

HS 210, LIFE SKILLS

MODULE 1

THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNICATION

The word communication originated from the Latin word “communicare” which means “to share”. It is the exchange of information between two persons or more. So communication is a social process. Generally, communication is exchange of ideas in an unstructured manner. The process of communication has four elements.

- Sender
- Message
- Medium
- Receiver

Sender is the person who wants to communicate

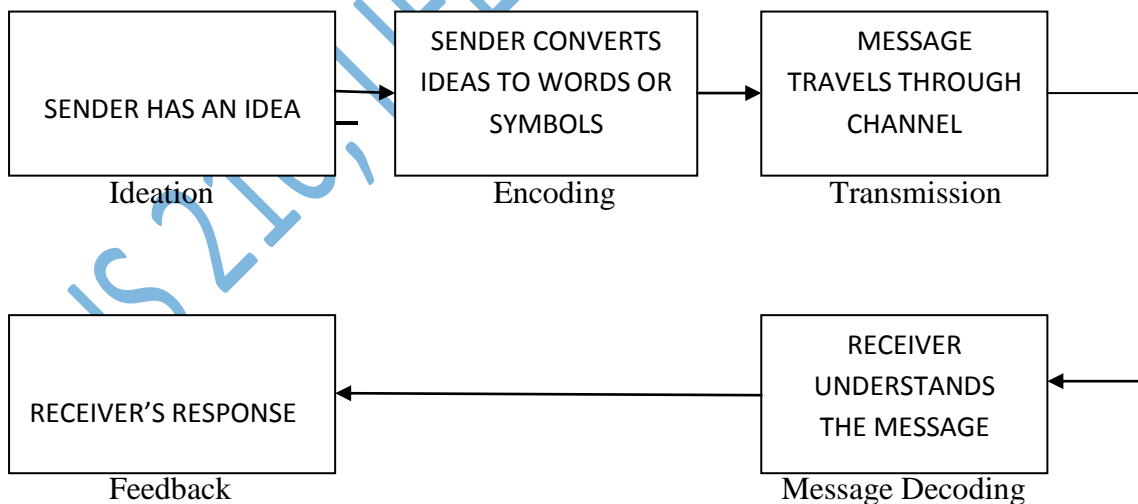
Message is the idea or content of communication

Medium is the use of language or symbols for communication

Receiver is the person who gets the message.



The process of communication can be represented as follows



NEED FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. To Maintain the Social Order

Communication is important in a society to understand its customs, beliefs, rules and regulations.

2. To Help Maintaining Harmonious Relationship with Others
3. To Ensure the Flow of Knowledge from Generation to Generation
4. To Share Love and Care to Develop a Family and Society
5. To Make and Maintain Effective Work Culture

LEVELS OF COMMUNICATION

1. Intrapersonal Communication

It is the communication happens within, i.e. a person speaks to himself. This takes place when a person thinks something serious to take an important decision, when analyzing a situation, et al.

2. Interpersonal Communication

It takes place between two persons where exchange of ideas happen. It can be planned or unplanned.

3. Group Communication

It happens in a group to discuss and finalise an outcome. It can be formal and informal in nature depending on the situation.

4. Public Communication

It is the communication by a sender to audience. Here, the sender is the leader of the communication process.

5. Mass Communication

It is the transmission of message to a large audience through print, visual and audio visual media. There will not be a direct contact between the sender and receiver of the communication. Radio, news paper and TV are the media used for the same.

CHANNELS OR FLOW OF COMMUNICATION

Information flows in an organisation both formally and informally. The interaction between different individuals working in a company takes place through different channels. On the basis of direction, communication can be divided into three namely i) **VERTICAL COMMUNICATION** ii) **HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION** & iii) **DIAGONAL COMMUNICATION**

1. Vertical Communication

It can be divided into two namely **downward** communication and **upward** communication.

a. Downward Communication

It moves from top to bottom i.e. from superiors to subordinates. The main function of this is providing direction and control.

Eg: communication from a General Manager of a company to Branch Managers. It includes notes, notices, e mails, face to face conversation etc.

a. Upward Communication

The main purpose of upward communication is to provide feedback on several areas of organisational functioning. It refers to the communication from subordinates to superiors.

Eg: a business report from a Branch Manager to the MD of a company. It promotes better working atmosphere within the organisation.

b. Horizontal Communication

The main objectives of horizontal communication are developing team work and promoting group behavior within an organisation. It takes place between professional groups or people working on same level. It is less formal and less structured than upward communication.

It can be carried out through informal discussions, management gossips etc.

c. Diagonal Communication

It is the product of modern changes in the management as a result of the growing need for equality in the organisation. It doesn't have any rigid rule to follow. It happens informally in a formal set up.

d. Grapevine Communication

It is an informal channel of business communication happens in an informal gathering. It is the most recent trend in corporate world to bring the work force to its maximum.

USE OF LANGUAGE IN COMMUNICATION

Language is a system of human communication (oral or written) involves the use of meaningful words, to be used by certain people belong to the same linguistic community. Even though we use body language, actions or graphics to communicate, language is very important to communicate effectively.

Language expresses **observation, thought, feeling** and **need**.

While selecting the language to communicate one should be careful about the following,

- A. The nature of the content whether it is complex or simple.
- B. Background or content
- C. Understand the receiver of the message
- D. The readiness of the receiver
- E. The purpose of the message

To make communication more effective, the following steps can be followed,

- A. KISS - Keep It short and Simple
- B. Use concrete and specific language
- C. Use simple words
- D. Deliver the message clearly
- E. Speak positively
- F. Maintain intimacy with the receiver

COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

A communication network represents the pattern of interaction between the different members of an organisation. Communication network is determined by the nature of organisation, number of persons included, flow of communication and the type of information.

1. Vertical Network

It is the communication happens between superior and subordinate. It is formal in nature and the feedback is fast.

2. Circuit Network

Messages and feedbacks are sent to and from two persons; not necessarily be superior and subordinate.

3. Chain Network

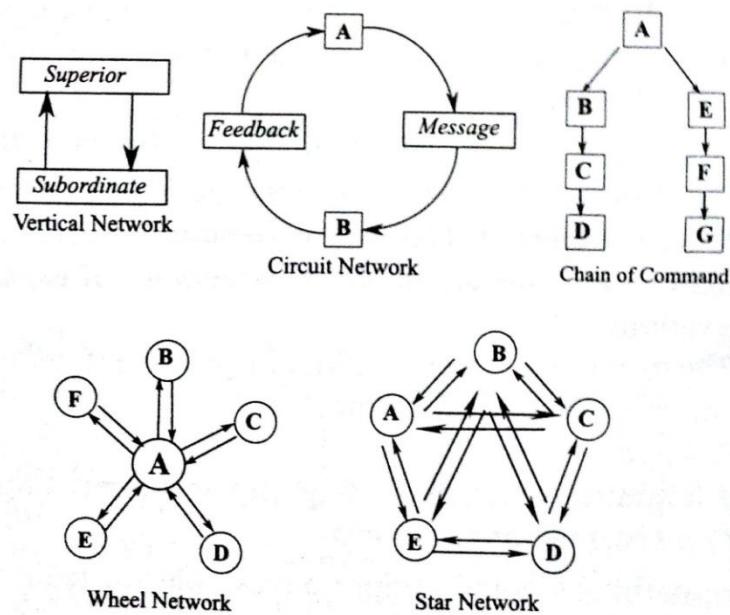
This has the downward movement of communication as a chain of commands to the subordinates.

4. Wheel Network

This is highly centralised. Everyone receives commands form the superior and the feedback is fast.

5. Star Network

In this all members communicate with each other and it is ideal for team communication.



BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

The word barrier means a thing that makes any trouble. There are different barriers to communication process also. We can classify the barriers as follows.

1) Physical Barriers

It includes personal physical barrier and barriers from the surroundings.

Personal barriers include inability to speak and hear, and hatred towards the subject and the speaker.

Barriers from the surroundings include noise, environmental discomfort and insufficiently insulated rooms etc.

2) Psychological Barrier

This is related to the mental stage of an individual. If a person is disturbed or distracted, it prevents the sender or receiver from giving attention to the message. This is termed as psychological barrier.

3) Semantic Barrier

It deals with the study of words, their meanings and use of proper words at apt contexts. Selection of wrong words, wrong sentence formation and ambiguous sentence can make communication ineffective.

4) Organisational Barrier

There are two basic types of communication in every organisation; namely formal and informal. Both are important. Too much informal communication may spoil the professional setup.

5) Interpersonal Barrier

Emotional reactions, positive or negative attitudes of sender and receiver, inattentive listening, wrong timing of message, etc create communication barriers and such can be termed as interpersonal barriers.

6) Cultural Barrier

Language, body language, mannerisms, etc bring cultural barriers since the workplace includes people from mixed cultural backgrounds.

MISCOMMUNICATION

It is the failure to communicate adequately. This can happen due to lack of clarity and failure in getting the message. Improper language use also results in miscommunication. Trying to convey a lot of information in a short span of time, high noise, distractions, language differences, etc are the other reasons.

NOISE

Noise is the external sound which prevents the effective communication. It can be physical or psychological.

Physical noise is related to the environment or medium which includes wind, noise of machinery, etc.

Psychological noise is related to the mind, which includes thoughts and emotions of the sender or receiver.

NOISE OVERCOMING MEASURES

1. Detect the source of noise and overcome it. This can be achieved by closing the doors and windows, reducing the speed of fans, switch off the machinery that makes noise, etc.
2. Raise volume
3. Use clear and understandable language
4. Listen actively

LISTENING AS AN ACTIVE SKILL

To make listening a skill and effective, the following methods can be adopted.

1. Avoid talking when the speaker speaks
2. Listen to the speaker carefully.
3. Be empathetic to the speaker
4. Listen to the ideas of the speaker, not just his words.
5. Be careful to non verbal messages including emotions and body language.

TYPES OF LISTENERS

There are majorly 4 types of listeners;

1. Detached Listeners

It is the one who doesn't feel involved in the process of communication. The listener may be bored or inattentive and the body language includes lack of eye contact, yawning, etc.

2. Involved Listeners

The listener is attentive and interested to listen. He/ she keeps eye contact and suitable body language.

3. Passive Listeners

The listener neither contributes actively to the communication process nor tries to understand the message.

4. Active Listeners

The listener fully participates in the communication process and gives maximum attention to the speaker. He has alert posture and eye contact.

TYPES OF LISTENING

1. Superficial Listening

In this type of listening the listener has little awareness of the contents he hears. The listener may ignore the spoken material by thinking that it is not meant for him and the points discussed are not worthy for him.

2. Appreciative/ Entertainment Listening

This is meant for enjoyment purposes. Listening to music and stories, jokes etc. are examples for this.

3. Focused Listening/ Listening to Specific Information

This is listening for specific information. This can be practiced to take decisions on a particular subject. Listening to radio programs, news items etc are examples for this.

4. Evaluative Listening

This type of listening is meant for evaluating somebody or some speech content. The listener analyses and interprets what he has heard and selecting the appropriate information. Examples include talks, classroom lectures etc.

5. Attentive Listening

This is known as the most important listening type. This type of listening demands the complete attention of the listener. This can be seen in GD, meetings and job interviews etc. The listener attends all the spoken materials.

6. Empathetic Listening

Empathetic listening is listening not only to what the speaker is saying but also to how he is saying that. It includes attending the feelings, emotions and state of mind.

The listener has to understand the body language of the speaker also.

7. Intensive Listening

It involves listening for details and appreciating the language form. It helps improving specific knowledge.

LISTENING FOR GENERAL CONTENT

This type of listening aims at getting a general idea of the total spoken material. The listener doesn't pay attention to all the minute points spoken by the speaker. The focus of the listener is to the content words from which he gets the overall idea of what is spoken.

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILL

Listening skill can be developed by following the given methods,

1. **Note Taking** : Writing the important points of the spoken material **while** listening to the speaker.
2. **Note Making** : Writing the important points of the spoken material **after** listening to the speaker.
3. **Ask Questions** : To get the unclear things clearly, ask questions to the speaker.

4. **Maintain Effective Listening Atmosphere**
5. **Prepare the Mind and be away from Psychological and Interpersonal Barriers.**

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LISTENING

Barriers to effective listening include factors such as external noise, unclear presentation, problems related to listening skill, etc.

The major barriers to listening are given below,

1. **Prejudice** : The ideas that the listener already has in his mind about the speaker and the topic of the speaker delivers. The listener thinks he knows what will be talked.
2. **Misunderstanding** : It happens due to lack of awareness, lack of interpretation skills and inability to listen properly to the speaker.
3. **Interruption** : Happens due to constant disturbances from outside. The listener cannot get the full content delivered by the speaker.
4. **Mental Distraction** : Happened due to the lack of concentration in listening to the speaker.
5. **Emotional Disturbances** : The listener becomes unable to listen to the speaker due to the disturbance of the mindset of the former.

SIGNIFICANCE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

1. Technical communication conveys scientific and other technical matters by appropriate diagram, vocabulary, etc.
2. Technical communication is **clear, able to use jargons (technical words), invokes logical thinking and reasoning.**
3. Technical communication is significant because it facilitates clear communication among professionals.

TECHNICAL WRITING

There are certain **differences between technical writing and general/literary writing** as given below,

TECHNICAL WRITING	GENERAL/LITERARY WRITING
✓ Followed by experts to convey scientific and technical information using technical vocabulary.	✓ Involves creative writing to entertain
✓ The primary target is experts	✓ General people are the target

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It employs a direct approach to explain facts ✓ Enhances logical reasoning. ✓ Objective in nature ✓ Crisp ✓ Formal in style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It has all the literary devices to arouse emotions of the reader. ✓ Enhances imagination ✓ Subjective in nature ✓ Elaborate ✓ Informal in style
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ELEMENTS OF STYLE IN TECHNICAL WRITING

1. Style in Structure

Clear flow of logical information is essential in technical communication. The document should be complete and coherent. All the sentences and ideas of the document should lead to the next. A paragraph should have a proper starting and a suitable ending.

The focus must be on the main clause in an individual sentence.

For example,

“The college authorities decided to expand the canteen after getting the students’ feedback.” is better than writing ***“After getting the students’ feedback, it was decided by the college authorities to expand the canteen.”***

2. Style in Presentation

- ✓ The presentation and tone of technical communication should focus on the end results and logic.
- ✓ The tone should be neutral and factual.
- ✓ The content should be precise without losing the importance.
- ✓ There should not be ambiguity (multiplicity in meaning) in sentences.
- ✓ The reader should understand what the writer has actually meant.
- ✓ Figures and tables must be clearly captioned to help the reader.
- ✓ Vague statements should be avoided.

3. Style in Language

Technical writing should be formal and objective. Pronouns like ***you, I*** and ***we*** should be avoided. Active voice should be used the maximum. When using the acronyms, expanded version should be used at the first time of use. Spelling and grammar should be checked and edited.

LETTER WRITING

Elements of a Letter

1. Heading of the letter containing the writer's address and date.
2. Salutation/ greeting
3. The message/ body
4. Subscription/ closing
5. Signature
6. Address of the recipient

In certain cases, subject and reference are also needed.

According to the contexts, letters can be divided into informal letters, formal letters, business letters and demi official letters.

1. Informal Letter

Informal or personal letters are written to family members and friends. This letter is not rigid in style.

The elements of a personal letter are given below,

- ✓ **Heading:** address and place on the top right corner followed by date in the next line.
- ✓ **Salutation:** Usually "dear" is used.
- ✓ **Body or Text of the Letter:** this is the matter we want to convey.
- ✓ **Subscription or Closing:** Placed on the bottom right corner, just above the signature line. "With love, yours lovingly", etc can be used.

2. Formal Letter

Formal letter is used to correspond with people or organisations that are unknown to us and hold official positions. It is used to make queries requests and complaints.

The different elements of formal letter are given below,

- ✓ **Heading:** address and place on the top right corner followed by date in the next line.
- ✓ **Salutation:** Usually "dear" is used with the surname and title like Mr, Ms, Dr etc.

- ✓ **Body or Text of the Letter:** this is the matter we want to convey. Use clear, concise and formal language.
- ✓ **Subscription or Closing:** Placed on the bottom right corner, just above the signature line. "Yours faithfully, yours sincerely", etc can be used.

3. Business Letter

A business letter is a formal letter which deals with business matters. It may be sent within or without an organisation. It is primarily informational and doesn't contain any personal comment. A business letter will have subject and reference lines.

Different types of business letter are **sales letters, order letters, resignation letters, business enquiry letters**, etc.

4. Demi Official Letter

Demi official letter is used for correspondence within an organisation. It is majorly used by the employees of same rank to remind of or enquire about some information which is already passed. Demi official letters are usually,

- ✓ Personal and friendly in tone
- ✓ Short
- ✓ Not quoted in official communications
- ✓ Not considered as official communication regarding anything.

JOB APPLICATION

A job application is one of the first steps to apply for a job. It is the first contact by a career seeker with an employer. **The components of job application** are, **a covering letter, CV or**

Resume, copies of certificates and mark lists, reference letters, etc.

1. Covering Letter

A covering letter is the letter we send along with resume/CV to show why we apply for the position. It explains our skills and experience in brief, which help the employer to get an overview about us. It is formal in nature.

There are three types of covering letters,

1. Application Letter

It is the letter we write in response to a job advertisement.

2. Prospecting Letter

It is the letter we write to enquire about the possibility of getting a position in a firm.

3. Networking Letter

It is used to get assistance or help to find out a job.

BIO DATA, RESUME AND CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)

1. Bio Data

A bio data lists all the details about a person such as age, marital status, nationality, religion and caste, etc. There will not be specific data about skills and achievements of a career seeker.

2. Resume

Resume is a French word which summarises a person's career including experience, educational qualifications, achievements, etc. Only the important skill sets suitable for the particular position is included in resume. A resume is 2 to 4 pages length.

A resume will have the following components,

1. A brief profile of the candidate with name, date of birth, address, etc.
2. Experience in reverse chronological order with positions handled and achievements.
3. Educational qualifications in reverse chronological order.
4. Other details including membership details in volunteer or professional organisations etc.

3. CV or Curriculum Vitae

A CV is the detailed history of a candidate's career and education. CV lists every skill, experience, qualification, projects and publications the candidate has had. It helps the recruiter to get the complete idea about a career seeker.

Tips to Create a Good CV or Resume

1. Use good font and legible font size (E.g. Times New Roman, font size 12).
2. Choose the most suitable template.
3. Don't use too many colours, bold and italic letters.
4. Have a consistent system of headings and sub headings.
5. The updated contact information of the job seeker should be given clearly.

6. Avoid spelling and grammatical mistakes.
7. Be truthful always.

REPORT WRITING

A report is a document that presents descriptions, information, analyses or opinions about a subject or problem in a systematic manner after conducting a research. A report can be written, documentary or film. Even oral report is also there. It is usually submitted to a superior authority. A report includes descriptions of sequence of events, evaluation of situations and facts, discussions of results, recommendations and conclusions. A report should be clear, unbiased and truthful.

Features of a Report

1. Reports are formal in nature in every aspect.
2. Reports have definite structure.
3. Data are presented in charts and tables.

Types of Reports

1. Project Report
2. Seminar Report
3. Annual Report
4. Audit Report
5. Investigation Report
6. Progress Report, etc.

Basics of Report Writing

Report writing has the following stages,

1. Defining the Requirement

The purpose of the report (whether descriptive, analytical, etc) must be clarified. Identifying the target audience is very important.

2. Researching the Topic

The data for research must be examined carefully, which helps in deciding the direction of research. Information for research can be collected from books, newspapers, internet, etc.

3. Analyse/Evaluate/ Understand the Information

Use logic, critical and creative thinking to make the report a sensible and legible one.

4. Organise the Report

Decide the structure of the report depending on the requirements and the information available.

5. Write the Report

The report can be written in this stage using the structure which is already decided.

Structure of Report

The basic structure of a report follows the **IMRaD** model. The **IMRaD** model stands for,

Introduction : The basic reason why the research is carried out.

Methods : How was the study done, what were the conditions and who participated, etc.

Results : How was the question answered the validation methods of hypothesis.

Discussion : What do the results say, any further question, etc.

Based on the length of report, a report will have some sections like title page, table of contents, abstract, introduction, summary and conclusions, recommendations, discussion and appendix.

Tips to write a Good Report

1. Have a plan. Work from an outline and be careful to include every point.
2. Organise the report into sections by giving clear and consistent headings and subheadings.
3. Avoid using technical terms as far as possible.
4. Format the report and correct the spelling and grammatical mistakes.
5. Don't write long sentences.
6. Use active voice as far as possible.

7. Be concise.
8. Cite the sources where the references and information taken from.
9. Avoid plagiarism (copying from others).

NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION AND BODY LANGUAGE

Exchange of information among humans can be had even without using words. Various other forms are used for communication exchange and they fall under non verbal communication.

Forms of Non verbal Communication

Some of the non verbal communications are deliberate, natural, idiosyncratic and some are related to the culture a person belongs to.

1. Forms of Non verbal Communication Using Body Language

It discusses sending messages by body or face during communication. These types of movements may be intentional or unintentional. Body language has the following forms,

- A) How people use space while communicating. If persons who communicate stand or sit closer means they have good relation.
- B) The sitting or standing posture of the communicators. If in good posture, means interested, else the opposite.
- C) Body movements, facial expressions, etc show whether the person has interest or not.

2. Non verbal Communication Using Para Language

Para linguistic features involve the aspects of oral communication other than language and words used by the speaker.

It includes speed of speaking, volume of the speaker, pause and silence, etc.

The speed of speaking and volume of the speaker should be optimum. Pause and silence should be given as and when they are required.

3. Non verbal Communication through Object Language

Material possessions, physical appearance, the brand a person uses, etc. tells about him.

The clothes and the way people wear, cars, and gadgets people use are also telling about the personality of a person.

4. Other Modes of Non verbal Communication

Emoticons we use in messages, emails, etc. tell about the emotions and mindsets of people. Similarly, arriving late to a function and an important meeting, ignoring the presence of someone, remembering an important person of our choice, etc. are coming under this.

Kinesics

Kinesics is the study of how body movements, actions and expressions play as a form of non verbal communication. There are **five types of kinesics** as given below.

1. **Emblems:** They are gestures used in place of words. For example, the gesture to stop the vehicle or ask for a lift.
2. **Illustrations:** They are the gestures to illustrate or reinforce what has already been discussed or said.
3. **Affective Displays:** They are body or facial movements to display emotions or affective state. Example is showing our anger or happiness in different ways.
4. **Regulators:** They are non verbal signs used to regulate the flow of speech. Example can be raising the finger to intervene a speech.
5. **Adapters:** They are the forms of non verbal communication which happens unknowingly by the listener. Biting the nails, changing the postures due to lack of interest, etc are examples.

Proxemics

It is the study of how people use space while communicating. How close or distant people stand, whether people touch or not, how the space between the persons is utilized, etc come under this. The space we need as a person is called personal space. The magnitude of this space depends on factors like culture and tradition, social norms, situations, personality traits, etc.

The acceptable distances are,

Intimate Space : From touch to approximately 18 inches

Personal Space : 18 inches to 4 feet

(Close friends & relative)

Social Space	:	4 foot to 12 feet (Acquaintance, social gathering)
Public Space	:	12 foot or more (addressing audience)

Chronemics

It is the study of the role of time in communication. The manners how we utilise time while communicating gives ideas about the speaker and are included in non verbal communication. The utilisation of time while communicating is different from each country. Certain people are rigid and stick on to time while others keep a fluid approach.

Effective Use of Body Language

Body language can be used in the following ways,

1. To Feel Confident

Be in a relaxed posture with straight back and shoulders relaxed. Make good eye contact. Don't sit on the edge of the chair. If standing, keep hands open by placing legs slight apart. Handshake should be firm.

2. To Get Collaboration

Let the speaker know that you are listening. This can be done by facing the speaker, keeping eye contact and leaning forward. Uncrossing the hands and nodding at regular intervals are appreciable. Avoid doing other things while you are engaged in conversation.

3. Use Effective Hand Movements

Hand movements help to attract the attention of the receiver of the message. It also helps in coordination of thoughts and stimulates brain.

4. To Influence People

Have a genuine smile which helps us to make an effective and impressive communication. It shows our warmth and approachability.

INTERVIEW SKILLS

The broad meaning of interview is a formal consultation or a meeting to obtain information. We can also assume that, interview means a discussion between a recruiter and an applicant to understand whether or not the latter can be given a job.

There are different types of interviews as follow,

1. Preliminary Interview

It is the starting stage of a more detailed interview, in which initial screening will be done. It helps to save time by eliminating the unsuitable candidates,

2. Standardised Interview

In this stage, pattern of questions will be decided before the proceedings. Time will be allowed to prepare.

3. Depth Interview

This is semi structured type by which an interviewee will be examined in depth. Background, knowledge, personality traits, etc will be understood in this type of interview.

4. Stress Interview

This is used to understand how the interviewee reacts to the pressure situations. The interviewer checks whether the interviewee gets nervous, irritated or angry when provoked.

5. Technical Interview

This type of interview is used to assess the knowledge, technical competence and proficiency. Behavioral aspects and communication skills are secondary here.

6. Personal / HR Interview

In this interview, the behavioral aspects and attitude of the candidate is checked. The EQ of the candidate will be checked more than his knowledge.

Ensuring Success in Job Interviews

Basic steps to ensure success in job interviews can be broadly classified into three.

1. Preparing

This stage tells about the pre interview stages.

- ✓ **Learn about the firm** from internet, reports, etc. Also refer to the website and annual reports if available of the company.
- ✓ **Understand the job requirement.** We should find out the requirement of the position and the skill sets required. We can use social networks for the same. Also find the nature of the job, pay scale, scope for career advancement, etc.

- ✓ Prepare the CV with maximum care.
- ✓ Rehearse with mock interviews.
- ✓ If the interview is technical, revise what you have already studied.
- ✓ Dress well to impress and feel comfortable in the dress.
- ✓ Leave for the venue early.

2. Performing

- ✓ Arrive early
- ✓ Maintain etiquette while entering and inside the interview hall.
- ✓ Adopt appropriate posture while sitting or standing.
- ✓ Be attentive and listen carefully to the questions.
- ✓ While answering, be natural and confident. Be audible and clear.
- ✓ Do not respond to the questions without thinking.
- ✓ Avoid negative talks. Don't criticise your previous bosses or any other.
- ✓ Always be truthful and pleasant.
- ✓ Thank each member before leaving the interview hall.

3. Follow up

- ✓ Send a thanking letter to the firm for giving opportunity to attend the interview.
- ✓ Learn from the mistakes that you have.

Appropriate use of Non verbal Communication in Job Interviews

- ✓ Dress well and in appropriate manner.
- ✓ Avoid pungent perfumes.
- ✓ Take a folder in which every document should be arranged properly.
- ✓ Keep smiling and be enthusiastic.
- ✓ Have a firm handshake with the interviewer.
- ✓ When greeting the interview board, smile and keep eye contact.
- ✓ Maintain confident posture.
- ✓ Speak confidently with optimum volume,
- ✓ Don't argue with the board members.
- ✓ Make sure that you close the door gently and do not leave it ajar or slam.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Discussions can be within persons both formally and informally. Informal discussions can be seen in restaurants, college canteen and bus stops. Formal discussions can be seen in an office setup, official meetings and in interview sessions.

Discussion is actually a group talk to club various view points. **GROUP DISCUSSION** is a communicative situation that allows its participants to express views and opinions to other speakers. It is a systematic and purposeful interactive oral process. Ideas, views and opinions are exchanging with each other in this.

The abilities of the participants are checked thoroughly in a GD. A job seeker may have to participate in a selection GD to get a job. The importance of GD has increased nowadays. It helps the recruiter to understand

- a) Problem solving skills
- b) Decision making skills
- c) Personality assessment
- d) Negotiation skills
- e) Cooperative mentality
- f) Team work and team mentality etc.

By checking all these factors an interviewer can select the best candidates from the group. It may be a better understanding level of one's personality.

Differences between Debate and GD

- ✓ Debate is a formal method of argument in which the speakers take a particular stand and remain in it till the end while GD aims at reaching a consensus.
- ✓ The aim of debate is to win while that of GD is exchange of ideas.
- ✓ Defending and attacking are the norms in debate while listening, reasoning and opinion sharing are the practices in GD.
- ✓ Debates are conducted to judge the communication skills while GD is conducted to judge the personality.

Ensuring Success in GD

- ✓ Maintain comfortable sitting posture which displays confidence.
- ✓ Be respectful to others' opinions.
- ✓ If possible, be the one to start the discussion.
- ✓ Bring the discussion back on track if the discussion deviates.
- ✓ Be mindful of body language and eye contact.
- ✓ Speak loud and clear.
- ✓ Have valid points when you speak.

PRESENTATION SKILLS

A presenter should be able to convince the target audience about the relevance of his idea, product, work or proposal. The most popular mode of presentation is oral presentation by using charts, slides, etc. Other forms of presentations include webinars, seminars, posters, brochures, etc.

Types of Presentations

Presentations can be classified as follow, according to the content.

1. **Informative** : to present specific information, date, time, cause, effect, etc.
2. **Instructional** : to teach a method or topic. It is longer than informative presentations.
3. **Arousing** : to arouse emotion or enthusiasm in the audience.
4. **Persuasive** : to grab attention and bring the audience to a specific view point which promotes action.
5. **Decision Making** : to arrive at a decision or consensus.

Elements of a Successful Presentation

All the ingredients given under have to be worked together to make a presentation successful. The six key elements can be identified as,

1. Preparation

It is the first critical element of presentation. Decide the manner and method of presentation to present the content successfully. The presenter should be well learned about the topic to answer any doubt asked by the listener.

2. Mode of Presentation

The most suitable mode of presentation should be selected once the topic is finalised. The most popular and suitable is oral presentation. All the supporting materials for presentation must be ready with the presenter. Calculations should be there on the duration of presentation.

3. Audience

The mode of presentation depends on the target audience. The speaker should know about the audience and the content and tone should be apt to the audience.

4. Language and Delivery

The choice of words must be in tone with the subject matter and the capacity of the audience. Avoid difficult and technical words. The speaker should control the speed of presentation. The audience should be treated well.

5. Non verbal Communication

Ideas are not conveyed by words alone. The gestures, postures, voice modulation, etc are also very important. The speaker should be able to understand the non verbal cues shown by the audience to improve his presentation. Keeping eye contact ensures connectedness.

6. Feedback

The presenter should obtain feedback from the audience during and after presentation. The feedback we had can be used to improve presentation skills in future.

Tips for Public Speaking

- ✓ Know yourself. Understand your strength and weaknesses.
- ✓ Learn the subject matter thoroughly.
- ✓ Practice in front of a camera or mirror.
- ✓ Focus on the right manner of presentation; be careful about the words and sentences you use.
- ✓ Dress well to impress the audience.
- ✓ Use pause and silence effectively.
- ✓ Listen carefully to other presentations.

- ✓ Understand the audience.
- ✓ Never argue with the audience.
- ✓ End the presentation with a suitable summing up.

TECHNOLOGY BASED COMMUNICATION

Recently, communication has gone through drastic changes. Social media, presentation software and other platforms are used even for high end presentations. Different aspects of technology based communication are given below.

Netiquettes

Etiquette refers to a generally accepted and unwritten code of polite behavior in society. The word **netiquette** is the combination of **network** and **etiquette**. It is the etiquette we should display in our online interactions. Good netiquette is an indicator of professionalism.

The Core Rules of Netiquette

1. Remember the Human

Understand that we are interacting with humans and not with machines. Consider the other end has humans.

2. Adhere to the Same Standard of Behaviour online that you follow in Real Life.

Never do anything illegal. If there is any ethical dilemma, follow the same level of activity that you may engage in real life.

3. Know Where You are in Cyberspace

Be familiar with the expected standard of behaviour in the community you are interacting with.

4. Respect other People's Time

Do not disturb other people with unnecessary interventions. If you are posting something and sending a mail, make sure that you are not disturbing others. Do not post the same things repeatedly.

5. Make Yourself Look Good online.

Always use good language and spelling. Don't use abusive language and don't use all in CAPS.

6. **Share Expert Knowledge**

If you have expertise with something, share it with others. There are forums and blogs to share your knowledge. Make sure that you don't violate any copyright.

7. **Help Keep Flame Wars Under Control**

Flaming usually happens in social media. It involves exchanging offensive and profane messages. Deliberate flaming which seeks to aggravate certain controversial points in discussion is called trolling.

8. **Respect Other People's Privacy**

Don't access other people's social media profiles and email accounts. Don't pass on other people's data to third parties without consent.

9. **Don't Abuse Your Power**

As system administrator, group admins or even as a person with superior programming skills, you should not misuse your power.

10. **Be Forgiving of Other People's Mistakes**

Be tolerant with other people's mistakes. If you want to correct someone, that can be done by sending a private e mail message.

Effective E Mail Communications

E mail is the most widely used medium of communication in business and academic fields. **The advantages of using e mails** are,

1. Speed : Reaches the recipient almost instantly.
2. Can be sent to multiple recipients on a single click.
3. A variety of files can be attached.
4. Easy access from anywhere in the world.
5. Inexpensive; most personal e mail ID's are free.
6. It can be sent even to a person who is hard to reach.

To maintain effectiveness in e mail communications, the following measures can be taken,

- ✓ Mention the subject correctly and never send an e mail without subject.
- ✓ Use simple and clear language.
- ✓ Use good formatting without using all CAPS.

- ✓ Type small paragraphs.
- ✓ Use bold, italics, etc to highlight the important points.

Power Point Presentation

Microsoft power point is one of the most popular slide show programs today.

The basic structure of slide show is given below.

1. Introductory Slides

They include the title, overview and introduction to the topic.

2. Content of the Presentation

These slides include the main body of the presentation.

3. Concluding Slides

These include the results, conclusion, discussions, references and thank you slides.

The purpose of slide show is to support the presentation and not to detract from it. The can use the slides to attract the audience and he is always the important factor in a presentation and not the slides. Slides should be used to,

- *support communication
- * make the presentation better
- * give an overview of the presentation
- * deliver the visual data which cannot be explained in words.

While making a presentation, the following are very important.

- ✓ Plan the presentation
- ✓ Ensure the clarity and visibility of slides
- ✓ Align the text to the left.
- ✓ Present the content in a structured manner
- ✓ Use a consistent theme without too much graphics
- ✓ Use dark text on a light background.
- ✓ Use good fonts
- ✓ Use slide numbers
- ✓ Before presentation, ensure that the slides work properly.

Don'ts

- ✓ Don't use slides as substitute for saying.
- ✓ Don't paste entire paragraph of the reference text to the slides.

- ✓ Don't put full sentences on the slide, only the key points are needed.
- ✓ Don't use too much animation.
- ✓ Don't add sound effects unless they are necessary.

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