABC Company.

XYZ Web Shops will launch the website when requested, provided there is no due amount.

Terms and Conditions

- Once the project fee is paid in full to XYZ Web Shops, any elements of text, graphics, photos, contents, trademarks, or other artwork furnished to ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. for inclusion in the website are owned by ABC Company Pvt. Ltd.
- XYZ Web Shops assumes that ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. has permission from the rightful owner to use any images or design elements that are provided by ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. for inclusion in the website and will protect, and defend XYZ Web Shops from any claim or suit arising from the use of such elements.
- XYZ Web Shops retains the right to display graphics and other Web content elements as examples of their work in their portfolio and as content features in other projects. XYZ Web Shops also retains the right to place a discreet text link at the bottom of the website page(s).
- The agreement contained in this contract constitutes the sole agreement between ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. and the XYZ Web Shops regarding all the items are included in this agreement.

Next Steps

To proceed with this project, ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. is required to take the following steps:

- Accept the proposal 'as is' or discuss the desired changes. Please note that changes to the scope of the project can be made at any time, but additional charges may apply.
- Finalise and sign the contract.
- Submit an initial payment of 50 per cent of the total project fee.

The project will be initiated, as soon as the necessary procedure is completed.

Examples of our work and references

You can see a list of some of the current websites designed and developed by XYZ Web Shops here in <http://xyzwebshops.com/work.php>

References are available upon request.

RECAP

- Proposals are persuasive documents written with a view to convince the reader of the suitability of a particular course of action.
- It is generally written for an external audience. However, in some cases, it may be prepared for internal purposes, by one department for another or from an individual to the management.
- It may be solicited or unsolicited.
- It may vary in length from a couple of pages to several pages.
- It may be written by individuals or organisations or for both individuals and organisations.

EXERCISES

1. What is a technical proposal? Discuss the various parts of a technical proposal?
2. List and explain the various types of the proposal? What guidelines will you provide to a junior who is planning to write a proposal to conduct an inter-class ‘Tech-Quiz’?
3. As a General Secretary of your college, you plan to organise inter-college tech festival. Draft a proposal to be approved by the principal.
4. As the secretary of the Sports Club, draft a proposal that has to be submitted to the Gymkhana Coordinator to organise an inter department sports week.

4

Technical Description

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- explain the definition and the purpose of technical description.
- illustrate the qualities of a good technical description.
- identify the components of a technical description.
- plan a technical description.

4.1 DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

Technical descriptions are a very important form of technical communication. They are usually a part of various brochures, specifications, proposals, field reports, etc. The technical description includes the definition of a product and its details namely, colour, shape, size, texture, weight, height, thickness, content and the material used to manufacture the product, any related numerical information, function and operation of the production. Typical examples of technical descriptions can be the description about the structure of a machine or the process of functioning of a machine.

Technical description can be visual, verbal or a combination of both. However, a description that ‘shows’ as well ‘tells’ is always effective. To make it more effective, creative descriptions (use of five senses) are prepared. They help the reader to visualise and conceptualise what is being described.

Depending on the purpose and audience, the technical description can be written in various forms. It can be in the form of a brief sentence, a paragraph, an entire section of a report or even a manual. Technical descriptions are found in textbooks, instruction or installation manuals or the documents that provide information regarding the use, repair and understanding of an object or a concept. Writing technical description is an art. Poorly written technical descriptions creates confusion, waste time and may also result in a disaster. Many times, a technical description is a legal requirement needed to ensure safety and compliance.

4.2 QUALITIES OF A GOOD TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

4.2.1 Appropriate Use of Cs of Communication

Technical description is one kind of written communication and it follows some of the Cs of communication. These Cs include Conciseness, Clarity, Completeness and Correctness. Being informative in nature, a technical description should not only be brief but it should also provide all relevant information clearly and correctly. If conciseness saves it from being wordy, completeness and clarity keep it query free and last but not the least correctness makes it error-free. Thus, the judicious use of Cs is required.

4.2.2 Use of Abbreviations, Numbers and Lists

In technical writing, use of abbreviations, numbers and lists is quite common therefore, they should be used carefully. They should contribute to the understanding but not to the confusion.

4.2.3 Use of Headings or Subheadings

Headings are used to mark off the discussion of the individual parts or characteristics. Ideally, each part should be described in a separate paragraph or in a section with a suitable heading.

4.2.4 Reader-centric

Being reader-centric is one of the prerequisites of effective communication. While writing any technical description, it is necessary that the writer is clear about the need and the purpose of the reader who is going to use the description. If it is for a layman who is going to use the machine, lesser use of technical terms is advisable. If it is for a technical person, the focus should be on the technical aspects of the machine or the process. The writer of the technical description should know what information to provide and in what depth it should be provided.

4.2.5 Illustrative

‘One picture is worth a thousand words’ goes the saying. A technical description can be illustrative through the appropriate use of diagrams, photographs, caption labels, etc. Illustration complements the verbal description. The illustration makes it easier for the readers to correlate the thing and understand the content.

4.2.6 Sequential

The information in a technical description should be either in a chronological or spatial pattern depending on the requirement. Information can be presented in time order or in a sequential manner by using the words like after, afterwards, as soon as, at that time, before, during, finally, meanwhile, etc. While using spatial order, the content describes the position

of space. For example, top to bottom, inside to outside, near to far, most important to least important using the words like above, adjacent to, away, below, horizontal, parallel, behind, between, in front of, inside, next to, under, within, etc.

4.2.7 Being Objective

As being a formal communication, technical description has no space for personal opinion, comments or grudges. Object or process has to be described the way it is. While writing a technical description, active verbs and present tense should be used. It should help the reader to visualise the product or process.

4.3 ELEMENTS OF WRITING A TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

1. **Function of the object or objective of the process through an overview:** This should include the meaning and the purpose of the description.
2. **Labelling components through visuals:** Here, the major and the minor parts are labelled and the connection between them is explained.
3. **Explanation:** This shows the functioning of various components. Depending on the need and level of the reader, the information should be provided.
4. **Conclusion:** This portion may include any information, warning, suggestion for a better understanding of the product or process.
5. **References:** This section offers details about the sources, if any, referred to draft technical description.

4.4 SAMPLE DESCRIPTIONS

4.4.1 Technical Description of a Computer Mouse 500

Compact optical mouse 500 is an external computer hardware device. The mouse is black in colour and basically curved in shape. The dimensions of this mouse are 3.44" (87.4 mm) in length and 1.88" (47.8 mm) in height. The optical mouse consists of following four parts.

- (a) The top casing, containing the right-click cover, the left-click cover and the scroll wheel.
- (b) The bottom casing, containing the small sensor.
- (c) The internal circuit board.
- (d) The cord and the plug.



Top Casing

The top casing of the compact optical mouse 500 is made of a hard and curved sheet of plastic that can protect the inside parts of the mouse. The top casing consists of the right click cover, the left-click cover and the scroll wheel. The right-click cover and the left-click cover are located at

4.4 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

the front side on the top casing and it is made of a curved piece of plastic. The left-click cover is a mirror image of the right-click cover. The scroll wheel is located between the right-click cover and the left-click cover that can be easily clicked and scrolled up and down.

Bottom Casing

The surface of the bottom casing is flat and it is made up of a hard plastic shell. The bottom casing consists of a small sensor. The small sensor can detect the mouse movement and it controls the motion of the pointer on the computer screen.

Internal Circuit Board of a Mouse

The internal circuit board is an electronic component made up of copper sheet. It is located inside the optical mouse and it is protected by the cover of the mouse. When the user makes a clicking or scrolling movement, the internal circuit board collects and translates the information.



Cord and Plug

The cord is a wire sealed by a plastic sheath that sends the information from the mouse straight to the computer. The plug is made up of plastic and metal and it is located at the end of the cord. At the end of the plug, there is a rectangle piece made up of metal and its function is to connect the mouse to the computer.

The compact optical mouse 500 is a simple device that is used for interacting with the computer. It is smooth and gives an accurate performance. It is also easy to use and set up because there is no requirement of any software for installation.

4.4.2 Technical Description of the Process of using PowerPoint Functions

Launching the PowerPoint Programme

- Launch the PowerPoint programme.
- Choose to create a blank presentation. (Sometimes a blank presentation is automatically launched)

Creating the Title Page

- Click the box that says ‘Click to add the title’ and add the title of your presentation.
- Click the bottom box to add your name or any other subtitle that you choose.
- Change their font, size, colour, etc., with the help of the toolbar options at the top.
- Change the size of the text box by selecting it, and then dragging it to the corners of the box. Move the text boxes by moving the cursor arrow over the border of the box till the four-arrow icon appears.
- Click on the four-arrow icon to move the text boxes wherever required.

Choosing a Design

- Go to the 'Design' tab at the top of the page.
- Scroll through all the options and decide which one looks best for the presentation you want.
- Hover over the design to get a preview of the design before choosing it. The design will continue automatically.
- To add a different design for any slide/s, go to the design tab.
- Select the design by right clicking on it.
- Choose the option of your choice i.e., 'Apply to All Slides' or 'Apply to Selected Slides'.

RECAP

- The technical description is an information about the object or process with reference to its physical aspects and its function.
- Technical description can be of two types namely, description of a production and description of a process.
- Characteristics of a good technical proposal include appropriate use of Cs of communication, abbreviations, numbers, lists, headings or subheadings, etc. It should be reader-centric, illustrative and sequential as well as it should be written in objective tone.
- Elements of writing technical description are function of the object or objective of the process through an overview and labelling components through visuals explanation conclusion references.

EXERCISES

1. Write the technical description of the exterior parts of a mobile that are included in a user manual.
2. Write the technical description of a calculator focusing on the functions of various external buttons.
3. Write the technical description of the process of making a group calling through Google Duo.
4. Write the technical description of the process of making a conference call.

5

Letter Writing

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- state importance of good letter writing
- describe modern lay out of a business letter
- discuss various parts of a business letter
- identify qualities of a good business letter
- write various types of business letters
- explain things to be taken care of while drafting a letter

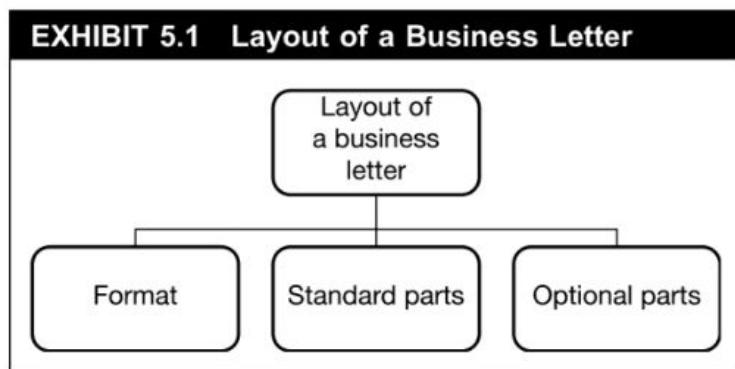
5.1 INTRODUCTION

Letter writing is a formal way of written communication. It is traditional, yet, very much modern. It has changed its format with the changing time and demand. It is not at all a lost art, as some may believe. Actually, having command of the technique of an effective letter writing is an important skill among other writing skills.

5.2 LAYOUT OF A BUSINESS LETTER

This skill is needed for various purposes especially when a person tries to sell or buy a product or a service. Style of writing a letter reveals the writer's capacity, level of education, personality and professionalism. A letter can be the first step towards long lasting business relations. An effective letter is one that induces the reader to take desired action. First of all, we discuss the layout of a business letter. Layout of a letter includes the following parts.

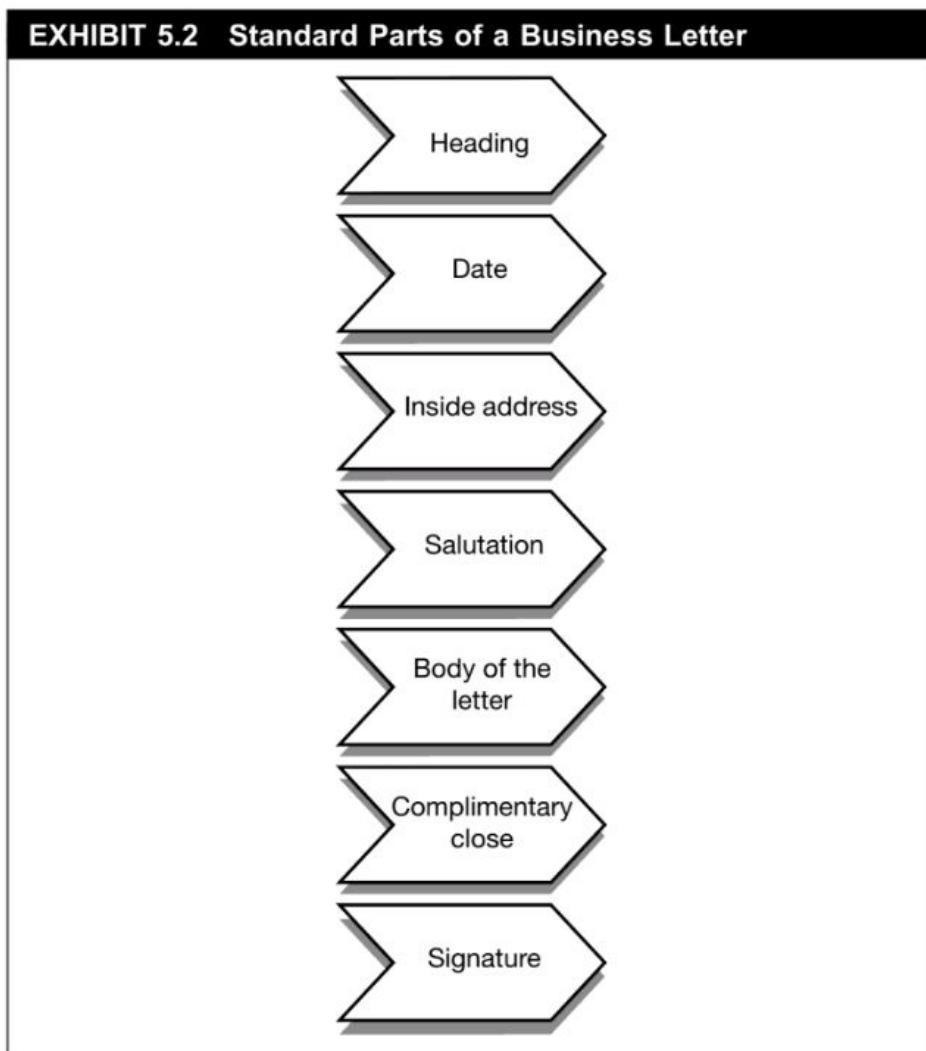
- Format
- Standard parts
- Optional parts



5.2.1 Full Block Format of a Business Letter

Generally, the format of a letter is same across the corporate worlds except a few variations. Nowadays, full block form is in practice. In this format,

- All the parts start from the left-hand side.
- One inch margin is kept all around.



- 11 to 12 point font size is preferred.
- Names of months are not abbreviated.
- Paragraphs are not indented.
- Lines are single spaced.
- Two lines are left between paragraphs.

5.2.2 Standard Parts

A business letter consists of standard parts and optional parts. Standard parts are in a way compulsory parts of a business letter as any business letter is bound to have them. Given below are the standard elements of a business letter followed by optional parts of a business letter.

Heading or Letterhead

- What** A letterhead provides information about the sender. It is the address of the sender.
- Where** It is written at the top of the letter or on the left-hand side as per the latest practice.
- Content** It contains name and address of the writer, firm or company. If from the name, the business cannot be understood, the second line talks about the nature of the business. Along with the postal address, the letterhead can also talk about E-mail address, contact nos., fax no., logo and/or website address if possible.

How

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Why

It helps the receiver in contacting the sender.

General tips

- When you are using letterhead, you need not type your address at the top.
- To create a good impression, letterhead and paper should be of a very good quality.

Date

What

The date gives information about the day, month and the year when the letter was written.

5.4 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

Where	It is written below the letterhead on the right-hand side or the left-hand side depending upon the style of the letter. If the letter is in full block form, the date is written on left-hand side otherwise on the right-hand side.			
How	Date can be written in two patterns: AMERICAN STYLE (MM, DD, YY) September 20, 2013			
BRITISH STYLE (DD, MM, YY) 20 September 2013				
Sometimes, people write the date in the third way. For example, 20/09/13. This method is not accepted in the commercial world. Sometimes, it may lead to confusion. If a person writes the date in American style, he or she would write the given date as September 20, 2013 and if he or she follows British style, he or she would write 20 September 2013.				
Why	The date is very important in a business letter. It is helpful in legal matters as well as useful in keeping record for future reference. If a price is quoted in a business letter today, it is valid only for a particular period; hence, the date is useful in that case.			
General tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When using a letterhead, write the date after two to four lines below the heading.• Your choice would depend on the length of the letter. If the letter is long, you may prefer to write it leaving two lines if short after four lines. However, if you are writing the letter as an individual, you need to leave just one line between the heading and the date.• Do not abbreviate the names of months like Jan, Aug, etc. Always write full names like January, August, etc.• Do not add any suffix like <i>st</i>, <i>nd</i>, <i>th</i>, etc. The practice is now obsolete.			

Inside Address

What	The inside address means the name and the address of the receiver.
Where	It is written below the date on the left-hand side.
How	As per the current practice, it is written in full block form. In full block form, it begins with the margin and no punctuation mark is used.
	Tech Solutions Ltd 28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road Memnagar Ahmedabad 380052
Why	Inside address supplies necessary information about posting the letter. The carbon copy of a letter is always kept for filing purpose or a copy in the computer is saved. Here, inside address is helpful for future reference. Whenever window envelope is used, the inside address works as the envelope address as the address can be seen from the plastic paper, there is no need to type the address on the envelope. Thus, it saves the time, money and energy.

- General tips**
- Your style of using a particular format informs the reader about your knowledge of standard business communication style.
 - A carefully drafted letter makes the reader focus on the content of the letter.

Salutation

What It is a kind of greeting. In our day-to-day life whenever we meet somebody, we wish him ‘Good morning!’ or ‘How are you?’ In a business letter, the salutation is used for the same purpose.

Where It is written below the inside address and begins with the left-hand margin.

How Salutation should be written keeping in mind the relationship between the writer and the reader. Salutation should be followed by either a comma (British style) or a colon (American style).

SALUTATION	TO BE USED FOR
Sir,	A very important person or for the head of the department/company/institute
Dear Sir,	The most formal one
Dear Sirs:	It is used for a big firm or a company especially when name begins with Messrs.
Dear Madam:	Used for a lady
Dear Mesdames:	Used for ladies
Dear Mr. Shah,	Whenever the writer is familiar with the person
Dear Ms Rajvi,	Before the name of a female recipient, whether she is married or not, it is customary to use ‘Ms’ only. The use of ‘Mrs’ is obsolete.

Why The way oral greetings like ‘Hi’, ‘Hello’, ‘Good Morning/Good Afternoon’ initiates communication, the same role is played by salutation in letter writing.

- General tips**
- Always use Dear
 - Avoid the use of ‘Respected’
 - Try to find out the name of the person you are writing to
 - If you do not know the name of the person you are writing to use *Dear Sir* or *Dear Madam*
 - If you do not know the gender of the receiver use Dear Sir/Madam
 - When you know the person, write, ‘*Dear Raj Thakkar*’ or ‘*Dear Mr Thakkar*’ do not write ‘*Dear Raj*.’

Body of the Letter

What The body of the letter contains the main message.

Where Usually, it is written one or two lines below the subject line. The message is in the form of different paragraphs. The common rule is to give one idea in one paragraph. A good business letter must be written around one central idea. Great care should be taken while writing the body of the letter. Presentation of the letter makes it effective or ineffective.

5.6 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

How	<p>The first paragraph makes a reference of the date and the subject of the previous correspondence, if any. It suggests the mood and the feelings of the writer. A short sentence should be preferred than a longer one.</p> <p>For example, We thank you very much for your order for 500 Microtex mobiles. OR</p> <p>For example, Your letter of 24 July 2013 has reached us and we are carefully attending to it.</p> <p>The second paragraph states the main message. This should be written in simple and clear language. This paragraph is called the <i>heart of the letter</i>. If the message is very long, separate paragraphs should be used. This paragraph should appeal to the customer's desire and his/her sense of getting profit.</p> <p>The last paragraph should offer good service, reasonable business terms and express gratitude. It may also talk about the next step of the writer.</p>
Why	<p>It is the heart of the letter. It becomes the bridge between both the parties. A well-written letter surely brings good and positive response, whereas a poorly drafted letter may not give desired results and may sometimes lead to loss of clients.</p>
General tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The letter should be typed with single line or 1.15 spacing.• Do not indent paragraphs.• Use the left-hand margin to start each paragraph.• Prepare a list of all the information that will be included in the letter.• Leave one or two blank lines to indicate a new paragraph.• In order to make sure the main points of the message are clear, put the important parts of the message in three central paragraphs.• Start the letter, a brief introduction of your firm/company, if you are communicating with the receiver for the first time or else start the letter by stating the reason why you are writing.• Do not use contractions such as <i>don't</i> or <i>can't</i>.• Try to fit the letter onto one page.• If you need to continue on to additional pages, use plain paper to number them.• However, the quality and colour of the paper should remain the same.• The numbering style should be <i>Page 1 of 3</i>.

Complimentary Close

What	<p>It is a polite way of saying <i>goodbye</i>.</p>
Where	<p>It comes at the end of a business letter. It is written two lines below the body of the letter on the left-hand side in full block form.</p>
How	<p>Yours truly,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first letter 'Y' is made capital, whereas the other word <i>faithfully/truly/sincerely</i> should be written in small letters.• Remember that no apostrophe sign is used in complimentary close.• Complimentary close is followed by a comma.

Sr. No.	Salutation	Complimentary Close
1.	Dear Sir, OR Dear Sirs	Yours truly
2.	Sir, OR Sirs	Yours respectfully OR Yours sincerely
3.	Dear Mr. Rajesh: OR Dear Ms. Komal:	Very truly yours Yours cordially Yours sincerely
4.	Dear Mr Shah OR Dear Ms Shah	Faithfully yours/Sincerely/Cordially

Why

Whatever role a nice leave taking plays in day-to-day life, the same role is played by a complimentary close in letter writing. It makes ending of the letter courteous.

General tips

- The most common complimentary close used in the United Kingdom and the United States is *Sincerely*.
- A comma always follows it. The complimentary should match with the salutation itself.
- If you have used the name of the person you are writing to, end your letter with *Yours sincerely/Sincerely/Cordially*.
- If you do not know the name of the person, use *Yours faithfully*.
- Warm regards, Thanks and regards, Affectionate Regards* are some of the popular leave taking now-a-days.

Signature**What**

Signature is the writer's name written by himself or herself.

Where

The signature is written just below the complimentary close leaving four lines on the left-hand side in full block form.

How

- The first line includes the handwritten signature of the person.
- The second line has the typed name of the writer.
- The third line has writer's designation.
- Fourth line has the company's name.
- If the name of the firm is mentioned first, the firm is responsible for the result but if the writer's name appears first he is held responsible for the result.

Why

Signature is a very important item of a business letter. Signature shows the writer's responsibility towards the matter of a letter. A letter without signature is worthless and incomplete. The signature tells that the writer is aware and conscious about the content of the letter and that he is responsible for the meaning of the letter. It informs the reader about who the reply should be addressed to.

5.8 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

General tips

The type of signature indicates if the company or an individual is accountable for the consequences of the letter.

If the name of the company is written first, the company is responsible.

Arohi Industries

(MK Kapadia)

Partner

If the name of the person comes after signature, the person is responsible for the consequences.

(MK Kapadia)

Partner

Arohi Industries

Do you know this?

* per pro signature (per procurationem)

Whenever the director of the company or the authority is absent, the possible delay is avoided by using per pro signature. In most of the companies, a person is authorized to sign a letter.

p.p. Arohi Industries Ltd.

(MK Kapadia)

5.2.3 Optional Parts

Optional parts are need-based things. In other words, they are used when needed. A business letter can be written without them.

EXHIBIT 5.3 Optional Parts of a Business Letter

Attention line

Subject line

Enclosure

Copy notation

Post script

Subject Line

What	As the name suggests the subject line talks about the subjects/topics of the letter. It gives brief information about the subject of the letter.
Where	It is placed either above or below the salutation at the centre. In full block form, it is placed at the left margin.
How	Sub: Inquiry about mobiles Sub: Our Bill No.325 dated 15 July, 2013
Why	The main function of the subject line is to get the prompt attention for the letter. This is also useful for the future records and for filing purpose. The receiver from the subject line can make out the matter of the letter.
General tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whenever the attention line is used, it is placed below the salutation. • According to the US style, for business letters, you are supposed to use colon (:) after salutation and comma after complimentary close; it is called mixed punctuation. • In Europe, commas are used in both cases. • Open punctuation (i.e., no punctuation) after salutation and complimentary close is becoming common, especially in the United States.

Enclosure

What	Sometimes it becomes necessary to attach some papers, bills or cheques to the main letter. Their inclusion is mentioned in the letter. The attachment of the letter is known as an enclosure.
Where	They are written on the left-hand side below the signature.
How	Encls: 1. Cheque No. 002345 dated July 29, 2013, Bank of Baroda, Anand Branch for ₹ 50000/- 2. Transport Receipt
	OR
	Encls: Two
Why	The enclosure helps the clerk verify the documents while receiving the letter. If anything is missing, s/he can draw the attention of the sender with the help of the enclosure.
General tips	The enclosures should be carefully attached in the sequence they are mentioned in the main letter.

Post Script (PS)

What	PS is a Latin word written as postscript, which means something, which is written afterwards. Thus, it is a bit of writing added to the letter.
Where	It is written after the signature or after enclosure, if there is any.
How	PS: There is an early bird prize for the first seven orders.

Why	In the earlier days, it was used to add something that was forgotten. This should be avoided as it creates bad impression. With the advancement of technology, it is used to emphasize an important point. It can also be used to add a friendly personal note to a formal letter. It successfully establishes personal contact. Further, PS can be used effectively in a sales letter.
General tips	It should not be more than three lines.

Attention Line

What	It is a line that helps the receiver know whose attention is needed.
Where	Attention line is placed two spaces below inside address and above salutation. It should be on the left.
How	The word ' Attention ' is followed by a colon (:). After the word 'Attention', one should write the name of the person whose attention is required. If the name of the person is not known, then designation can be used. Attention: Mr Maniyar OR Attention: Assistant Manager (Finance)
Why	When the sender wishes the firm/company to respond to the letter even in absence of the person to whom the letter is sent, s/he uses attention line.
General tips	When the attention line is written, one must put the name of the organization or department as the first line of the receiver's address. The attention line is written immediately afterwards.

Copy Notation

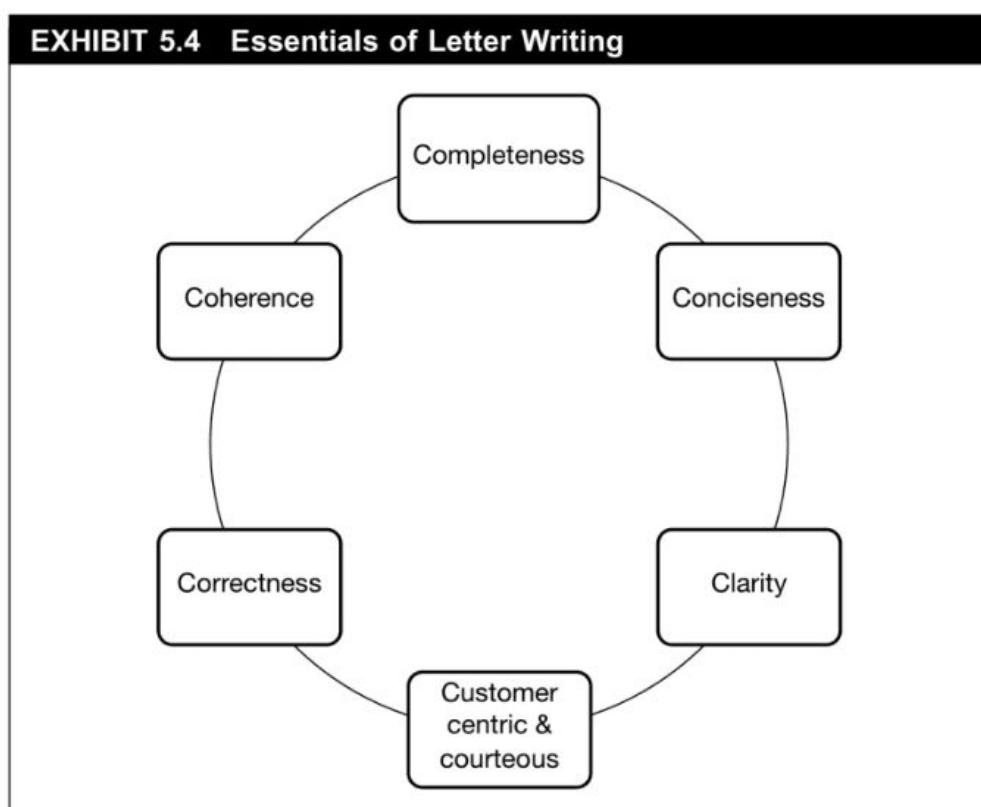
What	Copy notation is the information to receiver about the people to whom the letter has been sent to.
Where	If there are no attachments, copy notation is written directly below signature. If anything is enclosed, 'CC' is written after enclosure.
How	Type 'CC' followed by a colon and the name of the person. If the copy of the letter is sent to more than one person, all the names are aligned vertically on left side. CC: Mr RK Mishra Mr MT Tripathi Ms KT Patani
Why	It helps the receiver to know that the letter is sent to more than one person and to whom.
General tips	If all the major optional parts are used in letter, following would be the sequence: Enclosures : Carbon Copy Notations : Postscript :

5.3 ESSENTIALS OF LETTER WRITING

Appearance is important but not enough. Every business letter should have some inherent essential qualities that help in building a long-lasting relationship. They are also known as C's of letter writing.

5.3.1 Completeness

Completeness is one of the desirable qualities of any business letter. A letter can have this quality when it answers all the possible questions that a reader might have. It starts with the basic question from who is writing to whom and for what purpose.



Dos

- Make a list of information to be added to a letter.
- Before dispatching the letter, read it as a receiver does.
- Be straightforward and clear cut.
- Answer all the necessary questions like who, whom, whose, where, what, why, when, how much, how many, how long and how often.

5.3.2 Conciseness

The ability to convey needed information in minimum possible words is known as conciseness. Conciseness is difficult to define but possible to describe. Conciseness means to give maximum meaning in minimum words or to give the required information in few words. Thus, a concise letter contains only essential information.

5.12 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

A concise letter is always clear cut and to the point. A good business letter avoids flowery or ornamental language.

Dos

- Keep paragraphs short
- Whenever possible, write in the form of points
- Stay away from extra adjectives and/or adverbs

5.3.3 Clarity

Clarity means to tell the customer what s/he expects from products, services or business. Following is the list of do's to bring clarity to the letters.

Dos

- Have the clear idea about the purpose of the letter
- Use action verbs instead of passive verbs (prepare, plan, justify, schedule, select)
- Prefer short sentences instead of long ones
- Tell clearly, what the letter is offering
- Mention specifically what do you expect the reader to do
- Use familiar words
- Convey one idea in one paragraph
- If possible, keep the paragraph to maximum 6 to 8 typed lines
- Make good use of linking words like '*Therefore*', '*Nevertheless*', '*However*', '*Next*', etc. to make the paragraph coherent

5.3.4 Customer-centric and Courteous

A letter would serve its purpose when the receiver is kept at the centre. In other words, the letter focuses on the benefits of the receiver. It convinces the reader that the content is for his/her benefit. A customer-centric letter is courteous. This quality implies following proper etiquette in business letters.

Dos

- Write the correct name and spelling of the receiver/s
- Address them appropriately
- Reply letters as soon as possible, if possible in 24 to 48 hours
- Always write in friendly and cheerful style of writing
- Try to think from the reader's point of view

5.3.5 Correctness

Correctness means correctness in terms of format, information (facts and figures) and expression (spelling, grammar and proper use of words). Expression takes into account the language. There should not be any grammatical error or any ambiguity. Moreover, it should confirm the accepted practice of letter writing.

Dos

- Make sure that correct format is used.
- Confirm that initials and spellings of the name of the receiver are correct.
- Be sure that it is sent to the right person in right department for an appropriate action.
- Verify if the tone of the language is correct, i.e., neither it is too formal nor too informal.

5.3.6 Coherence

Coherence means logical links among the sentences and paragraphs. If a letter is coherent, the reader understands it in the first reading.

Dos

- Introduce your purpose in the first paragraph.
- Expand the purpose in the second paragraph. If more than one idea is to be expressed, make new paragraphs.
- Express your expectation from the reader in the last paragraph.
- Make appropriate use of cohesive devices such as *therefore, nevertheless*, etc.

Summary of Qualities of a Business Letter

Sr. No.	Quality	Avoid	Prefer
1.	Conciseness	We will keep you informed from time to time about the progress we are making.	We will inform you of our progress.
2.	Clarity and completeness	We will contact you soon. Not safe for children. We will meet on Friday for final decision.	We will contact you by 1 November. Not safe for children below 10 years. We will meet on Friday at 2:00 pm in the Conference Room of our Administration Building for final decision.
3.	Considerate, courteous and customer-centric	We are pleased to inform that _____. We invite you as the Chief Guest of this function. You should have taken care of this.	You will be pleased to learn that _____. You are invited as the Chief Guest of this function. This should have been taken care of/ note of.

(Continued)

(Continued)

Sr. No.	Quality	Avoid	Prefer
	Correct	You have not been selected. Please apply elsewhere. We have received your letter. This can coast you ₹ 2000 (<i>be careful about spelling errors</i>). We would advise you to buy _____.	Your qualification does not meet our requirement. You may apply next time. Thank you for your letter. This can cost you ₹ 2000. We would suggest you to buy _____.

Last but not least.....

A few additional points:

- Once the letter is written, save the format so that you can use on some other occasion.
- Always keep a copy of any correspondence you have sent.
- Use a quality ink that does not fade or spread on the paper.
- A sense of professionalism is conveyed if a letter is printed on quality paper and folded neatly. It shows the care you took while writing and sending the letter.
- The folded letter should be of exactly the same size of the envelope.
- It is advisable to have standard size business envelope.
- While folding a letter, make three folds of a letter with the last, i.e., top one slightly smaller.
- The letter should be folded in such a manner that when the receiver takes out the letter from the envelope, s/he lifts the fold that will show the top of the page.
- To fold a letter, first the bottom third goes up and then the top third is placed on it.
- It looks really professional, if care is taken to set the page in such a manner that the salutation is just above the edge of the bottom third part when folded.
- Full block form is helpful while using an envelope with a double window. This allows the sender's address as well as inside address in the upper window and lower window, respectively.
- The writer should make judicious use of 'I', 'We' or 'You' attitude. Use 'I' if necessary, do not replace it with 'We' unnecessarily, i.e., if you are talking about a company policy or a group opinion, use 'We'. If you are the decision maker use 'I'. If you need to talk about something from a reader's point of view, use 'You'.
- While drafting the letter, avoid using all caps or italics.
- Follow the steps like drafting, editing, checking and proof reading while writing a business letter.

5.4 TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

Business letters are of many types. They are either written by a customer or a supplier. In a way, it is a series, which generally starts with the letter of inquiry or an offer.

Given below is some useful information about each type of letter as well as phrases and/or sentences that will help you write various types of letters.

5.4.1 Letter of Inquiry (Enquiry About a Product, Service or Information, Asking for a Quotation)

Introduction

1. A letter of inquiry is written by a firm or a purchaser who intends to buy goods.
2. It contains details regarding the required goods/services.
3. It may contain a request for samples/demo.
4. It specifies the terms and mode of payment.
5. It specifies the time and mode of delivery.
6. It ends with a gesture of long-term relationship.

When writing the letter for the first time, you need to introduce yourself to the receiver. You may choose to begin in the following manner.

- We are happy to introduce ourselves as a leading company in the field of _____
- Let us introduce ourselves as a well-established firm in _____
- We would like to share that we are renowned name in _____

First paragraph (inquiring about catalogue and price list)

- We are dealers in _____ (product/service name). We are interested in your _____ (specific product/service). Please send us your latest catalogue.
- We have heard about your _____ (product/service name). Kindly give us more details regarding this.
- We are interested in _____ (product/service name) you offer. We request you to quote the terms and conditions for _____ (product/service name).
- We are happy to learn about the _____ (product/service name) you offer. We would be glad if you would kindly let us know the prices and terms of business.
- Yesterday we came across your advertisement of _____ (product/service name). We are quite impressed with it. We are interested in it. Kindly furnish the details regarding the terms and conditions, price and the catalogue.
- We are very much fascinated with _____ (product/service name) that you have recently introduced in the market. We would like to know more about your attractive, qualitative/useful/extra ordinary _____ (product/service name) to place an order. Will you please send us the required information regarding this?
- We are a dealer of _____ (product/service name). Your new _____ (product/service name) has caught our attention. We have a large market for it. Let us know the terms and conditions on which you are prepared to deal with us.
- I/we recently read/heard about _____ (product/service name) and would like to know _____ (product/service name)

5.16 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

- Having seen your advertisement in _____ (source of advertisement, i.e., newspaper, magazine, leaflet or hoarding). I would like to know about _____ (product/service name)

Second paragraph

Asking for discount

- Our order is going to be very large. We, therefore, request you to offer us your maximum discount and favourable terms of payments.
- As our order is likely to be considerably large, we request you to offer us extra discount.
- In view of our large and regular order, you are requested to offer us a special discount.
- You would have regular orders from us if you offer us generous discount.
- We would appreciate it if you would offer special discount to us.

Payment

- If terms and conditions are favourable, we do not mind dealing on CWO* basis.
- It is our usual practice to pay on COD** basis.
- We would pay 50 per cent on CWO* basis and remaining at the time of delivery.

* (CWO: Cash with Order)

** (COD: Cash on Delivery)

Time

- As our requirement is urgent, we would like to know whether you could deliver the goods within (duration) days/week/s.
- We have to supply the goods before _____ (date). Let us know whether you are in a position to supply the goods by _____ (date).

Third paragraph (assurance of the order)

- If your quotation is found to be reasonable and terms and conditions favourable, we shall definitely place our order with you.
- If your prices, terms and delivery period are found acceptable to us, we shall soon place our order with you.

Last paragraph (closing line)

- We look forward to receiving your prompt reply.
- We look forward to hearing from you soon.
- We look forward to hearing your positive response.
- I trust that you will give this matter your urgent attention.
- Kindly do not hesitate to contact us for further information.
- Please feel free to contact us for further details or clarification.

Your college wishes to start a language laboratory. You need 50 computers for that purpose. Write a letter to Tech Solutions Ltd, Nr ISKON Mall, SG Road, Ahmedabad.

SAMPLE LETTER

Anand Engineering College
Opp. Mission Hospital, Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Fax: (0261) 2841404

Website: anandengineeringcollege.ac.in

Phone: (0261) 2841403

Email: anandenggcollege@gmail.com

Date: 20 June 2019

Tech Solutions Ltd
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar
Ahmedabad 380052

Sub: Inquiry about computers

Dear Sir/Madam

We are pleased to introduce ourselves as one of the prestigious institutes affiliated to Gyan Technological University, Ahmedabad. With a view to strengthening the communication skills of our students, we have decided to set up a well-equipped language lab.

We shall be glad if you would kindly let us know the prices and terms of trade for the supply of 50 computers suitable for a language lab. Our order is going to be considerably large. We, therefore, request you to offer us your maximum discount and favourable terms of payments. As our requirement is urgent, we would like to know whether you could deliver the goods within a month.

If your prices, terms and delivery period are found acceptable to us, we shall soon place our order with you.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

(MR Rathi)
Procurement Officer

5.4.2 Letter of Reply

Introduction

- Reply to a letter of inquiry is written by the supplier.
- In the beginning of the letter, a feeling of gratitude should be expressed.
- The reply should contain exact information desired by the customer.
- The reply should include information regarding the prices, terms of payment, approximate time of delivery, discount, etc.

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- The reply should be sent within 24 hours or maximum 48 hours.
- The customer should not feel that s/he is being neglected or unwanted.
- The letter should end with a gesture of a long-term relationship.

First paragraph

- Thank you for your letter no _____ dated _____ for _____ (product/service name). We are paying full attention to your inquiry **OR** Your letter is receiving our best attention.
- We are pleased to learn from your letter dated _____ requesting us to quote the terms and conditions for the supply of _____ (product/service name).
- We are happy to learn from your letter dated _____ that you are interested in buying _____ (product/service name) from us. We value your faith in us as a precious asset.
- Many thanks for your letter dated _____ requesting us to supply you the necessary information about _____ (product/service name).

Second paragraph

- We are happy to state the terms and prices as required by you. We are sending you a copy of catalogue along with this letter.
- We enclose a copy of our latest price list. We hope that you will find our prices quite reasonable and competitive.
- As the advertisements do not carry all the details, we enclose more information in the form of literature/leaflet/catalogue.

Photographs, video, demonstration (when needed)

- Along with this letter, we are sending you some photographs/a video to give you an idea of the qualities and range of our products/services.
- In order to give you a better understanding of all the functions of _____ (product/service name), our sales representative will come and hold the demonstration.

Discount

- Generally, we offer 12 per cent discount but as you are our regular customer, this time you will get 5 per cent bonus discount.
- It is our usual practice to give 12 per cent discount but as you are a first timer and since we want you to be our permanent customer, you will have extra 3 per cent discount.
- If you order exceeds ₹ _____ (amount), we will provide you 5 per cent extra discount.

Mode of payment

- On receiving your order, you will get 15 days credit to make payment.
- It is our policy to supply the goods on CWO basis.
- As per our policy, you can make 50 per cent payment in advance and remaining at the time of delivery.

- You may make the payments in three instalments: 30 per cent payment at the time of placing the order, 30 per cent payment at the time of delivering the goods and the remaining, i.e., 40 per cent after a month.
- Our policy is to supply the goods against 100 per cent advance payment.

Time of delivery

- You will have ready delivery of goods on receipt of your order.
- Goods will be supplied within the stipulated time.
- We have a large stock of the goods required by you. We, therefore, shall supply the goods to you from our ready stock.
- We will immediately deal with your orders as per your requirement as we want to see you as our permanent customers.

Concluding paragraph

- We wish to have a prompt and positive response.
- We hope to get a warm response.
- We desire to add your name in the list of our regular customers.
- Our long experience is at your service. We expect you will make use of it.
- Words alone will not prove what we claim for our product, only a trial will convince you.

Tech Solutions Ltd has received an inquiry for the supply of 50 computers from Anand Engineering College, Surat. Write a suitable reply so that the institute places an order with you.

SAMPLE LETTER

Tech Solutions Ltd

28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar, Ahmedabad 380 052

Phone: (079) 65229214

Fax: (079) 65229215

Email: techsolutions@gmail.com

Website: www.techsolutions.com

22 June 2019

Anand College of Engineering
Opp. Mission Hospital
Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Attention: Mr Rathi (Procurement Officer)

Dear Mr Rathi

We are happy to learn from your letter dated 20 June 2019 that you are interested in buying 50 computers to set up language laboratory. We value your faith in us as a precious asset.

We are happy to state the terms and prices as required by you. We are also sending you a copy of catalogue with this letter, in case you wish to think of other options.

Quantity	50 computers
Product description :	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intel Core i3 3rd generation• 2GB DDR 3 RAM• 500 GB HDD• DVD RW• Key board and mouse• Integrated graphics• Free DOS• 18.5" LED monitor• Desktop speakers• Headphones with microphones
Price per PC :	₹ 35,100 per computer
Discount :	It is our usual practice to give 12 per cent discount but as you are a first timer and since we want you to be our permanent customer, you will have extra 3 per cent discount.
Mode of payment :	As per our policy, you can make 50 per cent payment in advance in the form of a demand draft/cheque and remaining 50 per cent at the time of delivery.
Delivery :	Within the stipulated time
Validity of the quotation :	15 days
Terms and conditions :	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One year warranty of the parts• Three years free service to repair or replace the parts• Cost of delivery to be borne by the company• Any complaint regarding damaged goods to be made within eight days after delivery
Sincerely	
(RH Malhotra)	
Encl: A copy of the catalogue	

5.4.3 Letter of Placing an Order

Introduction

- A letter of order is the confirmation from the buyer that s/he is making a deal with the supplier.
- The letter of order is a legal document; therefore, utmost care should be taken while drafting.
- It contains details about the purchase of goods or services.

- The letter should be addressed to the person that will be executing the order.
- Avoid using adjectives for the product as well as for the supplier.
- The opening lines should express gratitude for quoting reasonable terms and conditions.
- The body of the letter should explicitly state each and everything about the product, type, description of the product, quantity, price, terms of payment and other terms and conditions approved by you and the other party involved.
- If any advance payment is done, do mention it in the letter.
- Do indicate the preferable mode of shipping/carting.
- Point out a deadline for delivery date.

First paragraph

- This is with reference to the quotation letter that your firm sent us for _____ (product/service name). You will be pleased to learn that our company has decided to buy _____ (product/service name) from you.
- We are pleased with the terms and conditions stated by your firm and would like to place an order for _____ (product/service name).
- Thank you for the quotation you have sent, we are ready to build a long-term business relation with you.
- We would like to place an order with you. Please find below a list of products we require.
- You will be pleased to know that our company is happy with your approach regarding the proposal we have been discussing. We are glad to place an order with you. The particulars of the items and their numbers are given below.

Second paragraph

This should specifically state your requirements regarding the product you wish to buy.

Mode of Payment

- We agree that 50 per cent payment is on CWO basis and remaining at the time of delivery. We have attached a demand draft no. _____ dated _____ for ₹ _____ as 50 per cent payment towards the order.
- As decided, we expect 10 months credit.
- As per our discussion, the payment will be done as soon as the goods are delivered to us.
- 50 per cent advance payment will be done in the form of a post-dated cheque to be cleared on the day of delivery. The remaining payment will be done after 15 days of the delivery of the order.

Concluding lines

- We look forward to a timely delivery.
- We wish this beginning to lead us to long lasting business relations.
- We hope this relation to prove mutually beneficial.

Other terms and conditions

- Kindly note that the damaged items will be reshipped within a week. The cost of the same will be borne by your company.
- The charges involved in dispatch and delivery will be borne by your company.
- You will be responsible for any on-road fault.
- Any legal matter will be subject to the jurisdiction of Gujarat High Court, Ahmedabad.
- If the order is not executed as per the terms and conditions agreed upon, it will stand as cancelled.

Anand Engineering College approves the quotation sent by Tech Solutions Ltd. They wish to place an order with them. On their behalf, write a letter confirming the order for 50 computers.

SAMPLE LETTER

Anand Engineering College
Opp. Mission Hospital, Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Fax: (0261) 2841404
Website: anandengineeringcollege.ac.in

Phone: (0261) 2841403
Email: anandenggcollege@gmail.com

Date: 5 July 2019

Tech Solutions Ltd
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar
Ahmedabad 380052

Sub: Order for 50 computers

Dear Mr Malhotra

This is with reference to the quotation letter that your firm sent us for 50 computers. You will be pleased to learn that our institute has decided to buy computers from you.

Quantity

50 computers

Product description

- Intel Core i3 3rd generation
- 2GB DDR 3 RAM
- 500 GB HDD
- DVD RW
- Key board and mouse
- Integrated Graphics
- Free DOS
- 18.5" LED monitor
- Desktop speakers
- Headphones with microphones

Cost including discount:

₹ 29,835 per computer

Mode of payment :	We agree that 50 per cent payment is on CWO basis and remaining at the time of delivery. We have attached a demand draft No. 234450 dated 5 July 2019 of ₹ 7,45,875 of Bank of Baroda payable at Ahmedabad as 50 per cent payment towards the order.
Delivery :	Within one month from the date of placing the order
Other terms and conditions :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One year warranty of the parts • Three year free service to repair and replace the parts • The damaged items will be reshipped within a week • The cost of the reshipping, if any, to be borne by the company • The charges involved in dispatch and delivery will be borne by the company • The company is responsible for any on-road fault • Any legal matter will be subject to the jurisdiction of Gujarat High Court, Ahmedabad • If the order is not executed as per the terms and conditions agreed upon, it will stand as cancelled.
	We wish to have a timely execution of the order.
Sincerely	
(MR Rathi)	
Encl: A demand draft	

5.4.4 Letter of Execution of an Order

Introduction

- The letter of execution is a formal communication done to the buyer.
- The first paragraph should thank the customer for placing the order.
- The next paragraph should give in detail how the goods have been sent.
- The last paragraph should express supplier's desire for better relations.

First paragraph

- We thank you for your order of _____ (product/service name).
- Thank you for your order of _____ (product/service name). It is a matter of pleasure for us that you are satisfied with our quotation.

Second paragraph

- We have the pleasure to inform you that we have packed the goods in hard cardboard boxes/plastic bags/covers/wooden cartons and sent them through Gurjar Transport Company today. The truck receipt and bill are also sent herewith. We have granted 30 days' credit, as you have desired.

Third paragraph

- We believe that the standard quality of our _____ (product/service name) will give you utmost satisfaction. Any further order from you will give us an opportunity to serve you and strengthen our relations.
- The _____ (product/service name) are of excellent quality and known for their durability. We are sure that they will become popular among your customers. We look forward to having your further orders and assure you of our prompt and best attention in executing your valued orders.

Tech Solutions Ltd, Ahmedabad has received the order for 50 computers from Anand Engineering College, Surat. Write a letter informing them of the execution, stating all the necessary details.

SAMPLE LETTER

Tech Solutions Ltd
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar, Ahmedabad 380052

Phone: (079) 65229214
Email: techsolutions@gmail.com

Fax: (079) 65229215
Website: www.techsolutions.com

1 August 2019

Anand College of Engineering
Opp. Mission Hospital
Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Sub: Your order dated 20 July 2019

Dear Mr Rathi

Thank you for your order of 50 computers. It is a matter of pleasure for us that you are satisfied with our quotation.

You will be pleased to know that all the computers have been properly packed and sent through Gurjar Transport Company today. The truck receipt and bill are sent with the computers. We have supplied them on the terms and conditions mutually agreed upon. Following are the details:

Quantity	50 computers
Product description :	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intel Core i3 3rd generation• 2GB DDR 3 RAM• 500 GB HDD• DVD RW• Key board and mouse• Integrated graphics• Free DOS• 18.5" LED monitor• Desktop speakers• Headphones with microphones

Price per PC including 15 per cent discount :	₹ 29,835 per computer
Payment details :	Received ₹ 7,45,875 towards 50 per cent payment ₹ 7,45,875 to be paid after 30 days of receiving the order
Terms and conditions :	<ul style="list-style-type: none">One year warranty of the partsThree years free service to repair or replace the partsCost of delivery to be borne by the companyAny complaint regarding damaged product to be made within eight days after deliveryThe damaged items are to be reshipped within a weekThe cost of the reshipping, if any, will be borne by the companyThe charges involved in dispatch and delivery will be borne by the companyThe company is responsible for any on-road faultAny legal matter will be subject to the jurisdiction of Gujarat High Court, Ahmedabad.

We believe that the standard of quality of computers will serve your purpose completely. Any further order from you will give us an opportunity to serve you and strengthen our relations.

Thank you.

Yours truly

(RH Malhotra)
Proprietor

5.4.5 Letter Requesting Extension in Time/To Allow Partial Execution of an Order

Introduction

- A request for extension in time or for partial execution is made by the supplier.
- This may be in a situation, when the supplier has accepted or wish to accept the order but is not in a position to supply the goods in time as desired by the customer.
- In such a situation, the supplier requests for more time to execute the order or supplies the goods in instalments.
- The opening lines should thank the customer for placing the order.
- The next part should talk about the reason for the request you are making, i.e., why are you asking for extension in time or can execute the order partially.
- The following paragraph should talk about the time you need to execute the order or steps to be taken by you.
- The concluding lines should express your regret about the inconvenience likely to be caused, if any, to the customer and assurance that in future such inconvenience will be avoided.

First paragraph

- We thank you for your order for _____ (product/service name) to be executed within 20 days.
- Thank you very much for placing the order for _____ (product/service name). This shows your keen interest in our _____ (product/service name).

Second paragraph

- The recent untimely heavy rains have damaged and disrupted rail and road services. In these circumstances, the dispatching work has been held up.
- In this connection, we have to inform you that as there was a sudden fire in our factory, it will not be possible for us to dispatch the _____ (product/service name) at present.
- We regret to inform you that we are unable to execute your order at present. The labour strike in our factory has not yet been resolved.

Third paragraph

- We hope normalcy will be restored within a week or so. We request you to grant us an extension of 10 days in delivering the goods ordered.
- However, as your demand is urgent, we have sent you today half of your required goods. _____ (product/service name) are carefully tested and well packed. We are sure you will receive them within two days.

Fourth paragraph

- We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience caused to you. We assure you that we shall deliver the goods as soon as possible.
- We trust, you will appreciate our difficulty and grant us extension as requested.
- We shall be happy if you extend your time limit for execution of your order.
- We hope you will fulfil with our request and grant us extension for at least 10 days.

Tech Solutions Ltd, Ahmedabad has received an order for 50 computers from Anand Engineering College, Surat. However, due to some problem they are not in a position to supply the goods in time. Write a letter on their behalf requesting the client to extend the time limit to supply the goods, stating a convincing reason.

SAMPLE LETTER

Tech Solutions Ltd
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar, Ahmedabad 380052

Phone: (079) 65229214
Email: techsolutions@gmail.com

Fax: (079) 65229215
Website: www.techsolutions.com

1 August 2019

Anand College of Engineering
Opp. Mission Hospital
Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Sub: Extension in time for execution

Dear Mr Rathi

We thank you for your order for computers to be supplied within 20 days.

The recent untimely heavy rains have damaged and disrupted rail and road services. In these circumstances, we have to hold up the dispatching work.

We hope normalcy will be restored within a week or so. Hence, we request you to grant us an extension of 10 days in delivering the goods ordered.

We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience caused to you. We assure you that we shall deliver the goods as soon as possible.

Yours truly

(RH Malhotra)
Proprietor

5.4.6 Cancelling or Postponing an Order

A letter of cancellation or postponing the order is written on two occasions:

1. When the buyer is in trouble and is forced to cancel/postpone the order.
2. When the seller is at fault and the dissatisfaction of the buyer leads him/her to cancel/postpone the order.

Cancelling or Postponing an Order (buyer's problem)

Introduction

- An order is cancelled or postponed when the buyer is having some trouble.
- The opening paragraph should confirm the action taken, i.e., cancellation or postponement.
- The second paragraph should clearly give the convincing reason for the action.
- The next paragraph should state the next step of action to be taken.
- The concluding line should express the regret for the inconvenience caused to the supplier.

First paragraph

- We confirm our telephonic instructions to cancel/postpone our order for _____ (product/service name).

Second paragraph

- We have been compelled to do so as our clerk overlooked a portion of the stock in our godown. After placing the order, we found that the goods ordered are already in sufficient stock.
- We regret to cancel our order because of a recent fire in our shop/factory/organization. It turned all the stock and important files into ashes. At present, we are not in a position to stock the goods.
- We are sorry to cancel this order as you know that the natural calamity has changed the situation. People are in great distress; hence, we will not have expected business.
- We are to make the payment from the grant to be received. However, the grant will be released after 6 months. Hence, we are forced to cancel/postpone the order.

Third paragraph

- We are sorry for the inconvenience caused to you. We assure you that we shall place an order for our requirements as soon as the situation becomes normal.
- We hope you will understand our unpleasant situation and cancel/postpone our order. We shall be pleased to place orders with you in the near future.

Anand Engineering College, Surat has placed an order for 50 computers with Tech Solutions Ltd, Ahmedabad. However, due to some difficulty, they are writing a letter requesting them to postpone the order. Write a letter on their behalf.

SAMPLE LETTER

Anand Engineering College
Opp. Mission Hospital, Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Fax: (0261) 2841404
Website: anandengineeringcollege.ac.in

Phone: (0261) 2841403
Email: anandenggcollege@gmail.com

Date: 30 July 2019

Tech Solutions Ltd
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar
Ahmedabad 380052

Sub: Postponing the order for computers

Dear Mr Malhotra

We confirm our telephonic instructions to postpone our order for 50 computers dated 10 July 2019.

We have been compelled to do so as there was a small accident due to some problems in power supply. The problem is being taken care of and it may take a few days to restore normalcy. Hence, we have to postpone the order.

We are sorry for the inconvenience caused to you. We hope you understand our unpleasant situation and postpone our order. Kindly deliver it after 5 August 2019.

Thanks.

Yours truly

(MR Rathi)
Procurement Officer

Cancelling an Order (supplier's fault) or Late Delivery

Introduction

- An order is cancelled/postponed when the supplier is at fault.
- The opening paragraph should confirm the action taken, i.e., cancellation of the order.
- The second paragraph should clearly give the convincing reason for the action.
- The next paragraph should state the next step of action to be taken.
- The concluding line should hint at the future consequences of such an attitude.

First paragraph

- We confirm our telephonic instructions to cancel/postpone our order for _____ (product/service name). We regret that delay in the execution of the order has compelled us to cancel our order.
- Please refer to our order letter. It was clearly mentioned that _____ (product/service name) should be sent within a week of the receipt of our order. You even promised to do so but you have not fulfilled that. Despite our efforts, you have not cared to explain the situation.
- We wish to draw your attention to the delay caused in delivering the goods.
- I would like to express my dissatisfaction regarding the way our order has been handled.

Second paragraph

- The delay has caused us serious loss in our seasonal business. We are afraid as we will now have to contact another supplier.
- The delay on your part has put us in a very awkward position. We had to buy our requirements from other suppliers at higher price. If you fail to be prompt in future, we shall be compelled to obtain all our regular requirements from elsewhere.

Third paragraph

- We do not require _____ (product/service name) now. If you send them, we will have to return the parcel at your cost.
- Please do not send the _____ (product/service name) now.

Concluding lines

- I would appreciate your immediate attention to the matter.

Anand Engineering College, Surat has placed an order for 50 computers with Tech Solutions Ltd, Ahmedabad. However, the supplier has failed to dispatch the goods in time. Hence, the institute is forced to cancel the order. Write a letter on their behalf.

SAMPLE LETTER

Anand Engineering College
Opp. Mission Hospital, Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Fax: (0261) 2841403

Phone: (0261) 2841403

Website: anandengineeringcollege.ac.in

Email: anandenggcollege@gmail.com

Date: 8 August 2019

Tech Solutions Ltd
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar
Ahmedabad 380052

Sub: Cancelling the order for computers

Dear Mr Malhotra

We confirm our telephonic instructions to cancel our order for 50 computers. We regret that delay in the execution of the order has compelled us to cancel our order.

The delay on your part has put us in a very awkward position. Our students will have to wait for the access to language lab. We had to buy our requirements from other suppliers. If you fail to be prompt in future, we shall be compelled to obtain all our regular requirements from elsewhere.

We would appreciate your immediate attention to the matter.

Yours truly

(MR Rathi)
Procurement Officer

5.4.7 Letter of Complaint

Introduction

- A letter of complaint is written to express customer's dissatisfaction regarding the product or the service.
- Common causes of complaints are damaged or defective goods, late delivery or shortage in goods, irregularity of services or incivility of the customer care executives, etc.
- The complaint should be treated positively as it helps build relations. Supplier's timely treatment of the complaints shows s/he cares for the customers.
- The letter should provide all the details concerning the problem you experienced and specify what type of action or adjustment you expect.
- State the reason for writing the letter in the first paragraph.
- Explain the problem in detail in the main body of the letter. It may include details regarding the nature of problem, frequency of its occurrence (i.e., when and how many times), seriousness of it, etc.
- Give precise and necessary information on the situation.
- Use simple past tense when describing what happened.
- State what action you want to be taken at the end of the letter.
- Use simple present tense to express your wish/hope.
- The tone and language while describing the problem should be rational.

First paragraph

- We wish to draw your attention to _____ (name of complaint)
- We are writing this letter to express our dissatisfaction
- We wish to inform you that
- We regret to inform you that
- We are very much disappointed with
- We would like to draw your attention to the condition/fact that

Second paragraph

Detailed information about the problems (This will depend on the nature of complaint. In addition, it will vary from product to product. Given below are some examples.)

- Out of 50 computers, 5 computers are not working properly. Following are the problems we have experienced.
 - Computer no. AWE3450AE does not have operating systems installed.
 - Computer no. AWE3455AE has start up trouble.
 - Computer no. AWE3448AE has defective mouse cable.
 - Computer no. AWE3440AE and AWE3458AE have got scratches on the screen.

5.32 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

- We called the customer care 5 days back and gave complaint regarding _____ (briefly talk about the complaint) but have not received any response from them yet.

Adjustment of what you desire

- I would appreciate if you make the necessary arrangement for the regular service of the _____.
- We suggest that in order to avoid further damage to the name of your company, you should replace the necessary parts.
- I think something should be done about the quality of services being offered.
- We would appreciate your regularity in addressing the complaints made by us.

Stern actions if the complaint is of serious nature

- We are sorry to state that we shall have no choice but to seek legal advice in this matter.
- We regret to state that if our request is unanswered, we shall be forced to consider taking further action.

Concluding lines

- With the hope to have a prompt action
- We wish you take positive action in this regard.
- We are sure that you would address the problem within 48 hours.
- We await for an early reply.

Anand Engineering College, Surat has received the supply of 50 computers from Tech Solutions Ltd, Ahmedabad. However, there are some problems with the computers. Write a letter of complaint on their behalf.

SAMPLE LETTER

Anand Engineering College
Opp. Mission Hospital, Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Fax: (0261) 2841404
Website: anandengineeringcollege.ac.in

Phone: (0261) 2841403
Email: anandenggcollege@gmail.com

Date: 20 July 2019

Tech Solutions Ltd
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar
Ahmedabad 380052

Sub: Complaints regarding the computers

Dear Mr RH Malhotra

Thank you very much supplying the computers in time. However, we would like to draw your attention to the following problems that we have found in 5 (out of 50) computers supplied to us.

Computer no. AWE3455AE and AWE3450AE have start up trouble.

Computer no. AWE3448AE has defective mouse cable.

Computer no. AWE3440AE and AWE3458AE have got scratches on the screen.

We would appreciate if you make the quick and necessary arrangement to solve the above stated problems.

With the hope to have prompt action.

Sincerely

(MR Rathi)

5.4.8 Letter of Adjustment

Introduction

- Adjustment letter is a reply to complaint letter.
- Adjustment/Compensation may be or may not be granted.

While accepting the responsibility of complaint

- Appreciate the efforts and express your gratitude towards the customer for drawing your attention towards the problem s/he faced through the complaint letter.
- Express regret over the customer's troubles. Start the letter with reference to the letter of complaint received.
- If you accept the responsibility of the problem, explain what happened.
- For explanation, state the process you followed to investigate the problem.
- State clearly how the company wishes to solve the problem.
- The company may make an offer to take goods back, extra discount or to replace the goods.
- Do not show any resentment while granting the compensation.
- End your letter with the good intention that the complainant will continue business relations with him/her. Do this very cordially.

While rejecting the responsibility of complaint

- Appreciate the efforts and express your gratitude towards the customer for drawing your attention towards the problem s/he faced through the complaint letter.

- Express regret over the customer's troubles. Start the letter with reference to the letter of complaint received.
- Diplomacy is needed while writing a letter of adjustment, when compensation cannot be granted.
- Never reject the compensation straight away.
- Explain the process of dispatching the goods. Let this be factual.
- While rejecting the compensation, convincingly explain the reasons for not granting compensation.
- While rejecting the compensation, offer some partial assistance, if possible.
- While saying no, provide convincing and logical explanations for declining compensation.
- Always leave the scope for better business relations.

While accepting the adjustment requested by customer

First paragraph

- Thank you for drawing our attention to _____ (refer to the problem to show your customer that you have understood the problem). We really regret for the trouble you had to face.
- We refer to your letter of complaint about _____. We extend our sincere apology for the difficulty you had to face.
- With reference to your letter dated _____, complaining about _____, kindly accept our apology for the trouble you had to face.
- We are thankful to you for drawing our attention to _____ (refer to the problem). We would like to apologize for the error made in sending/packing the goods.

Second paragraph (accept the complaint, explain the reason/s and refer to the steps taken to avoid such complaints in future)

- We accept the fact that due to the rush of orders enough care was not taken in dispatching/packing the goods. However, necessary changes have been made to take care of all the necessary factors that may give any chance of complaint. We have dispatched the missing items by _____ transport/courier. They should reach you by Thursday, 7 November 2013.
- We are sorry for the incivility of our staff during your visit. On inquiry, it was learnt that the salesman was disturbed because of some social problem. He too felt sorry for his misconduct. Nevertheless, he has been warned against such misconduct in future.
- We inquired into the matter and learnt that the problem occurred because of the small accident that truck met on its way to delivering the goods. You can return the items that are damaged/you are not happy with. The company will bear all the cost of reshipping. We will send the fresh goods on receiving the damaged goods.
- We looked into the matter and realized that our packing department forgot to verify the goods which were being dispatched. As a result, you received the goods meant to be sent somewhere else. We agree to receive the goods back and ready to bear the cost.

The missing items have been sent to you through _____ Transport/courier. In addition to this, to avoid any such occurrence in future, we have modified our verification system.

Concluding lines

- We reassure that such a thing will not happen in future.
- We promise that we will not give any chance of complaint in future.
- Let us assure you that appropriate care will be taken to avoid all the causes of complaints.

While rejecting compensation requested by the customer

First paragraph

- Thank you for drawing our attention to _____. (refer to the problem to show your customer that you have understood the problem). We really regret for the trouble you had to face. We completely understand your disappointment.
- We refer to your letter of complaint about _____. (description of the problem as stated by the customer). We are really sorry about this. We know how disturbing it is when our expectations are not met.

Second paragraph

- However, we regret to inform you that the company cannot agree with the compensation requested by you as the period of free service offered to you expired a month ago.
- Nevertheless, we are sorry to state that the investigation has confirmed that no damage was done during transportation and all the care was taken during the packing as well. Hence, we cannot accept your request of reshipping and replacing the goods at our cost.
- As per the agreement, any complaint regarding the damaged goods was to be done within 8 days of receiving the goods. It is already 15 days; hence, we cannot consider your request of replacing the goods favourably.
- However, we would like to draw your attention towards the terms and conditions we agreed upon. According to the agreement, no returns/refunds were allowed on goods put for sale. Hence, we cannot consider your request positively.

Third paragraph

- We hope that our reply has addressed your grievance properly.
- We trust that the above arrangement has satisfied you.
- We hope that you are satisfied with the way things have been managed.
- We trust that you understand our point of view.

Concluding paragraph

- We assure you of complete attention in your dealings with us.
- We hope to have better business in future.
- We look forward to receiving your further orders.

Tech Solutions Ltd, Ahmedabad has supplied an order for 50 computers from Anand Engineering College, Surat. However, they have received some complaints regarding the goods supplied. Write a letter on their behalf accepting their request to adjust the manner.

SAMPLE LETTER

Tech Solutions Ltd
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar, Ahmedabad 380052

Phone: (079) 65229214
Email: techsolutions@gmail.com

Fax: (079) 65229215
Website: www.techsolutions.com

14 August 2019

Anand College of Engineering
Opp. Mission Hospital
Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Sub: Adjustment to your complaint dated 13 August 2019

Dear Mr Rathi

Thank you for drawing our attention to the damaged things you received in the goods supplied by us. We really regret for the trouble you had to face.

We accept the fact that due to the rush of orders enough care was not taken in packing and dispatching the goods. However, one engineer from our company will visit your institute within a week and address all your complaints. In addition to this, we like to add that necessary changes have been made to take care of all the necessary factors that may give any chance of complaint.

We reassure that such a thing will not happen in future.

Thanks.

Yours truly

(RH Malhotra)
Proprietor

Tech Solutions Ltd, Ahmedabad has supplied an order for 50 computers from Anand Engineering College, Surat. However, they have received some complaints regarding the goods supplied. Write a letter on their behalf declining adjustment to their request.

SAMPLE LETTER

Tech Solutions Ltd
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar, Ahmedabad 380052

Phone: (079) 65229214
Email: techsolutions@gmail.com

Fax: (079) 65229215
Website: www.techsolutions.com

14 August 2019

Anand College of Engineering
Opp. Mission Hospital
Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Sub: Adjustment to your complaint dated 13 August 2019

Dear Mr Rathi

Thank you for drawing our attention to the problems of defect in mouse cable, start up trouble and scratches on the screen. We really regret for the trouble you had to face. We completely understand your disappointment.

Nevertheless, we are sorry to state that the investigation has confirmed that no damage was done during transportation and all the care was taken during the packing as well. Hence, we cannot accept your request of replacing the monitors with scratches on the screen and mouse cable. However, our engineer would come to solve the problem of start up trouble you had with two computers.

We trust that you understand our point of view and agree to the adjustment made.

We look forward to receiving your further orders.

Thanks.

Sincerely

(RH Malhotra)
Proprietor

5.4.9 Letter of Sales

Introduction

It is evident from the name that, a sales letter is a kind of business letter that tries to sell the products or services through tactful writing. Ideally, it should serve the purpose of a salesman who tries to sell the products through tactful speaking. A sales letter can reach where a salesman cannot. Moreover, the receiver can read it as per his or her convenience. Thus, it is a kind of marketing strategy.

The major objective of a sales letter is to convince the customer to purchase the product. The allied objectives can be introducing a new product or service and expanding the market by reaching to prospective customers. A good sales letter should be able to grab the attention of the customer and arouse an interest in the product or service. Then, the interest should result in a desire and culminate into the action of purchasing the product or the service.

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The following things can be adopted while writing a sales letter.

- Use a catchy headline.
- Be the customer whom you wish to target.
- Tap the need of your reader.
- Use such a language that compels your reader to try your product.
- Make it easy to read.
- Describe the features of your product in a convincing manner.
- Conclude with an attractive offer.

You are the director of Nalanda Learning Media Pvt. Ltd. that provides e-learning platform for school education. Write a sales letter to prospective customers informing them about various features of the e-learning content prepared by your company.

SAMPLE LETTER

Nalanda E-Learning
Nalanda Learning Media Pvt. Ltd.
1st floor, West Wing, BSquare
Beside IncomeTax Office,
Ahmedabad, Gujarat 380009.

Date: 25 March 2019.

Your Child Deserves an Extra Edge

Dear proud parents

Parents always desire to provide the best option for their children. Needless to say that, no compromise is made when it comes to education. Please accept our accolades for being one of such parents.

You will agree with me that the world of learning has gone into a complete transformation and so are our children. They are more active and need something extra to keep pace with the competitive world.

Today, e-learning has changed the traditional teaching and learning practices in the classroom. Learning has become more fun and a less cumbersome activity. To support your child in surviving the competition, you need to give an extra edge for your children. Nalanda E-Learning Package can be this extra edge.

Nalanda E-Learning Package is prepared under the guidance of a team that comprises of experienced educationists, renowned child psychologists, prominent subject experts from schools across the country and as well as proficient IT professionals. Together, they have created a world of learning where, every child can learn as per his or her capacity and pace.

Some of the conspicuous features of the e-learning package are listed below.

- Personalised study plans.
- Interactive exercises which are adaptable to small screens. Progress tracker which helps to achieve milestone.

- Ample activities and practice tests.
- Quick and efficient doubt clarifying sessions through online question and answer forum.
- Adaptive tests to get a precise idea of your child's understanding of academic concepts.

Nalanda E-Learning Package is available on play store by downloading 'Nalanda-The E-Learning Package' or through registration on our 'website www.nalandaelearning.edu.com'.

Download our app and have a complete access to all the features for the first week at free of cost. Avail 30 per cent discount on ordering a package before 15 August 2019. So hurry, order today. To know more, you can reach us on our toll-free no.1800 120 3456 from Monday to Saturday between 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Looking forward to hear from you.

Yours sincerely

(Hetzvi Raichura)

5.4.10 Letter of Credit

Introduction

'Buy Now and Pay Later' practice is very common in business. This practice facilitates smooth business transactions. The credit helps a retailer to hold stocks, increase working capital and in turn finance business. The seller or supplier is also benefitted as the old customers are easily retained and the new customers can be added to the list. However, the other side of the coin is that, it increases the cost as the records have to be maintained and collections have to be taken care of. The supplier quotes higher cost and the buyer also pays it. There is also a risk of incurring bad debt. Nevertheless, this is a common practice with many firms. The types of credit letters are listed below.

- Request for credit (from a buyer to a supplier): When a company or retailer or trader is doing business regularly with another wholesaler or trader and finds it a bit inconvenient to make a necessary transaction with every deal, they request for credit to the supplier. Both the parties settle for payment on a quarterly basis or as per the mutual agreement.
- Accepting request for credit (from a supplier to a buyer): This letter is written for confirming the customer's request for credit.
- Request for extension of credit (from a buyer to a supplier): Due to some reasons, if the customer is unable to make necessary payment in due time, a request for extension of credit is made to the supplier. The buyer explains the causes of late payment, requests for certain time limit and assures that the necessary payment will be made within that time.
- Declining the request for extension of credit (from a supplier to a buyer): This is a negative response as the buyer requests for extending the credit. The supplier either finds it is riskier to extend the credit limit or it is against their normal practice of not accepting such requests or is not in a position to extend such favour.

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- Accepting the request for extension of credit (from a supplier to a buyer): This is a positive response to the buyer's request for extension of credit. Such a request from the buyer is entertained when the supplier knows the worth of the buyer and he is in a position to extend such favour.

Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd., Vadodara have their regular supply of various machinery tools from Madras Machine Tools, Chennai. Given below is a series of correspondence between them with regard to the credit facility.

Sample Letter: Request for Credit (from a buyer to a supplier)

Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd., Vadodara have their regular supply of various machinery tools from Madras Machine Tools, Chennai. Their business is growing and as a result, they are required to place orders frequently. Write a letter on behalf of Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd. to Madras Machine Tools, Chennai requesting them to grant credit limit of 6 months.

SAMPLE LETTER

Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd.

312/18, GIDC, Makarpura, Vadodara, Gujarat 390019.

Fax: (0265) 2841403

Phone: (0265) 2841403

Website: www.karvyengineeringltd.com

Email: karvyengineering@gmail.com

Date: 1 January 2018.

Madras Machine Tools
NO 10/11 TVS Nagar
Opp Jigs India Ltd., Padi
Chennai, Tamilnadu 600050.

Sub: Credit request

Dear Mr Srinivasan

Greetings!!!

It has been almost 2 years since we started purchasing various machine tools from you. We are also happy with your handling of our orders.

It is a matter of pride to share that in a short time span our business too has seen a remarkable surge and as a result, we would now require to place orders more frequently. In view of the frequency of orders, we would request you to consider settling our account quarterly.

If so required, we would be happy to supply banker's and trade references.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely

(Rajiv Bharadia)

Proprietor.

Sample Letter: Accepting Request for Credit (from a supplier to a buyer)

Madras Machine Tools, Chennai have received a credit request from Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd., Vadodara. On behalf of Madras Machine Tools, Chennai write a letter accepting their request.

SAMPLE LETTER

Madras Machine Tools
NO 10/11 TVS Nagar, Opp Jigs India Ltd., Padi
Chennai, Tamilnadu 600050.

Fax: (044) 22444141
Website: www.madrasmachinetools.com

Phone: (044) 22444141
Email: mmtools@gmail.com

Date: 4 January 2018.

Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd.
312/18, GIDC, Makarpura
Vadodara, Gujarat 390019.

Sub: Acceptance of request for credit

Dear Mr Bharadia

Greetings from MM Tools!!!

With reference to your letter dated 1 January 2018, thanks for acknowledging our efforts. Our heartiest congratulations to you on the success of your efforts too.

As far as your request for quarterly settlement of your account is concerned, we would be happy to agree for this arrangement. Based on our experience of your business transactions with us, we do not find any such need for you to supply any reference.

Also in the future, we assure you of our best services.

Yours sincerely

(Venkat Srinivas)

Proprietor.

Sample Letter: Request for Extension of Credit (from a buyer to a supplier)

Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd., Vadodara have their regular supply of various machinery tools from Madras Machine Tools, Chennai. They have a credit facility from Madras Machine Tools. However, due to some unforeseen circumstances, they require some extensions to clear their account. Write a letter on behalf of Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd. to Madras Machine Tools requesting them to extend the credit limit.

SAMPLE LETTER

Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd.
312/18, GIDC, Makarpura, Vadodara, Gujarat 390019.

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Fax: (0265) 2841403
Website: www.karvyengineeringltd.com

Phone: (0265) 2841403
Email: karvyengineering@gmail.com

Date: 15 June 2019.

Madras Machine Tools
NO 10/11 TVS Nagar
Opp Jigs India Ltd, Padi
Chennai, Tamilnadu 600050.

Sub: Request for extension of credit

Dear Mr Srinivas

Greetings!!!

With reference to your letter dated 12 June 2019, we are extremely sorry that we have not been able to make the payment within due time and that you have to remind us about the same.

As per our earlier practice, we were to make the necessary payment in time. However, our clients have been badly hit by the recent Vayu cyclone in Gujarat and have not been able to meet their obligations. This has obstructed the cash flow and the delay from our part too. We kindly request you to extend the credit limit for some time.

We assure to clear the account by 31 July 2019.

Thank you in advance for retaining your faith in us.

Yours sincerely

(Rajiv Bharadvia)

Proprietor.

Sample Letter: Accepting Request for Extension of Credit (from a supplier to a buyer)

Madras Machine Tools, Chennai have received a request for extension of credit from Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd., Vadodara. On behalf of Madras Machine Tools, Chennai, write a letter accepting their request for extension of credit.

SAMPLE LETTER

Madras Machine Tools
NO 10/11 TVS Nagar, Opp Jigs India Ltd., Padi
Chennai, Tamilnadu 600050.

Fax: (044) 22444141
Website: www.madrasmachinetools.com

Phone: (044) 22444141
Email: mmtools@gmail.com

Date: 19 June 2019.

Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd.
312/18, GIDC, Makarpura
Vadodara, Gujarat 390019.

Sub: Acceptance of request for the extension of credit

Dear Mr Bharadia

Greetings from MM Tools!!!

Thanks for the prompt response to our reminder.

We are sorry to learn about the ill effects of the Vayu cyclone on the traders there. Having faced a similar situation, we do understand their plight.

In view of your past records of payment and the reason you have cited, we would not mind granting you an extension as requested by you in this special case.

Kindly ensure to send the cheque of the outstanding amount by 31 July 2019.

Yours sincerely

(Venkat Srinivas)

Proprietor.

Sample Letter: Declining the Request for Extension of Credit (from a supplier to a buyer)

Madras Machine Tools, Chennai have received a request for extension of credit from Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd., Vadodara. On behalf of Madras Machine Tools, Chennai write a letter declining their request for extension of credit.

SAMPLE LETTER

Madras Machine Tools
NO 10/11 TVS Nagar, Opp Jigs India Ltd, Padi
Chennai, Tamilnadu 600050

Fax: (044) 22444141

Website: www.madrasmachinetools.com

Phone: (044) 22444141

Email: mmtools@gmail.com

Date: 19 June 2019.

Karvy Engineering Pvt. Ltd.
312/18, GIDC, Makarpura
Vadodara, Gujarat 390019

Sub: Decline of request for extension of credit

Dear Mr Bharadia

Greetings from MM Tools!!!

Thanks for the prompt response to our reminder.

We are sorry to learn about the ill effects of the Vayu cyclone on the traders there. Having faced a similar situation, we do understand their plight and also believe in you.

However, in spite of understanding your situation, this time we would not be able to grant you an extension. Our obligations and commitments to others make it impossible for us to extend any favour to you.

May we kindly request you to ensure to send the cheque for the outstanding amount by 31 July 2019.

Yours sincerely

(Venkat Srinivas)

Proprietor.

5.4.11 Letters of Appreciation and Acknowledgement

Introduction

Appreciating and acknowledging are the ways to forge a professional connection. A small thank or a word of appreciation can help one to build a great relationship. At the workplace, juniors should be appreciated by seniors. Support and motivation of seniors should be acknowledged by juniors. Appreciation and acknowledgement complement the performance and growth of everyone involved.

Letter of acknowledgement is also written when a company receives some document, parcel, consignment, etc,. It is a kind of receipt that should be sent as soon as the document, parcel, consignment, etc, is received. As the acknowledgement is a legal document, it should be precise, polite and pleasant.

While Writing a Letter of Appreciation or Acknowledgement

- **Appreciate and acknowledge in time:** If somebody has done something good to you, express your gratitude in time, preferably within 24 hours.
- **Be brief:** Like any other professional communication, this too should be brief and to the point.
- **Specify the reason:** It may happen that, the person to whom you are writing is being helpful to many and might be receiving many thank-you notes. Hence, be specific about the purpose of writing the letter.
- **Express genuine appreciation:** Let the letter not be merely formed of words. Words should express your genuine gratitude.

Sample Letter: Letter of Acknowledgement from a Student to a Teacher

Write a letter of acknowledgement to a teacher who wrote a letter of recommendation for you to help you seek admission in a foreign university.

SAMPLE LETTER

Bhumit Thakkar
Agam Heights
Bhimrad
Surat 395007

Date: 15 March 2018.

Dr Aashka Mahera
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Anand Engineering College
Surat

Sub: Thank you

Dear Madam

Greetings!!!

I am happy to share that I have just received the admission letter from Northern Illinois University (NIU), America as well as the confirmation from Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU), America. I am greatly thankful to you for penning down recommendation letters for me. I would soon join NIU.

I would like to put your teaching and guidance in action.

Your blessings will always help me.

Great regards.

Yours sincerely

(Bhumit Thakkar)

Sample Letter: Letter of Acknowledgement to Former Boss

Write a letter of acknowledgement to the person who mentored you during your internship at Bavelle Technologies, Ahmedabad.

SAMPLE LETTER

Rochak Pandya
15, Shivalik Society
Opp Shivalik Arcade
Vadodara

Date: 15 June 2019.

Yash Shah
Network and System Security Engineer
Bavelle Technologies
Thaltej Cross Road
Ahmedabad 380054

Sub: Acknowledgement

Dear Mr Shah

Greetings!!!

I would like to express my deepest appreciation for your mentoring during the internship under you.

It was a sheer pleasure and a great learning experience while working under you. I am greatly thankful to you for the paramount support and trust that you have bestowed upon me in all the initiatives and endeavours. Your faith in me was highly motivating.

With high regards.

Yours sincerely

(Rochak Pandya)

Sample Letter: Appreciation for a Good Job (from a senior to a junior)

The recent visit of a foreign delegation is a great success. Write a letter of appreciation to the project coordinator appreciating his or her contribution in making the visit a success.

SAMPLE LETTER

Bavelle Technologies
(protecting and accelerating your business)
Thaltej Cross Road
Ahmedabad 380054

Toll Free: 1800 203 2033
Website: bavelletech.com

Phone: (079) 2991403
Email: info@bavellec Corp.com

Date: 15, June 2019.

Divyanka Divakaruni,
Project Coordinator
Cyber Security Department
Bavelle Technologies
Ahmedabad

Sub: Appreciation

Dear Ms Divyanka

Thank you for coordinating the visit of the Australian delegation on their business trip to India. Your planning and insight made their visit hassle free. You took care of every small need of theirs, sometimes even without being told. Also, the delegation appreciated your pleasant nature and ever smiling face. Their visit would not have been successful and memorable without your support.

Thanks again.

(Yash Shah)

Head

Department of Network and System Security.

Sample Letter: Student's Acknowledgement for a Project or Thesis

You are to submit your PhD thesis. Draft a letter of acknowledgement expressing your gratitude for all those who helped you in reaching this milestone.

SAMPLE LETTER

Acknowledgement

A journey is easier when you travel together. Interdependence is certainly more valuable than independence. This thesis is a result of patience and laborious work wherein I have been accompanied and supported by many people. It is a pleasant aspect that, now, I have the opportunity to express my gratitude for all of them.

The first person I would like to thank is my supervisor – Professor KK Kanabar, Head, Department of Computer Engineering, Anand Engineering College, Surat.

This thesis is an extension of my final year project which was carried out under the supervision of Professor KK Kanabar. His enthusiasm and integral view on research and his mission of providing and getting 'only high-quality work and not less', has left a lasting impression on me. I owe a lot of gratitude to him for having shown me this way of research. I am sure that, he does not even realise how much I have learned from him besides the finer aspects of research. Besides being an excellent supervisor, his tremendous emotional and mental support helped me to sustain myself during the tough days of my life.

I am indebted to all my colleagues especially Dr DS Mehra, Dr YS Talati, Dr PK Pancholi for their moral support and motivation.

DST, New Delhi has partially supported and funded this research and I take this opportunity to thank them. I shall remain grateful to them.

My deepest sense of gratitude to my family and friends for their emotional support has helped me to manage the stress as well as time.

My gratitude to the Almighty whose blessings I have always had in my life. I pray to God to keep on showering His blessings all the time.

Date: 15 June 2019.

Vasu Karia.

Place: Surat.

Sample Letter: Customer's Letter of Acknowledgement of a Parcel or Consignment

Anand Engineering College, Surat has received 50 computers from Tech Solutions Ltd., Ahmedabad. Write a letter of acknowledgement on behalf of the college.

SAMPLE LETTER

Anand Engineering College
Opp. Mission Hospital, Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Fax: (0261) 2841404
Website: anandengineeringcollege.ac.in

Phone: (0261) 2841403
Email: anandenggcollege@gmail.com

Date: 15 July 2019.

Tech Solutions Ltd.
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar
Ahmedabad 380052.

Sub: Acknowledgement of the consignment

Dear Mr RH Malhotra

Greetings!!!

We would like to acknowledge that, we have received the consignment of 50 computers as ordered by us. The consignment is under verification at present. If everything is found as per the terms and conditions, the necessary papers will be sent to you within 10 business days. If there are any issues to be addressed, we will contact you within 10 days.

Looking forward to do business with you in the future.

Sincerely

(MR Rathi)

Procurement Officer.

5.4.12 Letter of Apology

Accepting one's error and seeking an apology is very crucial in maintaining business relations. However, when this apology is in writing, it becomes a permanent record. Hence, it is more crucial that, such an apology should be drafted very tactfully. An apology letter is written to apologise for the error committed by oneself or on behalf of the organisation.

Consider the following things while writing a letter of apology.

- Say sorry without defending your error.
- Express your regret by describing the situation that led to the error.

- Share your plan to fix the error.
- Assure to avoid such an error in future.

Anand Engineering College, Surat received the ordered computers. However, due to some reasons, they have failed to pay the due amount within the time limit mutually agreed upon. Write a letter of apology on behalf of the organisation.

SAMPLE LETTER

Anand Engineering College
Opp. Mission Hospital, Tower Road
Surat 395 001

Fax: (0261) 2841404
Website: anandengineeringcollege.ac.in

Phone: (0261) 2841403
Email: anandenggcollege@gmail.com

Date: 1 August 2019.

Tech Solutions Ltd.
28, First Floor, Himalaya Mall
Indraprasth Tower, Drive-In Road
Memnagar
Ahmedabad 380052.

Sub: Apology for the delayed payment

Dear Mr RH Malhotra

Greetings!!!

Many thanks for dispatching the consignment in time.

However, we are extremely sorry for being unable to clear your payment in time.

This was all circumstantial. We sincerely apologise for the delay and any inconvenience it has caused to you. We assure you that, this is a one-time error and will not occur in future dealings.

We have enclosed a cheque for the remaining payment and kindly request you to waive the late payment charges in view of our long-time affiliation.

Thanks for being patient with us.

Great regards!!!

Sincerely

(MR Rathi)

Procurement Officer.

5.4.13 Cover Letters (While Submitting Proposal, Report and Job Application)

Introduction

Submission of a proposal, a report or a job application requires a cover letter. It can be grabbed as an opportunity to highlight the strengths of the work you have just completed (report), relevance and value of the work you propose to carry out (proposal) or skills you have to deserve for a particular post (job application). Sometimes, it can be only a formality that has to be done to complete the process the submission.

Consider the following things while writing a cover letter while submitting a report.

- Summarise the details in the report.
- Provide a reference to the purpose of writing the report (who assigned the task and when and why).
- Offer an overview of the details of the report.
- If required, highlight the next steps to be followed.

Consider the following things while writing a cover letter while submitting a proposal.

- Introduce yourself and your organisation. Otherwise, provide some reference to the previous communication.
- Mention your merits.
- Express your enthusiasm about the project.
- Share the relevance of your work succinctly.

Writing a Cover Letter for a Job Application

It is not enough to have a degree, knowledge and skills to land an interview. One requires the abilities to showcase the strengths, skills and knowledge in a manner that convinces the recruiter about his or her employability. The first step towards this, is writing a compelling cover letter and an eye-catching resume.

A cover letter along with a job application highlights the applicant's credentials and interests in the position without sounding arrogant or braggart. It helps the recruiter to make a difference between two equally qualified applicants. However, one should remember that a cover letter is not a summary of your resume. It should be like a teaser compelling the recruiter to have a look at your resume. It should be concise and correct. It should never be more than a page.

Sample Letter: Cover Letter Used with a Report

ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. wishes to go for rebranding. You were entrusted with the task to prepare a report on the probable measures to be taken in this direction. You are ready with the report. Write a cover letter for the report.

SAMPLE LETTER

ABC Company Pvt. Ltd.
SG Highway
Ahmedabad 380054

Toll Free: 1800 303 3033
 Website: abcpvtltd.com

Phone: (079) 2893403
 Email: info@abccoltd.com

Date: 1 May 2019.

Mr Aarav Kothari
 Managing Director
 ABC Company Pvt. Ltd.
 Ahmedabad

Sub: Rebranding ABC Co Pvt. Ltd

Dear Mr Kothari

Greetings!!!

With reference to the Board of Director's meeting on 10 February 2019 to discuss various initiatives and measures required to rebrand our company and the power was vested in me in this regard. I interacted with our clients and various office-bearers and collected some data through the questionnaire as well as from other resources.

I am glad to share that, after the necessary research and analysis, a report is prepared. The report describes the areas required to be taken care of and proposes the measures to be taken for the rebranding.

I would also be happy to deliver a presentation in this regard.

With the hope that this rebranding helps our company scale new heights.

Regards.

Yours sincerely

(Saina Sutaria)

Encl: Report.

Sample Letter: Cover Letter Used with a Proposal

ABC Company Pvt. Ltd. wishes to redesign its website. Proposals are invited from the interested agencies. One such proposal is submitted by XYZ Web Shops, a web designing consultant. Given below is a cover letter from XYZ Web Shops that they enclosed with the proposal.

SAMPLE LETTER

Neev Patel
 Web Designing Consultant
 XYZ Web Shops
 Ahmedabad.

Date: 14 November 2018.

Mr Aarav Kothari
Managing Director
ABC Company Pvt. Ltd.
Ahmedabad.

Sub: A proposal on redesigning the website

Dear Mr Kothari

Greetings from XYZ Web Shops!!!

With reference to our meeting on 10 November 2018 at your office and the related telephonic communication thereafter, we are pleased to submit a detailed proposal to redesign the website.

We assure you that our experience and creativity will make your visualisation an exquisite and an alluring reality. However, contact us for any query or confusion.

With the wish to have an opportunity to redesign your website.

Yours sincerely

(Neev Patel)

Encl: Detailed proposal.

Sample Letter: Job Application Cover Letter

You are a final year student of Computer Engineering. You have come across an advertisement for the post of Network Security Engineer. Draft a cover letter to be sent with your resume.

SAMPLE LETTER

Yash Shah
305, Himalaya Heights
SG Highway
Ahmedabad

Date: 1 June 2019.

Ninad Joshi
Tech Securities Pvt. Ltd.
GF 10, ISKON Arcade
Memnagar
Ahmedabad 380052

Sub: An application for the post of Network Security and Design Engineer

Dear Mr Joshi

I am interested in the position of Network and Security and Design Engineer advertised in the Times of India of 28 May 2019. As a final year student of Anand Engineering College, I am working on the final year project on Network Security at Tata Consultancy Services Limited (TCS), Gandhinagar. I believe that, my knowledge, skill, and thirst for learning make me an ideal candidate for this post.

My previous internships with reputed organisations like Alternate Networks and Trend Macro Services have helped me to develop an insight into the needs of varied clients and probable challenges likely to be faced during a project. I always received a word of appreciation from my supervisor for my contribution and positive attitude.

I believe that, my critical thinking abilities would make me a suitable candidate for the post. I would appreciate your positive consideration of my candidature with regard to the stated post.

Regards.

Yours sincerely

(Yash Shah)

Encl: Resume.

RECAP

- A letter can be the first step towards long lasting business relations.
- An effective letter is one that induces the reader to take desired action.
- Full block format is in practice now-a-days in which all the parts fall on the left side.
- Heading, date, salutation, body of the letter, complimentary close and signature are the standard elements of a business letter.
- Subject line, attention line, post script, enclosure, copy notation and per-pro signature are the optional parts.
- An effective business letter is complete, concise, clear, customer centric, courteous and coherent.
- Letters are either written by buyers or sellers.

EXERCISES

Draft the following letters. Invent details wherever necessary

1. You have received a complaint letter from Sai Computers, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad regarding the shortage in supply. As the Sales Manager of Wipro, draft a suitable reply to the complaint.

2. Write a letter to M/s Santosh Electronic Ltd., Chandani Chowk, New Delhi calling for the illustrated catalogue and quotation of certain electronic goods required by your firm. (use block layout format).
3. Write a complaint letter in block format to Sajawat Wooden Furniture, Ahmedabad asking for compensation as you found some of the pieces of furniture delivered in the damaged condition.
4. Your company had ordered 100 computers. On receiving them, you came to know that they do not match the specifications and configuration you had given. As the Manager (Purchase), write a Letter of Complaint addressing The Manager, IBM, Hyderabad.
5. As the Purchase Manager of Alpha Engineering Co., Salt Lake City, Kolkata, you placed an order for 15 HP scanners to National Systems Limited, Electronic City, M.G. Road, Bangalore-560 100. You received only 12 scanners. Write a letter to the General Manager (Sales & Marketing) of NSL, making a complaint and asking him to send the remaining 3 scanners immediately (**use block layout format**).
6. As a student of engineering, you want to purchase a laptop for your personal use. Write a letter of inquiry asking for prices, configuration, discount, mode of payment and terms and conditions to The Wipro Technologies, Memnagar, Ahmedabad.
7. As a student of engineering, you want to purchase a laptop for your personal use. Write a letter of inquiry asking for prices, configuration, discount, mode of payment, terms and conditions to The Sony Electronics, Bangalore.
8. Your company has recently launched a new mobile. Write a persuasive sales letter that has to be sent to prospective clients convincing them to place an order.
9. You have completed your BE from an engineering institute. It has been a year since you have joined a reputed company. You have observed that activities conducted during lab sessions have been of great help to you in executing your responsibilities. Write a letter to your communication skill professor by acknowledging his or her efforts in moulding your personality.
10. As a team leader, you have successfully completed a project assigned by your company. Write a letter of appreciation to your team members by highlighting their contribution to the project.
11. You have completed your final year project. Write a note of acknowledgement to be included in the project report.
12. Your customer has made a complaint about the problems in the functioning of the recently purchased washing machine. Your engineer has submitted the inspection report as well. Write a letter of apology to the customer for the inconvenience caused to her. Offer her a suitable compensation.
13. You wish to send your resume for one of the most coveted jobs in your dream company. Draft a compelling cover letter by highlighting your essential skills and competence.
14. L&T Integrated Engineering received a letter from Himalaya Industries requesting for an extension in credit limit. Write a letter on behalf of L&T Integrated Engineering by expressing your inability to do so.

15. BIG Engineering Company, Rajkot is celebrating 25 years of its establishments. They wish to gift 100 mobile phones in the range of ₹ 10,000 to 15,000 among their employees. Write a letter on behalf of the Manager, Department of Human Resource of the company requesting Sumeet Sales Corporation, Ahmedabad to send a quotation stating all the terms and conditions.
16. Write a persuasive letter on behalf of the Sales Manager, Sumeet Sales Corporation, Ahmedabad who has received an inquiry from BIG Engineering Company, Rajkot to send quotation for 100 mobile phones in the range of ₹ 10,000 to 15,000.
17. BIG Engineering Company, Rajkot has received a quotation to supply 100 mobile phones in the range of ₹ 10,000 to 15,000 from Sumeet Sales Corporation, Ahmedabad. Write a letter on their behalf to place an order. State the terms and conditions you have agreed upon.
18. On behalf of the Sales Manager, Sumeet Sales Corporation, Ahmedabad, write a letter executing the order for 100 mobile phones in the range of ₹ 10,000 to 15,000 that they have received from BIG Engineering Company, Rajkot. State all the terms and conditions specifically.
19. BIG Engineering Company, Rajkot received 100 mobile phones supplied by Sumeet Sales Corporation, Ahmedabad. However, they have some complaints regarding some of the phones. Write a letter of complaint on their behalf.
20. Sumeet Sales Corporation, Ahmedabad has received a complaint letter from BIG Engineering Company, Rajkot to whom they have supplied 100 mobile phones. Write a letter of adjustment.

6

Agenda and Minutes of Meeting

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- explain what are the agenda and the minutes of the meeting.
- explain why they are useful.
- identify the key components of agendas and minutes of the meeting.
- prepare the simple agenda items and minutes of the meeting.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Depending upon the need, purpose and convenience, various forms and formats are used for communication in corporate world. Group communication is one such form where one can see all types of communication at work namely, vertical, horizontal and diagonal. Communication related to meetings is also one such group communication where, all types of communication can be seen. Any communication regarding the meeting, starts with a notice and it is followed by an agenda and ends with minutes.

'A meeting is an event at which the minutes are kept and hours are lost.'

—Unknown.

Meetings are very important at every workplace. They affect the morale, culture and overall performance of an individual as well as the organisation. They are convened to take important decisions regarding a project or a policy, take a stock of the situation, do necessary brainstorming to launch a product or make something to happen, etc. However, what makes a meeting work are the activities that precede and follow the meetings. They are the agenda and minutes of the meetings.

6.2 MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF AN AGENDA

This is an important activity that precedes any meeting. It is the list of things to be done at a meeting. It is usually sent along with the notice of the meeting. Sometimes, it is prepared after the notice is sent to incorporate other members' opinions or suggestions. It should be clear, concise and result oriented.

6.2.1 An Agenda Should Possess the Following Characteristics

- Allows the members of the committee to do necessary preparation in advance.
- Gives an opportunity for committee members to exchange ideas and thoughts before the actual meeting.
- Helps the group to have an organised communication activity.
- Assists all the members by remaining focused.
- Makes the members target oriented and meeting productive.
- Helps to take prompt and corrective decisions.
- Ensures that all the items are discussed in order within the time limit.
- Facilitates in controlling the unnecessary talks in the meeting.
- It is of great assistance in writing the minutes and resolutions of the meeting.

6.2.2 Points to Remember About an Agenda

- Items on an agenda are numbered using arabic numerals. They are of two ways namely, 1, 2, 3 (serial number of the agenda) or 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 (serial number of the meeting as the first digit and the number following the decimal to suggest the serial number of the agenda).
- The initial items on the agenda are usually 'Approval of the minutes' or 'Review of the previous meeting' if there was any meeting previously. The aims to approve or learn the status of the decisions taken in the previous meeting.
- The concluding items on the agenda are usually 'Any other matter' or 'Date for the follow-up meeting'. This includes the item raised by the chairperson of the meeting or any member but with the permission of the chairperson.

6.3 MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MINUTES OF MEETING

The efficacy of a meeting is defined by a good agenda and it is ensured by an appropriate recording of the minutes. Minutes are a formal record of the things that have been discussed and decided at a meeting. Minutes of all the meetings are preserved in a chronological order.

6.3.1 Significance of Minutes

Minutes are a very important document. They are a kind of official memory in which essential outcomes of the meeting are captured. They ensure that every committee member has

necessary details and decisions of the meeting for future reference, recollection and verification purposes. These are helpful to the members who attend the meeting as well as for the absentees. Also, minutes are used to verify the details in future.

Minutes are recorded in an established structure. However, even while following the structure, the clean format (appropriate arrangement of the content) contributes to the readability of the content. Information should be recorded under different headers to help the readers to locate different types of information easily.

6.3.2 Content of the Minutes

- It contains reference to date, time, type and location of the meeting.
- List of the members who attended and those who were unable to attend are mentioned in it.
- It contains the list of agenda items.
- It contains the record of the decisions that were taken.
- It contains the record of the actions to be taken with the deadline and the person who is entitled to do the task.
- Information about the follow-up meeting is also mentioned in it.

6.3.3 Points to Remember about Minutes

Meetings and all the documents related to them are very important as they involve a lot of time and can affect the careers of the employees and the growth of the organisations either positively or negatively.

- Minutes are usually recorded by a secretary or an assistant or any individual appointed for this task. He or she is not directly involved in any decision making process.
- Minutes of the previous meeting (if any) are read and confirmed at the beginning of the meeting.
- The confirmed minutes are signed by the chairperson. Once they are signed, they cannot be altered. They are binding to all legally.
- Normally, minutes are not available to all. Only the selected ones can access them.

6.4 PROCESS OF RECORDING MINUTES

6.4.1 Before the Meeting

- The minutes taker should learn or have necessary details about the people attending the meeting and the agenda of the meeting in advance. This would help him or her in preparing the framework of the minutes.

6.4 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

- Before the meeting, the minutes taker should talk to the chairperson and learn about his or her expectations regarding the type of minutes (minutes of narration or minutes of decision) that he or she wishes to have.
- The framework of the minutes should be kept ready as it easier for you to enter the data or details.

6.4.2 During the Meeting

- Verify the names of the attendees with the list that you have. If you are not sure, circulate the attendance list so that the attendees can either sign or put a tick mark against his or her name.
- Record the gist of the discussion or note down the decisions against each agenda item as per the expectations of the chairperson.
- Seek clarification if the clarity is missing with regard to any item on the agenda or if the committee does not make any decision.
- Be attentive and capture the key points of the discussion and all the decisions.
- If permitted, use the recorder to record the discussion.
- Be careful while keeping the minutes about the voting and its outcome.
- Record the number of votes cast for and against the motion.
- Stay objective. Do not add any personal comments or opinion. Record what is discussed and decided without offering any conclusion.
- Leave out words denoting praise or criticism.
- Skip the details of the debate over an issue. Focus only on the facts not feelings.
- Exclude the content that is embarrassing or inappropriate for an individual or organisation.
- Keep handwritten minutes till the drafted minutes are approved.

6.4.3 After the Meeting

- Draft the minutes soon after the meeting using your notes and recording (if permitted).
- Review your outline and if necessary, clarify the (action) points.
- Follow the Cs (Clarity, Conciseness, Correctness, Completeness) of communication while drafting the minutes.
- Get the minutes verified and signed by the chairperson before they are circulated (soft copy or hard copy).
- File the minutes as per the tradition of your company.

TIP: You should also save the minutes in your database so that you can use the framework and other related content in future. This will save your time and energy.

6.5 TYPES OF MINUTES

Minutes are recorded in the following formats namely, minutes of narration or discussion and minutes of resolution and they are described below.

6.5.1 Minutes of Narration or Discussion

As the name suggests, such minutes include discussion on various agenda. It briefly summarises the opinions or counter opinions on a particular proposal and the reasons leading to the final decision and rejection of the particular proposal. It also records the summary of the process that followed to make the final decision as well as the number of votes cast in favour of the proposal. In short, the happenings at the meeting are briefly included in this type of minutes.

6.5.2 Minutes of Resolution

As the name suggests, such minutes include only the resolutions made at the meeting. A resolution is a proposal accepted by the majority at a meeting. A resolution is usually recorded by inverted commas or in italics.

6.5.3 Verbatim Minutes

As the name suggests, such minutes record each and every word that is spoken in a meeting. Such minutes are usually kept for legal purposes. Such minutes are not used for normal business meetings.

6.6 SAMPLE AGENDA AND MINUTES

Given below is a sample agenda for a meeting of the career counselling and placement cell of a college followed by the minutes of the same meeting.

**Anand Engineering College
(affiliated to Gyan Technological University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat)
Opp. Mission Hospital, Tower Road
Surat 395 001**

A meeting of the Career Counselling and Placement Cell will be held in the auditorium of the college on Thursday, 14 June 2019 at 2 p.m. The agenda would be as under:

Agenda:

1. To review the efficacy of the activities carried out by the cell in the last academic year.
2. To list the activities to be carried out during the current academic year.
3. To discuss the contribution of alumni in strengthening the placement activities.
4. Any other matter with the permission of the chairperson.
5. Date for the next meeting.

Principal.

6.6 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

**Anand Engineering College
(affiliated to Gyan Technological University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat)
Opp. Mission Hospital, Tower Road
Surat 395 001**

A meeting of the Career Counselling and Placement Cell was held in the auditorium of the college on Thursday, 14 June 2019 at 2 p.m. under the chairmanship of the principal Dr R. C. Modi. The following members were present.

Shri MR Mohanti	HR Manager, Adani Group
Dr SK Gurjar	Co-ordinator, Career Counselling and Placement Cell
Dr NR Dave	Head, Department of Electronics Engineering
Dr YK Patel	Head, Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering
Dr PR Sahay	Head, Department of Biomedical Engineering
Dr PJ Prajapati	Head, Department of Mechanical Engineering
Dr KT Pathak	Co-ordinator, Career Counselling and Placement Cell
Dr TN Patel	Co-ordinator, Finishing School

Following members were not present due to their pre-occupation.

Dr GN Davda	Head, Department of Electrical Engineering
Dr HR Raval	Associate Professor, Department of Computer Engineering
Dr SN Lukka	Associate Professor, Department of IT Engineering

1. To review the efficacy of the activities carried out by the cell in the last academic year.

Dr KT Pathak made a presentation on the outcomes of the activities carried out by the Career Counselling and Placement Cell and shared the data about the on-campus placement.

Shri MR Mohanti, the special invitee suggested to make students to prepare a skill card. Dr SK Jani was assigned the responsibility to design the skill card in consultation with Shri MR Mohanti.

2. To list the activities to be carried out during the current academic year.

It was resolved to conduct a 40 hour programme focusing on Employability Skills for the students of the third year.

It was further resolved that Dr TN Patel, Co-ordinator, Finishing School will coordinate that programme in liaison with the Career Counselling and Placement Cell.

3. To discuss the contribution of alumni in strengthening the placement activities.

It was resolved that each department would identify 5 alumni members who are working in reputed organisations for at least 5 years. They would be invited to the institution for an interactive session with the students regarding the expectations of employees and the changing scenario of the corporate world.

It was further resolved that the Placement Coordinators of the respective department will arrange the programme in the month of August. ₹20,000/- budget was approved for each department.

4. Any other matter with the permission of the chairperson.

Following things were suggested by various members present at the meeting.

1. Remedial classes to develop proficiency in English should be conducted for the average students.

Dr TN Patel, Co-ordinator, Finishing School was assigned the responsibility to do the necessary planning and get the approval of the principal by 30 June 2019.

2. Internships in the nearby industry should be encouraged.

Dr SK Jani will coordinate the organisation of the internship with the help of the other members of the committee.

3. Date for the next meeting.

It was resolved that the next meeting will be held on 1 August 2019 for the necessary follow-up of the work assigned to the faculty members.

Prepared by: Dr TN Patel
Coordinator, Finishing School

Approved by Dr RC Modi
Principal.

RECAP

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a list of items to be deliberated during a meeting. Usually, it is either a part of the notice or circulated in advance. • It assists in meeting the objectives of the meeting. • It also aids in preparing the minutes of the meeting. |
| Minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are the notes about the discussion and the decisions taken at a meeting. • They are the official recording of the meetings. • They are useful for reference purpose. |

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

Interesting Statistics on Meetings

- 73 per cent of meeting attendees consider that having a prepared agenda is very important.
- 92 per cent of meeting attendees value the meetings as an opportunity to contribute to the organisation.
- 37 per cent of time is spent in meetings by the employees.
- 60 meetings are attended by managers per month.
- 47 per cent of meeting attendees consider that many meetings were the biggest waste of time.
- 39 per cent of meeting attendees admitted to dozing off during a meeting.
- 70 per cent of members brought other works to meetings.

6.8 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

- 25–50 per cent of meeting time were wasted in irrelevant discussion.
- 9/10 people daydream in meetings.
- 60 per cent of meeting attendees take notes to appear as if they are listening.
- The most important thing is that the researchers found that the more meetings employees attended, the more exhausted they felt and the higher they perceived their workload to be.

EXERCISES

1. Define the term agenda and minutes. Discuss their significance with reference to meetings.
2. Your friend has been appointed as a ‘Minutes Taker’. Provide necessary guidelines to him or her to do his task efficiently.
3. As the General Secretary of your college, draft an agenda for the meeting of the Students’ Grievance Redressal Cell of your college. Assume the necessary details.
4. You have been assigned the task of preparing the minutes of the meeting held to discuss complaints and suggestions received by the Students’ Grievance Redressal Cell of your college. Draft the minutes by assuming the necessary details.

Part C

Speaking Skills

7

Public Speaking

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- define the meaning of public speaking.
- compare and contrast various types of public speaking.
- illustrate the qualities of effective public speaking.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, public speaking means ‘the art of effective oral communication with an audience’. In other words, public speaking is a form of interpersonal communication where one person communicates to many. Good command over public speaking can help a professional to advance his or her career and to create better opportunities. In professional life, the art of public speaking is necessary for professional presentations, training events, motivational speech, conducting meetings, debating or discussing some issues or policies, etc.

7.2 TYPES OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Based on the purpose of speaking, public speaking can be divided into various types and they are listed and described below.

- Speaking to inform.
- Speaking to persuade.
- Speaking to motivate.
- Speaking to entertain.

7.2.1 Speaking to Inform

The purpose of such a public speaking is to share certain information, explain an idea or concept to the audience. For informative speaking, the speaker is required to research and collect the necessary data and details about the topic or an area that he or she is going to speak. The content selected should be organised in a coherent and concise manner because a long piece of information bores the audience and reduces their concentration level. The following activities which are included in the informative speeches are listed below.

- Classroom presentations.
- Lectures by professors.
- Paper presentations at seminars and conferences.
- Business presentations.

Illustration: Steve Jobs's 2007 iPhone Keynote Presentation

Steve Jobs's iPhone Keynote Presentation is considered as one of the best business presentations in corporate history. Following are the major takeaways from the presentation.

Build the Narrative

Stories have always succeeded by grabbing the attention of the listeners. Steve Jobs, too, began the presentation with a narration. He increased the importance of the occasion as well as the product and set the mood for the launch. He took only 1–2 minutes to do this thing. In the 2007 iPhone presentation, Jobs set the mood in the following manner without even mentioning the new product.

'This is a day I've been looking forward to for two-and-a-half years,' Jobs began.

'Every once in a while, a revolutionary product comes along that changes everything ... Apple has been very fortunate. It's been able to introduce a few of these into the world. In 1984, we introduced the Macintosh. It didn't just change Apple; it changed the whole computer industry. In 2001, we introduced the first iPod. It didn't just change the way we all listen to music; it changed the entire music industry. Well, today, we are introducing three revolutionary products of this class.'

Add the Element of Surprise

It is natural for the audience to lose interest in the narrative if the presentation flows in a formal manner. However, a touch of twist helps to sustain the interest of the audience in the narrative. Small surprises ensure that nothing is missed by the audience.

In the 2007 iPhone presentation, Steve Jobs surprises his audience at the beginning itself. The following excerpt is an example of it.

'Today, we're introducing three revolutionary products of this class. The first one is a widescreen iPod with touch controls. The second is a revolutionary mobile phone. And the third is a breakthrough internet communications device. So, three things: a widescreen iPod with touch controls; a revolutionary mobile phone; and a breakthrough internet communications device. An iPod, a phone, and an internet communicator. An iPod, a phone--are you getting it? These are not three separate devices. This is one device, and we are calling it ... iPhone.'

Use Sound Bite/s to Be in the Memory of People for a Longer Period

One liner always works wonders. Interesting catchy phrases are always mumbled by the audience and be the headlines in the media. While launching the iPhone, following sentence was used as the headline in the press release and was also repeated five times by Jobs in his presentation.

'Today Apple is going to reinvent the phone,'

Illustrate the Predicament to Make Them Feel the Need

Unless the consumer is reminded of the predicament of the situation, he or she will not understand the importance of the way out. Jobs reminds the audience about the problems that they are facing. Automatically, the importance of the new product increases as it is introduced as the solution to the predicament of the users. In the following manner, he discussed the limitations of the existing smartphones.

'The problem is that they're not so smart and they're not so easy to use. What we want to do is make a leapfrog product that is way smarter than any mobile device has ever been, and super easy to use,'

Season the Content with Humour

Information shared in a humorous manner is likely to be retained for long and helps to sustain the concentration level of the audience. It is actually reported that Steve Jobs, during his presentation, made the audience laugh as many as 51 times.

'During the demo of the Maps feature, Jobs placed a crank call to a Starbucks location, ordering 4,000 lattes before hanging up. Later, his presentation remote stopped working. As it was being fixed, Jobs told a story about the day he and Steve Wozniak created a "TV Jammer" and played a prank on Woz's dorm buddies.'

Thus, when you are ‘Speaking to inform’, the inclusion of the above discussed qualities are likely to yield a better result. Make your informative presentation in the form of a story by describing the situation, introducing the complexities and solving the complexities through your information.

7.2.2 Speaking to Persuade

Persuasive speaking aims to convince the audience about a particular point of view. Usually, a persuasive speech is a four step process. First, the speaker tries to attract the attention of the audience and then incites their interest in the matter being presented. After the success of these two steps, the third and the most important thing is to leverage your propositions or solutions with their expectations and needs. The fourth and the last stage is to make them to initiate the desired action. The persuasive speaker has a stake in the outcome of the speech. Politicians, for instance, may want votes or support for a project, lawyers try to convince a jury of their position and clergy members try to win the faith of the followers. The persuasive speaker uses emotional appeals and strong language in speeches. Persuasive speech is required in the following situations.

- Negotiating a deal with a prospective client.
- Making a presentation about the proposal to get finance.

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- Selling products.
- Convincing the audience about an idea.

Illustration: Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' on 28 August 1963, Washington, United States

Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' is considered as one of the best persuasive speeches in history. Following are the major takeaways from the presentation.

Look Calm, Confident and Convinced About the Idea

This is the first and the foremost need to deliver a persuasive speech. The confidence comes from the research and preparation that goes into preparing the speech as well as a strong belief in the value of the idea. Martin Luther King Jr. was committed to the cause of equality and was ready with the roadmap so, he was able to engage the people and could convince them effectively.

Repeat a Phrase or Sentence in a Rhythmic Manner to Drive Home the Point

In persuasive speeches, it is important that the audience remembers and believes in what the speaker said. Here, Repetition is a very useful technique. This can be the repetition of words, phrases or sentences. Repetition makes the idea clearer and memorable. There are greater chances of their getting accepted while repeating a phrase or a sentence.

- ***I have a dream*** is repeated eight times consecutively, making the audience believe in the dream and its possibility.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, live out the true meaning of its creed:

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children, will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream ... I have a dream that one day in Alabama,

I have a dream today ... I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted,'

Give Various Illustrations to Be Authentic

People believe stories and illustrations but not talks. Support your arguments with necessary illustrations. They leave a vivid impression and stimulate greater interest. Last but not the least, illustrations make the arguments convincing.

- In the speech 'I have a dream', the repetition of the phrase '***We can never be satisfied***' illustrates the injustices done to the Negro thus, making the proposition of equality more authentic.

'We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot

gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one.'

- There is also the reference to America's Declaration of Independence and its various parts.

'So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California.

But, not only that. Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi, from every mountainside. Let freedom ring . . .'

Highlight the Outcomes of the Acceptance of the Idea or Proposal

It is important to let the listener to learn and understand the outcomes and consequences of the acceptance of the proposal. Knowledge about the positive outcomes and future consequences motivate them to decide in favour of the proposition. In the speech 'I have a dream' using the phrase, '**With this faith**' repetitively, positive outcomes of the proposal are highlighted.

'With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.'

Get Connected Emotionally by Evoking Emotions and Images

Emotions help a speaker connect with the people. When an audience is connected with the speaker, they become more receptive and likely to accept the call and take the course of the action suggested by the speaker. In the speech 'I have a dream', numerous references to geographic places concretises the images and emotional connection is established. King talks to his audience and their personal situations directly.

'I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations,' he begins. 'Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.'

To sum up, a wholehearted acceptance of an idea is the result of a decision that is acceptable to the mind as well as the heart. Art of persuasion is all about convincing somebody to do something. To convince, the speaker needs to connect with the audience intellectually and emotionally. Thus, a persuasive speech should aim to win not only the mind but also the heart of the audience.

7.2.3 Speaking to Motivate

Motivating someone requires a higher level of emotional connection. Facts and figures do not work as much as real life or literary illustrations.

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Be Passionate About the Area You Have Chosen to Motivate

It is the passion for the chosen area that makes a motivational speaker effective. If you look at various motivational speakers, you can easily learn about their passion and their area of interest. For example,

- BK Shivani: Spiritual guide and mentor.
- Vivek Bindra: Corporate culture.
- Sandip Maheshwari: Youth and their aspirations.

Empathise with the Audience

As, a motivational speaker has to connect emotionally with the audience, it is necessary that he or she should be well-versed with the aspirations, concerns, worries, joys, hopes and fears of the audience. If he or she does not have this knowledge, then, he or she will not be able to incorporate related examples and hit the nail on the head.

Be Credible

Credibility is one of the most important attributes of a motivational speaker. In other forms of speaking, data and statistics might have an upper edge over other illustrations but in case of a motivational speech, the entire burden is on his or her ability to win the trust and confidence of the listeners. A motivational speaker can make a difference if the audience believes in him or her.

Be Dynamic

A motivational speaker may have his or her area of expertise but the demands and needs of the audience may vary. Hence, he or she should be a jack of all and master of one. It is desirable that he or she is well read and experienced to cater to the need of the audience.

Bring Novelty and Creativity to Your Content

As far as motivational speaking is concerned, what you say is not so important as how you say. ‘Principles of Living a Healthy and Happy Life’, ‘Importance of Relations’, ‘Secrets of Success’ have remained the same but motivational speakers approach them in a different manner. This approach and delivery of the message is the secret of success for every motivational speaker and the speech.

7.2.4 Speaking to Entertain

Speeches delivered on special occasions are termed as entertaining speeches. They are also known as special occasion speeches or ceremonial speeches. They are delivered in the form of speech at an awards function, welcome addresses at luncheons, stand-up comic acts, a motivational speech at a conference, a toast at a wedding, an acceptance speech, speech at farewell parties, speech at retirement parties, etc. The types of entertainment speeches make it clear that, these speeches are delivered before the people that the speaker knows. The purpose of such a speech is to amuse the audience or stir their emotions. Entertainment here, not only mean being humorous but also being touching or emotional, as per the occasion and the mood. Following attributes make an entertainment speech effective and they are described below.

Add a Personal Touch

As an entertainment speech is delivered for and before the people one knows, it would be great if one can weave in stories and incidents about the respective person. However, one should take utmost care not to hurt the emotions of the listener/s.

Adapt Your Content to Suit the Occasion

One should choose the content of the speech, by keeping the occasion in mind. If it is the golden jubilee celebration of your school, cracking funny jokes about teachers, students and the education system would be inappropriate. However, if it is a farewell party where the audience is your friends, you may share some funny experiences about academic life.

Reflect the Aspirations of Your Audience

While delivering an entertainment speech, one should relate to the audience. While relating to the audience, it is necessary to learn the demography of the audience. If you are delivering a speech on the first wedding anniversary of your friend, you should not crack jokes about difficult wives. This might be received well by the male audience but not by the females present there. It may also spoil the mood of many. Hence, your illustrations and quotes should reflect the mood of the audience. In this case, a speech about how a bonding between a husband and a wife make every moment of life a celebration can be delivered.

Keep It Simple and Short

People do not expect to listen too long and boring speeches. Hence, ensure that your speech is such that the audience need not concentrate much to understand you. Neither bore your audience with a long speech nor deprive them of their share of pleasure.

A Word of Caution

The illustrations used in the chapter do not mean that certain attributes can only make a particular type of speech effective. Depending upon one's abilities and need of the occasion, one should use his or her discretion and add particular attributes to the speech. Nevertheless, based on the above discussion, the qualities of effective public speaking are listed below.

7.3 QUALITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKING

1. Deliver your speech in the form of a narration.
2. Surprise the audience by being unpredictable.
3. Make them feel that they need your narration.
4. Be humorous, if the occasion permits.
5. Be confident about the idea and the content.
6. Reiterate very important idea or topic to drive home the point.
7. Illustrate to be authentic.
8. Draw attention to the outcomes of the idea or a proposal.
9. Get connected emotionally by reflecting the aspirations of the audience.
10. Be credible.

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11. Bring novelty and creativity to the content.
12. Keep it simple and short.

RECAP

In general, irrespective of the type of speaking, effective public speaking requires four Ps which are tabulated below.

Plan	a. Learn about the audience. b. Research the topic.
Prepare	a. Collect the material. b. Organise the material coherently.
Practice	a. Practice to modify your content. b. Practice to be confident.
Perform	a. Be calm and eloquent. b. Use positive verbal and non-verbal communication.

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

The fear of public speaking is termed as ‘Glossophobia’ and the person suffering from this fear is called ‘Glossophobic’. Interesting statistics about glossophobia:

1. Fear of public speaking cuts wages by 10 per cent.
2. Fear of public speaking inhibits promotion to management by 15 per cent.
3. Effective presentations comprise 38 per cent of your voice, 55 per cent of your non-verbal communication and only 7 per cent of your content.
4. The audience engagement drops by 14 per cent if the presenter does all the talking.
5. Adding facts and figures to a presentation increases audience retention by 20 per cent.

EXERCISES

1. Based on your understanding of the types of public speaking discussed in the chapter, exemplify general qualities of effective public speaking.
2. Listen to a public speaker and list the qualities that make his or her speech effective by citing suitable illustrations for each quality that you have listed.
3. List and discuss the attributes of a persuasive speech.
4. What is an informative speech? How can a person make an informative speech impressive?
5. You were assigned a task to welcome the new entrants of your department. Prepare a welcome speech.

8

Group Discussion

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- learn the purpose and significance of a group discussion.
- understand the characteristics of a successful group discussion.
- identify the areas of evaluation in a group discussion.
- understand the techniques of participation in a group discussion.
- make effective use of verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

8.1 IMPORTANCE AND PURPOSE OF GROUP DISCUSSION

Ideas and innovations are essential for the progress of everyone regardless of an individual or an organisation and the better ideas can be generated through human interaction, argument, debate and discussion.

When two or more people reason about a particular issue or topic in detail and delve into various perspectives and exchange ideas, which is called discussion. Therefore, discussion is a medium through which exchange of ideas or insight is possible. An effective exchange can generate knowledge and the same can be used for various purposes. In an organisation, the discussion is done to find a solution to a problem or to decide a strategy to carry out an activity, to finalise a policy or to implement a plan.

A Matter of Perspective

Most problems won't exist if people understood the difference between argument and discussion.

ARGUMENT = Finding out **WHO** is right.
DISCUSSION = Finding out **WHAT** is right.

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Moreover, at present, the corporate houses wish the employees to work in teams. Unlike superior-subordinate culture, employees are required to have the ability to work in team culture. Working in a team requires communication skills, problem solving ability, leadership qualities, creative, critical thinking, etc. Group discussion conducted as a part of the selection process (admission or interview) aims at identifying and evaluating these qualities in the candidate.

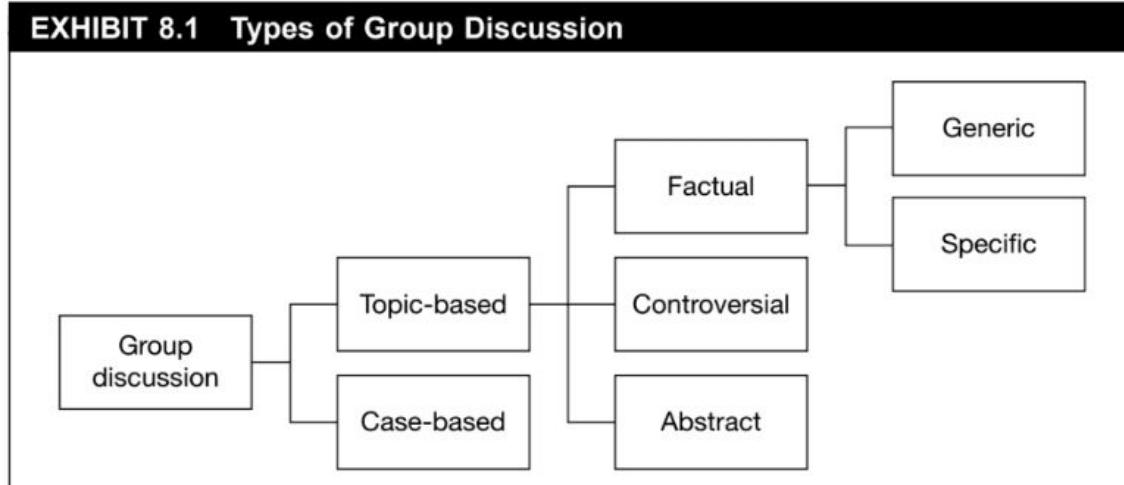
Group discussions serve various purposes. They are conducted to accomplish the following things.

- To identify a solution for an issue.
- To deliberate new ideas or new approaches to solve a problem.
- To develop a better and deeper understanding about an issue.
- To improve critical thinking.
- To visualise diverse approaches to solve a problem.
- To assist a group in making an appropriate decision.
- To identify different perspectives of an issue.
- To enhance the speaking and listening skills.
- To assess the qualities of a candidate before selecting him or her for a particular task or job.

8.2 TYPES OF GROUP DISCUSSION

Based on the needs and objectives, organisations and institutes conduct either topic-based group discussion or case-based group discussion. Broadly speaking, group discussion, as stated above, can be of two types namely, topic-based and case-based. Topic-based group discussion can be further divided into three categories namely, factual, controversial and abstract.

EXHIBIT 8.1 Types of Group Discussion



8.2.1 Topic-based Group Discussion

In this type, a topic is discussed and its conclusions are drawn. The participant would need to explore various angles and prove his or her point by citing suitable illustrations. Topic-based discussion is further divided into three categories namely, factual, controversial and abstract.

Factual Topics

Such topics are about current affairs, status or policy. They require thorough knowledge and understanding of various perspectives related to the topic. A candidate should try to substantiate his or her argument with concrete examples.

- #MenToo movement.
- Social media and social relationships.
- Jobs and advancements in technology.
- Demographic dividend and India.

Controversial Topics

They are also known as opinionated topics. Such a topic is posed to extract the participant's opinion and the logic behind the opinion. Discussion on such topics also assists the observer to understand the thought process and the mindset of the participant.

- Information and communication technology is helping or harming education.
- Should there be reservation for women in politics?
- *Sab ka Vishwas*: An Utopian Concept.
- Value Education: A wastage of resources.

Abstract Topics

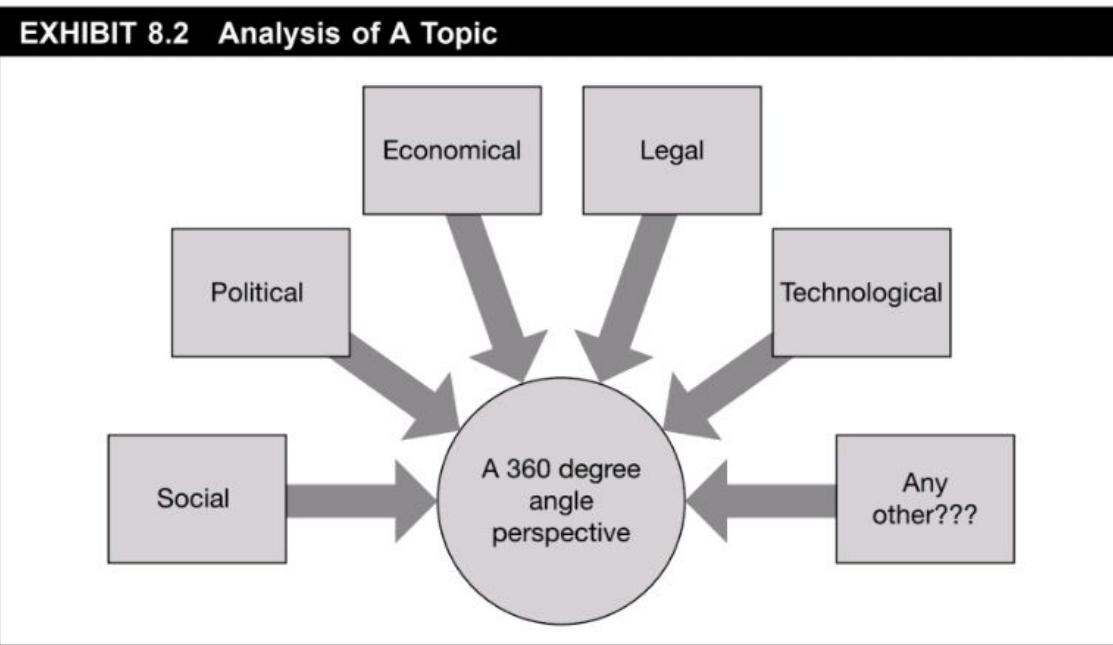
Handling such topics depends on the perception of the topic. The challenge is to understand the multiple meanings conveyed. Abstract topics are open to readers' interpretation. They can be single line statements, phrases, idioms, quotes, etc.

- Beauty.
- Black and white.
- Tradition versus modern.
- Every important thing or person is not always useful.
- Ignorance is bliss.

Whatever may be the topic, the participants are needed to understand the given topic, seek the hidden messages and draw suitable inferences. One should try to look at the topic from a 360 degree angle, i.e., from various perspectives. An ability to understand the implicit as well as the explicit meanings and generate discussion on it can ensure a remarkable success.

8.2.2 Case-based Group Discussion

Instead of general topics, caselets are gradually becoming an integral part of group discussion activities. The purpose is to assess the candidate in terms of the abilities to see various



perspectives, logical thinking, problem solving abilities, critical and creative thinking. The solutions might not be simple. However, by the process of exchanging perceptions, contradicting, defending points, and building on each other's ideas students become proficient in analysing the issues, in making judgments as well as in taking difficult decisions. As a caselet is related to the area or task for which the group discussion is held, it becomes easier for the observer to scrutinise and select the candidate.

'Cases are narratives, situations, select data samplings or statements that present unresolved or provocative issues, situations or questions...'

—Indiana University

Processes Followed in a Case-Based Group Discussion

- Participants are given a case summary to read for 5–10 minutes. (Depending on the length and complexity of the case, time limit can be extended.)
- The participants, as a group, are expected to solve the problem or questions posed at the end.
- The participants then, one by one present their solutions followed by queries and questions from the group members.
- If required, the observer may intervene to keep the discussion on the track or give a specific direction to it.
- The participants are expected to examine and assess the effects and consequences of the problems as well as the proposed solutions.

8.3 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION IN A GROUP DISCUSSION

In a group discussion, a small group of aspirants sit and interact with an aim to look at the various perspectives of a situation or an issue or a case to make a decision. In academic life, as a part of the recruitment process, group discussion helps an observer to assess the following skills of a participant and they are tabulated below.

No	Quality Criteria	Explanation of the Quality
1.	Verbal communication (listening skills + speaking skills)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant should let the other participant to complete his or her point as well as listen to everyone actively and attentively and respond appropriately. Ideas should be expressed in a clear, correct and appropriate manner. Views are to be supported with the relevant data, examples and facts.
2.	Non-verbal communication skills (clarity of voice + tone and voice modulation + correct use of gestures and postures + eye contact)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant should have a clear and audible voice with the correct pronunciation. The participant should use the right tone, speed and volume to emphasise important ideas and to sustain listeners' attention. Correct postures and gestures should be used by the participant to convey the message as well as respect the line of reasoning of the other participants. While speaking, maintain consistent eye-contact with all the listeners. While listening, maintain eye-contact with the speaker.
3.	Group work (cooperation + team spirit + leadership)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant should provide suitable verbal or non-verbal responses at an appropriate time. The participant should be willing to accept others' ideas and think about them positively. The participant should be able to lead others in discussion and keep or bring the discussion on the track.
4.	Problem solving and analytical skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant could perceive the real problems or issues and suggested workable solutions. The participant should be able to study the problem from various perspectives.
5.	Miscellaneous (understanding of the topic + quality of discussion + conclusion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant should be able to understand the topic completely and should be able to discuss it from all the possible perspectives. The entire discussion should be related to the topic and it should be supported with the apt arguments, relevant examples and facts. The discussion should conclude with the summary of all the relevant issues raised during the discussion and any conclusion that the group has agreed to.

8.4 GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN A GROUP DISCUSSION

Group discussion can be divided into three stages namely, initiation, participation and conclusion. A participant should be clear where and how he or she should take an entry into the discussion. Each stage requires a set of skills. Given below are some of the guidelines for effective participation at each stage.

8.4.1 While Initiating a Group Discussion

- Greet everyone in the group and announce the topic allotted to the group.
- Understand the topic, decide your stand and content before expressing your views.
- Use quotes, facts, data, statistics, anecdotes, questions to create a framework or background.
- Initiate the discussion if you are very confident about making a positive impression through your views, knowledge and expression. It is wrong to believe that one who initiates can only make an impact on the observer. If you are unclear about the meaning or the perspectives of the topic, let others speak. Speak once you are clear about what, why and how much of the content.
- Strengthen your claim by supporting the content with necessary facts, data, quotes, real life examples, etc.
- Do not begin with a verdict on the topic.

8.4.2 While Participating in a Group Discussion

- Try to express your views at an appropriate moment. If you do not get the chance to speak, create that space for you.
- Analyse and explain the key words of the topic with suitable illustrations.
- Discuss the topic from various perspectives by providing relevant examples.
- Do not repeat a point or be unnecessary lengthy.
- Contribute to others' discussion as well by elaborating or illustrating their points.
- Display your receptivity by nodding your head at an apt moment.
- Keep cool while expressing your views or listening to others' views.
- If opposed or interrupted unfairly, assert firmly that others let you express your views.
- Be a good listener. Avoid talking to others while a participant is making his or her point.
- Enter into the discussion after drawing every participant's attention.
- Maintain a positive tone throughout. Show your ability in proposing a solution. Try not to be negative by blaming the system, government or authority.
- Avoid locking horns with a participant/s. Try to remain friendly but firm.
- Ensure that the discussion does not digress from the topic. If it goes off the track, you should politely bring it on the track.
- Keep the track of time allotted to the group and try to ensure that the group arrives at a consensus.
- Adopt an idea if it is substantiated by any group member. However, do not change your ground.

8.4.3 While Concluding a Group Discussion

- Summarise all the points discussed in the group in an organised manner in the form of a recap.
- Ensure to incorporate all the important points in your summary.
- Do not include only the points you believe in or raised by you.
- Do not add any new perspective.
- Keep it concise.
- Ideally, conclusion should be done by anyone participant. However, if you strongly feel that the one who is concluding is not doing justice to the discussion, then you can do the damage control. However, this is also a double edged sword. There might be a high reward but it also has a high risk.

8.5 USEFUL PHRASES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN A GROUP DISCUSSION

8.5.1 To Initiate the Discussion

- Good morning or afternoon or evening everyone. Today, the topic for the discussion is...
- Hi or Hello everyone. I am (your name). The topic given to us for today's discussion is very serious or relevant or sensitive or interesting or controversial or requires an in

8.5.2 To Assert Your Opinion

- In my opinion,
- Personally, I think or believe or feel or consider that...
- In my view...
- It seems to me that....
- As far as I am concerned.....

8.5.3 To Agree with a View

- Yes, I absolutely agree. Along with this, I think we should include...
- That is absolutely what I think or believe or feel. To add to what you have said or suggested, we should also include....
- I, too, have or share the same view. In addition to this, we should....
- You have rightly pointed out..... However, another important factor or fact or to consider it.....
- I am also of the same opinion or view. Nevertheless, I think it would also be a good idea to mention....

8.5.4 To Express Partial Agreement

- I agree with what you have said but.....
- You have made a valid point but....
- There is some truth in what you have stated but
- I understand your point but I look at the matter or an issue or a problem from a different perspective. It seems to me that....
- To a certain extent....

8.5.5 To Seek Clarification

- Would you please clarify what do you mean by...
- I am sorry but I am not exactly getting what you are trying to say...
- Could you please repeat what you just said...
- I am sorry. I don't quite follow.
- Excuse me but I don't understand what you are saying.

8.5.6 To Repeat or Restate the Views

- What I mean to say is....
- What I am trying to convey is....
- In other words....
- To put it like this.....

8.5.7 To Disagree with an Opinion

- I am afraid that I do not agree with what you have shared or stated.
- I am sorry but I would prefer to defer.
- I am sorry but I do not see any logic in your arguments.
- My dear friend, I am sorry but I would completely disagree with you here.
- Excuse me, but I have to contradict you quite strongly here.

8.5.8 To Interrupt

- I am sorry to interrupt you but...
- Sorry to stop you but...
- Sorry to interrupt but we have digressed or deviated
- I think the same points or perspectives are repeatedly discussed. We should consider...
- Sorry, but I would like to add...

8.5.9 To Conclude the Discussion

- To conclude the discussion....
- To sum up or summarise.
- In the end, I would like to say that.
- Now, it can be summarised that...

To sum up, the discussion is an oral and interpersonal style of communication done in a formal manner. It is more about an exchange of knowledge to make a decision. It is a creative and dynamic activity that leads to reflective thinking helping people in reaching a consensus.

In this group communication, members share their ideas, information, views and opinion on a problem, topic or a situation to reach a decision or to solve a problem. Compared to meetings, conferences or presentations, it is a less formal kind of communication. In a group discussion, views, ideas and opinions are shared in order to influence other's thinking. A successful discussion is both speaking and listening.

RECAP

Meaning	An interpersonal (face to face and oral) communication is to understand an issue from various perspective and reach a consensual conclusion.
Types of group discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic-based: The topic can be factual, controversial or abstract. • Case-based: A real life or imaginary situation is to be discussed.
Stages of participation in a group discussion.	<p>A. Initiation stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand comprehensively. <p>B. Participation stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinks logically. • Listen carefully. • Express assertively. <p>C. Conclusion stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarise the key points meticulously.

EXERCISES

Given below is a list of topics for group discussion. Form a group/s of interested students, choose a topic and discuss the same. While one group is discussing a topic, the other group will play the role of the panel of observers. The discussion should be followed by the observations and comments from the panel. Once the observations are discussed, observers become participants and vice versa.

1. Religion in India: Strength or weakness.
2. Women molestation: Causes and remedies.

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3. EQ and not IQ ensures success in professional life.
4. Strengths and challenges of 21st century in India.
5. Professional courses in India: Problems and remedies.
6. Making attendance compulsory in the classroom: Causes and consequences.
7. Joint versus nuclear family in the 21st century.
8. Education without examination.
9. Consequences of making voting compulsory in India.
10. Job versus entrepreneurship.
11. Values and ethics are for preaching not for practice.
12. Self-financed institutes are a better option as compared to government institutes in education.
13. Tests and trials faced by a 21st century woman.
14. Destiny and not determination decides the course of life.
15. Indian customs and traditions: Effects and side effects.
16. Working women are responsible for the social problems in society.
17. Winners.
18. Pain.
19. Money makes relations.
20. There is no connection between success and education.
21. The situation for a case-based group discussion.

Navratri has a special significance in Gujarat. It is a nine day long celebration. All, especially the youth, play garba all night making it difficult for them to attend college. The colleges in Gujarat were offered a weeklong Navratri vacation once. Diwali vacation was curtailed by one week and was of 14 days. The student council proposes to continue with the weeklong Navratri vacation.

A discussion among various stakeholders of an institute, is to be arranged on the pros and cons of the situation and the final decision. The students participating in the discussion would assume the roles of representatives of students, parents, teachers, management and government.

9

Presentation Strategies

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- describe the concept and definition of presentation.
- explain the process of planning an effective presentation.
- illustrate tips on practicing an effective presentation.
- practice techniques of delivering an effective presentation.
- develop an art of managing question-answer session.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

A presentation is the process of presenting a topic to an audience. It is typically a demonstration, lecture, or speech meant to inform, persuade or build goodwill.

A presentation is a means of oral communication, which is used in various speaking situations, such as talking to a group, addressing a meeting or briefing a team. Thus, it is a method of sharing your views, ideas and information orally. This can be done by:

- Reading a speech from the script, for example, a leader addressing a rally.
- Giving a talk using cue cards, for example, a professor delivering a talk on ‘Importance of Innovation in Technology’.
- Delivering a presentation using PPT/Projector/Flowchart, etc., for example, a manager discussing yearly sales report in front of Board of Directors.
- Memorizing the content and delivering it in front of the audience, for example, a student participating in a debate at a youth festival.
- Offering a formal welcome to a guest or a new manager at your branch.



'What orators lack in depth, they make up to you in length.'
—Charles Montesquieu

9.2 DEFINING THE PURPOSES OF PRESENTATION

To know the purpose means to be clear about the reason for doing something. Knowing the purpose of an activity helps a presenter planning and preparing the presentation. The main purpose of any presentation is getting the message across the listeners. Generally, the purpose of any presentation can be as follows:

- To inform/explain about the new product or policy of the company, annual report of a company.
- To instruct about new rules and regulations or about the steps to be taken to arrest the decline in sales.
- To inspire/motivate the members of the team to achieve the set targets, to give 100 per cent in their work.
- To demonstrate/show the functioning of a new product to prospective clients, the strategies to expand the network.
- To persuade/convince prospective consumers to buy the policy or product, to make changes.

9.3 HOW TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION

An ability to deliver an effective presentation is an art and requires meticulous planning. To deliver an effective presentation, one needs to keep in mind the following things:

9.3.1 Planning a Presentation

It is well said that prior proper planning and preparation prevents poor performance. This implies that both planning and preparation should not only be prior but also proper. Planning and preparation are the first two steps to deliver an effective presentation.

Effective planning requires two things:

- a. Analysing audience and locale (who, why, where)
- b. Organizing content and preparing outline (when, what)

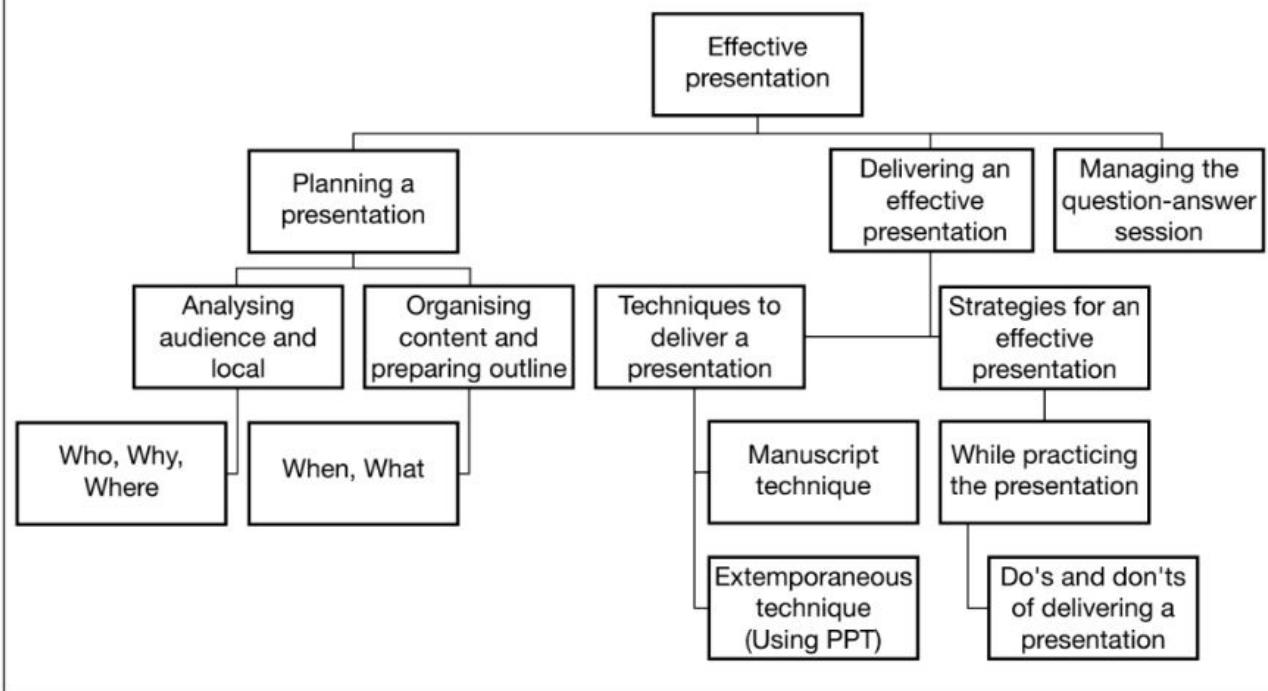
a. Analysing Audience and Locale

The first and foremost thing needed to deliver an effective presentation is the complete knowledge about the audience and the locale. To analyse the audience and to know about the place where the presentation is to be delivered, the presenter needs to have the answer to the questions such as WHO, WHY and WHERE.

“

'Talking without thinking is like shooting without taking aim.'
—Proverb

EXHIBIT 9.1 Effective Presentation



Who is your audience?

Who answers every basic detail about the audience. It familiarizes a speaker with the listeners. To be familiar, you should have the following information:

1. The size of the group or audience expected (helps in choosing the technique of interaction).
2. The field of the group (helps in deciding content and illustration).
3. The age range—retired people, teenagers, children (helps in choosing illustration).
4. Their experience in terms of the topic to be discussed (helps in deciding the beginning and end of the talk).
5. The values they believe in (helps in choosing the examples to support the ideas put forward).
6. The gender—male or female—their proportion (helps in choosing illustration and content).
7. Awareness and knowledge of audience about topic (helps in deciding the depth of the content).
8. The role/advantages of presentation in their life (helps in learning their perspective).



'Speakers who talk about what life has taught them never fail to keep the attention of their listeners.'
—Dale Carnegie

Why is your audience there? Why are you there?

Why clarifies purposes of presentation from the point of view of the audience as well as the presenter.

1. Why have you been asked to speak to a group of people? (helps in learning the purpose of the presentation).
2. What outcome(s) is/are expected? (helps in deciding the content).
3. Write down the reason for which you have been asked to deliver presentation and use them as reminder during presentation (helps you keep focused).

Where is the presentation to be delivered?

Where informs about the place and surroundings. The knowledge of the venue is essential. With this knowledge, the presenter can pre-plan arrangement for the presentation, as s/he knows the advantages and disadvantages of the venue and can decide the method accordingly. Following information needs to be collected:

1. Will setting be formal, less formal or social? (helps in deciding your approach).
2. What is the size of the room/hall? (helps in deciding the style of interaction, the kinds of visual aids needed and the need of a microphone).
3. How is the surrounding? (helps in anticipating probable barriers).
4. How is the seating arrangement? (helps in choosing your style of interaction).
5. Do the electrical outlets and lights work? How are they controlled? (helps you keeping ready with other alternatives).
6. Which equipment will be available? Get information about the availability of equipment, for example, microphone, overhead projector, computer set, etc. (helps in choosing your visual aids).
7. Will you need a projection screen? Is there one already in the room? If yes, where is it placed? If no, how can it be managed? Will there be any need of extension code for any equipment you intend to use? (helps in making advanced arrangements and shows your management skills, foresight, abilities, etc.).
8. Will you be in need of a helping hand while using audio/visual equipment? (helps in saving your time and arranging things properly).
9. What are the possible distractions, for example, noise, time, tiredness, serious information, etc.? (helps in creating a positive impression).
10. Which strategy can be employed to overcome such problems? (helps in showing your strategic skills and the message is conveyed effectively without any major impediments).

Answers and information about this will help the presenter decide the content and style of the presentation and help in devising appropriate strategy. This, in turn, aids in conveying message successfully and impressively.



'Some men have thousands of reasons why they cannot do what they want to, when all they need is one reason why they can.' —Willis Whitney

b. Organizing Content and Preparing Outline

To organize the content and prepare an outline, a presenter should answer the questions such as WHEN and WHAT.

When is the presentation to be delivered?

When provides necessary information about the time. The knowledge about the time of presentation is important as it will help you anticipate the mood and mindset of your audience. If it is in the morning, the audience will be in a good mood, but if it is just before lunch break or immediately after lunch break or at the end of the day, the audience would be a bit tired, likely to be inattentive or in a mood to leave for home. Thus, morning or mid-afternoon would be the best time to speak as people are most alert. Moreover, the knowledge about time helps you in deciding your content, i.e., loaded with information, infused with humour, etc.

In addition to this, one should find out how much time is given to him/her for the talk. It should also be confirmed if this is inclusive/exclusive of question-answer session. Apart from this, one should see that a session does not exceed 45 min, as the attention rate is likely to go down. If it is of more than 45 min, the presenter has to think about the ways to keep the audience engaged and their interest sustained.

What is to be included in the presentation?

What elucidates everything about the content to be included? This is a very crucial stage, as the presenter needs arrange everything cohesively. It includes two things such as: (1) Preparing an outline; and (2) creating and organising the content.

1. Preparing an Outline (June 2014)

This implies the creation of the framework for your talk. You need to think about the aspects you wish to cover in the presentation and to what depth. To do this, mind mapping or jotting down points is a good idea. For example, if you are to talk about 'Barriers to Effective Communication', your outline can be in the following type:

Topic: Barriers to Effective Communication

1. Introduction
 - A. Meaning
2. Middle
 - A. Types
 - (a) Barriers you are aware of
 - a. Noise ⇒ Meaning ⇒ Example
 - b. Lack of vocabulary ⇒ Meaning ⇒ Example
 - c. Knowledge level ⇒ Meaning ⇒ Example



'Say not always what you know, but always know what you say.'

—Claudius

- (b) Barriers you are unaware of
 - a. Negative attitude \Rightarrow Meaning \Rightarrow Example
 - b. Difference in perception of message \Rightarrow Meaning \Rightarrow Example
 - c. Dominance of a particular emotion \Rightarrow Meaning \Rightarrow Example
 - d. Egocentric nature \Rightarrow Meaning \Rightarrow Example
 - e. Habit of selective listening \Rightarrow Meaning \Rightarrow Example
- 3. End
 - A. Strategies to overcome the barriers
 - a. Develop your vocabulary
 - b. Control your emotions
 - c. Develop habit of listening
 - d. Receive messages critically

2. Creating and Organizing the Content

Once the outline is ready, you should start thinking about developing the points enlisted. This is a crucial thing. You must allocate as much time as possible and avoid short cuts. Preparation is the single most important part of making a successful presentation.

Recall the presentations you attended and jot down things you liked about them. If possible, watch the presentations of famous people and try to incorporate the qualities you admired as a spectator in their presentation. A good preparation, not only assures careful thinking about content that presenter wishes to communicate, but also boosts up confidence.

Any presentation would have three sections: introduction, middle and end.

Introduction

A famous quote reads, *Well begun is half done* and the same is applicable to a presentation as well. **The introduction is a preview of what is to be said.** If the presenter is able to attract the attention of the audience through the interesting or thought provoking sentences, anecdote, quotes, analysis or a striking question, s/he has won half the battle.

Middle

The middle of your presentation is extremely important. This would decide the success or failure of your presentation. You should always try to support the ideas with suitable content. The content should be decided on the basis of the knowledge about the audience. Keep the following things in mind:

- Decide what kind of illustration is needed where.
- Personal anecdotes, real-life situations or hypothetical examples are useful in making presentation convincing.



'Make sure you have finished speaking before your audience has finished listening.'
—Dorothy Sarnoff

- Offer variety of illustrations.
- Use visual aids to clarify and simplify your ideas.
- Take care that it supports your presentation and does not distract the audience.

In addition to this, you need to be ready for a very critical situation. This happens when you have to shorten your speech for some reasons, for example, shortage of time due to delay in commencement of the session, extra time taken by the previous speaker, etc. Here, MOM plan (Monippally, 2001) is of great help. In the MOM plan, first **M** stands for *May be*, **O** stands for *Ought to be* and last **M** stands for *Must be*. This plan prepares the presenter for three critical situations. In other words, this gives us three versions of presentations.

- Full version: Must be + Ought to be + May be (when you have all the time you were given to).
- Standard version: Must be + Ought to be (when some reduction is done in the time allocated to you).
- Core version: Must be (when you have minimum time to put forward your points).

Preparing three versions of presentation can save you from the last moment confusion regarding what to say and what to skip. It helps in conveying all the necessary things that you planned to. Moreover, the audience also does not feel that something is left to be discussed.

A famous quote reads, *All is well that ends well*. Thus, if a presentation ends convincingly, damages, if any, can easily be repaired. Conclusion is the recap of what is said which includes key points and the central idea. However, during conclusion, same words should not be used.

Thus, a good presentation is all about:

- Informing what is to be discussed (introduction)
- Discussing what is informed (middle)
- Informing what is discussed (end)

9.3.2 Delivering the Presentation

After having complete information about the audience, their needs, the place to deliver the presentation and organizing the content well, the presenter chooses the method of delivery. Delivery of presentation should take care of the following things:

- a. Techniques of presentation
- b. Strategies to deliver an effective presentation



'It is delivery that makes the orators success.'
—Johann von Goethe

a. Techniques of Presentation

How explains the methods of delivery. Following are the common techniques of delivering a presentation:

1. Manuscript Technique.
2. Extemporaneous Technique using PowerPoint.

1. Manuscript Technique

In manuscript technique, entire speech is written verbatim. The speaker then reads from the text during presentation. This technique is preferred when the accuracy of the content is extremely important.

Things to be Taken Care of While Preparing the Manuscript

- Run a grammar spell check.
- Go through the script many times
- If possible, make someone go through it critically.
- Use non-rustling good quality paper.
- Keep the font face bold and large enough to help you read the text properly.
- Keep the space of 1.5 between two lines.
- Leave wide margins on all four sides to have space for any last minute addition, if any.
- Number the pages, but do not staple them.
- Do not continue a sentence from one page to another.
- Print on the single side of the page.
- Ensure that the print is dark and of good quality.

Advantages of Manuscript Technique

- Extremely helpful when the accuracy of the message is very important.
- No chance of forgetting the content as the entire text is in front of you.
- If the speaker is well versed with the content maintaining eye contact would not be that difficult.

Disadvantages of Manuscript Technique

- Difficult to build rapport with the audience in the absence of continuous eye contact.
- Less scope to be spontaneous.
- It is difficult to curtail the content at the last moment.
- Not useful when speaking to a small group.

“ ‘If you have an important point to make, do not try to be subtle or clever. Use the pile driver. Hit the point once. Then come back and hit it again. Then hit it a third time; a tremendous whack.’ —Sir Winston Churchill

2. Extemporaneous Presentation using PowerPoint (PPT)

PowerPoint Presentation, today, is the most preferred style of presentation for various advantages. It is of great help when one chooses to be extempore in delivering presentation and has good command over the topic of the presentation. It gives you an advantage of the latest technology.

Things to be Taken Care of While Preparing a PPT

- Do not put too much content on your slides. Avoid putting paragraphs. Keep five to six words in a line and five to six lines per slide.
- Avoid putting words in all capital letters. Empty space on the slide will enhance readability.
- Avoid fancy fonts, as they are difficult to read. Choose a font style and size such that the audience can read from easily from a distance.
- Use high contrast while preparing your slide, for example, with dark background light colour letters should be used and vice versa. This makes presentation easier to read when projected on a screen.
- Put the content in the forms of points and use appropriate graphics and/or images. A well-prepared chart or diagram can often convey much more to the audience than a simple bulleted text. However, make labels for charts and graphs understandable.
- Make use of images, WordArt and clipart to enhance the presentation. Younger audiences may enjoy flashy images while senior participants want more substance, less flash.
- Choose an appealing theme for your presentation. Plenty of themes are available on internet as well in Microsoft Office 2007. A theme should be a good coordination of fonts, colours and graphic effects.
- Use video and audio to convey your message more effectively. This is very helpful in explaining important points.
- Utilize animations and transitions wisely. Limit the animation to the key points.
- Include a few main points. Talk more about them in your discussion. Limit your slides and only include necessary information. Too many slides and too much information will distract your audience’s attention. Minimize the number of slides to deliver effective presentation and keep the audience attentive and interested.
- Proof read the presentation. Do check the spelling and grammar errors as well as verify the content for factual errors.
- Reach in time at the venue and ensure that the equipment are connected and running properly.
- If the computer/s of the organizers is/are to be used take necessary measurements to save yourself from the software mismatches, lack of disk space and disk failures.
- Turn off the screen saver to keep the audience focused on the presentation.



'It takes one hour of preparation for each minute of presentation time.'
—Wayne Burgraff

- Keep the question-answer session at the end of the presentation to deliver the presentation uninterrupted.
- Never ever read the presentation. Even the audience can do that. The text should only be the cue to the audience. Presentation is all about elaborating the points.
- Plan your content keeping in mind the time given to you. It is better to speak less than more to sustain audience's interest.

Advantages of Extemporaneous Presentation using PPT

- It increases rapport with the audience.
- It provides an opportunity to be spontaneous.
- Examples can be modified or added keeping in mind the mood of the audience.
- It would be easier to shorten the speech if there is any such need.

Disadvantages of using Extemporaneous Presentation using PPT

- Unfamiliarity with the content may result in an unimpressive presentation.
- Lack of rehearsal may create a problem.
- Inability to be spontaneous results in boring presentation.
- Failure in linking points appropriately will lead to confusion.

b. Strategies to Deliver Effective Presentation

Success of any presentation rests on three *Ps*, viz., *Preparation, Practice* and *Performance*. First stage includes preparation and practice. The second stage means applying the third *P* which stands for *performance*. If a presenter has put enough efforts for preparation and in practice, the performance would definitely be impressive. However, there are a few things to be taken care of. They are discussed as under:

While Practicing the Presentation

- Do not read the script silently.
- Rehearse the presentation the way you wish it to be delivered—standing, aloud, and with the passion, pacing and movement you will actually use.
- Practice your speech aloud. Practice will help you clarify and modify your ideas.
- Do necessary changes as you practice.
- Record your speech.
- Listen to the tone, pitch and speed of your voice. Make necessary corrections. Practice to appear natural and relaxed.
- Pause naturally as you would do in conversation.
- Visualize the probable problems and possible solutions.



'There are always three speeches, for every one you actually gave. The one you practiced, the one you gave, and the one you wish you gave.' —Dale Carnegie

Dos: While delivering a Presentation

- Stand erect with legs slightly apart.
- Face audience confidently.
- Be loud enough, be slow and make pauses where necessary.
- Walk calmly.
- Calmly face the audience, but not more than 2 to 3 seconds.
- Segment your audience into at least three sections and evenly change your eye contact among them.
- Try to be spontaneous by bringing in ideas and comments that are relevant to the situation.
- Ask occasional yes/no type questions to involve the audience.
- Look at your audience not at the visual aids.
- Do not hide behind podium, if you are reading your speech.
- Maintain eye contact.

Don'ts: While delivering presentation do not

- Start with an apology and/or offering excuse for not being well prepared.
- Run nervously back and forth all the time.
- Stand stiffly at one place all the time.
- Make lots of gesticulation.
- Fumble the papers.
- Play with pen or pointer.
- Read everything from the notes.
- Use non-words like umm...., uhh... This shows lack of preparedness and comfort.
- Ask questions like 'OK', 'Right', 'Did/Does that make sense?' (This implies that either you doubt your skill as a presenter or the capacity of the audience to understand) 'What example can I give you here?' (This implies that you have not done enough preparation for the occasion. You are there to answer questions not ask questions.)

9.3.3 Managing the Question-answer Session

The last stage of presentation can be called presentation after presentation. It is known as the question-answer session. This is more interactive in nature and is equally important. This is an opportunity

- to verify if the message conveyed is received in its true sense or not
- to reinforce your ideas
- to clarify the doubts, if any



'No one ever complains about a speech being too short!'
—Ira Hayes

Strategies to Make Question-Answer Session Effective

- Encourage the audience to ask questions
- Keep some chits ready for the audience to write their questions. Give them in advance so that they can write the question while listening to you. Moreover, this would help those who are scared of asking questions.
- Read/repeat the question before you answer it to help everyone know the question
- Use phrases like, 'That is a good question', 'I am happy that you asked this question', etc.
- Do not be defensive while answering the question.
- If you do not know the answer, do not lie. Tell them that you will research and get back to them with the answer.
- Go into the detail of some points, if necessary.
- While answering questions, do not repeat the same material that you used in presentation.
- After answering the question, confirm if they are satisfied with your answer. You can do this by asking questions like, 'Is this what you wanted to know?', 'Have I answered your query?', etc.
- Remember that quality of questions decides the effectiveness of your presentation.

However, one should remember that techniques of presentation do not decide the effectiveness of presentation. The efficacy depends on how well the need of the audience is addressed. Presentation, thus, is an art that can be cultivated and enhanced with the help of systematic practice.

RECAP

- A presentation is the process of presenting a topic to an audience to inform, persuade or build goodwill.
- The purpose of any presentation can be to inform/explain, to instruct, to inspire/motivate, to demonstrate or to persuade/convince, etc.
- There are three stages to deliver an effective presentation.
- The first stage is all about planning the presentation which includes analysis of audience and the local as well as organization of the content and preparation of the outline.
- While analysing the audience, the presenter should have the answers to questions, 'who, why and where.'
- Organizing the content and preparing the outline requires the answers to the questions 'when and what.'
- The stage is all about delivering the presentation which includes the decision about the technique to deliver the presentation as well as practicing effective strategies for an effective presentation.



'The success of your presentation will be judged not by the knowledge you send but by what the listener receives.' —Lily Walters

- Depending on the need of the content, requirement of the audience, availability of the equipment and personal efficacy the presenter should choose the technique.
- The dictum, 'Practice makes a man perfect', is also applicable to a presenter as well; hence, a systematic and strategic practice will instil confidence in the presenter.
- While delivering a presentation, a presenter should be careful about his/her verbal as well as non-verbal communication.
- The question-answer session should be utilized skilfully to verify if the message is received in its true sense or not, to reinforce ideas and to clarify the doubts of the audience.

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

The Triple-Filter Test

In ancient Greece, Socrates was reputed to hold knowledge in high esteem. One day an acquaintance met the great philosopher and said, 'Do you know what I just heard about your friend?'

'Hold on a minute,' Socrates replied. 'Before you talk to me about my friend, it might be good idea to take a moment and filter what you're going to say. That is why I call it the triple filter test. The first filter is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?'

'Well, no,' the man said, 'actually I just heard about it and...'

'All right,' said Socrates. 'So you don't really know if it's true or not. Now, let's try the second filter, the filter of Goodness. Is what you are about to tell me about my friend something good?'

'Umm, no, on the contrary...'

'So,' Socrates continued, 'you want to tell me something bad about my friend, but you're not certain it's true. You may still pass the test though, because there is one filter left—the filter of Usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about my friend going to be useful to me?'

'No, not really.'

'Well,' concluded Socrates, 'if what you want to tell me is neither true, nor good, nor even useful, why tell it to me at all?'

Source: Social Media



'The most precious things in speech are the pauses.'
—Sir Ralph Richardson

EXERCISES

State if the following statements are true or false and justify your answer in around 150 words.

1. While choosing the medium of communication, for presentation, there is no need to think of time, type of message, cost and target audience.
2. While rehearsing the presentation, one should not practice loudly.
3. Recording your speech and listening to it is a good practice during rehearsal.
4. *Who, Why* and *Where* question words are needed to be answered while organizing content for the presentation.
5. It is necessary to maintain eye contact during presentation.
6. While delivering the presentation, the audience should be asked *wh*-questions to keep them actively involved.
7. The knowledge about the venue of the presentation is necessary for the presenter.
8. A good professional should master only one technique of delivering presentation.
9. During extemporaneous presentation, one should run back and forth all the time.
10. Audience should be encouraged to ask relevant questions.

Observe, Analyse and Answer

Choose a public figure / celebrity (politician / actor / actress / public speaker / activist etc) delivering a presentation and list the positive as well as negative traits of his / her presentation.

Answer the Following Questions:

1. Discuss the strategies that one should generally employ while planning his/her presentation.
2. Discuss the steps involved in planning a presentation.
3. Why is it important to define the purpose of presentation? Discuss the importance of 'audience' and 'locale' while making a presentation.



'The will to win is important. But the will to prepare is vital.'
—Joe Paterno

Lab Activity

Prepare a presentation of 15 min (10 min presentation + 5 min question-answer session) on any one of the enlisted topics by following the given steps:

1. Time management
2. Stress management
3. Career options for an engineering student (discuss with reference to the branch you are studying in)
4. Strategies to crack competitive exams (talk about one exam of your choice)
5. The mobile application, I like the most

Steps to be followed

1. Get answers to the following questions:
 - (a) Who is your audience?
 - (b) Why are you there? Why is your audience there?
 - (c) Where are you going to make the presentation?
 - (d) When are you making the presentation?
 - (e) What will you include in your presentation?
 - (f) How will you deliver your presentation? Choose one of the following techniques:
 - a. Manuscript technique
 - b. Extemporaneous technique using a PPT
2. Deliver the presentation with the help of guidelines given about each of the stage in the chapter you studied.
3. Get feedback from your teacher and friends about your presentation.

Part D

Career Skills

10

Resume Building

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- understand the purpose and the significance of a resume.
- discuss various components of a resume.
- list the attributes of an appealing resume.
- develop an effective resume.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Simply stating, a resume should be one page document summarising your work experience, education, skills and achievements to be a prospective employer. In other words, it is a synopsis of your gradual evolution.

'No one creates a perfect resume on their first try. Writing a perfect resume is a messy process, but the easiest way to start is by simply getting in the right mindset and putting pen to paper.'

—Matthew T. Cross, *The Resume Design Book: How to Write a Resume in College and Influence Employers to Hire You.*

A resume is usually needed as a part of job application. A good resume can open the door of an interview for your dream company. It is an opportunity to market your strengths and stand apart from the rest of the applicants. A resume is said to have served its purpose when it grabs the attention of the recruiters, sells your strongest skills and accomplishments, shows how you are a match for a position or project and most importantly, lands you on a job interview.

10.1.1 Interesting Statistical Facts about Resumes

- The average time spent by recruitment managers for analysing a resume is 5–7 seconds.
- Unprofessional email addresses is the reason for rejecting about 76 per cent of resumes.
- When you put a photo on your resume, the chances of getting discarded are up to 88 per cent.
- During the year 2014, over 90 per cent of resumes are made available online or sent via email.
- It is worthy to note that, only 35 per cent of the candidates are eligible for the jobs they apply for.
- Applicant Tracking Software (ATS) is an automation software for reading resumes and it eliminates nearly 75 per cent of the applicants.

10.2 COMPONENTS OF A RESUME

10.2.1 Personal Details

The essential personal details includes, the full name and contact information like phone number and email address, LinkedIn URL if possible.

10.2.2 Career Objective

Being a fresher, you might not have much professional experience. Hence, you are to project your image through your career objective. It is a space to brand yourself. Your career objective should address the goal of the company and should be written in two or three lines. It should also be very specific. Vague expressions like ‘looking for an opportunity to showcase my skills’, ‘looking for an environment that allows me to utilise my skills completely’ should be avoided. Instead, specific objectives like ‘looking for an opportunity to develop a technology to reduce traffic congestion’, ‘would like to leverage my skills in managing groundwater’ are more effective.

10.2.3 Academic Qualification

Information about the educational experiences should be in the reverse chronological order. This information includes your qualifications, institutions you have studied, year of completion and other specialisations, if any. Special awards and other educational achievements can also be mentioned.

10.2.4 Career History

This can include details about internships, any volunteer work, previous jobs, etc. It should provide information about the title of your position, name, the location of the organisation and duration of employment. A brief overview of your role, responsibilities and

achievements during your work experience and highlighting the skills you have gained is always preferred. The other headings for this information can be Employment History, Professional Background and Career Highlights etc.

10.2.5 Professional Developments

Information to be put here includes details regarding the courses, seminars, workshops or training experiences that relate to the job you are applying for. It is advisable to place this information after the academic qualification.

10.2.6 Awards, Honours and Recognitions

Co-curricular achievements and accolades can be put in this compartment. However, make sure that the information you put here, highlights your skills and support your claim for the position you are applying for.

10.2.7 Additional Information

This can also be put under the labels like ‘Skills’, ‘Strengths’ or ‘Interests’. The only thing to be taken care of is that the information put here should be directly or indirectly relevant to the position you are applying for. Information that illustrates your competence in communication, computer programs, management abilities can also be included here.

10.3 ATTRIBUTES OF AN EFFECTIVE RESUME

- For an entry level profession, a one page resume would be sufficient.
- Keep the design and the layout of the resume neat and easy to read.
- Use one or two fonts that are easy to read.
- Make judicious use of headers, bullet points and paragraphs.
- Highlight relevant information using bold, italics, uppercase and centring of the text features.
- Adopt no-person approach while writing your resume i.e as far as possible avoid the use of *I*.
- Ensure linguistic correctness (no spelling or grammatical errors).
- Choose the font size from 10–12 points.
- Use a light colour paper for your resume.
- Leave adequate ‘white space’ on all four sides to create a clean and readable look.
- Keep the margin no less than a half inch and not greater than $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches.
- Save your document in PDF format to keep the format intact.
- Avoid sending your resume with a photograph unless you have been asked for.
- Use the photograph, if at all you use it, in formal attire with a clear background.

10.6 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

- Do not include the following things in your resume.
 - References, until it has been specifically asked for.
 - Family details.
 - Signature or any declaration at the end.
- Do not lie or make any false claim.

10.4 CURRENT TRENDS IN RESUME

10.4.1 Importance of LinkedIn Profile

In addition to being in one of the platforms on social media, LinkedIn is a personal branding tool and the largest professional network. Nowadays, recruiters prefer to learn more about the candidate on this network. Profile on LinkedIn is an electronic resume. It provides a user visibility as well as credibility. You can learn about various job openings and also, the recruiters know about your qualifications. A person can put every academic and professional credential without being worried about the amount of information and the recruiter can search for whatever information he or she would like to have about the candidate. Thus, it is advisable to have a LinkedIn profile.

10.4.2 Application Tracking System

Application Tracking System (ATS) is a software that helps a company in collecting and sorting resumes during the recruiting process. Though, not free from flaws, ATS is preferred by those companies that receive thousands of applications. ATS filters and highlights the top candidates. The common strategy is to search for key skills and titles. Therefore, it is very important to include keywords in your resume. According to Jobscan research, at least 98.2 per cent of Fortune 500 use ATS. After getting filtered through ATS, some of the recruiters prefer to take a cursory glance at the resumes.

10.4.3 Emailing Resumes and Cover Letters

Nowadays, it is very practice to send and receive resumes, cover letters, and follow-up letters through email. However, before any correspondence through mail, the following activities has to be done.

- Confirm that the employer is willing to receive resumes or CVs through email.
- Save your resume in one of the following manners listed below.
 - Yash-Shah-Resume.pdf
 - YashShah_Computer Engineer_Resume.docx
- Send your resume as inline text as well as an attachment. (Some people are averse to opening attachments due to the threat of virus.)

- Make your cover letter as the body of your email. If you do not wish to send a cover letter, include a brief message that summarises your interest in the job and add a note that your resume is attached.
- Avoid sending large files (Anything larger than 10 MB).
- Keep your subject line concise and clear. For example, resume – post applied for – your name or post applied for – your name – resume.
- Use a professional email address (It should include your first and last name or initials).
- Send the resume from a professional email address.
- Close your message with a professional signature for the reader. You may provide your name and contact information.

10.5 TYPES OF RESUME

A resume is nothing but an effective way of presenting your credentials to convince your recruiter about your potential to perform the role you are applying for. To highlight the relevant strengths, various strategies can be used in resume building. Based on the arrangement of information, the classification of resumes are described below.

- a. Chronological resume.
- b. Functional resume.
- c. Hybrid or combination resume.
- d. Infographic resume.

10.5.1 Chronological Resume

As the name suggests, it provides educational details and experience related information in reverse chronological order. This is a traditional type of resume and focuses more on titles, years and dates. This is ideal for those who have consistently bright academic or professional career. Information in a chronological resume is included in the following sequence.

- Name and contact information.
- Summary or objective.
- Professional history.
- Educational history.
- Skills and abilities.

10.5.2 Functional Resume

Just like its name, this type of resume offers an insight into the skills and accomplishments of the person. This works well with those who have gaps or changes in their career. Information in a functional resume is included in the following sequence.

10.8 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

- Name and contact information.
- Summary or objective.
- Skills and abilities.
- Professional history.
- Educational qualification.

10.5.3 Hybrid or Combination Resume

It is a combination of chronological and functional resumes. It is more preferable as it gives freedom of presenting your data in the most effective manner. This is also good for those who have a diversity of experience and for those who are applying for the job where skills and competencies are more important than the time frame in which they are achieved.

10.5.4 Infographic Resume

An Infographic resume is a creative way of representing your details. It uses graphic design elements such as layout, colour, icons and font styling to organise the content. However, unless you are into a creative field, it is advisable to prepare a traditional resume as the company's ATS (Application Tracking System) might not recognise the text in infographic resume. In such case, you choose to prepare an infographic resume, never forget that you are preparing it for a professional purpose. Hence, choose two to three colours or one colour in varying shades. It is advisable to keep the background in light colour and details in dark colour. Just like any other style of resume, do not go for stylish fonts. Preferable fonts are Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, Tahoma, etc. Keep the font size between 10–12. The most important thing is to see whether the information is organised in a coherent manner.

10.6 SAMPLE RESUMES

In short, to prepare an effective resume, dig deeper into your personality and your academic journey as well as your aspirations. Think...rethink... then, write...rewrite.

Recall memorable moments of your academic life, your achievements, compliments and accolades you received from your friends and teachers. This process should help you answer WHY SHOULD THE RECRUITER EMPLOY YOU? Express CAN DO attitude throughout your resume.

For better understanding of how to prepare an effective resume, sample resumes are shown in Exhibit 10.1 and Exhibit 10.2.

YASH SHAH

MS CYBER SECURITY & PRIVACY, NJIT

✉ my-email@gmail.com
📞 +91-4352347890
📍 Ahmedabad, Gujarat
🔗 yashshah7118/
👤 yash7118

Skills

CYBER SECURITY TOOLS & TECHNOLOGIES

Content Disarm and Reconstruction(CDR)
Secure Browsing
Continuous & Automated VAPT
Breach and Attack Simulation
Data Leakage Protection
Next Generation Firewalls
Business Continuity Planning
Disaster Recovery
Cloud Security
Email Security
Encryption

NETWORKING & SYSTEMS

VMware -ESXi & Horizon
Windows & Linux Administration
Exchange/Office365
AWS

Infrastructure Migrations

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT TECHNOLOGIES

Python
C/C++
Architect Secure Software Applications

To secure a challenging position in a reputable & evolving organization to expand & commit my technical & managerial skills to innovation and betterment of all stakeholders.

Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH v9) , Certified Python Developer, Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA,August 15th 2018), Sophos Certified Engineer
Content Disarm and Reconstruction Specialist.
Master of Science, Cyber Security & Privacy @ New Jersey Institute of Technology.
Network & Systems Security Engineer @ Bavelle Technologies.

Education

New Jersey Institute of Technology
Master of Science Cybersecurity and Privacy 2019

Aug. 2017 to May 2019

Gujarat Technological University, Gujarat, India
Bachelor of Engineering Computer Engineering 2016

June 2012 to May 2016

Experience

Bavelle Technologies
Network & Systems Security Engineer New Jersey
May 2018 to Current

- Designing and supporting diverse IT business solutions, including: Virtualization, Security and Cloud based Deployments.
- Performing Cyber Security Audits and Penetration Testing.
- Configuring and deploying emerging Cyber Security Solutions, including Content Disarm & Reconstruction (CDR), Secure Browsing (Ceedo) , Next Generation Firewalls, Encryption and Endpoint Protection. (Sophos, Symantec)
- Designing and deploying VMWare Virtualization Clusters.
- Developing and implementing Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Solutions.
- Configuring and monitoring alerts from PRTG, Manage Engine and other well-known monitoring tools.
- Incident Response Management.
- Supporting and managing customer networks as their Managed Security Service Provider (MSSP)
- Providing consultancy to clients as and when required.
- Keeping abreast of emerging trends in technologies..

Appstech Solution
Network Security & Design Engineer India
June 2016 to July 2017

- Designing Network and Systems Security Solution & Plan Project Timeline and Implementation Process.
- Monitoring of passive implementation of customer approved solution & Configuration of active components.
- Leading a team of Network & Systems Engineer to ensure successful project completion and documentation.
- Optimizing & Auditing Networks.
- Following compliant Change Management process to maintain the networks and systems implemented.
- Monitoring the Network and Systems' up time.
- Designing and Implementing - Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Solutions.
- [Major Projects Involve: Leading Automobile Plants: Maruti Suzuki , Honda Motor Vehicles, Maxxis Rubber India Pvt. Ltd & Pharmaceutical Labs: Pangenomics International Pvt. Ltd]

Projects

Breach and Attack Simulation - For Secure Web Gateway

Jan. 2019 to Current

Windows Server 2019, SQL Server 2017, Python 3.7, .Net MVC Framework , VMWare- Academic Project @ Bavelle

Technologies

(Project Manager, Security Analyst & Python Developer)

- Leading a team of 5 Graduate Students.
- Architecting and Managing Breach and Attack Simulation Project for Bavelle Technologies - as a part of Capstone Project of New Jersey Institute of Technology.
- Working closely with team to ensure successful and seamless working of the project.
- Developing a prototype and POC for Breach and Attack Simulation for Secure Web Gateways.

Content Disarm and Reconstruction (CDR)

July 2018 to Current

- Working Closely with CISO and Senior IT management team to explain and breadth and depth of the CDR Technology.
- Designing and Implementing POC and industry compliant solutions for production deployment.
- [Major Projects Involved: US Power Companies, US Emergency Response Departments]

Others:

July 2018 to Current

- Working Closely with Fin-Tech Companies - Ensuring uptime of their critical networks and systems.
- Implementing Continuous VAPT Solutions (Cronus-Cyber Cybot Pro, Open VAS)
- Monitoring and Managing customer's IT Infrastructure as their MSSP.
- Designing and Implementing Cyber Security Solutions - Based on Python and C++.

10.10 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

EXHIBIT 10.2 Sample Resume

(FirstName) (LastName)

Curriculum vitae

PERSONAL INFORMATION

📍 (Address)

📞 (Phone Number)

✉️ (Personal Email)

Birth Date/Place DD/MM/YYYY in (Name of location)

Nationality Indian | Marital Status Married/Unmarried

EDUCATION

01/2018 – 09/2018

Master thesis in Materials Science

Grade: 1,0 GPA

RWTH Aachen University, Aachen (Germany)

Department for Industrial Furnaces and Heat Engineering, Aachen (Germany)

Exchange student under "RWTH worldwide exchange program" on DAAD Scholarship

Thesis title: Physical modelling of mixing in a steel ladle

08/2016 – 11/2018

Master of Engineering in Materials and Production Engineering

Grade: 1,3 GPA

King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok, Bangkok (Thailand)

College: The Sirindhorn International Thai-German Graduate School of Engineering-TGGS

07/2012 – 06/2016

Bachelor of Engineering in Metallurgy Engineering

Grade: 1,3 GPA

Gujarat Technological University, Ahmedabad (India)

College: Government Engineering College, Gandhinagar (India)

Thesis title: Correlation of micro-macro properties & mechanical properties in TMT rebar

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

08/2017 – 09/2018

Intern/Researcher

Department for Industrial Furnaces and Heat Engineering, RWTH Aachen (Germany)

- Operated and performed experiments in ladle metallurgy laboratory which mainly included physical modelling and Particle Image Velocimetry (PIV)
- Project title: Mixing time correlation in water model of 185 t ladle

01/2017 – 04/2017

Lecturer Assistant

Company R&D Center - Facilitation Center (CRDC-FC), Bangkok (Thailand)

- International Mentor for students of the University Industrial Engineering Camp 2017
- Topic: Bearing design of Schaeffler

02/2016 – 06/2016

Project Intern

Institute for Plasma Research, Gandhinagar (India)

- Operated mechanical testing and characterization lab equipment
- Project title: Effect of heat treatment on microstructure and mechanical properties of IN-RAFM steel

05/2015 – 06/2015

Vocational Trainee

Tata Steel Limited, Jamshedpur (India)

- Training under Plant Manager in "Merchant Mill (Rolling)" and characterization lab

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Languages known

English (fluent, C1), German (intermediate, B1), Hindi (fluent, C2), Gujarati (Mother tongue)

Computer skills and related competence

- SolidWorks, ANSYS-Fluent, MATLAB™ (good)
- Microsoft Office™ (very good)

Journal Publications

- 'Physical Study of the Impact of Injector Design on Mixing, Convection and Turbulence in Ladle Metallurgy', Engineering Science and Technology, an International Journal – Elsevier, Volume 22, Issue 2, February 2019, p. 538-547
- 'Interaction of Injector Design, Bubble Size, Flow Structure, and Turbulence in Ladle Metallurgy', steel research international, Volume 90, Issue 2, February 2019,

Technical activities participation

- Advances in surface engineering and welding technology-2016, Gandhinagar (India)

Honours and award

- Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) Scholarship (August 2016 - July 2018)

(Included full weaving of education fees and partial funding of living expenses for two years)

- Gujarat Technological University Top 10 Metallurgy Student Merit List, 2016

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

2016.....Sumukh Mehta's Creative Resume Landed Him a Job with GQ....

In 2016, Sumukh Mehta, a 21 year old from Bengaluru got an internship opportunity at GQ magazine's London headquarters without an interview solely on the basis of his unique and unforgettable resume.

He showcased his creativity and capability by making a GQ-style '20-page magazine resume'. His resume included a cover page, table of contents and even a special editor's note - the sort of layout usually seen in a magazine. He shared his experience, educational qualifications, hobbies and more in his special resume.

He wrote on Facebook, 'A 20-page magazine resume which managed to impress the Editor-in-Chief of British GQ, Mr Dylan Jones who has offered me to work at their London Headquarters without an interview process. It took me more than 3 weeks to make this resume including the photo shoots, graphic designing and content writing.'

2019.....LinkedIn is no more the only platform for you get noticed by the company. The latest edition in the list is Instagram...

Ankita Chawla, a 20 year old Visual Content Creator, turned her Instagram account page into a creative resume by devoting 60 hours in designing her Instagram resume and another 5 hours in its execution. She posted this pretty and creative resume as a collage on her account. She succeeded in grabbing the attention of Deloitte India. She was offered her first job through Instagram and she is currently working there as a visual content creator.

EXERCISES

1. Collect three resumes from your teacher and do a comparative study. Divide your observations into two lists. The first list should consist of the qualities that made the particular resume stand out. The second list should detail the things that should have been avoided or taken care of.
2. Draft a functional resume to be sent to the company you wish to start your career with.
3. Prepare an infographic resume to be sent to the company you wish to start your career with.
4. Be creative and prepare a resume to be sent to the company where you wish to start your career.

11

Interview Skills

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- explain the steps should be taken for a successful job interview.
- make necessary planning and practice to face an interview.
- understand the techniques of answering the questions.
- face a mock interview.
- develop necessary competence for a job interview.

11.1 INTRODUCTION AND IMPORTANCE

Every milestone requires strategic planning and systematic execution. Cracking a job interview is one of the very important milestones in everybody's life. Challenges are greater when the candidate is a novice in his or her field.

At a Job Interview

Recruiter: What are your strengths?

Candidate: I am an optimistic and a positive thinker.

Recruiter: Give me an example?

Candidate: When can I start, Sir?

Source: Social Media.

Interview is an effective forum to convince the recruiter that you have the knowledge and capability to apply for the job. It also serves as a platform where, the candidate and the recruiter meet and decide if working together helps both of them to achieve their targets and if they can contribute to the growth of each other. Before we go further, let us learn some interesting facts about the current scenario.

11.1.1 Interesting Facts about Job Seeking

- In every week, job seekers are posting over half-a-million resumes at 'Monster India.com'.
- As of now, there are over 15 million brands and organisations available at Facebook and it is interesting to note that over 18 million people have found their job through this platform.
- Over 10 million job seekers have found their job through LinkedIn and 89 per cent of recruiters have recruited someone through this channel.
- Over 8 million applicants found their job through Twitter.
- Recruiters are very much keen in searching your public profile. It is interesting that, 93 per cent of the recruiters say that they probably look at the candidate's social media behaviour.
- Around 43 per cent of the candidates are using their smartphones to engage in a job searching activity while 7 per cent of them are conducting their job search even in the restroom.

11.2 STAGES OF INTERVIEW

The interview might be conducted in a room for about 4–40 minutes. However, to nail the chance, one requires thorough preparation and planning which starts from the study of the job opening and ends for at least 24 hours after you had left the interview room. The entire process of preparing oneself for an interview can be divided into three stages and they are described below.

- Before the interview.
- During the interview.
- After the interview.

11.2.1 Before the Interview

The following things that are to be done before one enters the interview room are discussed below.

Research the Company

This helps you to develop an understanding about the past, present status and future goals of the company. By this, you will learn how you will be able to contribute for the growth of the company. It always creates a good impression when you surprise the interviewer with your knowledge and understanding about the company, its policies and its future plans during the interaction. Sometimes, the interviewer may directly ask you to say something about the company.

Review the Job Description

Job description is the narration of the company's expectations from you. If you have studied and understood the narration, you should have been able to highlight those abilities in your resume and showcase them directly or indirectly during your interview. Inclusion of skills, as

expected by the recruiter, increases your chances of selection. Not only this, but it also helps you to decide whether you would like to take up the job or not.

Prepare a List of Questions for Yourself and for the Interviewer

A strategic planning is a must for every victory. In case of an interview, it includes an understanding of the questions that are likely to be posed by the committee. This exercise gives you a scope to think, plan and practice your answers which ensures that you speak exactly what the interviewer likes to listen. Learn to exemplify your strengths. A list of FAQs during an interview are tabulated below.

No.	Question	Purpose of asking the question	You should
1.	Tell us something about yourself.	To ascertain how do you fit for the job.	In addition to primary details about yourself, briefly mention 2–3 accomplishments from your previous experience to prove that you are worth for the position.
2.	What do you know about our company? or Tell us something about our company.	To see if you have cared or tried to learn about the company where you wish to work for.	Learn the mission, vision and future plans of the company and match them with your strengths and goals.
3.	Why should we select or hire you?	To judge your confidence and verify your abilities.	By keeping the job responsibilities in mind, justify your candidature correlating with your skills.
4.	Why do you want this job?	To check your passion and likings about the post you have applied for.	Substantiate your candidature by talking about the dreams or goals about the work as well as the company.
5.	What are your strengths?	To learn more about you and to see how do you see yourself.	Introspect and provide the genuine details about yourself and support it with necessary data and examples.
6.	What are your weaknesses?	To learn more about you and to see how do you see yourself.	Ensure that your weaknesses do not seem to be an obstruction/s in your profession. Never say 'I do not have any weakness'.
7.	Tell us about a challenge that you faced and how you overcame it.	To assess your stress management, time management and conflict management abilities.	Honestly share the story of the challenge you faced and the strategy you employed. Ensure that your strengths get highlighted.
8.	What do you consider as your greatest achievement till date? Why?	To assess your leadership skills or team-work ability or learn more about your attitude and aptitude.	Be a good storyteller. Share an incident from your life by describing the situation, narrating what and how you did something and conclude with your final achievement.
9.	How do people describe you? or What do your friends or colleagues say about you?	To see how well you get along with others and learn about your other skills.	Answer this question by keeping in mind the fact that your recruiter might contact your colleagues or teachers to learn about you. Hence, it is suggested that you talk about your people management skills or working style (avoid repetition).
10.	Where do you see yourself from five years now?	To understand your vision and your probable contribution and loyalty to the company.	Without being overambitious, share your realistic goals ensuring that they align with the post you have applied for.

Practice a Mock Interview

The cliché that ‘Practice makes a man perfect’ is testified in many cases. With the help of an experienced senior or a reliable friend or a known professional, practice a mock interview. This boosts your confidence level and modifies your verbal and non-verbal communication.

Pack Your Portfolio

Verify and arrange the things that are to be carried for the interview. This includes the original documents and their photocopies. Carry all your necessary documents in an organised manner so that, you do not miss any of them and whenever required, you may produce them easily. Rummaging your documents at the time of interview creates a negative impression about yourself. Also ensure that, you keep a proper file or folder or portfolio to carry your documents. If you are to deliver a presentation, then carry multiple copies of your presentation so that, each of the committee members have a copy when you discuss your presentation.

Plan Your Dressing

Be clear about your dress and footwear. Choose a formal attire. If you are a boy, always prefer casual formal clothes and shoes. For a girl, sari, salwar kameez or suitable western attire like jeans and a formal shirt are better. Ensure that your clothes are wrinkle free and suits you well and your shoes are polished and matches your clothes. It is important that, you should feel comfortable in the attire that you wear. Do not choose any fashionable or new clothes and carry a handkerchief or a tissue with you.

Eat Healthy Food and Sleep Well

To feel fresh and relaxed, it is advised to have a simple food before the interview to avoid any energy slump. Avoid alcohol and late night party at all costs. Don’t be on social media till late night.

Learn the Logistic Details About the Interview

Necessary information about the venue and time helps you to plan your journey and you get saved from last minute worries of traffic or related things.

At the Venue

Reach the venue at least 10–15 minutes earlier or as specified by the recruiter. Be nice to the people you meet at the venue. Wear a warm smile on your face and be cool and stop rehearsing about anything. Be friendly with other candidates and avoid being negative about anything or anyone. Ensure that your posture is appropriate. Do not check your social media account or play a game. It is good to switch off your phone. It is better to spend your time by browsing any corporate content or any magazine which is lying nearby. Or else, just be observant and a good listener. Before you enter the interview room, visit the restroom to ensure that you look perfect.

11.2.2 During the Interview

- Knock the door and seek permission before entering the room.
- Be erect and walk slowly while entering the room.

- Greet everyone and sit after you are asked to sit.
- Maintain a good posture. Always sit erect.
- Keep your folder, if you are carrying, in your lap and your hand on it.
- Avoid sitting cross-legged.
- Maintain a consistent eye contact with every panel member.
- Be attentive while listening to the question.
- Think for a while before answering the question.
- Exhibit confidence and be in a pleasant mood.
- Use positive verbal and non-verbal communication.

11.2.3 After the Interview

- Thank the panel with a smile on your face.
- Leave the room confidently by gently opening and closing the door.
- Send a thank-you note to the company for the interview.

11.2.4 Do You Know These Interesting Facts About Interviews?

The average length of an interview will be around 40 minutes. However, in a survey taken from 2000 recruiters, 33 per cent of them reported that, they will recruit the candidate within the very first 90 seconds of the interview.

11.2.5 The Mistakes Made by the Candidates as Observed by the Recruiters

- 70 per cent of the candidates were too trendy while attending an interview.
- 67 per cent of the candidates were unable to make eye contact.
- 55 per cent of the candidates were rejected because of the way the jobseeker walked through the door.
- 47 per cent of the candidates did not have any information about the company they were applying for.
- 38 per cent of the candidates were not selected because of their voice quality and overall confidence level and the lack of a smile.
- 33 per cent of the candidates were rejected due to their bad posture during the interview.
- 26 per cent of the candidates were rejected because of their bad handshake.
- Interestingly, 21 per cent of the candidates got rejected for crossing their arms against their chest during the interview.

RECAP

Meaning	It is an interaction between the prospective employer and the employee to see if their goals are compatible with each other.
Stages of interview	From the perspective of a candidate, the interview process can be categorised into three stages as listed below. A. Before the interview: Research, plan and practice. B. During the interview: Perform confidently through appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication. C. After the interview: Thank and take a gracious leave.

EXERCISES

1. Discuss the possible answers to the questions listed under FAQs in this chapter with your classmates or friends. Write the answers which are applicable to you and get it reviewed by your peer or senior or teacher.
2. Write a note on the preparations required before the job interview.
3. Explain the care that one should take during and after the job interview.

Part E

Code of Behaviour

12

Telephone Etiquette

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- tell different attributes of telephone etiquette.
- plan and make conference calls.
- do appropriate text messaging.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

The success of every enterprise depends upon the communication whether it is face to face or virtual. Today, world has become a global village and technology has advanced a lot. Hence, it is very common to find professionals talking to their counterparts over the phone for business purposes. The telephone is one of the most important and commonly used tools in every businesses. Over the years, phones have evolved a lot offering many productive features and multimedia communication facilities. It would not be wrong to say that you carry the entire world in your small phone. Communication on phone or mobile requires better oral skills, manners and etiquette. Effective paralinguistic communication is even more important in telephonic conversation as speaker and listener rely solely on oral communication without any support of facial expression or any other kinesthetic aspects of communication.

12.2 ONE TO ONE TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION

12.2.1 Etiquette of Receiving a Call

- Answer promptly. Ideally, one should pick the phone at least by the third ring.
- Discontinue any other conversation or activity such as eating, chewing gum, typing, etc., before picking up the receiver.
- Acknowledge the caller by name. Make him or her to feel ‘at home’.

12.4 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

- Listen without interrupting. Focus on what is the purpose of the call. When the caller finishes, repeat his or her purpose of calling for his or her as well as for your understanding. Ensure that you help the caller with necessary information.
- Ask for the permission of the caller first before placing the caller on hold and thank him or her. Minimise customer hold time and return frequently to reassure that they have not been forgotten. Ensure to inform the caller that his or her call is being transferred.
- Use the hold button when leaving or connecting the phone so that the caller does not accidentally hear conversations being held nearby.

12.2.2 Etiquette of Placing a Call

- Express yourself clearly and concisely.
- Be certain of the number you are dialling to avoid disturbing someone unnecessarily.
- Apologise quickly, if a wrong number is dialled and then hang up.
- Be familiar with the hours of operation when trying to reach for business purpose.
- Avoid calling right at closing time.
- Do not call anyone before 9 a.m. or after 8 p.m. in spite of having the permission to contact on personal telephone number.
- Be courteous to administrative secretaries or other support staff who may answer your call. Being rude with someone is unprofessional and may cost you a great deal.
- State your first and last name clearly to the person answering the call, and let him or her know the reason for your call.
- Once the call is connected to the expected person, ask politely if this is a good time to talk to her or him. This is especially important if you are aware that, the call is likely to last longer more than a few minutes. If you know that a particular call will be lengthy, it may be best to schedule a specific time to call.
- Thank the receiver before putting down the phone.

12.2.3 Universal Telephone Etiquette (Expected from a Caller as well as a Receiver)

- Speak clearly and slowly to avoid jumbling of sounds.
- Use a pleasant tone (when suitable).
- Project a positive, enthusiastic and friendly attitude.
- Always be professional and courteous.
- Use phrases like ‘Could you’, ‘May I?’, ‘Please’ and ‘Thank you’ to make the person, on the other hand, to feel more comfortable and at ease.
- Keep a pen and paper ready to take notes if necessary.
- Repeat the message or note to confirm that you have understood the message.

- Pause periodically to confirm whether the other person has heard and understood you. Expressions or words like 'Mm-hmm', 'ok', 'right' are the indicators that the message is understood.
- Be courteous and helpful to someone who has dialled a wrong number by mistake.

Don't cough, sneeze or clear your throat into the phone. If you must sneeze or cough, move the mouthpiece away and cover it with a hand or put your phone on mute for a moment.

Common Structures that could be used in a Telephonic Conversation

No.	Situation	Formal
1.	Introduction while making a call.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello, Good morning or afternoon or evening. This is..... (name of the caller) speaking from (name of the organisation the caller belongs to). Could I speak to (name of the person who the caller wishes to speak to)
2.	Checking the availability of the receiver.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it a good time to talk to you? • Have you got a minute or two? • Can you spare some time for a quick discussion about....? • Sorry, if I have bothered you. Could we discuss...
3.	While receiving a call.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello, this is (name of the receiver) speaking. • How can I help you? or What can I do for you?
4.	While answering the call, if you need to learn more about the caller.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May I know who's calling, please? • May I know who am I speaking to?
5.	If you need to make the caller wait.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you please hold on a minute? • Hold the phone for a while, please!!!
6.	If you are to give negative feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am afraid, I am busy at the moment. I will call you back, later on or after a while. • I will be free around.. (time). Could you call me back then? • I am a bit busy at the moment. Is it OK if I call you back after one hour or half an hour or today or tomorrow morning or afternoon or evening?
7.	If you are facing any barrier.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am afraid, I cannot hear you well. There must some problem with the network. I will call you back.
8.	If you did not get the message.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am sorry, I did not get what you said. Could you please come again?
9.	While leaving a message.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can I leave a message, please? or Could you pass on a message to him or her? • Could you ask him or her or name of the person to call me back on the no.....
10.	While taking a message on behalf of someone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could I have your message? I will pass on it to him or her or name of the person.
11.	Bidding goodbye. (Receiver's side)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you for calling. Have a nice day.
12.	Bidding goodbye. (Caller's side)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks for the positive response.

12.3 VOICE MAIL

Voice mail is the voice message conveyed through a computer based system that assists the caller and the receiver to exchange messages when the receiver is unavailable in person to answer the call due to some reasons. In such a situation, the voice mail greets the person and shares the message that the receiver has stored for the caller. The caller too can leave a short message for the receiver. The receiver, as per his or her convenience, listens to the recorded message and gets in touch with the caller. Voice mail is much like the email. Unlike email, it receives and records the messages in the form of voice text. As per the need, a person plays the role of a sender or receiver. Some etiquettes while using voice mail are described below.

12.3.1 Leaving a Voice Mail for the Receiver

Reveal Your Identity

Before leaving voice mail, identify yourself. This identity should include your name. If the person does not know you, share your designation and department along with your name. If you wish the receiver to call you back, share the necessary information as well as your contact details very briefly.

Plan Your Message

If required, be ready to leave a voice mail. Think about a point or two using the keywords. Quickly get to the message. ‘The purpose or the reason of my calling is’ ...or ‘I would like to learn about or know’ or ‘Kindly let me know the status of...’ or ‘What is the update about....’ Try to finish your voice mail in the minimum possible time, preferably within 30–60 seconds. If you wish the receiver to call you back, let the person know when you will be available. Ensure that he or she has necessary contact details.

Use If Required

The voice mail is used to leave a message for the receiver. However, to leave a message ‘I will call you back’, voice mail should not be used. Instead, it is always better to understand the voice message left for you by the receiver and call back the person or contact through some other means than leaving such a time wasting message.

Speak Slowly and Clearly

As the listener might be noting down your message or he or she will not have an opportunity to request you to repeat your message, one should speak slowly and clearly while leaving a voice message. Utmost care should be taken while speaking your name, number and other important details.

Be Cautious

You should be cautious about the words and the tone that you use as the voice message, as it can be recorded and can be transferred to others through the mail.

Model Voice Mail by the caller:

Hi, I am (your name). I have called you to inform or inquire about.....
(a message that you wish to convey).

12.3.2 Leaving a Voice Mail for the Caller

Reveal Your Identity

Though the caller is aware about the person whom he or she has called, it is good to identify yourself. This identity should include your name, designation and department.

Be Clear and Concise

It might be an unexpected thing for the caller to find out that you are not available. Hence, be clear and concise while recording your voice mail for the caller. You should inform the caller why you are not picking up the phone slowly and clearly.

State the Approximate Time of Your Response

Inform the caller when you are likely to respond to his or her voicemail. You may also provide an alternative for communication in your absence so that, your absence should not become an obstruction.

Assist the Caller to Leave You a Message

Help your caller to help yourself. In other words, be specific about the message you want the caller to leave for you. You may state, ‘Please, leave a brief message about how I can help you? Kindly leave your number and I will call you back.’ If convenient to you, you can also suggest the caller to send you an email. In doing so, spell out your email address clearly. Mind your pace as the caller might be noting it down.

Model voice mail by the receiver

Hi, This is (your name). I am out of the time or office till(date). I will not be able to check the voice mail message till (date).

In case of emergency or any assistance, you may contact..... (name of the person or department) on (contact number). Or Let me know, how can I help you? You can also leave your number, once back, I will call you. Or. You leave a message or send me an email on (your email).

12.4 CONFERENCE CALL

The evolution of technology has changed the scenario of the workplace in the corporate world. One such advantage of tech advancements is an alternative to interpersonal meetings which is, ‘Conference calling’. Just a few years ago, the word ‘conference’ is used to be associated with the world of research or people of high ranking from the corporate world. Nowadays, anyone can create a conference call for professional or personal purposes as well.

As defined by www.techopedia.com, ‘a conference call is a telephone call in which the calling party can speak to several call participants at the same time. A conference call is usually done with a telephone, although it can also be done with the help of IP telephone service providers or with similar call applications. Conference calls can be either simply audio or both audio and video.’

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In a busy schedule and with a long to-do list, conference calling is a great alternative for interpersonal meetings by saving time and money especially when there is an involvement of different people from different locations. Conference calling allows people to stay connected and collaborate from wherever they are. It can be done by web portals as well as through phone. There are free and paid platforms that provide services or helps to make conference call. Some of them are Google+ Hangouts, Skype, FreeBridge, Rehuddle, Free Conference Calling, OpenVoice, SendHub, UberConference, GoToMeeting, Screenleap, etc., with the pros and cons of their own.

12.4.1 While Making or Being a Part of a Conference Call

Though, conference call is a very useful tool, it has challenges associated with it but, if appropriate etiquettes are followed, then we can surely address many challenges and it can prove as one of the boons of technological advancement. During a conference call, whether you are either a chairperson or a member, play your role effectively, in addition to having the necessary expertise in your area, you should follow certain manners and etiquettes. Some of the etiquettes that would help the concerned people meet the objectives of a conference call are listed below.

Be Punctual

Like every other professional assignment, being on time, is not only a courteous but also a must thing to do. It also helps you to verify whether there is no technological snag and if there is any, you have time to troubleshoot. If you learn in time that you will be late for a call, let the other person know this and inform him or her or when you can join the conference. If the person you are calling does not pick up, try again after 1–2 minutes. If still, the person does not receive the call, leave a message and a mail informing him or her about your availability.

Avoid Technical Snags in Advance

Ensure that the phone system is fully functional and preferably offers HD voice. Do not let your phone drop the call. This also means that, you know about the functioning of the technology and process of joining the conference call. (if you are using any online service, you should have the dial-in number and PIN with you).

Understand the Agenda

For a constructive contribution to the meeting, it is important to understand the purpose of the call. You should be sure about the likely course of your discussion and its outcome. You should be ready with the necessary information that you are to share. There is nothing wrong in requesting the organiser to share the agenda of the conference. This helps you to do the necessary preparation in advance and be more productive.

Be Candid About Call Disruptions

Ideally, the conference call should take place in a quiet area. In case, you are to be a part of the call where the conversation is likely to get disruptions due to some noise, technical problems, relay the information with the people on the conference call.

Know the Participants

Before being on a conference call, it is important to know who are the other people with whom you are going to talk. In fact, it is good that all the participants know about each other.

Introduce Yourself or Be Introduced by Others

For a better communication, it is good to introduce oneself or get introduced by others. If you are introduced by others, chip in and offer appropriate greetings to all the participants to break the ice as well as make them familiar with your voice. If you are meeting the participants for the first time, it is advisable to share the designation as well. During the interaction, ensure to address the person by his or her name. This shows respect towards the participant and everyone knows who is being addressed. When you contribute for the first time, it is good to speak your name first so that, others know the identity of the speaker.

Be Loud and Clear

It is important to slow the pace and be loud and clear to ensure that the message reaches in an undistorted manner.

Express But Do Not Interrupt

Nobody likes to be interrupted. Hence, make certain that, when others are speaking you do not interrupt. Wait for your turn or the apt moment to enter into the discussion.

Use the Mute Button When Required

Noise is a big barrier drowning the sound of the person while expressing his views. If there is a lot of noise, put yourself on the mute button and unmute it when you speak.

Avoid Using the Hold Button

Conference call is as important as a face to face meeting. Hence, do not put the conference call on hold. If you need to be away from the call, share this with someone and prefer to use the mute button.

Let Not Silence Prevail for Long

If the silence prevails for long, it may be misinterpreted as technical snags or the person being unresponsive or rude. If you are busy in looking for something or getting something done or thinking about something, inform everyone that you are busy with. Such a narration shows that you are still there.

Be Relevant

When it is your turn to speak, be precise. Keep your sentences short and pace slow. Take pauses at regular intervals to help everyone follow you properly and raise any query.

Ensure Inclusive Participation

Don't keep yourself busy with some other stuff when on the conference call. If you do not want to be part of the conference call, it is better to suggest somebody else's name or state that you will be busy with some other work and would not be able to be there for the entire call.

Avoid Eating or Drinking Anything

Much like the norms of interpersonal meetings, eating and drinking anything during the conference call should also be avoided to remain focused.

Take Notes If Necessary

It is always advisable to keep a notepad and pen with you to note down the relevant information for future reference or to raise a query, if any.

Keep a List of Input or Questions Ready

Jot down every input or question about the matter to be discussed during a conference call. This brings clarity and confidence when you speak.

Conclude with a goodbye

Just like any other form of communication, sign off with a goodbye to end on a positive note.

12.4.2 When Chairing a Conference Call

Keep the Number to a Minimum

Keep the call limited to as few people as possible and make sure that, each one in the call is really necessary. The more the people, the lesser is the attention.

Plan Ahead

Being less formal and less structured as compared to interpersonal meetings, it is natural for a conference call meeting to digress. To improve productivity and increase the effectiveness of the conference, you should define the to do list and share it in the form of an agenda with the participants. Following details should be made available to the participant in advance.

- Objectives of the meeting.
- Date, time and duration. (if anyone is to have a cross time zone, specify it carefully)
- Details of attendees. (Names and titles)
- Details of the pre-preparation and participation (general or specific): This can include information about, what one is expected to read and be aware of and what all are supposed to bring (related data or status updates). It can also incorporate the time allotted to each participant. In short, the participant knows what he or she is supposed to keep ready before joining the conference call and he or she is aware about the available time to him or her to share the details.

Sharing necessary details help the participant to prepare in advance and he or she is ready with ideas and questions. The same can result in a higher level of engagement and help the conference to be on track.

Keep It Short

15 minutes is believed to be right by the researchers. A short duration indirectly informs and encourages the participants to be precise and effective. They would also remain focused and participate attentively. However, one can always decide the duration using his/her discretion.

Share the Details About Screen Sharing Service

If any screen sharing service is being used, share the necessary details with the other counterparts so that they can do necessary installation and verification that it works before the call.

Appoint a Note Taker

Many things will be discussed during the meeting and some decisions will also be taken. It is always a good idea to assign somebody with the task of taking notes. After the meeting, this official document can be shared with everyone through a follow-up email. This would also help them to keep a track of things discussed in the meeting.

Start on Time

Respect time. Just like other meetings, start on time. Do not wait for latecomers. If someone joins late, there is no need to provide any recap for him or her. Let, him or her learn it from others after the call.

Introduce the Participants

If you know all the participants and the participants are unknown to each other and if the number is small, it is a good idea to take a quick roll call and introduce everyone briefly one by one. Introduction of the individual should be followed by his or her greetings to all.

Provide an Outline

Share the principal objective of the conference call in the beginning followed by the agenda. The participant should learn your expectations as well as the time allocated to them to share their share of information.

Call for a Comprehensive Contribution

Ensure that all have a meaningful participation. Do not let anyone to monopolise the conversation or even keep mum.

Keep the Provision of Follow Up Call

If there are many participants in a conference call and you wish to discuss something important with only one or two participants or a particular matter which is related only to a particular participant, it is always good to inform the concerned ones to discuss that particular matter offline later on. It saves other's time.

Inform in Advance Before Bringing the Meeting to a Close

At least, before 2–5 five minutes of ending the discussion, inform everyone that it is time to wrap up. Ask, if there are any queries or suggestions. Do not unnecessary stretch the call. Respect participants' time.

Provide a Recap

Once the discussion is over, it is always good to have a quick recap of what is discussed and the decisions taken or the duties assigned. This helps in ascertaining that, there is a complete clarity regarding who is going to do what.

Do Necessary Follow Up

Keep a track of next steps as the call goes on, and send them around via email afterwards as a reminder.

Conclude with a Goodbye

Just like any other form of communication, sign off with a goodbye to end on a positive note.

12.5 SHORT MESSAGE SYSTEM (SMS)

Convenience, speed and efficiency are the three most important attributes that have made text messages as an important tool of communication for many. However, texting a friend or a relative is different from texting clients, colleagues and authorities. Just like any other tool of communication, one has to be on his or her guard when using technology as a tool for

communication. The etiquettes which help you reap the advantages of the tool of texting in professional life are listed below.

Text to People Whom You Know

It is not advisable to text a person unless you have any previous communication with the person. You should text to a person with whom you share a comfortable relationship.

Text During Work Hours

Though text may not disturb the person as much as a call, it is always a sensible thing to text during work hours.

Keep the Text Brief

The full form of the system is Short Message System and its purpose is to convey short messages. If the message is long, one should prefer to send a mail or make a call.

Watch Your Language and Tone

Unlike oral communication, in written communication, it is difficult to understand the meaning through paralinguistic features. Hence, one should be watchful about the language as it is going to convey your message.

Do Not Share Confidential News Through SMS

Every tool of communication serves a specific purpose. Text messages are used to inquire and inform something important to be learnt or shared respectively.

Do Not Use Emojis and Abbreviations

If a text message is done for some official purpose, one should not use emojis and abbreviations. Emojis look unprofessional and abbreviations may not carry the same meaning for all or may not be understood by all.

Respond Timely

Texting aims for faster communication. Hence, one should try to respond to the message as soon as possible.

End the Text Communication Gracefully

Once the necessary communication is done, express thanks and end the communication.

Ensure Linguistic Correctness

Before you hit the send button, ensure that your message is correct in terms of factual information, spelling, grammar and punctuation marks. Be careful that autocorrect and autocomplete function do not change the meaning of your message.

Verify the Recipient

Before the send button is hit, confirm twice that you have selected the name of the person to whom you wish to send the message.

Sign Your Message

Unless you are sure that the receiver has your contact details, do not forget to put necessary information that reveals your identity.

Etiquette is a skill that plays an important role in professional life. It is rightly said by Clarence Thomas that 'Good manners will open doors that the best education cannot.' To sum up, etiquette is doing not what one wants to do but what one should do.

RECAP

Telephone etiquette is all about being skilful in employing the right set of manners while communicating through phone. For better telephonic communication, one should develop consciousness about the following etiquettes.

One to one telephonic communication.	1. While receiving the call. 2. While placing the call.
Use of voice mail.	1. While leaving a voice mail for the receiver. 2. While leaving a voice mail for the caller.
Use of conference call.	1. Being a part of the conference call. 2. Chairing a conference call.
Using SMS	1. Understand the preference of the recipient 2. Follow the Cs of communication.

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

- More than 60 per cent of intercall's respondents admitted to doing other work or sending an email while on a conference call.
- More than half the people on the line are eating (hopefully on mute).
- Just under half are in the bathroom (hopefully on mute).
- One in five is shopping. One in 11 is exercising. 6 per cent are taking another call.

EXERCISES

1. Write a note on etiquette that one should follow while receiving or placing a call for business purposes?
2. What is voice mail? Explain the care that one should take while leaving a message as a receiver or a caller.
3. Discuss the significance of conference call in the business world. How can one play his or her role effectively in a conference call?
4. If you were to chair a conference call, what steps will you take? Why?
5. Discuss the etiquette that one should follow while using SMS for professional communication?

13

Etiquette to Follow While Being a Guest and Playing Host

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- discuss the importance of etiquette while dealing with a foreign counterpart.
- identify the code of conduct while meeting a foreign counterpart.
- have a clarity about the cross-cultural concepts of kinesics, proxemics and chronemics.
- use appropriate etiquette while being a guest or playing a host to a foreign counterpart.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Role reversal is a natural phenomenon in the functioning of nature, in leading day-to-day lives and in the working of the corporate world as well. The same can be observed while doing business with foreign counterparts. Business transactions across countries can not only be done by communicating the related matter through phone, email, video conferences and conference calls but also it is required to visit a foreign country for some business purposes or to welcome a delegate or delegation from a foreign country. Both the situations, call for some awareness about certain small things that can make a big difference in business dealings. This chapter discusses about important manners, norms of behaviour and course of conduct that can help one to be a good guest and a perfect host.

13.2 VISITING FOREIGN COUNTRIES FOR BUSINESS TRIP/S AND BEING A GUEST

'When in Rome, do as the Romans do' goes an old saying. Likewise, it would be completely an inappropriate thing to discuss the salary in America and a completely appropriate thing to do

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so in Japan. Knowledge about cultures, traditions and social code of conducts of the country you are visiting is very vital for a successful business trip. Poor manners are likely to reflect adversely on your profession.

13.2.1 Acceptable Code of Conduct

The concept of an acceptable code of conduct varies across countries. Thus, it is good to learn about the acceptable code of conduct. This code of conduct has more do with non-verbal communication. The following things should be taken into consideration for acceptable code of conduct.

Handshake

- In countries like Turkey, a firm handshake is considered as rude.
- Australians prefer giving a firm handshake.
- British offer light handshake.
- In France, the handshake is quick and light.
- In China, the oldest people are greeted first with a slight nod of the head. A firm handshake can be seen as a sign of aggression. Therefore, a light handshake is more preferred.

Cautious Use of Gestures

Meaning of non-verbal signs varies across countries. Be mindful about the gestures you use and their meanings in the host country.

- Giving someone a ‘thumbs up’ in Latin America is considered as rude. It means ‘up yours’, not ‘good job’.
- V sign is used to indicate peace or victory in the USA. In 1960, during the Vietnam war, it became popular as a symbol of peace. But, in Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada and the United Kingdom, an outward-facing V sign is an obscene gesture equivalent to giving someone the middle finger.

Exchanging Business Cards

In Asia, a business card is handed carefully with both hands. While handing over the card, the writing should face the person who is getting the card. It is also suggested to get the cards printed in the country’s language as well. The receiver too accepts it with both the hands, notes the details on it, and then places it in his shirt pocket (not trousers’ pocket). Receiving the business card with one hand and putting it on the table is a mark of disrespect. Exchanging business card also acts as a kind of ice-breaker in a meeting.

Addressing or Meeting the Person

- In China, it is a custom to address or greet a person by his or her title and family name. For example, Director Chan or Good Morning Mr Chan. Becoming too familiar too quickly is not welcomed in China. Hence, Chinese take time in becoming familiar.
- In Italy, it is normal to kiss a new business acquaintance’s cheeks and have a long handshake.

13.2.2 Concept of Space

An understanding of the acceptable space during interaction is very necessary. For example, American and British value their personal space very much so, one should choose the zone for interaction carefully. If you are not aware about the acceptable code of conduct, it is good to manage with a simple handshake.

13.2.3 Concept of Time

Perception of punctuality varies across countries. Hence, whichever country you are visiting, it is good to understand their concept of time.

- Americans, Australians and Japanese prefer to be always on time.
- Swiss strictly follow the time. Even a 30 second delay means that you are late for the meeting.
- Mexicans and Indians are not very punctual. It is common to arrive late.

Whatever may be the perception of time of the host country, it is advised to be on time.

13.2.4 Discussion of Personal Matters

Whenever you are at work, whether in your country or on a business trip, you should choose your discretion as far as discussion of the personal matter is concerned. However, it is always good to keep personal and professional matters apart. Prefer to discuss about weather, food, current events, etc.

13.2.5 Learning a Bit about the Native Language

Though English has become the global language for communication in the international business world, a little understanding of the host's language is always appreciated. At least, one should learn to say 'Hello', 'Good Morning or Afternoon or Evening', 'Please', 'Thank you', 'It was nice meeting you', 'Have a nice day', etc., in the native language. This can be done with the help of various mobile apps or Google translate. However, one should be careful with the use of the native language.

13.2.6 Use of Social Media

Be extremely careful about posting status updates about your travel using social media. Your host might also be seeing those updates at that time or later on. You might inadvertently hurt their feelings. If the use of social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook which are banned in the country you are visiting and if you are using them, then, it seems to disrespect your hosts and country's policy. In such a situation, it is advised not to use social media.

13.2.7 Being Thoughtful

Your co-workers must have shared some extra load in your absence. As a good gesture of your remembering them there, if possible, bring something back for them. The cost might be

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relatively small, but the goodwill you will garner with your colleagues may be felt for months or years to come.

13.2.8 Expression of Gratitude

A small thanks takes you a long way. You should not forget to write a thank-you note to all of those who helped you in one or the other way and especially to your host. It is not wrong to send a small gift as a token of appreciation. If possible, you may also invite the person for lunch or dinner when you are there and know of a good place.

13.2.9 Miscellaneous

- If possible, arrive a day or two before the business begins. It helps you to know more about the place and the people you are visiting.
- Like many other things, it is good to have some idea about the cuisine and dining customs of the country you are visiting.
- Even, if you do not appreciate something about the country, it is always good not to be negative about food, custom, manner, weather, government policies or people of the host country.
- If the person with whom you are talking to expresses an opinion that you strongly personally disagree with, just veil your disagreement. Try to remain neutral or change the topic.
- Be attentive if your host shares things about the host country. It not only shows your respect towards him but also it will be helpful to you for your future visit.
- Talk as quietly as possible and always put your phone on vibrate mode.
- Open the conversation with a small genuine compliment. It could be about clothes, career, well-organised event, ambience, or food.
- Make an effort to remember the names of the people and use them in the conversation.
- Close the conversation gracefully. Leave the place after excusing yourself with a positive comment such as ‘it was nice meeting you’.

Thus, learning the culture and customs of the host countries and being gracious is indeed important for a successful business trip.

13.3 PLAYING HOST DURING THE VISIT OF FOREIGN COUNTERPARTS

Treat people the way you like to be treated by them. Your visitor’s expectations and observations when they visit or meet you are the same as that of yours when you meet them. In other words, when we visit somebody’s office, we form an impression based on our interaction with them, their non-verbal communication and look as well as the arrangement at the workspace.

Similarly, words, actions and workspace make a visitor form perceptions about us and our company. How you make them feel, makes all the difference.

People will forget, what you said. People will forget what you did but people will never forget how you made them feel

—Maya Angelou

The first and the foremost thing in ensuring a successful visit of foreign counterparts is to designate a Single Point Contact Person (SPCP) who will be responsible for arranging and organising the visit. This SPCP, in consultation with the higher authority and with the support of his or her team, should take care that the delegation is received well, offered warm hospitality and given an appropriate send-off. The SPCP should be in constant contact with the visitors before their arrival, during their stay and till their farewell. The SPCP should always be available for information and support.

Following are some tips to amaze the foreign delegation and make their visit a successful one.

13.3.1 Do the Required Research

It is important to have some basic details about the delegate or delegation visiting your organisation. You should try to learn if this is their first visit or they have already been to your organisation. If they had been to the organisation before, gather the experience of your colleague who had coordinated the visit. You should try to have maximum information about their needs, likes, dislikes, food habits and other preferences. This will help you to do the necessary planning and arrangement from your side. You can also learn a lesson from the faux pas that might have happened in the earlier visit. If it is their first visit, try to learn about their preferences from them or other resources.

13.3.2 Inform, and If Required, Train All the Employees

Ensure that everyone in the office is aware about the visit of the delegation and their purpose of visiting the organisation even if they do not have any direct role to play. This is helpful in making the delegates feel homely. The information about the delegates will ensure that your colleagues will make eye contact, say hello with a smile and attend to their queries if any. Some pleasantries may also be exchanged. All these contribute to forging a relationship.

13.3.3 Welcome in a Style

You can prepare a board or banner to welcome a delegate or delegation. This may be kept outside the office, meeting venue, manufacturing units, sales department, HR department, etc., throughout their visit. During their visit to your organisation, introduce them to other colleagues and create an environment for small talks. This small gesture can go a long way.

13.3.4 Be Aware about the Objectives and Outcomes

Be clear about the objectives of the visit as well as about the expected outcomes. Ensure that each activity is in sync with these objectives and outcomes directly or indirectly.

13.3.5 Share the Schedule

This should have been done in advance. Discussion regarding the schedule should have started once the broad objectives, date and duration of the visit is finalised. While preparing the schedule, make sure whether it is flexible and can accommodate the changes, if required, at the eleventh hour. In other words, keep some scope for slippage. This time can be utilised if something goes unplanned. After a due discussion among both the parties and the incorporation of necessary changes, the finalised schedule should be shared to all the concerned ones.

13.3.6 Arrange for Pick Up and Drop Off Facility

It is rightly said that ‘well begun is half done’ and ‘all is well that ends well’. Appropriate receiving and memorable send off can make things easier for the delegation and would result in a more comfortable communication between you and your counterpart. By arranging pick up and drop off facility, you can solve their worries and queries like

- How to get to the hotel?
- Which would be a preferable mode of transport?
- How much will the journey cost?

If it is possible for you to receive the guest, just do it. The small talks on the way to the hotel, will not only help you address their queries, but also build a connection between you and them. This makes the entire visit more comfortable.

13.3.7 Keep the Workplace Clean and Tidy

Cleanliness is next to godliness. Look at your workplace from the eyes of your visitor/s. Ensure that every nook and corner of the workplace looks neat and tidy. Let, your aesthetics reveal your personality and professionalism.

13.3.8 Use Apt Flowers, Air-fresheners, Magazines and Newspapers

Do necessary research about the cultural values, likes, dislikes and other preferences of the delegation. Based on your understanding of them, you should choose flowers, air-fresheners, magazines and newspapers.

Connotation of flowers varies across cultures. For example, in Greek culture, lilies are associated with rebirth and motherhood whereas, in China, lilies are used in weddings. Chrysanthemums (mums), also carry specific meanings. Depending on the country, mums could convey happiness or grief. Mums symbolise long life and good luck in the homes of China, So, they are offered to the elder people. Due to their nickname ‘mums’, in Australia, chrysanthemums

are gifted to mothers, especially on Mother's Day. In Belgium, mums are considered as memorial flowers and offered on the grave of loved ones. Hence it is necessary that, the cultural significance of flowers is learnt before placing them in the rooms or offices to be visited by the delegation.

As far as magazines and newspapers are concerned, it should be seen that they are fresh, related to the work of the organisations and are placed appropriately in the rack. It should also be seen that some of them are in English.

Air fresheners help you mask the odour, if any, at the workplace. It also helps in making the ambience fresh and the mood pleasant. However, care should be taken while choosing the fragrance. The fragrance should be mild and appropriate to the occasion.

13.3.9 Display Vision, Mission Statements at Appropriate Places

Arrange for the display of Vision, Mission Statements at an appropriate place/s in the office. Ensure that they are reflected in the initiatives as well as in the demeanours of the employees.

13.3.10 Choose the Meeting or Negotiation Venue with Care

The ambience of the place where the meeting or negotiation is taking place matters too. It should be airy with the proper seating arrangement. In addition to this, it should be ensured that the venue is equipped with necessary technology required for teleconference, video-conference or conference calls. To avoid disruption caused by power failure, keep a back up power supply ready.

13.3.11 Make an Arrangement, If Required, for the Translator

English is usually the language of communication in international business. However, if the delegate is not comfortable with English, overcome the language barrier by identifying a reliable translator.

13.3.12 Identify a Constant Companion

Ensure that someone is always available to attend the foreign counterparts if the SPCP is busy with some other work.

13.3.13 Arrange for an Appropriate Meal

Appropriate refreshments, snacks and meals are very vital to meet the objectives of the meeting and make the visit a memorable one. Here, one has to be culturally sensitive. One should be completely aware about their preferences with regard to the choice of food and taste. One can always plan to make them experience the local flavours. Arranging to serve a fusion of both cultures can also be a pleasant surprise. However, one should always be on one's guard that such a plan is not backfired. While making arrangement for food and refreshments, be sure

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about the religious values, choices and preferences. If the delegation has members preferring vegetarian as well as non-vegetarian food, buffet service would be a good idea. The catering staff should have the necessary knowledge and information about the dishes (ingredients, nutrition value and speciality) being served.

13.3.14 Plan for their Shopping and Sightseeing

Although the purpose of the visit is some business, everyone would like to have some cultural experience while visiting a foreign country. The schedule should have space for this too. If somebody is visiting Gujarat, he or she should have an opportunity to have some glimpses of the glorious traditional heritage of Gujarat. People would love to carry rich cultural memories.

13.3.15 Expression of Gratitude

Send a thank you card or small gift to express your gratitude and appreciation towards them. Eventhough, this is a small gesture, the rewards are far-reaching.

The above discussion proves that, playing your role well as a host or a guest requires knowledge, planning and an in-depth understanding of the culture of your guest or host country. Misunderstanding the cultural values may result in a loss of business or irreparable damage to you and your organisation's repute.

RECAP

Being a guest	When you are on a visit to a foreign country for some business purpose, always keep the following things in mind. a. Have information about the acceptable code of conduct. b. Understand the host country's concept of space and time. c. Avoid discussion of personal matters. d. Learn the native language a little. e. Do conscious use of social media. f. Be thoughtful about your colleagues at the workplace. g. Do not forget to express your gratitude towards the host. h. Behave the way you would like any guest to behave at your place.
Playing host	The following things should be accomplished while welcoming a guest/s for some business purpose. a. Collect necessary information about them. (culture, tastes, preferences, etc.) b. Train the employees who are to interact and meet the delegation. c. Welcome in a style.

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <p>d. Be clear about the objectives and probable outcomes of the visit.</p> <p>e. Plan the schedule in consultation with all the concerned ones and share the same with all in advance.</p> <p>f. Arrange pick up and drop off facility.</p> <p>g. Keep the workplace clean and tidy.</p> <p>h. Use apt flowers, air-fresheners, magazines and newspapers.</p> <p>i. Display vision, mission statements at appropriate places.</p> <p>j. Choose the meeting or negotiation venue with care.</p> <p>k. Make an arrangement, if required, for the translator.</p> <p>l. Identify a constant companion arrange for an appropriate meal plan for their shopping and sightseeing.</p> <p>m. Keep some provision for shopping and sightseeing</p> <p>n. Express gratitude towards the guest</p> |
|--|---|

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

- Former President, George W. Bush made a gaffe during a visit to Australia. He tried to signal a peace sign by waving the two finger or V-sign at the crowd. It could have been a simple gesture, but he committed a major error. Instead of his palm facing outwards, it faced inwards. In Australia, it meant that he was asking the crowd to go screw themselves!
- 'Ich Bin ein Berliner'. That's John F. Kennedy saying 'I am a Berliner' in Germany in 1963. Urban legend holds that this was Kennedy misspeaking and that people in Berlin assumed that he meant 'I am a jelly doughnut'. The confusion existed because a 'Berliner' is a type of doughnut made in Berlin.

EXERCISES

1. Define the term etiquette with reference to the corporate world? List the measures, one should take to prove oneself a good host?
2. Discuss the manners and etiquette that one should follow while on a business trip to a foreign country?
3. Illustrate the role of non-verbal communication while dealing with a foreign counterpart?

14

Etiquette for Small Talks

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- explain the meaning of small talks.
- recognise the attributes of small talks.
- identify the topics for small talks.
- practice small talks.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Often, seemingly unimportant things help us to achieve important milestones. The world of small talks is also like that. The adjective ‘small’ seems to suggest the insignificance of this activity. However, one should not forget that even a large landslide can be caused by small things. From the words of William H. McRaven, ‘If you can’t do the little things right, you will never do the big things right’, it is clear that the skill of doing ‘Small talks’ is indeed very significant.

The term ‘Small talk’ has various definitions and opinions. For example, www.urbandictionary.com provides three different definitions for the term small talk but none of them gives the appropriate meaning in the corporate context. However, if these definitions are filtered as small talks are exploited in the present era, the following things defines the term small talk.

- Small talks are useless and unnecessary conversation which attempts to fill the silence in an awkward situation. They are usually arised by commenting about current weather, weather pattern in the past or in future days or major weather disturbances in the recent past.
- It is the act of presenting oneself with irrelevant information in an attempt to appear friendly and normal to the person with whom, one is meeting for the first time. Most of the people resort to small talk in uncomfortable situations.

14.2 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

The attributes that can be derived from the above stated definitions are listed below.

1. Small talks are the conversation about the things that are unimportant.
2. Small talks often occur between people who do not know well about each other.
3. Small talks aim at appearing friendly and normal to a person especially when you are meeting him or her for the first time.
4. Small talks fill the void in uncomfortable situations.
5. Small talks save you from falling into an awkward situation.
6. Small talks are the easy ways to build connections with other people.
7. Small talks could be about weather, movies, culture, books and headlines in the news, career etc.
8. Small talks are useful in starting and finishing a dialogue with acquaintances or strangers.

14.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF SMALL TALK

As, warm up is essential before playing any match, small talks are also essential before initiating any formal communication. Small talks can be a conversation between any two known persons or between any two unknown persons. In both the situations, it serves certain purposes.

In general, small talks give some idea about each other's mind-set which helps in setting the tone of the discussion as well as managing the interpersonal distance. It also helps in identifying the intentions and views as well as created a bond among the people involved in the interaction. It also contributes in making new acquaintances and learning more about the person with whom you are going to develop professional relationship. Most importantly, they establish the reputation of that speaker as well as offer an insight into his or her intentions, attitude and intellectual level. If two known persons have a private conversation, one can guess the mood of the other and can steer the conversation accordingly.

Small talks, if utilised well, not only work as a conversation initiator but also helps to end the talk in a good manner. It offers a smooth transition from the completion of the formal talk to the end of the talk. It helps one from avoiding a sudden end to the talk. Small talks make the beginning and the ending of the formal talk.

Also, small talks create wonders in routine life too. It is an informal source of information. You never know, when you will learn something good from someone with whom you are having a small talk. The sharing during small talks strengthens the bond between you and your colleagues. As it is said, a lot can happen over a coffee. Similarly, a lot can be possible through small talks. You may build a long-lasting connection, find a close friend, develop new ideas, get inspired and ultimately spend more time with humans. Small talks also offer you respite from the stress bringing joy and smile to your busy schedule. They are a kind of shot in the arm. It is, thus, not wrong to state that the small talks facilitate the big deals.

14.3 SUGGESTIONS TO MASTER THE ART OF SMALL TALK

It is not difficult to master the art of small talk. The following simple strategies can help you to be good at small talks.

14.3.1 Keep a Friendly Smile on Your Face

Your smile is your asset. It is the first step for creating a comfort zone for the person to approach you.

14.3.2 Offer a Warm Greeting

Greeting someone with a smile followed by Hi, Hello, Good Morning, Good Evening, etc., enhances the possibility of establishing connections. It is a kind of gateway to enter into the conversation.

14.3.3 Identify an Interesting Topic to Talk About

This requires some intuition. Use of your hunch and begin with a yes or no question or some interesting and informative data. Be careful about the veracity of the data.

- Don't prefer to talk about the person's health, religion, and political views.
- Prefer to talk about weather, sports, shows, movies, art, your location or venue, food or cooking, hobbies, fashion, travelling, music, professional interests and responsibilities, etc.

If the topic is not interesting, learn to make it interesting. If required, do some homework or necessary research. Remember, that small talk is a skill. Hence, only practice can make you perfect.

14.3.4 Be an Active Listener

Give your 100 per cent attention to the speaker. Make him or her to feel that you are interested in his or her views and talks. This is also an opportunity to understand his attitude, aptitude and mood. Remember, a good listener is never at loss.

14.3.5 Take Care of Your Verbal and Non-verbal Communication

Avoid discussing any controversial topic. If the other person, initiates such a discussion, it is always good to be neutral. While speaking or listening, maintain a positive attitude and body language. Understand the attributes of kinesics and proxemics.

14.3.6 Focus on the Person You are Chatting with Not the Phone

However, important your phone call or a message is, once you have initiated the small talk, give your complete attention to the person you are interacting with. Small talk is an ice-breaking

14.4 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

task. Your attention to the phone makes the person feel unimportant. He loses focus yielding no positive outcome from your talk.

14.3.7 Identify Some Common Ground

For a successful small talk, it is necessary that after initial ice-breaking, the discussion gets directed towards something that is interested for both the parties. This serves for two purposes. Firstly, the person feels comfortable in expressing his or her views. Secondly, this may open a possibility of some sort of collaboration too.

14.3.8 Introduce Yourself and Others

Introducing oneself does not mean sharing details about his or her name, title, and experience only. Let the person learn a little more about you, your interest, abilities, etc. However, be careful that you do not start bragging about yourself or sound a narcissist. At the same time, if required, introduce others also in a fine manner. You may talk about who they are, what they do, where they come from, etc.

14.3.9 Be Humorous

The flow of communication becomes smooth if the state of affairs is cheerful. A touch of gentle humour can do this easily. However, one should be on his or her guard to see that the humour, though inadvertently, does not hurt anybody's feelings or it can be backfired.

14.3.10 Take a Graceful Leave

If you feel that you need to leave, do not leave abruptly. Let the people you are interacting with learn the genuine reason for your parting. Gracefully, excuse yourself and leave.

In short, small talk is a kind of starter. The way a tasty starter increases appetite, small talks increase the interest and involvement of both the parties. The way starter hints about the food of the main course, small talks help to learn about both the parties to understand about each other. One should identify a suitable moment to enter into the conversation. It makes it easier to contact and connect business associates, colleagues, as well as strangers. It is an effective and useful way to develop and extend your networks.

14.4 DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE SMALL TALKS THAT RESULTED INTO A BIG VENTURE?

Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield met at the gym class. They had a number of conversations while they were doing laps in the gym class. Gradually, they became very good friends and they launched 'Ben & Jerry's'.

Cohen and Greenfield initially did not dream to make super premium ice cream. However, Cohen did not succeed in selling his pottery and Greenfield was rejected by medical schools. These failures led them to open some kind of store together. They first wanted to open a bagel shop. However, the cost of equipment was beyond their capacity. Hence, they settled for ice cream making at Penn State. With \$4,000 from each and the same amount of loan from a bank, they started their venture by converting a gas station in Burlington to suit their needs. Today, it is one of the most successful companies of frozen desserts.

RECAP

Meaning	Small talk is an art of informal conversation in a formal situation to help two or more strangers feel at ease and preparing a stage for the formal conversation.
Dos of small talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a warm introduction with a friendly smile. • Identify a common and interesting topic. • Exhibit positive verbal and non-verbal communication. • Show genuine interest in the person and his or her talk. • Keep the mood and topic light.
Don'ts of small talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not inquire about family details or any professional information. • Do not discuss the personal matters of your colleagues. • Do not indulge in any controversial discussion.

EXERCISES

1. Define the term 'Small talks' and discuss its relevance in professional communication.
2. Your friend is learning to communicate. What tips will you give him or her to be good at small talk?
3. Write a note on the topics and questions to be used during small talks.

15

Respecting Privacy

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- define the term ‘Privacy’ in corporate context.
- explain the importance of respecting the privacy.
- outline the ways of respecting the privacy.
- develop a disposition to respect the privacy.

15.1 INTRODUCTION

Every human being values and prefers some privacy in personal and professional life which is a known and a quite natural thing. However, the notion of privacy and code of conduct differs across cultures. Privacy, basically, is a desire, need and right to have some space for oneself where any kind of encroachment is very offending. Cambridge Dictionary defines the term as ‘the right that someone has to keep his or her personal information secret or known only to a small group of people’. Privacy is classified into four categories and they are described below.

1. **Physical Privacy:** It means restriction on others to experience a person or situation through one or more human senses.
2. **Informational Privacy:** It suggests restriction on searching for or revealing facts those are unknown or unknowable to others.
3. **Decisional Privacy:** It implies restriction on interfering in decisions those are exclusive to an entity.
4. **Dispositional Privacy:** It denotes restriction on attempts to know an individual’s state of mind.

15.2 PHYSICAL PRIVACY OR PRIVACY OF SPACE

Privacy of space deals with proxemics. Edward Hall coined the term ‘Proxemics’. Proxemics is a study of space offered to others and used by the person in everyday life as well as at a

15.2 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

workplace. People are very conscious of the distance they wish to maintain while interacting with others. The habit of keeping distance varies across cultures. Hence, it may be said as the space maintained during the interaction between two people can be perfectly acceptable in one culture but it is considered as very rude or a taboo in another culture. The beliefs of acceptable and unacceptable space are shaped by cultural values. Many times, people do not even realise that they are making someone uncomfortable by entering into the zone not acceptable to the other person..

For example, it is perfectly accepted for a man and woman to be together or to be intimate in public in western culture. However, in India, usually, women can or do not interact so freely with men. It is likely to be misinterpreted. Thus, the concept of proxemics differs greatly among people of different cultures.

Japanese people prefer to stand 4–5 feet apart from each other during meetings or discussions. On the other hand, the Europeans and North Americans tend to stand quite closer in the same scenario. When using public transport, the Japanese will manage in less personal space owing to the large population. On the other hand, the Europeans and North Americans would like to have greater space due to the lower population density.

Thus, every culture has a set of implied rules concerning the physical space between the people during communication. Violation of any of these rules is likely to be interpreted as impolite or even intimidating. Hence, it is necessary that while interacting with a person from a different culture, you have the knowledge about the acceptable norms of space during the conversation. This knowledge would help you to respect the privacy of a person.

Sometimes, even within a culture, many people advertently or inadvertently breach the code of privacy.

15.3 INFORMATIONAL PRIVACY OR PRIVACY OF INFORMATION

At your workplace, you should be protective about three types of information namely, employee information, management information and business information.

15.3.1 Employee Information

While working together, you might know many things about your colleagues. This can include general information regarding the home address or telephone number, e-mail address, password to the system he or she is using, certain personal details, etc. Do not share any details with anyone without the knowledge and permission of the colleague.

15.3.2 Management Information

While working for the company, you will be managing many responsibilities. While doing your work, you are likely to learn many things pertaining to your colleagues, disciplinary actions,

company's future policies for promotion, etc. Ensure that you do not share any of this with any colleague. This is an unethical practice and might also be illegal sometimes. It would be a breach of trust. It would always be counterproductive and will dent the work culture at the workplace.

15.3.3 Business Information

This is commonly known as 'trade secrets'. By virtue of your position, it is likely to have certain information regarding the manufacturing process and secrets, financial data, business strategies, list of clients and customers, trade policies and computer data. If this data is shared with the competitors, it may incur a huge loss to the company. One should not practice any such unethical thing and breach the trust of the company.

15.4 DECISIONAL AND DISPOSITIONAL PRIVACY

Curiosity about others is a natural tendency. Human beings are always curious about learning what is happening to whom and why. However, it is not a welcoming thing at a workplace. One should curb one's curiosity as the co-workers have decisional and dispositional privacy. Following etiquette can help your colleagues enjoy the stated privacy.

- Do not cause any discomfort to your colleague by staring at his or her computer when you happen to visit his or her table or office for some work.
- Do not interrupt your colleague or stand near him or her when he or she is busy with some call.
- Do not enter into anybody's cabin or cubicle without his or her permission however close you are to the person.
- Do not take or use your colleague's stuff without his or her knowledge or consent. When you borrow something from your colleague, return the stuff in working condition as soon as possible.
- Do not advance for physical contact (handshake, kissing hands or cheeks, etc.) without permission especially without understanding the cultural values of the person.
- Do not intrude your co-worker's space with your paraphernalia when you are sharing a workspace.
- Do not eavesdrop on a conversation or read over anyone's shoulder without having the permission to do so.
- Do not upset others with your strong perfume, smelly lunch and loud music or for that matter constant coughing and occasional snorting.
- Do not waste their time by gossiping or doing idle chatting.
- Do not trouble them with your loud laughter or long talks over the phone.
- Do not offer any unsolicited advice.
- Do not discuss any reprimands, salary raise or any such matter that causes emotional disturbance.

15.4 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

To sum up, you gain what you give is a universal truth. The same is applicable in the case of privacy at the workplace. If you respect others' privacy, your's will also be respected. In the long run, it is mutually beneficial.

RECAP

Meaning	If you make your colleague to feel comfortable during interaction and make his or her stay at the workplace more comfortable through your etiquette, you are said to have respected his or her privacy.
Types of privacy	To live the above stated definition, one should try to respect <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Privacy of space: Let a co-worker be in a comfort zone during the interaction. Respect his or her cultural values.• Privacy of information: Do not share the company's or co-worker's confidential information with anyone.• Privacy of decision and disposition: Do not try to be privy to your co-worker's state of affairs.

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

Top Secret

An Indian family moved to the USA. The seven-year old boy of the family was learning to interact in English. He was taught some greetings such as 'How are you?', 'Where are you going?', 'How old are you?' etc.

One day the mother and the son were taking a walk in a garden. There, they met an American lady. After, the initial exchange of pleasantries between the ladies, the American lady started talking to the boy. The boy was very excited. He too started interacting with the lady. As taught at home, his first question was: 'How are you?' To this, the lady replied with a smile: 'Fine, Thank you.' The next question was: 'Where do you live?' The lady again smiled and shared her address. The boy got motivated and inquired; 'How old are you?' The lady was taken aback and hesitated a bit. However, soon her face brimmed with happiness. She replied with a smile on her face, 'I am sorry dear. That's top-secret. I can't tell you.' Having said that, she, then, bid good-bye and left.

The young boy could not understand the reply. His mother, nevertheless, could understand the pain-point. She explained to her son that the Americans valued their privacy and that they did not like people to know their age. The boy did not seem to be very convinced with the answer.

Having lived among the Americans, he developed an understanding about the American culture. This childhood memory, however, always remained with him as a first lesson in respecting the privacy of others.

EXERCISES

1. What do you understand by the term ‘Respecting privacy’? How can a person protect the privacy of space at a workplace?
2. List the etiquettes to protect the privacy of decision and disposition?
3. What is privacy of information at a work-place? Discuss its types by citing suitable illustration.

16

Learn to Say NO

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- explain the importance of saying NO.
- recognise a situation where NO should be said.
- demonstrate an ability to say NO.

16.1 INTRODUCTION

The ability to decide when and how to say NO, is one of the most powerful and important skills. However, it is also the most unusual thing say NO for many. Some feel guilty (such people are driven by emotions) while some feel anxious (such people fear about the adverse consequences of their NO) whereas others may feel sad and depressed (such people feel that every NO is a loss of opportunity). Thus, there are mixed emotions behind saying NO. Hence, they can be summarised as the apprehension of following thoughts that are listed below.

- Being recognised as ‘no person’.
- Being considered as ‘mean, lazy, boring, and uncaring’.
- The loss of opportunity.
- The negative consequences.

‘It’s only by saying “NO” that you can concentrate on the things that are really important.’

—Steve Jobs.

Time is invaluable. It cannot be manufactured, recycled or reused but it can only be utilised well. Once it has gone, the same version of time never returns. Therefore, one should not waste it on people and projects which do not align with his or her mission or goals.

16.2 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

However, it is always easy to say than to do. If saying ‘Yes’ can be a terrible choice sometimes then, saying ‘no’ too might not be accepted well by your colleagues and it can be too risky if the person is your boss. Thus, depending on your relationship with the person and your situation, you should make your choice of saying ‘Yes’ or ‘No’.

16.2 WHEN TO SAY NO

Say NO to the offer or request for the favour or assignment during the following situations.

16.2.1 If It Does Not Align with Your Priorities

Always remember your targets and priorities. If you receive an offer or request which does not match with your goals or deviates you from your schedule, then, politely decline the offer or reject the request.

16.2.2 If It is Against the Principles That You Have Set

Everyone has certain principles in life. These principles are like the beacon which guides and influences their decisions. Your principles define you. Hence, if anyone comes with a request or an offer which is against your principles, it is good to say NO. For example, work ethics, being useful to co-workers, lending money, maintaining relations, etc.

16.2.3 If You Are Hard-pressed Against Time

You should know your priorities, targets and deadlines. It seems to have a race against time to maintain a balance between personal and professional world. At this time, if you receive an offer, an opportunity or request for a favour, simply say NO to save yourself from stress and upcoming conflicts. For example, busy work schedule versus personal priorities.

16.2.4 If You Are Unwilling to Do

Sometimes, there is nothing against your principles and it is not a question of time also. However, it is something you just do not want to do because you do not like to do or you are not in a mood to do. At this time, it is good to say NO. The reason may be depending on the type of work or depending on your physical or mental status. Your unwillingness may result in procrastination causing loss to the other party who approached you with high hopes. It also affects your credibility adversely.

16.2.5 If You Are Incapable to Do

It may be the thing that sometimes you are approached with a request to do something but you know that you are incapable of doing it due to the lack of expertise, and necessary experience. Even though, the person who approached you with the offer might be confident but you know yourself more. Unless you know that you will develop the necessary competence to complete the task, do not say YES.

16.2.6 If You Are Being Manipulated (Used by Others to Get Their Work Done)

Many people are good at using others as prey. Be smart enough and do not let yourself to be exploited by others. There may be a colleague of yours who would try to take unnecessary advantage of your knowledge, skill and efficiency.

Saying and accepting NO is difficult but a well-thought-out NO is helpful for both the parties. However, before saying NO, collectively take the reasons which are stated above for consideration.

One should evaluate the offers and make smart decisions. Answer the following questions, before you decide your response. If your responses are more YES, then, accept the responsibility. If your responses are more NO, then, politely turn down the proposal.

No.	Question	My Response YES or NO
1.	Do I have time to do it?	
2.	Does it align with my priorities?	
3.	Is it important for me to do?	
4.	Is it urgent for me to do?	
5.	Am I the right person to do this job?	
6.	Does it match with my goals and objectives?	
7.	Is it my duty to do this?	
8.	Am I the only person, who should do this?	
9.	Can I do this?	
10.	Should I do this?	
11.	Have I to do this?	

If you have to say NO, then say it gracefully without showing yourself in a bad light. Given below are some strategies which helps you to say NO.

16.3 HOW TO SAY NO

It would be good if you learn to say NO. This would not only save you from stress but also keeps your relationship smooth with others. Remember, if there are more chances of long-term happiness after opting for NO, then, it is always better to say YES.

16.3.1 Say YES to the Person and NO to the Task

Whenever you say NO to anyone, always make sure that you make the person understand that you are saying NO to the task and not to the person. Instead of saying simply NO, try to communicate with the person and express your inability to do it without justifying your actions. Let the person know that in future, if convenient, you would be happy to collaborate.

16.3.2 Suggest an Alternative

Many times, it is the scenario, that when some work is offered to you, the person actually does not want 'You' only to do it. His interest lies in getting the work done. Understand the interest of the person and the relevance of the work with regard to your priorities and goals. If the work does not align with your priorities and goals, suggest somebody whom you trust and know that whether he or she can do justice to the task. The objective is not to put anyone in the trouble but to see that a deserving person gets an opportunity to showcase his or her ability. Remember, if the work is not done properly, your credibility would also get damaged.

16.3.3 Express YES with the Possibility of Oblique NO

It happens sometimes when you cannot say NO straight away. In such scenario, you may say that it is difficult for you to comply with the request at that time, however, if the person had time you would be able to do the task. Having said this, you may suggest the time you require to help the person to carry out the task. This would save you from a negative impression as well as you get some more time.

16.3.4 Be Kind But Remain Firm

What you say is important but not more than how you say it. Try to say neutral no. In other words, when you say NO, do not express any reluctance or guilt. If there is any expression of reluctance on your face, the person would feel that you do not want to extend your help. If there is an expression of guilt, he or she would have false hope and would try to push the request.

16.3.5 Use Guided NO

This NO works best when you know that the person actually does not require your active involvement in completing the task. Your guidance would solve his or her problem and that you can take and want to take this task. In such scenario, offer necessary guidelines to the person.

16.4 BEFORE SAYING NO TO THE BOSS

Evaluate the scale and scope of the task. When there is an assignment or an opportunity from the boss, it should not be a straight forward NO. Even if you are hard-pressed against time or overburdened, consider the worth of the opportunity before responding negatively to it. Try to consider, whether it is important and urgent? Will it take long? Can it be accepted if you reprioritise your work? How does it align with your goals? What are the likely repercussions of saying NO? If it is all about the professional workload that makes you hesitant about accepting the task, depending on your rapport with the boss, you may inquire if you can reprioritise the task or can have longer time? Having given due considerations to all the perspectives, if you are sure that you neither desire to do nor is there any possibility to extend any help, it is always good to be up front and turn down the assignment and or opportunity. Do not be aimless.

However, turning down the assignment is likely to have negative repercussions on you. They should not add any bitterness or distrust in the relationship. If possible, explore some of the ways where you can partially contribute or offer an able alternative. Remember, the boss should not regret to have chosen you for the job. He or she might be unhappy with your denial but should be happy with your suggestion.

Some alternative responses to say NO are tabulated below.

Do not say....	Say.....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wish I could do this but I have to meet a relative. • I'm so sorry, but I just can't carry out what you're asking me to do. • I am not the right person to do this. I do not think, I will ever be able to do this thing. Thank you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you for this invitation. Unfortunately, I am occupied on that day. • Thanks for the invitation. However, I have some prior commitments. • Thanks for the opportunity, I would be unable to do justice to your work and my other project would also suffer. • I am busy with my routine work from 10 a.m. –5 p.m. entire week or month. Hence, it is difficult to comply with your request this time.

Thus, saying NO is very critical. It helps others learn your preferences and you have control over your priorities, likes and dislikes. It also saves you from anxiety, stress and losing focus. Do not always be afraid of saying NO. Sometimes, there is nothing wrong in putting your priorities first and being selfish without causing any harm to others.

RECAP

Meaning	Saying NO is an ability of not accepting work without letting it affect either your image or reputation.
Importance of saying NO	One should learn to say NO to remain focused and continue being productive for a longer period.
When to say NO	Say NO when your <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities are getting affected adversely. • Attention is being diverted . • Reputation and reliability are likely to be damaged. • Mind disapproves the job.
How to say NO	Saying NO is a tactful task. While saying NO, one should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decline the offer not the person. • Suggest an alternative, if possible. • Remain kind but firm. • Express readiness to guide, if possible.
Saying NO to the boss	Saying NO to the boss is quite a risky job. One can avert the risk by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being candid and sharing the rational causes of your NO. • Considering the consequences and making a considered choice. • Pondering over all the perspectives to have a clear picture.

EXERCISES

1. According to Steve Jobs, 'It's only by saying NO that you can concentrate on the things that are really important'. How far do you agree with the statement? Justify your stand through appropriate illustrations.
2. Learning to say NO is important but equal importance should be given in knowing when to say NO. List and discuss the situations when one should say NO.
3. Learning to say NO is important but equal importance should be given in knowing how to say NO. List and discuss the strategies of saying NO.
4. Have you ever said NO to any offer of work or request for any assistance or opportunity? If yes, why? What were the reasons for saying NO? What were the consequences of NO? What lessons have you learnt?
5. Have you ever seen anyone saying NO to any offer of work or request for any assistance or opportunity? If yes, why? What were the reasons for saying NO? What were the consequences of NO? What lessons have you learnt?

17

Time Management

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- examine the need of time management.
- identify his or her time wasters.
- list the essential step to manage time.
- distinguish between various priorities.

17.1 INTRODUCTION

Today's learners are energetic, talented and tech-savvy individuals. They like to be challenged and motivated in their learning process. They would want to collaborate and work with peers. They desire to do so many things as soon as possible. Thus, they have very high expectations from everyone and everyone has from them. Very rightly, it is said that higher the goals, greater are the challenges. The 21st century learners have great aspirations, abilities and opportunities. To reap success, after success they need to strike a balance and for this, time management is essential.

Simply stating, time management is an ability to use the available time in the most productive manner. To use it productively, one requires thoughtful planning to use the available time for specific activities. Good time management enables an individual to accomplish more in a shorter period of time with lower stress. This skill helps not only in leading a better professional life but also to lead personal life and needless to say that the quality of one's life depends on the quality of other's life. That is, if your professional life balanced, it is likely that your personal life will also be happy.

Good Time Managers do not allocate their time to those who '*demand*' it, but rather, to those who '*deserve*' it.

17.2 TECHNIQUES OF EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT

Effective time management is all about making choices regarding the utilisation of your time to achieve small targets and long-term goals. It is an ability to assign time for the activities as per their urgency and importance. Time is equal to life. Hence, time management is actually life management. If one wastes time, he or she is not only wasting time but also his or her life. People say, time flies but they forget to add or realise that everyone is the pilot of the time at his or her disposal. Time can be managed effectively by accomplishing the following things.

17.2.1 Doing Meticulous Planning

This requires complete clarity of what is to be done, why it is to be done and when it is to be done and what are the small targets to be achieved. One should prepare a roadmap to achieve a particular goal. Planning can be more awarding, if it is done by keeping the priorities in mind. Priorities can be decided with the help of the Eisenhower Matrix which is also known as Urgent-Important Matrix. It helps one to decide and prioritise the tasks by urgency and importance. Following is the matrix.

Urgency		Urgent	Less urgent	
		Important		
Important	Tasks that are listed here are to be done first as they are important as well as urgent.	Tasks that are listed here can be scheduled as they are important but less urgent.		
	i.		i.	
	ii.		ii.	
	iii.		iii.	
	Tasks that are listed here can be delegated if possible as they are urgent but less important.	Tasks that are listed here can be put on hold till every other task is over as they are neither urgent nor important.		
	i.		i.	
	ii.		ii.	
	iii.		iii.	

17.2.2 Setting SMART Goals

Planning and prioritising helps you ascertain your SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals.

Qualities of a goal	Questions to be answered to ensure the related quality in your goal.	Application of the concept: Goal: To prepare a powerpoint presentation.
Specific	• What do you want? – i.e., the end result.	• To be able to prepare a power-point presentation using pictures, audiovisual file/s, animation, etc.

(Continued)

Qualities of a goal	Questions to be answered to ensure the related quality in your goal.	Application of the concept: Goal: To prepare a powerpoint presentation.
Measurable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you ascertain that the goal is achieved? – Rubrics or evaluation criteria. • What changes should have been taken place? – Differences to be observed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coherent Content. • Appropriate font formats (size, colour, style). • Effective use of pictures, graphics, audiovisual aids and animation.
Attainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it feasible to do? – Possibility of its becoming a fact. • Do I have enough resources to attain the goal? – Knowledge about available resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be done sincerely with the help of the course coordinator • Computer lab facility of the institute or personal or friend's laptop to be used.
Relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you want? – Motivation and purpose for doing the task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An integral part of an engineer's life. • Short-term benefit: To do the necessary assignment/s in BE. • Long-term benefit: Useful on various occasions in my professional life.
Timebound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should be the deadline? – Time by which it should be learnt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be discussed with the teacher before the mid-semester exam. • Should be submitted after necessary correction/s for the final evaluation before the internal viva voce.

17.2.3 Delegating and Dealing with the Responsibilities

Once the planning and prioritising is done using the Eisenhower Matrix, you will have the list of things to be done. They can be found under four different combinations which are listed below.

Urgent and Important

Activities listed in this quadrant should be your topmost priority. The tasks listed here may include the last minute assignment from the boss, sudden project meetings or any unforeseen crises. Complete them as soon as possible. Ideally, the activities listed here should be the unforeseen ones not the postponed ones. If this quadrant is full of the activities that you have postponed, then, you possess a lack the timemanagement ability.

'Urgent' tasks demand your immediate attention but if you actually give them that attention may or may not matter.

'Important' tasks matter and not doing them may have serious consequences for you or others.

Important But Not Urgent

Ensure that the activities listed here are completed in time before they become urgent. This can be done with the help of strategic and systematic planning. This quadrant should have all your goals and planning. Activities listed in this quadrant can be scheduled in a manner that they get completed in time without causing any obstruction to the activities listed in the

17.4 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

urgent and important quadrant or listed in this quadrant itself. Ideally, the majority of the activities, in this quadrant, should have been the foreseen ones. They are the proofs of your time management abilities.

Urgent But Not Important

The tasks listed in this quadrant are likely to prove some kind of interruptions. Hence, it is, necessary that such tasks are delegated to someone who would do them efficiently in a given time frame. One should even learn to say 'NO' at the workplace. It is not always required to do everything on your own. There are other people as well. One should say no when he or she knows that something is difficult for him or her to complete the task within the deadline due to other prior commitments. It is always better to delegate roles and responsibilities as per the interest and specialisation of employees instructing them to finish tasks within deadlines.

Neither Important Nor Urgent

Generally, activities listed in this quadrant are mere distractions. One should get rid of them as soon as possible. If someone presses you to do a certain thing, and you are likely to list it in this activity, very politely say no to him or her by giving a convincing reason for not doing the work. Such an attitude may save you from non-important activities in future.

The crux of the matter is that, for an effective time management, one should invest time in the activity that can yield the desired return to build a brighter future. Investment of time requires effective planning, viable goals and objectives with realistic deadlines and focused attitude. Time management comes with many advantages.

17.3 ADVANTAGES OF TIME MANAGEMENT

Every good thing offers rewards so is the case with timemanagement. There are many advantages of effective time management. The major ones are discussed below.

If you give yourself one thing to do, it will take all day. If you give yourself two things to do, you get them both done. If you give yourself a dozen things to do, you may not get 12 done, but you'll get 7 or 8 completed.

Lesser Stress and a Higher Level of Productivity

When you have learnt the art of time management, you are likely to have less work stress as everything will be done in time by you. Your targets will be achieved with better results. Your boss would be happy with you and you too feel satisfied. This satisfaction brings happiness and aspirations. You would set more and higher goals resulting in better productivity.

Lesser Reworking and Better Free Time

When you have learnt to plan and prioritise the activities, you need not rework your schedule or the task for that matter. You will be able to meet the deadline easily and as a result, you would have qualitative time for yourself. This qualitative time can rejuvenate you and you are ready to achieve the next target.

Lesser Friction and Better Relationship

Friction in personal and professional life is more due to your inability to perform as per one's expectations. Underperformance at professional front causes stress resulting in friction. If targets are achieved in time as per the expectations, there will not be any stress. No stress means no friction. In short, timemanagement helps you to be free from the vicious circle of stress, friction and unhappiness.

Lesser Wastage of Time and More Opportunities

When you have to-do list and the roadmap to accomplish your targets, there will be no wastage of time. The saved time can be used to do more productive tasks. Being productive adds to your contribution. An obvious outcome is more opportunities and greater chances of promotions.

Lesser Distraction and Greater Focus

Once, you are ready to hit the target, there are few chances of your getting distracted. You aim only at the target you wish to achieve. History is a witness to the fact that a focused person has never lost any aim.

17.4 CAUSES OF POOR TIME MANAGEMENT

It is a challenging task to manage time. Many cannot manage the time effectively. The causes of poor time management are are discussed below.

Lack of To-do List

You are always wasting your time and energy if you are working without planning. It is walking continuously but reaching nowhere. Lack of to-do list results in stress and breaks down of the target.

Inability to Prioritise

Inability to prioritise means you do not have any idea about the sequence in which you should do the tasks. When you cannot prioritise, you might end up using your energy and time for the task that might not be needed or to be done by you. You could have delegated the task to someone and could have directed your efforts towards the target that requires your skills and efforts.

Failure to Manage Distractions

Life is full of distractions. One who cannot overcome his or her temptations, get deviated from the path and forgets his or her calling. One requires strong will power and determination to concentrate and continue chasing his or her dreams.

Habit of Procrastination

Habit of procrastination prevents you from giving your best. It not only takes you away from your target but also adds to your and others' workload. When the workload increases, quality is compromised and the repute is at risk.

Inability to Say NO

This is an important skill. If you are good at something, it is likely that many would approach you with a request to do them a favour. Other times, you may also have many opportunities. In both the cases, you need to be clear about what you want to do and why you would do that. If you think that doing a favour increases your trouble, it is better to say NO even if it hurts the other person for a while. However, in the long run, it is good for both of you.

In short, to accomplish more and to feel less distress and stress, it is necessary to learn time management. One, who can manage time effectively, stands out and is likely to be more successful in personal and professional life. Time management increases efficiency, selfconfidence and paves a way for the goal.

RECAP

Concept of time management	An ability to utilise the available time in the most productive manner.
Techniques of effective time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doing meticulous planning.• Setting SMART goals.• Delegating and dealing with the responsibilities.
Advantages of time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lesser stress and a higher level of productivity.• Lesser reworking and better free time.• Lesser friction and better relationship.• Lesser wastage of time and more opportunities.• Lesser distraction and greater focus.
Causes of poor time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of to do list.• Inability to Prioritise.• Failure to manage distractions.• Habit of procrastination.• Inability to say NO.

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

Some interesting facts and figures about time management and personal productivity.

1. The average person uses 13 different methods to control and manage their time.
2. The average person gets 1 interruption for every 8 minutes, or approximately 7 in an hour, or 50–60 per day. The average interruption takes 5 minutes, totalling about 4 hours or 50 per cent of the average workday. 80 per cent of those interruptions are typically rated as ‘little value’ or ‘no value’ creating approximately 3 hours of wasted time per day.
3. By taking 1 hour per day for independent study, 7 hours per week, 365 hours in a year, one can learn at the rate of a full time student. In 3–5 years, the average person can become an expert on the topic of their choice, by spending only one hour per day.

4. 20 per cent of the average workday is spent on ‘crucial’ and ‘important’ things, while 80 per cent of the average workday is spent on things that have ‘little value’ or ‘no value’.
5. A person who works with a ‘messy’ or cluttered desk spends, on average, 1½ hours per day looking for things or being distracted by things or approximately 7½ hours per workweek.
6. 70 per cent of business and professional people use a ‘to-do’ list on a regular basis to administer their ‘have to’s’.
7. 5 per cent of business and professional people use a ‘to-do’ list on a regular basis to administer not only their ‘have to’s’, but also their ‘want to’s’.
8. ‘A project tends to expand within the time allocated for it.’
9. Delegation is an unlimited method to multiply time for achieving results.
10. 1 hour of planning will save 10 hours of doing.

Lessons from Great Personalities

Excerpts from Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Interaction with a schoolboy who asked a question on time management. The question was 'How do you manage your time?' This is how Hon'ble PM, then the CM of Gujarat, replied

There is a thumb rule of this world for time management. The hardworking person has no problem with time management and the lazy one is always struggling with time. If someone is ready to work, he will say, please do come we will manage within 5–10 minutes. The working person does not have any problem related to time. We all are having enough time but don't know exactly how to use it!

Generally, we do not know the art of prioritising the task. If we make it a habit of not to compromise with doing worth tasks, it will be easy for us to optimize our time and we will get the best from our time.

Secondly, some people are complaining about exhaustion due to too much work. This is wrong. Too much work never exhausts. Actually, too much work gives satisfaction. It is a myth that I am tired due to too much work. If you are doing an unimportant task, then you feel exhausted. We should be aware enough not to waste time.

Further, he shared his experience of being with Shri Ke Ka Shastriji, a linguist of Gujarat state who enriched the Gujarati language immensely through his research and creation. He said, ‘Once I met Shri Ke Ka Shastriji who is a highly learned person of this state. He must have been 85–90 years old at that time. I had an opportunity to be with him for 10 days. I considered myself lucky thinking that it was a great opportunity to serve this erudite person. We were together for 10 days. While being with him, I noticed a few things about him, which impressed and inspired me a lot.

While travelling, if the vehicle stops at the railway crossing, what would we do? We would while away our time doing nothing fruitful. Shri Ke Ka Shastriji would start writing and when the bus started, he would stop writing. This continued, whenever he got time, he kept writing.

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What a utilisation of time!! When we reached Dharmashala, I started searching for a pillow and bedding for him. When I came with the bedding, he was sleeping without a pillow. He used a small bag as a pillow. He did not expect anything! He was always on time for prayer, reading and writing. It was a very hectic schedule for 10 days. However, he completed all his work in touring which he used to do at home too. Remember, that too was at the age of 85–90. He lived for 103 years. What a perfect life he lived! What a great personality!!

EXERCISES

1. Identify your two academic goals (technical and non-technical subject). Prove them SMART through necessary elaboration.
2. Keep in mind the current semester. Decide, list and prioritise tasks using Eisenhower Matrix.
3. Plan and manage your time.

Task 1: Review your last week in terms of your utilisation of time with the help of the following table: (The details in columns i.e., activities and duration of time (given in hours) are indicative in nature. You are suggested to make necessary changes as per your requirements.)

Day	Sleep	Routine	Study	Physical Sports	Social Media	Video Games	Travelling	Music	Any other
Mon	8:00	3:00	8:00	1:00	00.45	2:00	1:00	00:15	
Tue									
Wed									
Thur									
Fri									
Sat									
Sun									

Task 2: Plan your next week in terms of your utilisation of time with the help of the abovegiven table: (The details in columns, i.e., activities and duration of time are indicative in nature. You are suggested to make necessary changes as per your requirements.)

Part F

Life Skills

18

Skills for Self-development and Self-assessment

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- recall various skills essential for self-development and self-assessment.
- describe the meaning and importance of the skills.
- relate the need of a particular skill for a better life.
- integrate various skills in deciding a course of action.

18.1 INTRODUCTION

In the article ‘The Skills You Need To Succeed In 2020’, the World Economic Forum reports ten skills that a professional would require to succeed in 2020. However, not only in 2020 but also in the coming years these skills are going to play a vital role to sustain success in professional life. The skills are listed below.

1. Complex problem solving.
2. Critical thinking.
3. Creativity.
4. People management.
5. Coordinating with others.
6. Emotional intelligence.
7. Judgement and decision making.
8. Service orientation.
9. Negotiation
10. Cognitive flexibility.

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Not only The World Economic Forum, but also the organisations like WHO and UNICEF have reported the need to nurture such skills for a better life (personal and professional) in this dynamic world. Collectively, these skills are called ‘21st Century Skills’, ‘Employability Skills’ or ‘Survival Skills’. However, a more common and known term is ‘Life Skills’.

The World Health Organisation has defined life skills as, ‘The abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life’.

According to UNICEF, life skills are defined as the psychosocial abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. They can be loosely grouped into three broad categories of skills namely, emotional or personal skills, interpersonal skills and cognitive or thinking skills. Emotional or personal skills are useful for developing personal agency and managing oneself, or people after interpersonal skills are used for communicating and interacting effectively with others and cognitive and thinking skills are used for analysing and using information.

18.1.1 Emotional or Personal Skills

These skills are necessary to recognise, express and manage emotions at different stages of life and to have the ability to empathise with others. They include everything about self-management.

18.1.2 Interpersonal or People Skills

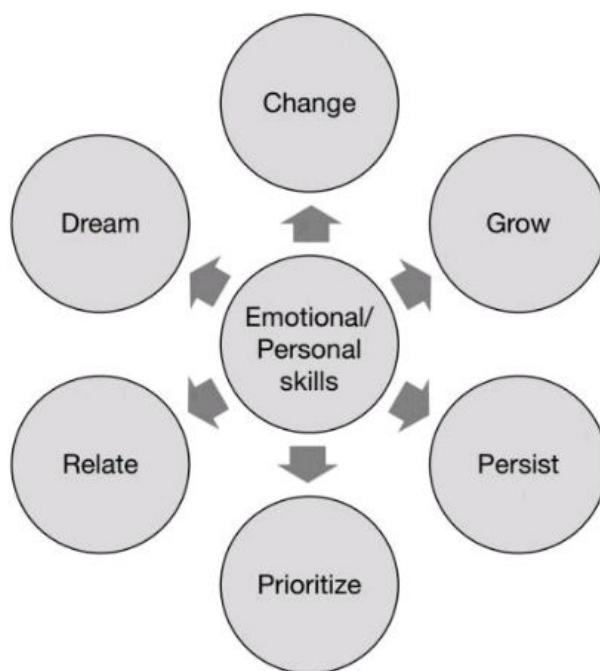
Academic skills are nurtured formally in the classroom as well as by an individual through self-learning. Every academic skill revolves around communication. It appears that communication includes LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) abilities. LSRW skills are much wider as they help in developing interpersonal skills, leadership skills, management skills, co-operation, team-building skills, etc.

18.1.3 Cognitive or Thinking Skills

Skills that augment the ability of problem solving and decision making with the help of analytical ability, creative and critical thinking are known as thinking skills or negotiation skills.

18.2 EMOTIONAL OR PERSONAL SKILLS

Just like IQ (Intelligent Quotient), EQ (Emotional Quotient) is also given equal importance for a peaceful and successful life and career. A higher EQ can reduce procrastination, develops self-confidence and enhances our ability to focus on a goal. It also enables a person to create better relations, overcome setbacks, and persevere with a more resilient attitude. They include the aptitude for and attitude towards change, growth, persistence, prioritisation, relation and dream.

EXHIBIT 18.1 Emotional or Personal Skills


18.2.1 Change

Very rightly it is said that, nothing is constant except change. As, change is a spice of life, no growth whether it be external or internal, is possible without a change. However, it is not always easy to accept change. Many fear all sorts of change and are averse to it. Some accept external change and adapt to it but they are worried of internal change and they find it difficult to adapt it. One has to accept that, change is inevitable and hence should be embraced gladly. History of evolution is a witness to the fact that those who could not change or adapt to the change have now become extinct. Thus, an ability to change helps one to adapt and survive. Many instances have proved that change is hard at first, messy in the middle and gorgeous at the end.

The following things have to be perceived for a change.

- Visualise your goal.
- List the things (habits, nature, friends, attitude, etc.,) you require to change to achieve your goal or target.
- Determine the tools, strategy and timeline to change your habits or attitude.
- Review and monitor yourself.
- Reward yourself for every positive change.

*"The measure of intelligence
is the ability to change"*

—Albert Einstein



Do You Know This?

- **Giorgio Armani:** Giorgio Armani is better known as the world's top fashion designer. He studied medicine when he was young. After completing his studies, he joined the Italian army and worked at the military hospital in Verona. After leaving the military job in 1953, he became a window dresser at a store in Milan, then a seller in the men's clothing apartment. It was in the mid 60s, he started designing clothes and at the age of 41, he founded his company in 1975.
- **R Madhavan:** Madhavan, the superstar who used to take courses on public speaking and personality development skills, before pursuing his passion for acting in Mumbai.



A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

Change to be a better performer. Talk to yourself and your confidant to learn more about you.

1. Which change (external or internal) do you think which would be more challenging and why?
2. What is the latest change that you have noticed in your personality? Is that change is positive or negative?
3. Who and what caused that change?
4. What advantages and disadvantages have you noticed and what do you expect to see as a result of the change?
5. List any three things that you would like to change about yourself. They can be either external (outward personality) or internal changes (attitudinal change) or both.
6. Request your friend to suggest any three changes that you need to make to achieve your professional goal.
7. Discuss with your peer, seniors and professionals, you know and try to learn the changes likely to occur in the career prospects, you wish to follow. Envisage the changes that you need to make for successful survival.

"Don't go through life, grow through life"

—Eric Butterworth



18.2.2 Grow

Persistent growth is a must for a sustainable successful career. As per the Oxford Dictionary, to grow means to develop physically, mentally and spiritually. It is also defined as the process of increasing value or importance. As far as, the

academic or professional life of a person is concerned, the first kind of growth (physical, mental and social development) can trigger the second kind (increased value and importance) of growth. In simple words, as a person fine-tunes his necessary skills then automatically, his or her value and importance in an organisation increases.

A dream and desire to do something and earning self-esteem are the prerequisites for any growth which are followed by the attributes like setting goals, motivation and dedication.

Setting a goal is just like preparing a road map to achieve something. Every goal has to be SMART i.e., it should be **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant and **T**ime bound. It is a kind of visualisation of what one wants to do, where, when and how.

To set your goals, the following things have to be accomplished.

- Dream...Dream...Dream...Desire...Desire...Desire...
- Identify the small targets that can lead you towards your ultimate goal.
- Prepare your strategy to reach the target/s.
- Work dedicatedly and avoid all the distractions.
- Identify your motivating factor and keep it in front of your eyes.

Do You Know This?

Among many options available for cashless transactions, Paytm, a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved e-wallet is probably one of the easiest and preferred method. It was launched as an online mobile and DTH recharge and shopping bills in 2010 by Vijay Shekhar Sharma. Now, Paytm enables its users to make almost every kind of transaction on the click of a button. In a short span of 8 years, Paytm has over 250 million registered users and more are getting added every day. The growth plans are to:



- build its biggest campus in Noida to propel growth that will house over 15,000 employees.
- tap the loan market and pay out small loans to 500 million people.
- launch a WhatsApp like chat app with more sophisticated features.

The success story of Vijay Shekhar Sharma is the outcome of his great vision and hard work.

- He used to read second-hand tech magazines to keep him updated.
- He could not sit for the IIT entrance and other competitive exams due to the lack of proficiency in English.
- Could hardly understand what was taught in the class while doing his engineering.
- He spent a lot of time in the computer room by browsing the internet.
- He built his first company named 'XS Communications' during his college days.
- He took the loan of 8 lakhs at 24 per cent interest, which got him into a vicious cycle of unpayable debt and forced him to take up petty jobs to make ends meet, setting up LAN connections, delivering guest lectures and so on.
- He put \$2 M at stake to finally launch the brand as the investors were sceptical about the success of the idea.

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

Grow to be a better performer. Talk to yourself and your confidant to learn more about you

1. What is/are your dream/s? Prepare a collage of your dream/s and keep it before you.
2. List the goal/s that you need to achieve to realise your dreams.
3. Prove that they are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time bound.
4. List the probable challenges that you may encounter in achieving your goal/s and your strategy to avoid or overcome them.

18.2.3 Persist

To persist is to continue a course of action in spite of difficulty or opposition. Persistence is even more importance than planning. A persistent person just does not give up, in spite of any situations. In fact, persistence is the secret of every success.

The following things have to be accomplished to be persistent.

- Decide what you want. (set your goals)
- Know why you want it. (determine the purpose of doing it)
- Visualise the probable setbacks and obstacles. (be ready to strive and strain)
- Set off your journey. (review consistently and revise whenever required)
- Remain surrounded with positive people. (be motivated)

“Patience, persistence and perspiration make an unbeatable combination for success”

—Napoleon Hill



Do You Know This?



- Walt Disney was turned down 302 times before he got financing for his dream project Disneyland.

- The founder of the popular food chain KFC 9 (Kentucky Fried Chicken), Colonel Sanders too refused to quit. He spent two years driving across the United States looking for restaurants to buy his recipe. Colonel Sanders heard 1009 times ‘no’ before he heard his first ‘yes’. There was no looking back then. KFC expanded internationally and he sold the company for two million dollars.
- ‘*By every usual standard, I was the biggest failure I knew.*’ are the words of JK Rowling, the author of Harry Potter series. As a single mother, she had to struggle with depression, raise a child on her own and live on meagre unemployment benefits. She worked on her book in cafes while her daughter was asleep. She sent her chapters to 12 different publication houses but her mailbox received only rejection letters. However, it did not let her to stop. Finally, the ‘Bloomsbury Publishing Company’ published the book and the rest is history.

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

Persist to be a better performer. Talk to yourself and your confidant to learn more about you.

1. Recall something where you did not give up in spite of many obstacles and challenges. Why did you not give up? What were the outcomes? What lessons have you learnt? Share this with your class.
2. Recollect an incident from your life or of someone you know, wherein you or that person could have succeeded, had you or that person remain persistent? Share it with your class.

18.2.4 Prioritise

Prioritise is to decide the sequence of tasks as per their importance and relevance. Prioritisation is extremely essential to remain focused and succeed. Prioritising helps in using the time productively.

Prioritising goals help you to accomplish the following things.

- To manage your time.
- Reduce work stress.
- Avoid distraction.
- Prevent procrastination.

Do You Know This?

A professor of philosophy came into his class. He brought some items with him and put them on the table. When the class began, he took a large transparent empty jar and started to fill it with rather massive stones. Then the professor asked his students: ‘Is the jar full?’ They confirmed that it full.

Now the professor picked up a box of small pebbles, poured them into the jar and shook it so that pebbles filled the open areas between the rocks. He asked once again: ‘Is the jar full?’ They agreed that it is full.

“To change your life, you need to change your priorities”

—Mark Twain



18.10 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

This time the professor poured a bucket of sand into the jar, and the sand filled the jar completely. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students once again answered affirmatively.

'Now', said the professor, 'I want you to see that this jar is just like your life and the stones are the most important things, your main values – your family, health, morality.'

The pebbles are other things that matter such as your job, house and car. The sand represents the small stuff.

So, if you put the sand into the jar first, there would be no place left for pebbles and large stones. Therefore pay most of your attention to the things, that are the most important in life. Therefore, spend enough time with your family, take care of your health and do not forget to develop spiritually. Always be kind, honest, sensitive and helpful. These are the things that really matter. They should be your priorities. The rest is just sand.'

Source: Social Media

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

Prioritise to be a better performer. Talk to yourself and your confidant to learn more about you.

- Prepare a to do list which include routine tasks, short-term goals and long-term goals.
- Use the Eisenhower Matrix. This is also known as Urgent-Important Matrix. It helps one decide on and prioritise the tasks by urgency and importance.

Urgency	Important	Urgent		Less Urgent	
		Tasks that are listed here are to be done first as they are important as well as urgent.		Tasks that are listed here can be scheduled as they are important but less urgent.	
Urgency	Important	i.		i.	
		ii.		ii.	
		iii.		iii.	
Urgency	Less important	Tasks that are listed here either can be delegated if possible, as they are urgent but less important.		Tasks that are listed here can be put on hold till every other task is over as they are neither urgent nor important.	
		i.		i.	
		ii.		ii.	
		iii.		iii.	

18.2.5 Relate

Science may say that air, water and food are the basic necessities of life. However, science cannot negate the fact that love, support and warmth of feeling are also the necessities for a happy life. Various researches across the globe have proved that strong relationship contributes to a healthy life. A survey by the National Bureau of Economic Research of 5000

people found that doubling your group of friends has the same effect on your well being as a 50 per cent increase in income! Robert Waldinger, the director of the Harvard Study of Adult Development stated that loneliness kills.

The following things have to be accomplished to maintain healthy relationships with family and friends.

- Accept the person as he or she is.
- Take time to be with each other.
- Be honest.
- Trust and respect each other.
- Forget and forgive.
- Remember small details about each other.
- Appreciate each other for small things.

Do You Know This?

The poet Rupert Brooke (1887-1915) set out to travel by a boat from England to America. Everyone on the deck had someone there to see him or her off—everyone except him. Rupert Brooke felt terribly lonely. Watching the hugging and the kissing and goodbyes, he wished he had someone to miss him.

The poet saw a youngster and asked his name.

‘William,’ the boy answered.

‘William,’ he asked, ‘would you like to earn a few shillings?’

‘Sure, I would! What would I have to do?’

‘Just wave to me as I leave,’ the lonely man instructed.



It is said that money cannot buy love, but for six shillings young William waved to Rupert Brooke as the boat pulled out. The poet writes, ‘Some people smiled and some cried, some waved white handkerchiefs and some waved straw hats. And I? I had William, who waved at me with his red bandana for six shillings and kept me from feeling completely alone.’

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

Relate to be a better performer. Talk to yourself and your confidant to learn more about you.

- How many birthdays, anniversaries and special days do you remember? How many people do you wish in a year?
- Do you have a friend/s with whom you can share everything? Why do you share with that/those friend/s? You may list the qualities you admire in them.

18.12 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

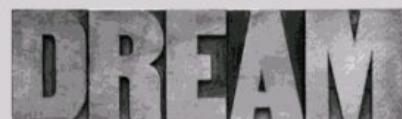
- Do your friends/relatives to share their happiness and problems with you? What qualities do they appreciate in you?
- Observe people around you and how do they maintain their relations? Share your observations with your friends.

18.2.6 Dream

Every success story begins with a dream. Dreams are one of the things that differentiate a human being from other living things. The one, who dreams, can only deliver. Dreams help a person envision things. They motivate and inspire to put your best foot forward.

"You have to dream before your dreams can come true"

—APJ Abdul Kalam



Do You Know This?

- **Oprah Winfrey:** Oprah Winfrey did not have an easy childhood. She was born to an unwed teen. She struggled her way through various life hurdles. She is one of the self-made billionaires of the world and one of the most influential women in the world. She believes 'The key to realising a dream is to focus not on success but significance and then even the small steps and little victories along your path will take on greater meaning.'
- **Dhirubhai Ambani:** Dhirubhai Ambani is the founder of the biggest business empire 'Reliance Industries' said, 'If you don't build your dream, someone else will hire you to help them to build theirs.' He was once a worker at a petrol pump. He was a dreamer since his early days. He used to tell his colleagues at the petrol pump that one day he would own a Mercedes. All used to laugh at him. However, the world is a witness to his chase and success.

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and introspect

Dream to be a better performer. Talk to yourself and your confidant to learn more about you.

- List your dreams, identify an image for each of it and prepare a beautiful collage. Ensure to have that collage in front of your eyes as much as possible.

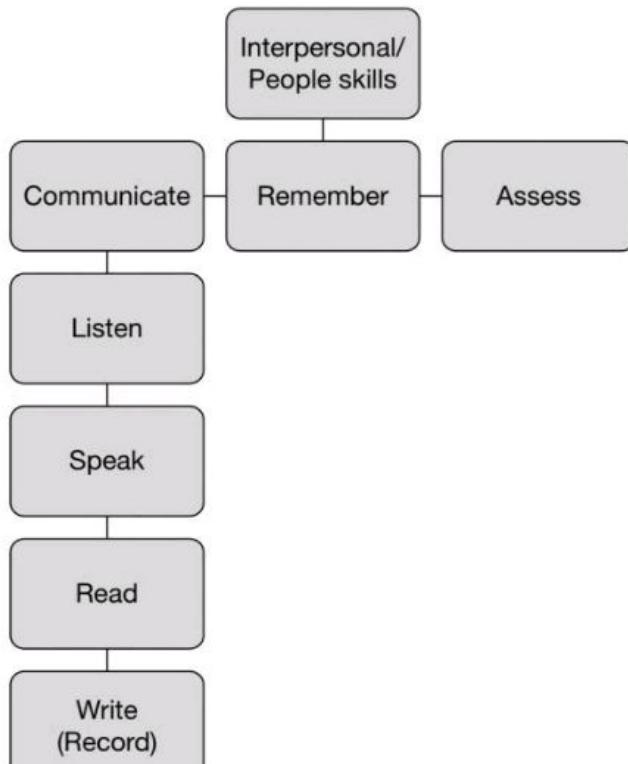
Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

—Langston Huges

18.3 INTERPERSONAL OR PEOPLE SKILLS

Interpersonal skills are important for every student to master as they build their confidence, increase their competence, enhance their self-esteem and help them to excel in their personal as well as their professional life.

EXHIBIT 18.2 Interpersonal/People Skills


"Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success"
—Anonymous



18.3.1 Communicate

Competence to communicate is a skill that encompasses all other skills or at least is the base for the development of other skills. It is a skill of conveying as well as receiving the message in a manner that the desired response is obtained. It is also the ability to understand what is not said explicitly. In communication, listening and reading are receptive skills through which a learner imbibes the required knowledge whereas speaking and writing are productive skills through which the leaner expresses his or her proficiency.

Listen

This is one of the most crucial skills to develop. Everyone usually lives with the belief that they can listen. However, listening is not a physiological act. In fact, it is a very complex process. Many swap listening with hearing but both are two different acts. The difference between the two is tabulated below.

"Most of the successful people I've known are the ones who do more listening than talking"

—Bernard Baruch



18.14 Effective Communication Skills for Engineers

No	Hearing	Listening
1.	It is an unconscious and involuntary act.	It is a conscious and voluntary act.
2.	It is an act of receiving sounds.	It is an act wherein sounds are received, understood and interpreted. It aims at making sense of received sounds.
3.	It does not anticipate any response.	For accuracy in understanding, it requires the ability to interpret the speaker's body language.
4.	There is no purpose.	It is done with a purpose.

Listening can be divided into two types namely, active listening and passive listening and they are listed below.

Active Listening

Every act of listening is followed by an appropriate response. Active listening has various purposes and they are listed below.

- Listening to comprehend. For example, training.
- Listening to judge and evaluate. For example, conflict resolution.
- Listening to build trust and rapport. For example, counselling.
- Listening for recreation. For example, FM radio and TV shows.

Passive Listening

Listening done without making much effort to understand the message or responding in an inappropriate manner can be known as passive listening.

Barriers to Listening

Anything that creates a hitch or snag in the process of communication can be termed as a barrier. Broadly, barriers are caused either by a speaker, listener or the location. The major barriers to listening or communication are listed below..

- Ambiguity in the mind of the sender about the message.
- Inability to convey the message as per the need and level of the receiver.
- Inappropriate use of the medium to convey the message
- Lack of understanding about the cultural differences of the listener.
- Disinterestedness of the receiver.
- Inability of the receiver to comprehend the message.
- Lack of faith in the sender.
- Receiving the message with preconceived ideas or prejudiced mind set.
- Physical discomfort in terms of seating arrangements, hunger, thirst or nature's call.
- Noise among the audience. For example, Vehicles or buzz .

Qualities of a Good or Effective Listener

The qualities of a good listener are listed below.

- He or she makes an effort to understand what the speaker is trying to convey than what he or she wishes to understand.

- He or she shows interest in what is being communicated.
- He or she maintains eye contact and gives positive non-verbal signals like head nods and appropriate facial expressions.
- He or she provides feedback for the message received.
- He or she shuns distracting actions as well as gestures.
- He or she asks questions, without disrupting speaker, to clarify doubts and assure the speaker that he or she is listening.

Do You Know This?

Interesting Facts about Listening

Researchers across the world have established the following facts about listening.

- A normal human being listens to 125–250 words per minute but he or she thinks 1000–3000 words per minute.
- Non-verbal communication plays a vital role in listening. It is believed that, only 7 per cent of the meaning is derived from the actual words spoken, 55 per cent of the meaning is derived from the body language and 38 per cent of the meaning is derived from the tone of speech. Thus, as a listener, you are deriving 93 per cent of the meaning through non-verbal communication.
- Less than 2 per cent of people have received formal training in listening.
- 85 per cent of the learning takes place through listening and at 75 per cent of time, the listener is pre-occupied with some other thoughts.
- Confident people tend to listen more carefully as compared to the people who lack confidence.

Speak

There are many activities when a learner is required to express himself or herself through speech. They include presentation, debate, group discussion, paper presentation, etc. The attributes of a good speech are listed below:

1. Clear and audible voice with correct pronunciation.
2. Right tone, speed and volume to emphasise the important ideas.
3. Correct physical gestures and posture to sustain the interest of the audience.
4. Consistent eye contact to hold the listener's attention.
5. Use of relevant anecdotes, joke, facts, news, quote, etc., to make the content interesting.
6. A well organised content supported with relevant examples and stories to make the content authentic.
7. Concise talk to sustain concentration.
8. Error free content for better communication.
9. Confident, calm and natural voice to convince the audience.

Do You Know This?

- During the presidential debates in 1980, some complained that Reagan was too old to run to office. Reagan began his comments at one of the debates with Mondale by saying, 'I will not make age an issue in this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience.'

Read

Reading is a complex process of decoding the symbols to understand the meaning. When a reader reads something, he or she should be able to decode and comprehend the individual words, phrases and sentences that he or she comes across. It is done in three stages. For each stage, there are strategies that one needs to use for better comprehension.

To develop reading comprehension, utilise various strategies suggested for each stage.

1. Pre reading strategies.
2. Reading strategies.
3. Post reading strategies.

"Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body"

—Joseph Addison



Pre Reading Strategies

- Be clear about your purpose (why) of reading.
- Make list about the topics or questions (what) you want to read about.
- Decide to what depth (how much) you need to know.
- Check the possibilities of using the gained knowledge.
- Learn necessary vocabulary about the content.
- Skim the text by looking at the organisation of the content, heading, subheadings, illustrations, figures and charts, if any.
- Read the summary of the chapter, if available.

Reading Strategies (Monitor Your Comprehension)

- Underline the important content (if it is your book).
- Write notes in the margin (if it is your book).
- Form questions on the basis of the content you have read. Make sure that the read content is the answer to your question.
- Reflect on the text, anticipate, and make predictions.
- Confirm or correct predictions as and when needed.
- Monitor comprehension, if it breaks reread the previous portion to fix the break.
- Decide carefully what to read, what not to read, and what to re read.
- Use text structures and text features to support meaning.

- Generate questions about the text.
- React intellectually and emotionally to the text. (reader's response)

Post Reading Strategies

- Summarise and restate read things either by thinking loud or in a different book.
- Generate questions on the basis of what is read.
- Review and relate the read things to appropriate situations.
- Decide if the goals have been achieved.
- Summarise major ideas.

In short, the reading strategies involve recalling, deducing and evaluating.

- **Recalling:** What have I read?
- **Deducing:** What is the implied meaning?
- **Evaluating:** Which are the related examples?

Do You Know This?

Donald Trump once said, 'I read Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* when I was quite young, and it left a great impression on me. I agree that a positive outlook and approach to life and business can reap great results.'

Write (Record)

It is a mode of communication using letters, signs and symbols in semantically and syntactically acceptable manner. Good command over this skill helps a person express himself or herself with a clarity and also records information for future references. Many academic activities offer an opportunity to develop writing skills. Technical writing skills like letter writing, proposal writing, report writing, notice-agenda-minutes writing are discussed under Technical Writing section. Here, we would focus on note-taking skills.

"If you are not taking notes, you are not learning"

—LinkedIn



Note-taking is an essential skill to record whatever one has read or whomever one is listening to. A student should prepare the visual map while reading or listening. This will help him or her to decide whether the content is understood or not. If the reader finds it difficult to take notes, then it is clear that he or she has difficulty in comprehending the content. After making notes, the reader should revise them and verify that they make complete sense.

The steps of note-taking are discussed below.

- Read the passage or listen to the speaker carefully.
- Write the heading based on the central idea of the content.
- Create subheadings based on the development of the central idea.

Dos of Note-taking

- Use standard abbreviations and symbols. For example, MP (Member of Parliament), NDA (National Defense Academy), Sc (science), Govt (government).
- Write the first few and last few letters of words with or without an apostrophe in between. For example, can't(cannot), sth (something), sb (somebody).
- Use the first letters or few letters of the phrases for example, kg (kilogram), ref (reference), sub (subject), progm (programme).
- Use of acceptable symbols for example, @ (at the rate of), = (equal to), e.g. (for example), viz (namely).
- Be clear and concise.
- Use bullets or numbering.
- Arrange the content in a logical sequence.
- Review the notes in 24 hours.

Don'ts of Note-taking

- Write each and every word.
- Use long sentences.
- Lose the focus on the main idea.

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

Communicate to be a better performer. Talk to yourself and your confidant to learn more about you.

- Divide the class into small groups. Start a story with a sentence. Every group takes a turn and adds a new sentence. Every time, one of the group members has to repeat the story before adding a new sentence. Depending on the number of groups and the availability of the time, the length of the story can be decided.
- Select a group of students. Make them stand in a line. Decide a verbal or non-verbal message. The message can be serious or funny. Share the message with the first student. The first student should convey the message to the next student. The other students from the group should not see this process of communication. The second student shares the message with the third student. The same process is repeated until everyone in the group receives the message. The last person is to share the message with the entire group. The first student or the teacher, then shares the original message. In this process, however, those who have conveyed the message can be the silent observers. This would help them understand how distortion occurs in communication.
- Divide students into groups. From each group, a student is given a picture with certain shapes drawn on it. It would be a good idea to draw small shapes in a big shape or design. The selected student should describe the design and the other group members are to draw the picture. For clarification, they may be allowed to ask questions. The same process is repeated with the second group. Once, every group has performed the task the pictures are shown to the class. The team with the most similar picture is the winner.

18.3.2 Remember

According to Bloom's Taxonomy, Remember is the first stage of learning. The other stages include understand, apply, analyse, evaluate and create. However, if a person is not good at the first stage, he or she cannot accomplish the higher stages of learning.

To remember

- **Connect:** Associate meaning to your learning, i.e., attach factual knowledge to every input. In other words, make your learning concrete. Whatever you learn, connect with something. Connections make remembering easier.
- **Apply:** In addition to long-term memory and short-term memory, there are active memory and passive memory. Depending on the usage of the things learnt, you can make it a part of either active memory or passive memory. To make it a part of your active memory, utilise your learning whenever and wherever possible.
- **Recollect:** Whenever possible try to recollect whatever you have learnt. Frequency can be decided by keeping the relevance and importance of the learning in mind. Recollecting can be done by recalling information mentally or sharing the same with others.

"Just remember, you can't climb the ladder of success with your hands in your pockets"

—Arnold Schwarzenegger

REMEMBER

Do You Know This?



"I hate it when I walk into a room and forget why I went in there. Especially when it's the bathroom".

Short-Term Memory Loss Support Group



"Good evening. You're probably all wondering why you just walked into this room."

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

Remember to be a better performer. Play this game of memory train

1. The game begins with a student saying a statement: For example, 'Communication is of two types.' The next student repeats the phrase and adds an additional item or completes the sentence. For example, 'Communication is of two types namely, verbal and non-verbal. The game continues, with each player by saying the phrase or sentences, stated

by the previous players and adding a new one. Players get eliminated if they make a mistake. The person who can able to repeat the content for the longest time wins.

(Depending upon the need or interest or level of the students, topic and style can be chosen.)

18.3.3 Assess

It is not enough to learn something. Equally important thing is to monitor or review if whatever is being learnt is appropriate and in the right direction. There can be self-assessment, peer-assessment or assessment by a teacher. The assessment allows a learner to see if the learning is appropriate and it helps a teacher see if the teaching is effective.

One should do a self-assessment of his or her learning style. An understanding of one's learning style can help one decide learning strategies.

To assess

- Know your personality.
- Be clear about your likes and dislikes.
- Do constant monitoring of your behaviour.
- Observe other's likes and dislikes about you.

Do You Know This?

'Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.' Albert Einstein.

"Prove yourself to yourself not others"

—Anonymous



18.4 COGNITIVE OR THINKING SKILLS

The statement, 'An idea can change your life' is known to everyone. Ideas are the result of thinking ability. The ability to think has enabled human race to achieve unimaginable things. It is the ability to think that helps a person to plan, implement, reflect and revise. Every human being has this capacity. It is only the thing that some are conscious about it others are not some use them, others do not. The world where machines are taking place of humans, it is the thinking skills that would help one survive. Various thinking skills are listed below.

- Creative thinking
- Critical thinking
- Negotiation skills

"No problem can withstand the assault of sustained thinking"

—Voltaire



18.4.1 Creative Thinking

An ability to have innovative ideas or unusual thoughts is all about being creative. Simply stated, it is thinking outside the box. Today, organisations value a person who has the ability to develop new and imaginative ideas, concepts and plans.

Creative thinking, like any other thinking, is a systematic process. Following steps facilitate the process:

1. Identify the challenge to be addressed.
2. Collect necessary information for a better understanding of the causes of the challenge.
3. Pin-point the cause/s that created the challenge.
4. Generate ideas, without bothering much about being acceptable to others.
5. Evaluate the possibilities of executing it and possible outcomes.
6. Implement the best and the most feasible one.

To develop creative thinking

- Look for possibilities, not any particular answer.
- Be impractical, if required.
- Look at the things in a different way.
- Break the established pattern.
- Develop new combinations.
- Accept even seemingly absurd ideas.

Do You Know About These Creative Solutions?

Kanpur Ordnance Factory's Creative Solution to the Problem of Anti-static Shoes

In the Kanpur Ordnance Factory's ammunition manufacturing unit, workers were required to wear special anti-static shoes. This was to prevent gun powder from being set off from static electricity when people walked around. These shoes were delicate and not designed to withstand everyday usage. Needless to say, these shoes were super costly too.

Nonetheless, the worker still wore them outside the factory, walked on streets, rode bicycles, etc. This withered the shoes easily. The Ordnance Factory was incurring a huge cost replacing these shoes.

Being a government factory, with the employees protected by unions, the management of the factory felt very helpless in correcting the situation. In spite of the repeated reminders, then pleading and finally multiple warnings, there was no change in the behaviour of the workers.

A committee was set up to come up with a solution. After much thought, one of the members suggested that the next order for the shoes should be like, order all the right shoes in black and all the left shoes in white. No one will dare wear the contrasting pair of shoes outside in public.

Problem was solved. Compliance happened. Simply brilliant, isn't it?

A creative door closer made with the help of a water bottle.



My #whatsappwonderbox is filled with examples of modest, but out-of-the-box thinking applied to everyday problems. This person spent just ₹2 to rig this door closure versus ₹1500 for a hydraulic one! How do we channel this creativity so that we move from Jugaad to Jhakaas!

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

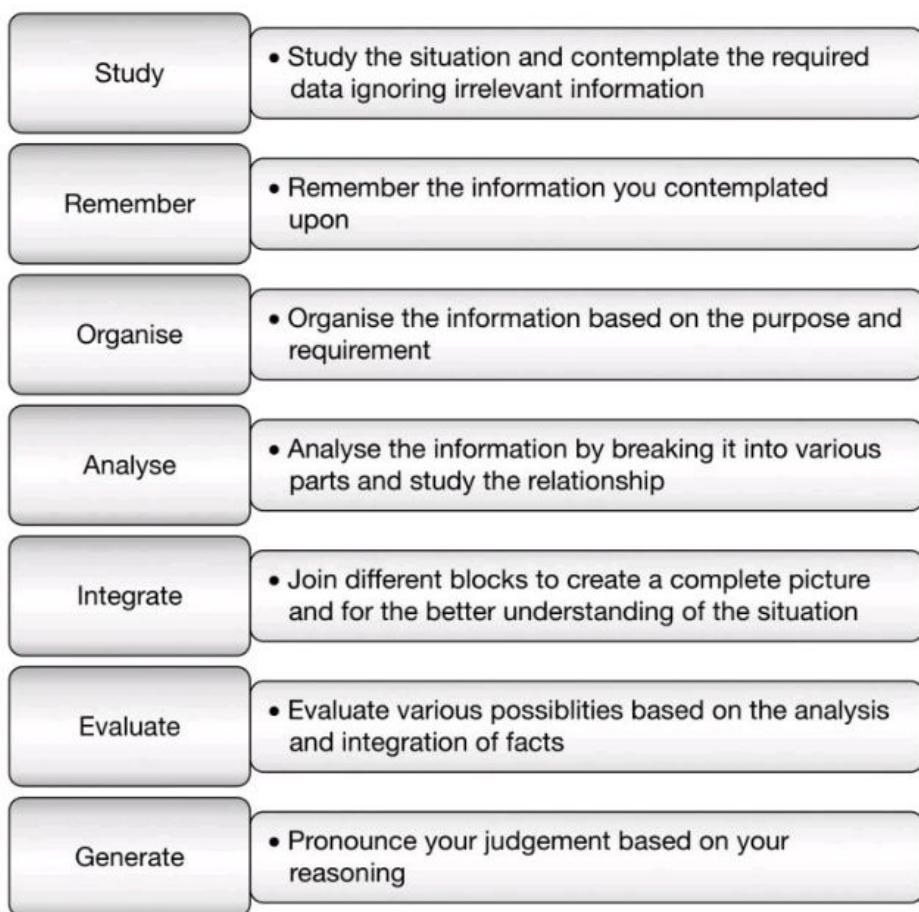
Do creative thinking to be a better performer.

1. Have you noticed any creative solution to a problem? Share the story with the class.
2. Divide the class into small groups. Ask them to identify and share a problem (academic, societal etc.,) in the class. Each group has to select a problem and brainstorm it to propose a creative solution. A student may be asked to prepare a write-up about the entire process and its conclusions.

18.4.2 Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is an ability to process information, study the situation, make connections, solve problems and take decisions. Thinking skills are the cognitive ability of our mind. In critical thinking, a person makes a decision or derives a conclusion based on the data or information available to him. It is all about evaluation or judgement. One should follow the given process to do critical thinking.

EXHIBIT 18.3 Process of Critical Thinking



To develop critical thinking

- Be a part of project based learning.
- Work in collaboration.
- Develop HOTs. (Higher Order of Thinking Skills)
- Think about alternative solutions or possibilities in various situations.
- Grab the opportunity to organise various curricular, co-curricular, extra-curricular activities.
- Don't accept everything. Raise legitimate questions.
- Look for evidence.
- Be more logical than emotional.

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

Do critical thinking to be a better performer.

Engineering Education in India

While Prime Minister Narendra Modi promotes Make in India mission and the country looks forward to reaping the advantages of demographic dividend, quality of engineering education is a big question mark as far as employability of the students is concerned.

Ideally, that is the current status and not the situation. The next step involves identifying the factors that have created obstacles and suggesting measures that could be used to solve this issue.

The class can be divided into small groups. Each group would decide its leader. Each group would have a piece of paper. Each group would list three factors which they believe as causes of trouble. Every group then shares the factors with other groups. The class then prepares a common list arranging them in the order of most serious to the less serious one. Each group selects a problem and discusses the solution to the problem. The solution is then shared with the other groups.

18.4.3 Negotiation Skills

Negotiation is bargaining (give and take) process between two or more parties (each with its own aims, needs and viewpoints) seeking to discover common ground and reach an agreement to settle a matter of mutual concern or resolve a conflict. The definition makes it clear that the art of negotiation requires a number of other skills like the abilities to plan, strategise, persuade as well as influence.

“Negotiation and discussion are the greatest weapons we have for promoting peace and development.”

—Nelson Mandela

Importance of Planning, Strategising, Persuading and Influencing in a Negotiation

The 16th President of America, Abraham Lincoln, has famously said, ‘Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.’ Planning and strategising are thus acts of sharpening the axe in a negotiation. The battle is half won if things are properly planned and strategised. Planning and strategising mean ‘thinking in advance what is to be done, when it is to be done, how it is to be done and by whom it should be done’. Thus planning works as a bridge between where we stand and where we wish to reach and strategy is the course of action that we will take to cross the bridge.

Persuasion is an ability to influence people by changing belief, attitude and mind set. Persuasion is very vital as it helps a negotiator turn the table on his or her side by making him or her understand and accept your stand. Persuasion can be done by either pulling or pushing the client. In pulling style, you get the maximum information about your counterpart; understand his **Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement**, i.e., BATNA.

The term BATNA was originally used by Roger Fisher and William Ury in their 1981 book entitled ‘Getting to Yes: Negotiating Without Giving In.’ It is defined as the most advantageous alternative that a negotiating party can take if negotiations fail and an agreement cannot be made. In other words, a party’s BATNA is what a party’s alternative is if negotiations are unsuccessful. This is likely to result in a mutually beneficial agreement and such negotiations are preferred when both the parties wish to enter into a long-time partnership. Pull style of persuasion works better when both the parties share balanced power. When one party is more powerful than the other party, push style of persuasion is usually at work.

Last but not the least, one should not only use statistics and facts during persuasion but also augment their effect with stories, narratives, examples, metaphors and analogies. Also, this helps connect emotionally with your counterpart.

To Succeed in a Negotiation

Know Your Counterpart

Preparation is one of the most effective negotiation strategies. Preparation begins with learning all the possible things about the person with whom you are going to negotiate. Learn about his or her skills and past successes and failures. Look at the situation from your counterpart’s perspectives too. For the time being, look at the situation from your counterpart’s perspective. This insight would help you plan and strategise your negotiation.

Separate the People from the Problem

During the negotiation, one should focus on the situation and not the people involved in the problem. Dislike the situation but not the person. If the problem is focused upon, the solution can be sought but if a person is focused upon the problem gets complicated.

Learn to Respond, Do Not React

Reacting is a tactless act. The person who reacts not only missed key points but also cannot take the consequences of the act into consideration. It is an immediate and thoughtless expression of your likes or dislikes and approval or disapproval. On the other hand, responding is a

thoughtful act. It is logical feedback in the communication. One who responds, always studies the situation and understands the possible causes of the occurrence. The response makes the other party feel better whereas reaction aggravates the situation. The reaction causes anger, fear and distrust whereas response generates faith and builds trust.

Be Assertive, Not Aggressive

Patience is a key for every successful negotiation. Aggression makes you to lose your focus and blocks your cognitive abilities. It may also hurt the self-esteem of the opposite party. Hence, one should remain calm and express the options assertively. Assertive communication has a better chance to convert the other party to your thinking.

Be a Good Listener

Listening is the quality of winners and effective communicators. Also, in negotiation, one should focus more on listening. 80/20 rule is worth trying, i.e., during 80 per cent of the time, one should play the role of a listener and 20 per cent of the time should be used in expressing his or her thoughts. If you listen well, you will have a better understanding of your counterpart.

Create a Win-Win Situation

It is always dangerous to have ‘all or nothing approach’. You should give your counterpart the impression that you do have his or her interest in the mind. A successful negation is a mutually beneficial deal for both the parties.

Understand All Your Options

Before entering into any negotiation, it is necessary to learn all the acceptable options. This clarity would help you know your bottom line and help you decide when to back off or move further. It is always good to keep multiple options ready. If plan A does not work, there should be plan B or C.

Be Trustworthy

Trust is at the root of every successful deal. Ensure that your communication builds trust. Everything would collapse if your counterpart develops distrust. Everyone would like to get benefitted. Hence, it is to be ensured that you are able to convince him or her that you are not taking any disadvantage of the situation.

Avoid Resistance

It is not always possible that your counterpart agrees with everything that you suggest. Whenever your counterpart takes a stand, avoid making him or her to feel that you consider him or her wrong or illogical. Don’t try to prove that him or her wrong, instead, try to prove yourself right. Once, both the parties start defending their stands, the negotiation is likely to fail as it becomes a question of ego. Instead of the problem, people become more important. Roger Dowson, the author of ‘Secrets of Power Negotiating’, advises to use the Feel, Felt, Found (3F) formula to diffuse the competitive spirit. For instance, if you are selling something, and your prospective buyer says, ‘Your price is way too high,’ don’t argue. Instead of this, say, ‘I understand exactly how you feel about that. Many other people have felt exactly the same way as you do when they first hear the price. When they take a closer look at what we offer, however, they have always found that we offer the best value in the marketplace.’

RECAP

Emotional or Personal Skills	<p>They are the one's ability to identify and control emotions and behaviours. They help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain positive relationships. • Make responsible decisions. • Solve challenging situations. • Set and achieve positive goals. <p>Some of them are an individual's ability to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change as per the need and adapt. • Grow amidst challenges. • Persist in spite of setbacks. • Prioritise to remain focused. • Relate with friends and family members to survive and succeed. • Dream to envision and be able to deliver.
Interpersonal or People Skills	<p>They are one's abilities to make and maintain relations as well as express oneself in an effective and amiable manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate and interact with others. • Enjoy better relationships at home and workplace. • Increase team and organisational productivity. <p>Some of them are an individual's ability to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to others actively. • Speak effectively. • Read the text efficiently. • Write the content perfectly and precisely. • Remember the information accurately. • Assess one's ability sincerely.
Cognitive or Thinking Skills	<p>They are one's abilities to process thoughts and make a decision. They help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decode the complexities of the problem. • Develop problem solving abilities. <p>Some of them are an individual's ability to make decisions using</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking which requires an objective analysis and evaluation of a situation. • Creative thinking which requires a fresh perspective and out of box thinking. • Negotiation which aims at reaching a compromise or an agreement avoiding unnecessary dispute or argument.

DO YOU KNOW THIS?

- ‘In negotiation, patience is the biggest virtue, followed closely by decency,’ says Harsh Goenka. ‘We have had several acquisitions over the last two decades and in all these, the spoken word was more important than the written document. I always look to find where the value lies not only for me but also for the other side.’ – Harsh Goenka, Chairman, RPG Group.
- ‘The biggest barrier to good negotiation is ego. When people who have never seen each other before face off in a room, it can be difficult. You have to take some time initially to get to know the other side.’ – Mukul Kasliwal, Chairman, MW Corporation.
- ‘The Japanese are process driven, so you have to be patient. Indian promoters who try to accelerate things while negotiating with them usually fail. Americans are comfortable with a bottom line approach. They don’t mind hearing bad news on certain issues. You can be direct. But ultimately, everybody is working towards striking a good deal.’ – Zia Mody, Indian Corporate Lawyer and Business woman, an Authority on Corporate Merger and Acquisition Law.
- In April 2011, Apple filed a lawsuit accusing Samsung of copying the ‘look and feel’ of the iPhone when the Korean company created its Galaxy line of phones.

Samsung countersued Apple for not paying royalties for using its wireless transmission technology. The number of patents under dispute skyrocketed. The two companies repeatedly accused each other of copying the appearance and functions of their smartphones and tablet devices.

Later on, the companies showed some willingness to compromise in an effort to avoid going to court: at the California court’s suggestion, they cut the number of disputed patents in half. But even as the CEOs sat down at the table for their mediation, which was urged by the court, Apple filed a motion asking the presiding judge to bar the sale of Samsung’s Galaxy Tab 10.1 on the grounds that the tablet was designed to ‘mirror’ Apple’s second generation iPad.

As both the sides had said that they hoped to avoid a legal battle and the fact that Samsung was one of Apple’s biggest suppliers, the companies had a strong incentive to move beyond their dispute and build on their on-going partnership. Yet, the two day mediated talks between the CEOs in late May ended in an impasse, with both sides refusing to back down from their arguments. The suit later went to trial twice, with Apple ultimately winning more than \$409 million.

This case study proves that such negotiations are less likely to succeed when the parties become grudging participants instead of engaging actively in finding a solution. When negotiators feel they have spent significant time and energy in a case, they may feel they have invested too much to quit.

Moreover, the longer they spend fighting each other, the more contentious and uncooperative they are likely to become. The lesson is that when a business dispute arises, you should always do your best to negotiate or mediate a solution before taking it to the courts.

A Self-Assessment Activity: Explore and Introspect

Negotiate to be a better performer.

- Students wish to organise some extra-curricular activities. However, the principal or management is hesitant in granting permission in view of certain challenges. A meeting is arranged between the members of the Student Council and the Heads of various departments in the presence of the principal or representative teachers. Do the necessary negotiation for the mutual benefits of both the parties.
- It is compulsory to have 80 per cent attendance in every semester. Lack of 80 per cent attendance leads to the detention. Students wish the institute to change the policy. A meeting is arranged between the members of the student council and the heads of various departments in the presence of the principal. Do necessary negotiation addressing the concern of both the parties.

To sum up, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) does offer a brighter future but cut-throat competition, unemployment, lack of job security, etc., trap everyone in the mad race. However, here knowledge, understanding and apt use of life skills help one survive the stress and succeed.

EXERCISES

1. Discuss various attributes that can help a person in self-development and self-assessment?
2. Define emotional skills. Illustrate any three which you think you need to develop the most?
3. What are the interpersonal skills? Discuss the role of communication in the development of interpersonal skills.
4. List cognitive skills and discuss any one of them in detail.
5. Differentiate between creative and critical thinking? How can one enhance the faculty of critical and creative thinking?
6. What is negotiation? Discuss the importance of planning, strategising, persuading, etc., for a successful negotiation?
7. Explain the techniques that one should follow to be successful at a negotiation.

Part G

Value Education

19

Ethics in Engineering

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the learner should be able to

- state the meaning and the significance of studying ethics.
- illustrate the scope of engineering ethics.
- practice the steps to resolve ethical challenges.
- use various approaches to resolve ethical dilemmas in the engineering profession.
- discuss ethical and unethical practices with reference to engineering.
- explain the concept of corporate social responsibilities.

19.1 INTRODUCTION

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that explores the issues like ‘How should people live?’ and ‘What are the right or wrong actions in a particular circumstance?’ Basically, ethics address the dilemmas concerning human morality and try to define the dichotomies between good and evil, right and wrong, fair and unfair, virtue and vice, etc.,

‘Ethics is not definable, is not implementable, because it is not conscious; it involves not only our thinking, but also our feeling.’

—Valdemar W. Setzer.

The concept of ethics varies across persons and cultures. Hence, instead of understanding about ethics, it is better to get clear between ethics and ethical behaviours.

- Ethical behaviour is not what everyone does. For example, using organisational resources for personal use.
- Ethical behaviour is not what is acceptable in a particular society. For example, Nazi’s hostile attitude towards Jews or White People’s treatment of the Black.

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- Ethical behaviour is not always the same. What is right in one situation may be wrong in another. For example, a soldier fighting with a terrorist and a doctor feeling the need of euthanasia for a patient.
- Ethical behaviour should not be linked with religion. For example, segregation based on cast and creed.
- Ethical behaviour does not mean following laws. For example, Gandhiji's Civil Disobedience Movement.

In layman's words, ethics are the standards of professional behaviour, the values and responsibilities that are fundamental for a particular profession. Standards and responsibilities vary with the profession but basic moral values remain the same. They are honesty, integrity, faithfulness, responsibility, etc.,

Ethics govern one's conduct and guide one to make morally correct decisions with respect to that profession. They clarify what one ought to do. However, situations do not remain as same as the ethical principles. Fundamentally, ethical principles include the consideration for others which is founded on well-thought-out reasons. Such considerations are others' right to life, right to freedom, right to privacy, right to progress, etc,. These standards are supported by consistent and well founded reasons. To put it simply, depending on the situation, one should use his or her discretion, assess the relevant factors and choose the most appropriate course of action.

Ethical studies are divided into three broad branches and they are described below.

1. **Meta-ethics:** This branch of ethics explores the scope and status of moral values. It tries to clarify about moral values, understand the source and foundation of moral values and also its perception by various people.
2. **Normative ethics:** This branch defines the moral standards which standardise the right and the wrong. It is based on the philosophy that suggests to do what you wish others to do with you in a particular situation.
3. **Applied ethics:** Applied ethics analyse a specific situation and address moral dilemmas. The criteria and considerations differ according to the situations. Applied ethics covers fields like business ethics, military ethics, bioethics, political ethics, research ethics, engineering ethics, etc.,

Ethics in engineering are concerned with what a person is obligated to do in a specific situation or the domain of action in the world of engineering.

Martin and Schinzinger in their book 'Ethics in Engineering' define ethics as following.

- The study of moral issues and decisions confronting individuals and organisations involved in engineering.
- The study of related questions about moral conduct, character, ideals and relationships of peoples and organisations involved in technological development.

According to Beck, ethics are ‘The universal practical philosophy dealing with the intrinsic goodness found in most of the actions’.

In the view of Richard William Paul and Linda Elder, ethics are a ‘Set of concepts and principles that guide us in determining what behaviour helps or harms sentient creatures’.

In the word of bioethicist Larry Churchill, ‘Ethics, understood, as the capacity to think critically about moral values and direct our action in terms of such values, is a generic capacity’.

In short, the understanding about ethics can be summarised as follows.

- Ethics are the study of moral issues and decisions related to one’s way of dealing with a situation, character, principles and relationships in one’s profession.
- Ethics are the practice of righteousness observed in the deeds.
- Ethics are the ability to distinguish right from wrong and choosing to do right.
- Ethics are the ability to decide the most appropriate course of action from the appropriate ones.
- Ethics are the guidelines which helps one to decide what to do in a particular situation.
- Ethics are an individual’s capacity to reason the situation critically to take a moral decision.

19.2 MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ETHICS

‘To be or not to be’ is a natural phenomenon in every profession. However, it is more evident in a dynamic and progressing profession like engineering. Knowledge about the ethical code of conduct can be a guide and reference for a profession in day-to-day decision making. When one has knowledge about the standards of professional conduct, he or she can relate it with the organisation’s mission, values and principles to resolve ethical dilemmas. Generally, ethics can accomplish the following things.

ED Jaffe and A Tsimerman, in their study, revealed that the tendency of the Russian managers compromising one’s ethics for self-interest is because of the failure of appropriate ethical education.

- Shape our organisation, society and business.
- Mould our relations with family members, colleagues, countrymen, etc,
- Establish the norms and laws of behaviour.
- Guide a professional in fulfilling his or her duties in a fair manner.

Based on the ethical framework, a particular organisation follows certain practices in manufacturing and marketing policies. Based on the ethics, an organisation provides a certain type of quality, features and standards in their products. The same framework also works in customer care policies. Being ethical helps an organisation in many ways. Ethical practices help an organisation in the following ways.

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- Attract new customers and clients as well as sustain the old ones leading to the growth of the business.
- Retain the employees for long which results in capacity building.
- Reduce labour cost and enhance productivity.
- Motivate the qualified, skilled and ethical employees to join the organisation.
- Builds a positive work culture.
- Sustain the trust of the investors thus creating a win-win situation.

Talking at an individual level, a student should study ethics as they can accomplish the following objectives.

- Generate a greater scope of employability and promotability.
- Make a person less vulnerable in an untoward situation.
- Enable a person to be a good corporate citizen.
- Assist to develop a clarity about the process of ethical decision making.
- Build up the capacity of managing a complicated situation in future.
- Amplify reasoning and reflection skills leading to a better judgement.

Many times, it is not that a professional does not wish to exercise ethical frame of mind but he or she is not aware of what to do and how to do. Such ignorance is likely to lead to a wrong judgement which may have a extended negative impact. Education in ethics, thus, ameliorate the fulfilment of obligation and duties, facilitate in being fair and compassionate, train in respecting the rights of others and last but not the least, making one to contribute towards the construction of a better society.

19.3 SCOPE OF ENGINEERING ETHICS

Ethics are the guiding principles that help a professional to make a moral judgement in his or her profession. Engineering ethics encompass all the areas and the people are likely to be affected directly or indirectly by the activities in the engineering field. Thus, the scope of engineering ethics can be determined in the light of the roles and responsibilities of an engineer.

'If a man is called a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and Earth will pause to say, Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.'

—Martin Luther King Jr.

The general responsibilities of an engineer and scope of ethics are discussed below.

Ensuring the Safety and Welfare of the People

National Society of Professional Engineers (NPSE) in its lists of duties of an engineer states that, an engineer shall hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public. The basic aim of every engineering activity is to solve problems and make life more comfortable through innovations. However, it is equally important to see that one solution does not generate another problem or the safety of the end user should not be endangered in any manner.

To ensure the safety and welfare of the people, an engineer should carry out the following things.

- Go by the accepted standard while manufacturing or approving the design of a product.
- Not reveal any confidential information without prior consent or approval of the client or the organisation.
- Not engage in any dishonest act.
- Not be a party of any unlawful enterprise.
- Report about the violation of any such moral code of conduct to the appropriate authority.

For example, when it was found by Honda Cars India Ltd. that their cars (Jazz, City, Civic and Accord) had faulty airbags, they announced the recalls of all the affected cars for the replacement of airbag inflators. The replacement was carried out free of cost at all the Honda dealerships across India by communicating with the customers directly. In 2012, 41,580 such cars were taken care of.

Not only Honda but also the companies like Hyundai and Nissan went for the recall to fix the airbags. However, in 2010, Toyota was a big unethical failure as they betrayed their customers by ignoring safety concerns and delayed recall investigations to save money. (Adapted from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/10>)

Planning, Coordinating and Executing Engineering Project as Per His or Her Competence.

This responsibility implies that one should only venture into the area of one's competence. Just because one sees an opportunity in a particular area, one should not involve oneself in it. To plan, coordinate and execute a particular project, an engineer should carry out the following things.

- Acquire necessary information and knowledge before accepting any project or assignment.
- Do not approve any document or project about which you are not completely aware of.
- See that the people involved in the project have the necessary competence.

For example, the headquarters of Canterbury Television and other companies which are popularly known as CTV building was located in Christchurch Central City, in New Zealand. On 22 February 2011, the CTV building collapsed in the wake of the earthquake by claiming

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115 lives. The investigation revealed that, in 1986, Mr Harding, a civil engineer was employed by Alan Reay Consulting Engineers (ARCE). He did not have any experience in the analysis, design and construction of multistorey buildings. In spite of that, he was assigned this task and he accepted that too. The design was developed and submitted without any appropriate review. The fateful consequences of this unethical act were to be borne by the families of 115 people who were killed when the building collapsed.

(Adapted from: <https://www.engineeringnz.org>)

Being Objective and Truthful

People love to live a life of comfort and luxury. Hence, it is natural for them to try everything that they feel would make their lives cosy. It is expected that, while describing the features of their products, the engineers should be truthful and do not try to lure their customers through deceitful marketing or sneaky tactics. To be objective and truthful, an engineer should carry out the following things.

- Use relevant details and facts about a product.
- Express his true opinion about a technology or a technical product.
- Not issue any paid announcements or make any undue criticism.

For example, one of the largest US based oil corporations in the world, Halliburton, has its business to spread in over 80 countries. The company has been accused of overbilling the US army for food and oil supplies during the 2003 Iraq war. It is also said to have misled investigators by sending criminal notes on how to handle federal investigations to the related employees.

(Adapted from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/28/>)

Being Faithful and Accountable to the Client, the Organisation as Well as the Country One is Operating in.

An engineer is expected to be faithful and accountable as one unethical initiative or act affects lives of many directly and indirectly. Profit should never be the sole objective of a company or an individual. However, it is a customary practice by many companies to promote injurious products with misleading information that can be harmful to consumers or the environment, purely for the sake of improving the outcome.

To be faithful and accountable, an engineer should carry out the following things.

- Not be a party to any unethical practice carried out by the seniors or the organisation.
- Try to convince the seniors and one's organisation to follow laws and prescribed standards.

For example, a Japan based Takata Company that manufactures airbags for cars and supplies them to car manufacturers across the world.

However, Takata supplied faulty airbags to 19 different automakers from 2002–2015. This

resulted in deaths of many and caused injury to hundreds. When the real reasons got revealed, the company started facing investigation from everywhere. To settle various cases, company had to shell out a huge amount at various points of time and this legal battle ultimately made company file for bankruptcy. The company not only lost the credibility but also made their supplier to bear the brunt of their unethical practices.

Showing Earnestness and Sincerity

An engineer should make the utmost effort to attend the complaints as soon as possible to avoid serious damage to the property and public. If necessary action is taken in time, greater calamities can be avoided. To show earnestness sincerity, an engineer should carry out the following things.

- Manage the situation by being proactive.
- Address the complaints immediately.

‘... there was a confusion among irrigation department officials over under whose jurisdiction the dam comes, leading to no action.’

—Victim Abhijit Chavan, who lost his brother and other family members.

For example, in June 2019, the Tiware dam in the Konkan region of Maharashtra state burst at night amid heavy monsoon rains drowning around 7–8 houses and 4–5 families. 19 people were reported to have been killed. Locals claimed that around 6 months ago they noticed the cracks and informed the irrigation department about the same. However, the officials of the irrigation department ignored the warnings about the cracks and leakage in the dam.

Chiplun MLA Sadanand Chavan too confirmed the same in his statement, ‘After complaints from the villagers, I had inspected the dam a few days ago and noticed the cracks. I informed about it to the administration but officials did not act or carried out the shoddy job’.

Maharashtra water resource minister Girish Mahajan too accepted that locals complained about the cracks in the dam which was built around 14 years ago.

The question is: Could the tragedy have been avoided, had the complaints been heard of and the repairing work been carried out in time?

Being Honest and Morally Upright

Honesty and moral uprightness are the virtues of an ethical engineer. These virtues make one abide by the laws governing a particular domain. Being lawful helps one to earn creditability among clients, respect of competitors and admiration of authority. To act honestly and be morally correct, an engineer should carry out the following things.

- Not compromise with the principles of professions even amidst various challenges.
- Not indulge in any illegal activities.
- Not exploit employees.
- Offer due benefits to clients and employees.

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- Share the credit of every success with the team members.

For example, making employees work for long hours and underpaying them has become a common practice in the corporate world. In many companies, the working situations are stressful and the employees are subjected to mental and sexual harassment. Companies of the developed nation are found to hire sweatshops in third world countries for low-cost manufacturing due to the cheap labour. The situation in such workplaces has even led many to end their lives.

Reports stated that, iPhones were made by children who were forced to work in risky conditions, breathing in cancerous vapours, for 10 a day, 7 days a week at lower wages. Tiny quarters, bunk beds added to their misery. The condition in the manufacturer plant Foxconn was so miserable that employees started committing suicide to protest this unethical practice and the company had to install anti-suicide nets. However, the product is beautiful but the production process is unethical.

Being Concerned About Global Issues

Engineering is a kind of social enterprise. Engineering activities affect thousands of lives locally and globally. The impact of an engineering activity can be favourable to some whereas adverse to others. Thus, it is necessary to see that engineers take into account a broader picture. To exhibit concern for the people across the world, an engineer should carry out the following things.

- Use technology in making lives of millions of people better.
- Address the issues related to the basic necessities of people.
- Reduce global warming.
- Create eco-friendly products.

For example, Trafigura Group Pte. Ltd. headquartered in Singapore is one of the world's largest multinational metal and energy trading company. The company was to dispose of the toxic wastes in 2006. It was learnt from the leased ship of the company that, the activity was likely to cost 20 times the original price. The company decided to wait for someone to do the task for a lower price.

An inexperienced company named 'Tommy' accepted the job and illegally dumped the waste without appropriate processing at 12 different sites in and around Abidjan, the economical capital city of Ivory Coast in Africa. The act not only caused the death of more than 10 people but also made thousands of people sick. Based on the investigation, the company was fined over \$1 million for dumping the waste. The question is: Why should people pay the price for the unethical act of an individual or an organisation?

(Adapted from: <http://encyclopedia.uia.org> & <https://www.smallbusinessbonfire.com/>)

19.4 ACCEPTING AND SHARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Accepting and sharing responsibilities are the attributes of an ethical employee. A responsible employee is an asset to an organisation. Once a person is hired, the job description lists his or her responsibilities. An employee is said to have accepted the responsibilities when he or she either carries out the work on his or her own or coordinates a task whereas, sharing of responsibilities suggests that the individual is acting as a team member.

A responsible employee not only takes pride in his or her work but also he or she is ready to complete the task in the best possible manner by walking an extra mile. He or she never blames the circumstances or complains about the challenges. Instead, he or she is willing to take the ownership. Responsibility can be demonstrated by an employee by reaching in time, completing the task without compromising with the quality within the deadline and working for the larger goal.

In addition to the above-stated qualities, shouldering and sharing responsibilities calls for some other attributes as well and they are listed below.

1. Accountability.
2. Commitment.
3. Resilience.
4. Ownership.

EXHIBIT 19.1 Attributes of a Responsible Employee



"Accountability is an act of will." - Anonymous



"Commitment is what transforms a promise into a reality." - Abraham Lincoln



"Resilience is knowing that you are the only one that has the power and the responsibility to pick yourself up." - Mary Holloway



"When a team takes ownership of its problems, the problem gets solved. It is true on the battlefield, it is true in business, and it is true in life." - Jocko Willink

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1. **Accountability:** Accountability is one's readiness to accept the credit or discredit for the work done. An ethical employee is ready to share the credit and take the blame for the negative consequences. Accountability helps to build trust and team spirit among the employees. Being accountable is a conscious choice made with a positive mindset. An accountable employee works with complete integrity and honesty. Research proves that accountability leads to higher performance and higher performance leads to a greater satisfaction.

To instil the quality of accountability among others as well, one should make team members feel important and ensure that their opinion is counted. Their efforts should be recognised and appropriate incentives should be offered. An environment of trust should be created in the organisation so that, whenever any problem arises, the focus of everyone is on identifying the relevant solution and not the fault. Such an environment motivates everyone to give his or her best.

2. **Commitment:** Commitment towards one's work expects a person to be honest and dedicated. A committed person also knows how to manage time and prioritise his or her schedules and responsibilities. This can also be done by preparing a list of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results oriented and Time bound) goals.

To help others remain committed, a team member can be assisted in scheduling the tasks. It should also be seen that, an employee is not overburdened with excessive work or is not assigned the tasks he or she is not capable of.

3. **Resilience:** Being resilient means to be able to face the challenges, hardships and even setbacks boldly with an optimistic attitude. Resilience makes a person flexible and makes it easier for him or her to adapt to new situations. A resilient person is not scared of challenges and failures. He or she learns necessary lessons from the setbacks and gets ready to fight the new challenge with fresh vigour.

To develop resilience among the team members, one should build their confidence and help them push their boundaries. To do this, a person should be assigned the tasks that make him or her to come out of the comfort zone to help one to realise his or her potential and power.

4. **Ownership:** Taking ownership means stepping up and doing what is best for the business. When an employee takes the ownership, he or she accepts the results and the outcomes of the activity irrespective of their nature. One who takes the ownership knows the worth of each task irrespective of its type and magnitude.

To encourage others to take ownership, it is required that their morale is boosted by appreciating their efforts irrespective of the outcomes. Team members should be completely clear about their roles and responsibilities. It is a good idea to assign them the task and let them decide the strategies. The project head may just supervise and provide the necessary support.

Based on the above discussion, implications of accepting and sharing responsibilities can be summarised in the following manner.

Accepting and sharing responsibility is defined below.

- A conscious decision of a professional to make the thing happen.
- The readiness to be accountable.
- Making all the possible efforts to avoid any kind of negligence.
- Having the will power not to fall prey to temptation of any sort.
- Being committed to a cause.
- Facing challenges resiliently.

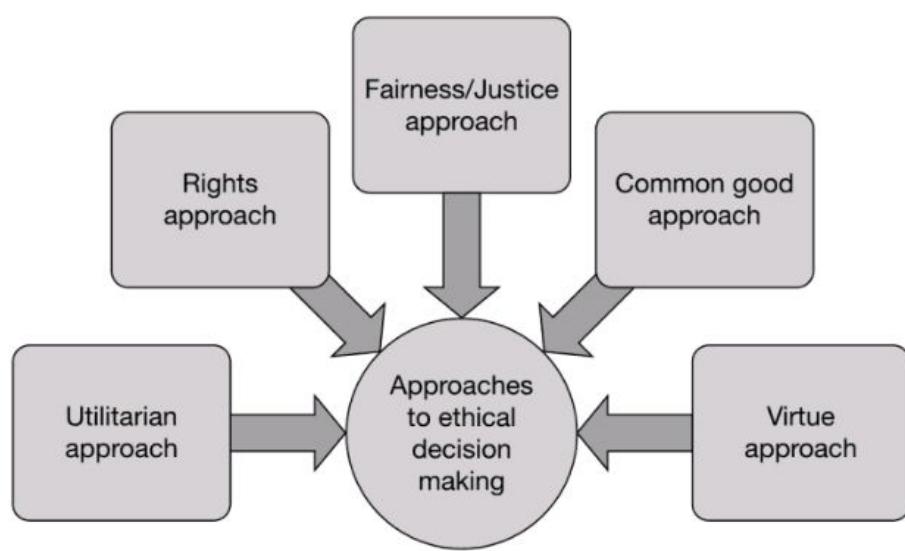
Last but not the least, accepting responsibility is taking care of explicit as well as implicit moral obligations of an assignment.

The willingness of an employee is to accept and share the responsibility which not only helps the employee but also the organisation. Efforts of the employee pave the path of progress for the company. On the other hand, following ethics using appropriate strategies help the well-wisher and the company to scale heights.

19.5 APPROACHES TO ETHICAL DECISION MAKING OR MAKING MORAL CHOICES

Ethical decision making is a complex process. Various approaches are available to make an ethical decision and moral choice. Depending on the need, any one or a combination of multiple approaches can be utilised to make an ethical decision.

EXHIBIT 19.2 Approaches to Ethical Decision Making



A brief explanation of these approaches are given below.

Utilitarian Approach.

As in its name, this approach takes into account the consequences of a decision in the light of the advantages and disadvantages which is likely to be caused to the stakeholders. While using the utilitarian approach, one should try to get answers to the following questions.

- What benefits will each course of action produce? To whom? Why? How? What would be the probable number of beneficiaries?
- What harms would each course of action produce? To whom? Why? How? What would be the probable number of beneficiaries?
- Which alternative will lead to the best overall consequences? Who would be the beneficiaries? What would be the probable number?

Use of the utilitarian approach helps the organisation or individual/s choose the option that is likely to produce the greatest benefits and the least harm.

Rights Approach

As signified by the term, while using this approach, a person is expected to take into account the rights of all the concerned parties. To consider various options available, the decision maker should have the knowledge of the rights (legal and moral) of all the parties. While using the rights approach, one should try to get answers to the following questions.

- What are the legitimate rights (contractual, legal and moral) of all the concerned parties?
- How well the (contractual, legal and moral) rights of everyone are respected or protected by the action?
- Which action would cause less infringement on the rights (contractual, legal and moral) of others?

Use of rights approach helps the organisation or individual/s choose the option that is likely to protect the most rights of both the parties. This approach believes that, it is necessary to respect everyone's moral rights.

Fairness or Justice Approach

In this approach, the core consideration is to ensure that the action is morally justifiable. It is ascertained that, there is not any kind of favouritism or injustice to anyone. The good and harm, if any, should be distributed equally. Reflection plays a major role in using this approach fairly. While using the fairness or justice approach, one should try to get answers to the following questions.

- Who are the stakeholders?
- What are the similarities and differences among them with respect to wages, positions, perks and opportunities?
- How is a particular decision going to affect them?

Use of fairness and justice approach helps the organisation or individual/s choose the option that is likely to treat everyone involved in the most impartial manner. This approach advocates

the philosophy of the development of all i.e., the weaker section should not feel left out and the stronger section should not feel neglected. The course of action should benefit everyone almost equally. While using the fairness approach, one should try to get answers to the following questions.

- Is my or our choice fair?
- On what grounds can I call it fair? i.e., How does it do justice to all the concerned people?

Adopting the fairness approach develops affability and builds comradeship among employees and the concerned people. A healthy working environment is created. As a result, people show their readiness to help each other which leads to the growth of the organisation as well as the individual.

Common Good Approach

This approach takes into account the impact of a particular choice on the community and society. An individual is viewed as a part of a larger community. Hence, before making any choice or decision, the impact of the same should be assessed with reference to the community, society and the country we wish to live in. In other words, the decision should sync with the common good of society. While using the common good approach, one should try to get answers to the following questions.

- In what way does a particular action benefit the society, country or even the human race at large?
- How many sectors (health, education, public safety, trade, commerce, etc.) will it benefit?
- Will it be a short-term or long-term benefit?

Use of common good approach helps organisation or individual/s choose the option that is likely to contribute to the development of the organisation that is envisaged in the vision and mission of the company. This approach believes that it is necessary to respect everyone's moral rights.

Virtue Approach

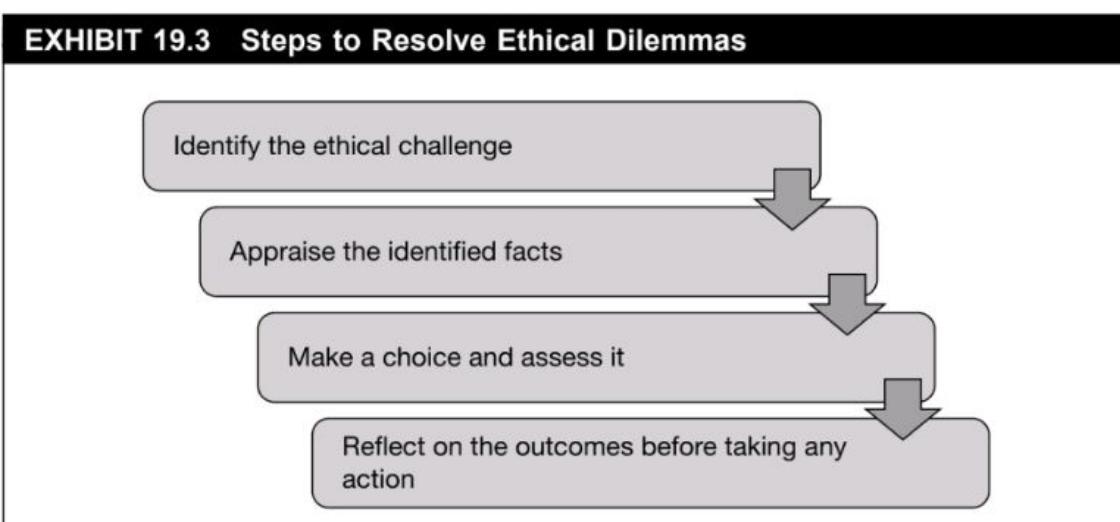
The goal of the virtue approach is the inculcation and advocacy of certain virtues. However, while using this approach, one has to take into account the cultural values and virtues of a particular society as well as the organisation. While using this approach, one should try to answer the following questions.

- How would a particular choice affect the morality of the concerned individual or a group of people?
- What are the likely, consequences of that effect?
- Will the choice make an individual a person, he or she wishes to be or should be?
- Will it contribute in the making of the desired enterprise?
- What does it reflect about us? Which virtues (diligence, self-reliance, compassion, honesty, loyalty, justice, etc.,) are highlighted through this decision?

Use of virtue approach helps organisation or individual/s choose the qualities that they would like to get reflected through their preferences.

19.6 RESOLVING ETHICAL DILEMMAS

Ethics are guiding principles or standards of behaviour that make a person aware the appropriateness of his or her action in certain situations. However, it is not always easy to make ethical decisions to resolve ethical challenges. One needs to weigh various considerations, do necessary exploration and follow an appropriate method to come to a suitable conclusion. The steps that one should follow while trying to resolve ethical dilemmas are discussed below.



Identify the Ethical Challenge

The prerequisite to resolve any challenge is to identify the challenge itself.

To identify the ethical challenge one should try to get answers to the following questions.

- i. What is the issue?
- ii. Which facts are available about the situation?
- iii. What is at stake?
- iv. Who is getting affected (in the company and outside the company) and how?
- v. What are the available alternatives?
- vi. What choice is to be made from? Good and bad, good and good, bad and bad.
- vii. Are there any legal implications? If yes, what are they?

Appraise the Identified Facts

Having identified the relevant facts, one should evaluate the alternatives and assess each one's pros and cons. This process of evaluation calls for the consideration of the following things.

- I. If you are to choose between good and bad, understand the parameters that help you to decide if something is good or bad.
- II. If the choice is between two goods, how can you say that a particular option is better?

- III. If the choice is to be made between two bads, how will you decide that a particular option is less harmful?
- IV. Will you be able to make your choices on your own or do you require to seek somebody's opinion or contribution?

Make a Choice and Assess It

Based on the adequate appraisal of the facts, one can make choice/s. However, before implementing, one should scan the situation by various approaches. One can assess the situation by applying various approaches in the following manner.

- I. Utilitarian approach: Which option is likely to cause the least harm and most good?
- II. Right approach: Which option takes care of the rights of everyone concerned in the best possible manner?
- III. The fair approach: Which option has a better scope for the fair treatment of all?
- IV. The common good approach: Which option benefits the larger section of the society?
- V. The virtue approach: Which options help me/us/organisation in showcasing and imbibing qualities that I/we/the organisation advocate for.

Reflect on the Outcomes Before Taking Any Action

Once the choices are assessed in the light of various approaches, one should reflect on the answers derived from the application of various approaches to the situation. To contemplate the outcomes, one should do a comparative study and decide how one can make the best of the situation. Here, one may work as a team for a better understanding of the possibilities. Following questions can assist one in contemplating the probable outcomes.

- I. List the pros and cons of your choice/s?
- II. Assess the possible outcomes from the perspectives of all the stakeholders.
- III. Take into consideration the professional, legal and social perspectives too.
- IV. Which choice benefits maximum to the deserving people?
- V. How can the adverse effect be minimised?
- VI. What precautions are required before implementing the choice?

In addition to following the above-stated process, one may be double sure by having affirmative answers to the following questions.

- I. Will I be comfortable telling others about my decision?
- II. Can I honestly say that I would be proud of the choice/s I have made?

If any of the questions makes you think while saying YES, think twice before making a final choice. It is better to be a little late than regret for the lifetime.

Thus, resolving ethical challenges requires deliberations and the correct mindset. There can never be one specific formula for every situation. The situation may remain the same but variance with respect to the organisation, time and people require a different stand.

19.7 RESPONSIBLE PROFESSIONALS AND ETHICAL CORPORATIONS

Tata Group

In November 2008, the Taj Hotel, one of the five star properties of Tata group became a target of a terrorist attack. The valour of our policemen helped to kill the terrorist involved but the damage of thousands of crores could not be avoided.

Ratan Tata, the then chairman astounded the world by his exemplary decisions and actions. The available information reveals that everyone affected in this brutal attack was offered compensation, including the pav bhaji wala that earned his bread and butter near the hotel.

Free education and medical facilities have been offered to the survivors and dependents at Tata Hospitals for the rest of their lives. The list includes 46 children who had to bear the brunt of the attack in one or the other way. A trust has been formed to help rehabilitate the families of the victim of the callous terrorist attack. Not only this, all the 80 families of the employees affected by the bomb blast were personally visited by Mr Ratan Tata and lakhs of compensation was offered. Reports also claim that Rs. 10,000 per month is offered to the policemen who were directly or indirectly involved with the attack.

Wipro Group

The WIPRO Group, headed by Shri Azim Premji, is also an epitome of ethical practices. Shri Azim Premji firmly believed that the rich should pay more taxes. His stand annoyed many capitalists when he supported the call for more taxes for the rich. To explain his stand, he even faced many interviews.

Under various initiatives supported by the WIPRO Group, approximately Rs 900 Crores have been spent in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh only to build school infrastructure and improve school education. The Wipro Group has also donated to many Government Hospitals in Tamilnadu.

There is also one famous instance about the strong advocacy of ethical practices by Shri Azim Premji. Many years ago, a trade union leader faked a bill for Rs 20. On discovery of this unethical act, he was immediately sacked. A strike ensued for 6 months. The company neither relented nor reinstated the employee. Reports have quoted Mr Premji saying that he would have preferred to rather close the office than reinstating such an unethical trade union leader. It took 6 months to the agitators to understand his stand and ultimately the strike was called off.

TVS Group

In Chennai, Sundaram Finance one of the companies of TVS Group has the practice of attending all its senior citizen customers in 10 minutes. Free financial advice is offered to people on tax related matters. Even though the interest is not very high as compared to the

In 2019, 128 companies are recognised across the world by American think tank Ethisphere Institute for exemplifying and advancing corporate citizenship, transparency and the standards of integrity. Tata Steel and Wipro are the two Indian companies that have consistently featured on this list.

other banks, the company has earned the trust and loyalty of its clients and has succeeded in collecting 2,000 crores rupees of fixed deposits mainly from senior citizens. Whenever the last day of the month falls on a holiday, the interest on such deposits is credited one day in advance. The organisation has earned the confidence of depositors and showed faith in borrowers. It has a huge network of borrowers who does the payment in due time knowing very well that TVS Group stands for Trust, Values and Service.

The TVS Group companies follow one more worthy of note practice. Each employee goes home with some kind of eatables be it a small biscuit packet, a packet of banana or potato chips, etc. This small gesture shows that the company cares and shares. Such kind of gestures have resulted in the fact that the third generation employees have been working for the company.

The Murugappa Group

Chennai based the Murugappa group of companies have the practice of not indulging into bribery or any other such act. Everything was done in a transparent manner. Every transaction, whether it is big or small is done through cheques or bank transfers (before the era of GST and e-transactions). Not only the organisation but also its employees are made to follow ethical practices. Income tax of the employees is deducted and paid to the government authorities on time.

Johnson & Johnson

Johnson & Johnson's Tylenol was the best selling, non-prescription pain reliever drug sold in the United States. In 1982, it is believed that an unknown person/s replaced Tylenol capsules with cyanide-laced capsules, resealed the packages and put them back on the shelves of pharmaceutical and food stores in Chicago. The poisoned capsules were consumed by innocent people and almost seven people had a horrible death. The investigation later made a connection between the deaths and the Tylenol capsules.

The company played an active role along with the media. A mass warning was issued and a massive recall of more than 31 million bottles of Tylenol was done. The tainted capsules were also discovered in some other pharmaceutical and food stores in Chicago. The replacement was offered to the people who had already purchased the pills. A reward was also offered to a person who could offer any lead to the individual or team involved in these murders. However, the perpetrators were never found out. The market share of the product plummeted to less than 8 per cent from more than 35 per cent.

Nevertheless, Johnson & Johnson came out with a new tamper-free protection method for their product. The company invested more than \$100 million, introduced price reductions and a new version of the pills that were slick, easy to swallow but harder to tamper with. The packaging protection soon became the industry standard and the pill too once again became the most favourite pain reliever drug.

(Adapted from: <https://www.pbs.org>)

19.8 UNETHICAL PRACTICES (COULD THE TRAGEDY HAVE BEEN AVOIDED?)

Volkswagen's Defeat Device

In September 2015, it was found by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), USA that the leading German car manufacturer Volkswagen had been violating the EPA norms. It was learnt that, many Volkswagen car had a defeat device in the diesel engines which would make the engine to change its performance while being tested. In other words, the device would help the engine to temporarily perform as per the standards prescribed by the EPA. The EPA could find approximately 4,82,000 Volkswagen diesel cars on the American roads that were emitting up to 40 times more toxic fumes than permitted. Even the manufacturer admitted that all over the world approximately 11 million cars were affected.

On account of this unethical practice, the company had to recall 8.5 million cars in Europe and 0.5 million cars in the US. Not only this, CEO Martin Winterkorn had to resign and the company was ordered to pay a \$ 2.8 billion fine for rigging the vehicles to cheat on the emissions tests.

(Adapted from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-34324772>)

Tragedy of the Rana Plaza building, Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Rana Plaza building in Dhaka, Bangladesh, housed 5 garment factories. On 24 April 2013, the building collapsed and killed more than a thousand people and caused injuries to more than 2500. Underpaid garment workers used to toil there to produce clothing for fashion retailers like H&M and Zara. On multiple occasions, the workers made complaints regarding the security of the building which were completely unheard by the authority. The attention of the authority was even drawn to the cracks that had developed on the lower floors of the building but that too was not paid any heed. The incident is considered as one of the worst industrial accidents. Despite the great losses, no compensation was paid considering the tragedy as an employer's liability only.

It was shared by the chief engineer that, the permit was obtained for a five storey building only. The extended three stories were completely illegal but that fact was completely ignored by the authority due to the owner's political connections.

(Adapted from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/> & <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics>)

The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

An industrial disaster of April 2010, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill occurred in the Gulf of Mexico. It was caused by the explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig. It is reported that, the technicians on the rig continued to drill in spite of the defective blowout preventer, faulty software that kept crashing their systems and the disabled emergency alarms. The tragedy

killed 11 employees and injured 17. Almost 5 million barrels of oil leaked into the Gulf of Mexico over 87 days.

(Adapted from: <https://www.britannica.com> & <https://en.wikipedia.org>)

19.9 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

As defined by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is ‘the continuing commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the community and society at large’. CSR is being responsible for the activities carried out by a conglomerate. These activities include manufacturing a reliable product, asking a fair price, keeping a reasonable profit, providing a fair wage to the employees and at the same time protecting environment, public health and taking care of other such social concerns.

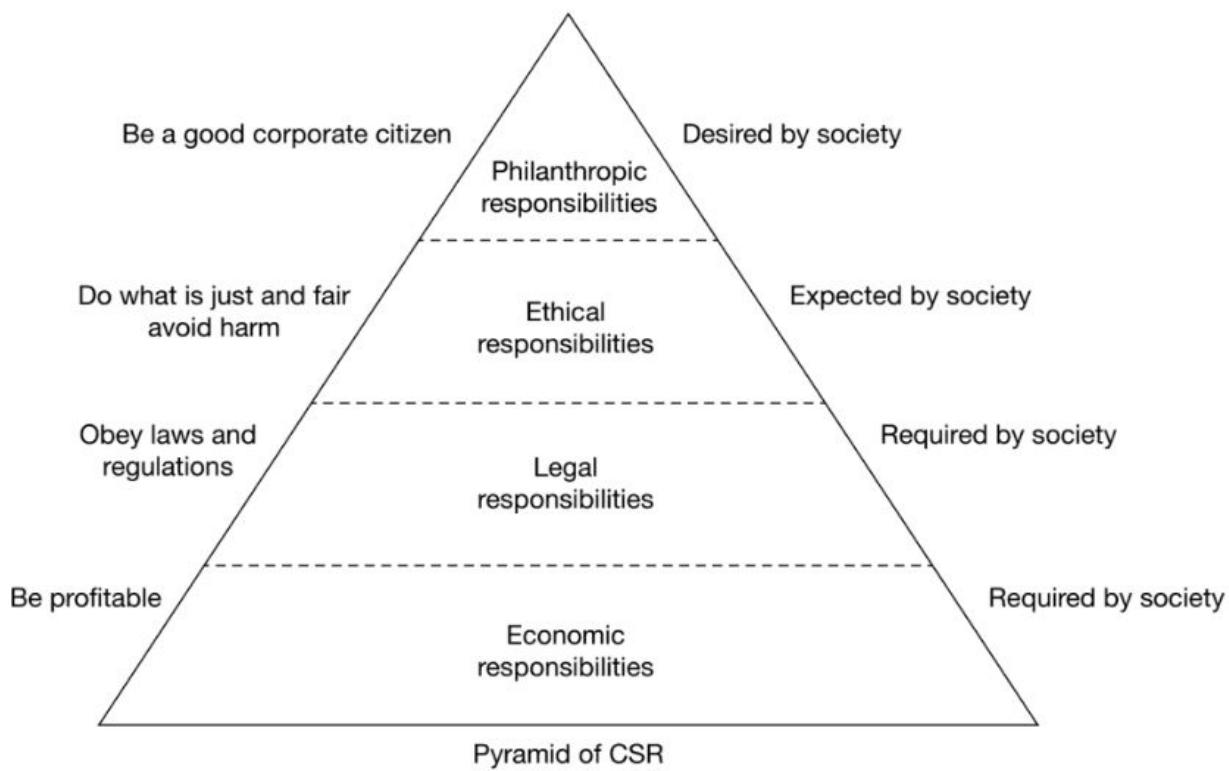
‘Every company has a special continuing responsibility towards the people of the area in which it is located and in which its employees and their families live.’

—JRD Tata.

Carroll divides corporate responsibilities into four areas and they are listed below.

- 1. Economic responsibilities:** This is the base of corporate social responsibilities. As suggested, it is expected that a corporation earns profit and helps all its stakeholders to prosper.
- 2. Legal responsibilities:** This is the second most important expectations from a corporation with an assumption that by abiding the laws a company would cause the least possible harm to the society.
- 3. Ethical responsibilities:** These are expected by society and a corporate is expected to do what is just and fair and should try to avoid the negative impact of its activities as much as possible.
- 4. Philanthropic responsibilities:** Philanthropic attitude of a corporation is desired by society. It is expected that a corporation through its various initiatives makes this world a better place to live. It is a kind of expressing one’s gratitude towards the world.

Initially, CSR was considered to be and limited to the philanthropic activities of a company. However, recent years have changed the perception of CSR. Corporations are expected to protect the environment and contribute to the social welfare. However, nowadays, CSR is accepted as an obligation of modern business. Today, all corporations have become socially responsible as they are involved in one or the other kind of social welfare activities.

EXHIBIT 19.4 Carroll's Pyramid of CSR

In India, CSR is mainly considered as a philanthropic activity. However, it has enlarged its reach. Not limiting itself to educational, research and cultural activities, it has recently expanded to community development activities too.

Some of the remarkable CSR initiatives are listed below.

- Coca-Cola devoted more than \$100 million dollars in research to reduce the energy consumption of the refrigerators that keep its beverages cold. This initiative would reduce the cost for the retailers and help reduce carbon emission too.
- A part of the IBM website is devoted in showing the use of its technology in improving the teaching and learning process. Videos, interviews and case studies are frequently shared in this regard.
- The ITC Group has generated livelihood opportunities for 6 million people through its various initiatives. One such significant initiative is the e-Choupal Programme. This initiative aims to help rural farmers in getting agricultural products through the internet. It covers 40,000 villages and approximately 4 million farmers. Their social empowerment programmes have helped at least 40,000 rural women in sustainable livelihood.
- Infosys, a leading software company's initiatives focus on providing quality education to its citizen, enhancing their IT skills and proficiency. They also sensitise people in the appropriate use of natural resources.

Thus, Corporate Social Responsibility is all about corporate houses managing the business processes to create a positive impact on society. They take care of the interests of society by undertaking the responsibility of the effect of their activities humans as well as environment.

Note: Many organisations have published code of ethics for engineers. Following links would help students in developing the insight in ethics with respect to engineering in general and their respective branches in particular.

1. NSPE: National Society of Professional Engineers Code of Ethics.

Sources: <https://www.nspe.org>

2. IEEE: The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

Sources: <https://www.ieee.org>

3. AIChE: American Institute of Chemical Engineers.

Sources: <https://www.aiche.org>

4. ASCE: American Society of Chemical Engineers.

Sources: <https://www.asce.org>

5. ASME: American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

Sources: <https://community.asme.org>

6. ASM: American Society for Metals.

Sources: <http://www.asm.com>

RECAP

Meaning of ethics	Norms governing one's conduct in professional life.
Significance of studying ethics	Assists one in making moral and ethical choices with respect to what to do, why to do and how to do in their profession.
Scope of engineering ethics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring the safety and welfare of the people. 2. Undertaking work as per one's competence. 3. Being objective and truthful. 4. Being faithful and accountable. 5. Showing earnestness and sincerity. 6. Being honest and morally upright. 7. Showing concern for global issues.
Accepting and sharing responsibilities	<p>A willingness to complete the task as per one's abilities and skills. This requires</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accountability. 2. Commitment. 3. Resilience. 4. Ownership.

Approaches to ethical decision or making moral choices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilitarian approach: Focuses on the positive utility and impact of the action. 2. Rights approach: Strives to respect the maximum rights of the concerned parties. 3. Fairness or justice approach: Tries to be fair to all the concerned parties. 4. Common good approach: Takes into account the larger impact of an action. 5. Virtue approach: Aims at cultivation and preservation of virtues advocated by the organisation.
Steps to resolve ethical dilemmas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of the ethical challenge. 2. Appraisal of the identified facts. 3. Choice and its assessment. 4. Reflection on the outcomes before the final action.
Corporate social responsibility	It is the responsibility of a company to invest in socially and environmentally relevant causes to interact and operate with the stakeholders.

EXERCISES

1. Define engineering ethics. Explain the significance of its study with reference to an organisation and an individual.
2. Write a note on the process of resolving ethical dilemmas?
3. Discuss various approaches which are helpful in making moral choices.
4. Violation of ethics in engineering causes great harm not only to the society but also to the party violating them. – Illustrate.
5. Read, understand and analyse the following case in the light of the ethics.

Two companies ABC and XYZ are negotiating some business deals through video-conference. At the end of the discussion, ABC Company switched off the video but missed to switch off their audio. The XYZ Company listened to their planning for the next phase of the negotiation in detail and eventually had an upper edge in the deal.

Was it ethical on the part of the XYZ Company to listen to the planning? Justify your stand?

6. Students may visit the given link for various case studies to sharpen their moral reasoning abilities.

Sources: <https://www.scu.edu>

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