

Syllabus

F.Y.B.Sc. IT Professional Communication Skills

Unit I

The Seven C's of the Effective Communication

1. Completeness
2. Conciseness
3. Consideration
4. Concreteness
5. Clarity
6. Courtesy
7. Correctness

Unit II

Communication: Its interpretation

1. Basics
2. Nonverbal Communication
3. Barriers to Communication

Unit III

Business Communication at Work Place

1. Letter Components and Layouts
2. Planning a letter
3. Process of Letter writing
4. Email Communication
5. Memo and Memo Reports
6. Employment Communication
7. Notice Agenda and Minutes of Meeting
8. Brochures

Unit IV

Report Writing

1. Effective Writing
2. Types of Business Reports
3. Structure of Reports
4. Gathering Information

5. Organization of the Material
6. Writing Abstracts and Summaries
7. Writing Definitions
8. Visual Aids
9. User Instruction Manual

Unit V

Required Skills

1. Reading Skills
2. Note-making
3. Précis Writing
4. Audio Visual Aids
5. Oral Communication

Unit VI

Mechanics of Writing

1. Transitions
2. Spelling Rules
3. Hyphenation
4. Transcribing Numbers
5. Abbreviating Technical and Non Technical Terms
6. Proof Reading



PAPER PATTERN**Total Marks :100****Duration : 3 Hrs****Note: All questions are compulsory**

Q.1	Combination of questions from Unit 1 to 6 (no internal choice)	10 M
Q.2	Questions from Unit 1 only (with internal choice)	15 M
Q.3	Questions from Unit 2 only (with internal choice)	15 M
Q.4	Questions from Unit 3 only (with internal choice)	15 M
Q.5	Questions from Unit 4 only (with internal choice)	15 M
Q.6	Questions from Unit 5 only (with internal choice)	15 M
Q.7	Questions from Unit 6 only (with internal choice)	15 M



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Unit I

BASICS, VERBAL, NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION AND SEVEN CS OF COMMUNICATION

Unit Structure

- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Basics of Communication
- 1.4 Channels of Communication
- 1.5 Importance of Communication
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1.1 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the basics of communication
- To understand the concept of verbal and non verbal communication

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will introduce you to various theoretical concepts of communication in general to help you to relate them to various day to day situations. Communication skills progresses from the birth of child to the adulthood to the oldhood. The learning of communication commences with the observation of the world surrounding you. The nomenclatures of the various situations one may come across in his/her personal or formal life are the events of communication. Imagine, you complete your B. Sc. IT with flying

colours and you find a different world outside the classrooms you have attended and you are confused to begin with, how will you face such unusual situations that you have never experienced? The answer is if you are aware of the content of the communication skills you have learnt as a part of your academics, your half way is done. Now let us begin understanding each component of the soft skills you required to understand.

1.3 BASICS OF COMMUNICATION

1.3.1 Concept of Communication

Every individual needs to be well equipped with the tools to communicate effectively, whether it is on the personal front, or at work. In fact, according to the management gurus, being a good communicator is half the battle won. After all, if one speaks and listens well, then there is little or no scope for misunderstanding. Thus, keeping this fact in mind, the primary reasons for misunderstanding is due to inability to speak well, or listen effectively.

The word communication is derived from the Latin word 'communicate' which means to make common, to transmit, or to impart the ideas, knowledge, feelings, emotions and gestures. According to the various dictionaries the definition of effective communication skills are as follows:

"Effective communication skills includes lip reading, finger-spelling, sign language; for interpersonal skills use, interpersonal relations."

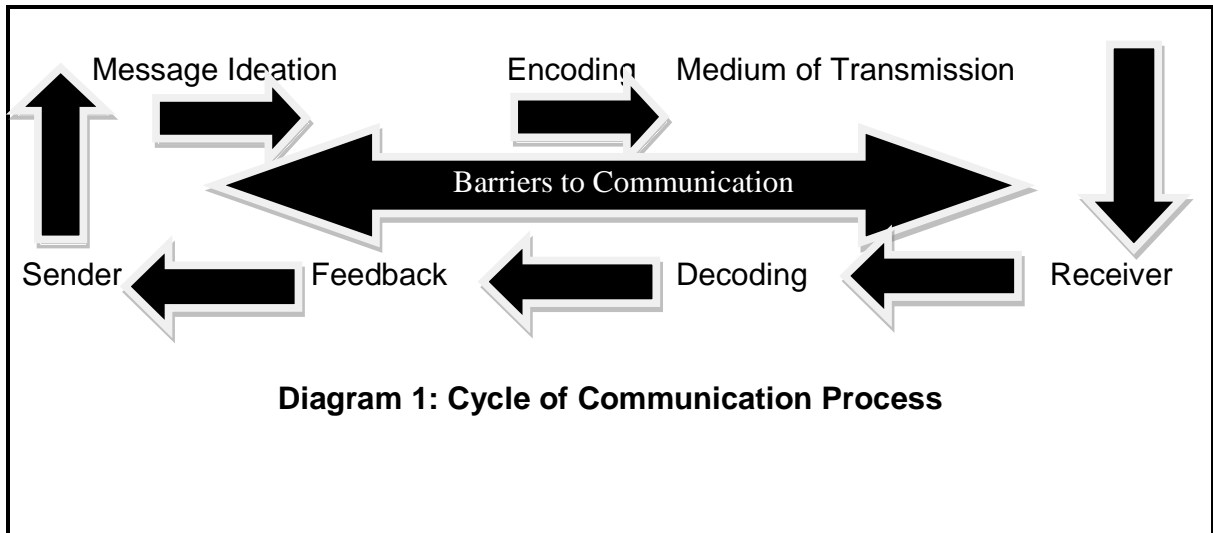
"Effective communication skills are the ability to use language (receptive) and express (expressive) information."

"Effective communication skills are the set of skills that enables a person to convey information so that it is received and understood. Effective communication skills refer to the repertoire of behaviors that serve to convey information for the individual."

While it is an undisputable fact the communication forms one of the essential bases of human existence, yet most individuals overlook the need to refine their communication skills, from time-to-time. Effective communication skills is a must whether it is individual or then effective team communication skills.

1.3.2 Process of Communication

Communication is a two-way process in which there is an exchange and progression of ideas towards a mutually accepted direction or goal. For this process, to materialise, it is essential that the basic elements of communication be identified. These elements are: Ideation/Message, Sender, Encoding, Receiver, Medium and Transmission, Barriers, Decoding and Feedback.



1.3.2.1. Ideation/Message

The process of communication begins with ideation, which refers to the formation of the idea or selection of a message to be communicated. It consists of the 'What' of communication and is concerned with the content of the specific message to be presented. The scope of 'ideation' is generally determined by the sender's knowledge, experiences, and abilities, as well as the purpose of communication and the context of the communicative situation. However, the form of ideation depends on several other factors.

Messages generally have two kinds of content, logical and emotional. Logical messages consist of factual information, while emotional messages consist of feelings and emotions. In formal communicative situation, 'ideation' may consist of finding and selecting a subject or general topic, looking for ideas and thoughts, and deciding the type, scope, and sources of information.

1.3.2.2. Sender

The person who initiates the communication process is normally referred to as the sender. From his personal data bank he selects ideas, encodes and finally transmits them to the receiver. The entire burden of Encoding of communication then rests upon the sender or encoder. His message choice of images and words, and the combination of the two is what goads the receiver to listen carefully. In this process a number of factors come into play, primary among them being an understanding of the recipient and his needs. If the message can be formulated in accordance with the expectations of the receiver, the level of acceptance is going to be higher.

1.3.2.3. Encoding

Encoding is the next step in communication. It is the process of changing the information into some form of logical and coded message. The encoding process is based on the purpose of communication and the relation between the sender and the receiver. In a formal situation, encoding involves: Selecting a language; selecting a medium of communication; and selecting an appropriate communication form.

Selecting the right language is essential for effective encoding. Verbal messages need a common language code, which can be easily decoded by the receiver. If the receiver is not able to decode or understand the message, communication will fail. For example, a person who does not understand Tamil cannot decode a message encoded in Tamil

As selecting the right medium of communication involves making the right choice out of many available options, it determines the effectiveness of encoding. There are three basic options for sending interpersonal messages that is speaking, writing, and non-verbal signs and symbols. The spoken word involves vocalization while non-verbal message cues are generally visual (auditory and tactile). Non-verbal clues play a significant role in oral communication. These clues include body movements, facial expressions, touching patterns, speech mannerisms. The selection of the appropriate form largely depends on the sender-receiver relationship and the overall goal of the communicative situation. Oral communication may be face-to-face interpersonal communication, group communication, speaker-audience

communication, or telephonic communication. The choice depends on the need and purpose of the communication.

1.3.2.4. Receiver

The listener receives an encoded message which he attempts to decode. This process is carried on in relation to the work environment and the value perceived in terms of the work situation. If the goal of the Decoding of sender is envisioned as similar to his own, the listener becomes message more receptive. The decoding of the message is done in almost entirely the same terms as were intended by the sender

1.3.2.5. Medium and Transmission

Another important element of communication is the medium or channel. It could be oral, written or non-verbal. Prior to the composition of the message, the medium/channel should be decided. Transmission refers to the flow of message over the chosen channel. Transmission confirms the medium selected during the process of encoding and keeps the communication channel free from interference or noise so that the message reaches the receiver without any disturbance.

1.3.2.6. Barriers

The barriers refer to the various hurdles the message may come across in process of transmission. Noise may disturb the proper encoding, the psychological barriers of the receiver may hamper the basic purpose of the message or the barriers may hinder the smooth completion of the cycle of the process of communication. The barriers could be cross cultural, linguistics, semantics, socio-psychological, etc.

1.3.2.7. Decoding

Decoding is the process of converting a message into thoughts by translating the received stimuli into an interpreted meaning in order to understand the message communicated. It is important to note that it is the message that is transferred, as meaning cannot be transferred from one person to another. The receiver has to assign meaning to a message in order to understand it.

The process of decoding involves interpretation and analysis of a message. Decoding in written communication refers to reading and understanding a written message. On the other hand, in oral

communication, decoding includes listening and understanding. Effective decoding is very important for successful communication as any misinterpretation of a message leads to communication breakdown and creates confusion and misunderstanding.

1.3.2.8. Feedback

Effective communication takes place only when there is feedback. Feedback is the last stage in the communication process. It is the action or reaction of the receiver to the message. It helps the sender know that the message was received and understood. The feedback that goes to the sender makes it clear whether the receiver has accepted the information and filed it in his/her memory or rejected it. He or she may ask for more information or clarification. Response is, thus, the key to communication as the effectiveness of communication depends on how congruent a receiver's response is with the meaning intended by the sender.

1.4. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is essential for the internal functioning of any organisation. By integrating the managerial functions and serving to influence the behaviour and attitudes of people through persuasion, it encourages them to perform in order to achieve organisational objectives. The interaction between the different individuals working in a company or organisation takes place through different channels. These channels could be both informal and formal.

Informal channels transmit official news through unofficial and informal communicative interactions known as the 'grapevine'. This informal communication network includes tea time gossip, casual gatherings, lunch time meetings and so on. These channels may not be very reliable as they may be company rumours or just gossip. Such channels are more active in organisations that are not transparent. As employees want to know what is going on in their organisation, they seek out unofficial sources of information. The grapevine is not always negative for an organisation and can, in fact, be helpful as it helps in positive group building by acting as a safety valve for pent-up emotions. It may help in building up organisational solidarity and harmony.

1.4.1 Downward Communication

As the main function of downward communication is providing direction and control, it refers to communication from the higher level in managerial hierarchy to the lower ones. A communication from the general manager of a company to the branch managers is an example of downward communication. Other examples of downward communication include annual confidential reports, performance appraisals, notices, project feedback, announcements of company policies, official instructions, and so on. Forms of downward communication may include notes, notices, memos, telephone conversations, voice mails, emails, or face-to-face conversations.

Downward communication is essential for the functioning of any organisation as it involves the transfer of information, instruction, advice, request, feedback, and ideas to subordinate staff. It increases staff awareness and facilitates implementation of new policies, guidelines, decisions, and evaluation and appraisal of the performance of employees. However, too much downward communication can lead to reaction from subordinates and can hamper better employee-employer relationship.

1.4.2 Upward Communication

As the main purpose of upward communication is to provide feedback on several areas of organisational functioning, it refers to communication from subordinates to superiors. A business report from the branch manager of a company to the managing director of the company is an example of upward communication. Other examples of upward channel include business proposals, suggestion box, exit interviews, grievance committees, and so forth.

Since upward communication involves the transfer of information, request, and feedback from the subordinates to their seniors, it promotes better working relationships within an organisation by giving the subordinate staff opportunities to share their views and ideas with their supervisors. It facilitates employee involvement in the decision making process. Nevertheless, in any organization there has to be a balance between downward and upward communication channels.

1.4.3 Lateral Communication

The main objectives of horizontal communication are developing teamwork, and promoting group coordination within an

organisation. It takes place between professional peer groups or people working on the same level of hierarchy. Horizontal communication is less formal and structured than both downward communication and upward communication, and may be carried out through informal discussions, management gossip, telephone calls, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, memos, routine meetings, and so on.

1.4.4 Diagonal Communication

Diagonal communication is the product of modern changes in information technology and management and is the result of the growing realisation of fraternity and equality in the corporate sector. It is basically a response to market needs that demand speed and efficiency. As the diagonal channel occurs between people who do not have to follow rigid norms of communication protocol, it flows in all directions.

1.5 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

Management has emerged as one of the dynamic field in the modern business scenario. The importance of communication in management in organisation is best summed up in the words of expert Harold Janis, "The world of management is a world of action. Services are designed made and sold. People are hired. Services are rendered. Policies are devised and implemented. Jobs are learned and performed. Yet there is no practical way in which any of these events can take place without communication."

1.5.1 Era of Specialisation

Unless the specialists know how to communicate, their vast knowledge of a limited field remains unused. Mr. Jadhav Raje may be expert on taxation and the life insurance but if he cannot communicate his knowledge to others and give them the benefit of his advice, his knowledge is wasted. Similarly in an organisation the engineers, accountants, storekeepers and scientists must be able to communicate with each other and their superiors.

1.5.2 An Age of Tension

Not being able to communicate can result in tremendous mental tension (not to mention physical strain), especially when the banks knows that their rivals are more successful only because they are better communicators.

1.5.3 Reduces Miscommunication

The manner in which a message is perceived by the receiver often leads to miscommunication. To avoid this banks must learn to communicate, keeping in mind the attitudes and mental framework of the customers as well as employees who receives messages. If a manager asks a new clerk to get him information about the "composition of the liquidated party", the young man will be at a total loss to understand, for composition means the amount paid by a bankrupt to his creditors. Such situations arise because most specialised branches of business have their own sub codes or "jargon" and sometimes individual business houses have their own special set of terms which outsiders cannot understand.

1.5.4 Healthy Organisational Environment

Many banks and insurance organisation are so large that they may be termed "empires". They contain several branch offices within the country and even overseas and have many sub branches too. Not only should the managements of such organisations be able to communicate effectively with all the units but should also be able to do so speedily. Modern banks and insurance organisations are managed by communication which has in recent times become the chief management tool for achieving coordination and control. Effective communication leads to a healthy organisational environment, better management – employee relations, proper delegation of authority and division of work, helps to deal better with competition and solve trade union created problems.

1.5.5 Aid to Managerial Process

This means that unless these organisations are effective, speedy, and use the best means and instruments they will be wasting valuable time ("time is money" in these organisations) and will lag behind their rivals. Also while receiving communications they tries not to receive maximum communication but pertinent information. Effective communication promotes managerial efficiency and performance.

1.5.6 Creates Relations

Lack of effective communication in any organisation may lead to many problems like misunderstandings, groupism and negative thinking. An effective and systematic communication system can do much to solve these problems. Good relationship within the organisation and with outsiders is essential for success in

business. This objective can only be achieved with the help of effective communication.

It ensures success. There is need to save on cost and time in modern business. Only effective communication can achieve this.

1.6 NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1.6.1 Concept of Verbal and Non verbal Communication

We communicate by exchanging symbols to describe our ideas and experience. Language is a common symbol system which we use for sharing our experience with others. We can also use other symbols like pictures, colours, signs and sounds to communicate. We do communicate a number of things by our facial expressions, movements, clothing, and so on, whether we speak or not.

Communication through words is called verbal communication; communication through other symbols is called non-verbal communication.

1.6.1.1 Verbal Communication

The communication mode which we rely on most often to carry meaning from one person to another is the verbal mode. Everyone who has ever thought about it has come to the insight, however, that there are enormous difficulties in sole reliance on this mode of communication. History is replete with examples of misunderstandings among people who were relying on words to carry meaning. Perhaps the most significant learning that has come out of this experience has been that words themselves do not have meaning. People have meaning, and words are simply tools that we use for trying to convey meaning that is idiosyncratic to one person into the idiosyncratic meaning system of the other person. One of the difficulties with words is that we attach to them different experiential and emotional connotations. Words are not always associated with similar experiences or similar feelings on the part of the listener and speaker. Other difficulties encountered in using the verbal mode include the use of jargon, the use of clichés, and the use of specialized vocabularies. It is often said that words have meaning only in context; it can be better said that words only have meaning when they are associated with people in context.

It is not uncommon to observe people attempting to find the right words to say what they mean. There is a myth that there is a way to "say it right." If we extrapolate from that phenomenon, it is easy to hypothesize that there are some people who, instead of experiencing feelings and sensations, more often experience language; that is, their experience parameters are defined by their vocabularies and their ability to be articulate. The psychologist, Piaget, describing cognitive development in children, says that we go through three phases: concrete, imagic, and abstract. When the little baby first experiences the world, he is incapable of a highly differentiated emotional or sensational experience. He experiences only distress or delight, and his/her major inputs are concrete; that is; he touches, tastes, sees, hears, and smells things. As it becomes necessary for him to interact with the world and significant others in his environment in order to have his needs met, he develops a fantasy life, an imagic experience. He can imagine mother when mother is not concretely present. That fantasy life can remain throughout his life. As he develops verbal fluency, he begins to abstract, from physical stimuli which bombard him and from the images that are triggered by those stimuli, meanings which he attaches to his experiences. This abstract experience is a translation of sense data into a meaning system. The difficulty with adults, of course, is that very often we do not let into awareness the physical sensations which we experience. We often mistrust our fantasy lives and tend to be afraid to permit ourselves to dream. We experience the world, then, in an abstract way rather than in a concrete and imagic way. The meanings that we permit ourselves to be aware of are verbal and abstract. What we abstract from the physical stimuli which we experience is dependent on our vocabularies and our reasoning abilities. But those three layers of experience concrete, imagic, and abstract are going on continuously. People experience concretely, people experience imagically, and people experience the abstracting process which they do when they are awake and attributing meaning to what they see, hear, feel, taste, and touch. Not all of these meanings can be carried from one person to another through the verbal mode only. Verbal communication may be oral or written. Oral communication is more natural and immediate. It needs training and practice to speak effectively in a formal situation.

Oral communication requires the presence, simultaneous attention of both the persons, personal presence and must be able to respond to the body language of the other. Written

communication can greatly extend the field and powers of oral communication. Writing overcomes the limits of space and time which confine speech.

1.6.1.2 Non Verbal Communication

You cannot say anything! Try to sit for one minute without speaking. Even if you are able to keep from moving you will still communicate rigidity, anxiety, or something. We are always saying something. It is important to observe and try to understand what is being communicated. In many situations people say what they think intellectually rather than what they feel emotionally. There is some truth in the old cliché "actions speak louder than words." Body language, carefully observed and interpreted, can tell a lot about what others are feeling.

Nonverbal communication is learned and practiced often on an unconscious level. We attract people by using these nonverbal signals, and sometimes those we attract (or who are attracted to us) are unwholesome. As we grow older and become more aware of ourselves we should be able to recognize and weed out the unwholesome in favor of those for whom we have an affinity.

Non-verbal methods of communication can be consciously created and used with both written and oral communication. Graphics of all kinds can enrich the message presented in a document or in a speech. Pictures, maps, charts, graphs and diagrams add quality and clarity to a verbal message.

Besides using these symbols consciously, we may convey meaning by facial expressions, gesture, tone of voice, clothing, and other aspects of our personality and body. This is called body language.

Non-verbal methods can be consciously used to enhance what we speak; a trained speaker can use gesture, facial expression and posture to enrich the meaning of words.

A good deal of body language is unintentional and unconscious. It occurs through visual appearances and sounds related to us and around us. Personal appearance, colours used in clothing and in office decor, stationery, voices and other office sounds make an impression on others; they communicate information about us.

Non-verbal communication comprises all the impressions we receive and the interpretations we make from what we perceive through our senses.

Non-verbal communication occurs even when there is no verbal communication. And it always accompanies verbal communication, whether oral or written; it is more difficult to control and may sometimes betray the truth which the speaker/writer is hiding behind the words. Hence the saying, "non-verbal communication speaks louder than Words,"

Thus, there can be unintended and unconscious non-verbal communication as well as conscious use of signs and sounds to communicate. An understanding of non-verbal methods and aspects of communication will help you to improve your oral and written presentation by using the methods and by gaining control over body language.

1.6.2 Use of Non Verbal Communication

Non-verbal methods have almost instant effect because of quicker grasp by the recipient. It takes less time to see a colour or picture, and to hear a horn or bell than to hear or read and understand words and sentences. This quality of speed in conveyance and response makes non-verbal methods extremely useful in many situations.

1. For traffic signs and signals, it is the red or green colour or a pictorial representation that tells the road user of the safety or danger of proceeding. Motorists and pedestrians respond at once on hearing a horn or a whistle.
2. Visual non-verbal methods are extremely useful as an aid to verbal communication; maps, charts and graphs are absolutely necessary for conveying ideas related, to geography, locations, data, and most of the sciences. They can present a large amount of complex data in a compact form; one page can contain material which would need several pages to convey in words. This makes the information available conveniently, at a glance; comparisons can be made and conclusions drawn by studying a single sheet of paper which shows the data in a graph or a chart.

3. Human beings respond more powerfully to pictures, colours and plain sounds than to language. A cry of agony arouses a much stronger response than a tale of woe; a film showing the actual events or a story is more effective than a narrated or written story. News on the TV is more interesting, effective and realistic than on the radio because of the visuals.
4. For illiterate people, the best method of conveying important information is by non-verbal symbols. Bottles and containers of poisons are marked with a skull and cross-bones as a warning; illiterate drivers can manage with the non-verbal traffic signals and signs.
5. Films are used to explain processes to people who may not follow oral explanations easily. Actual or filmed demonstration is useful for teaching processes. Non-verbal communication can overcome the barrier of language.

1.6.3 Attributes of Verbal and Non Verbal Communication

1 Speed

Written communication is slower in preparation, in conveyance and in reception; it takes more time to draft, type, dispatch, and to receive and read a letter than it takes to speak, and to hear, listen to, and understand an oral message. Feedback is also slower in written communication.

2 Record

Written communication serves as a record and can be used for future reference. It is a documentary proof, and can be used as legal evidence. Oral communication may be taped for later reference, but the authenticity of the voice may be questioned; moreover, tapes can be edited and the message distorted. Written records and documents are more reliable and acceptable.

3 Precision and Accuracy

Written communication is more precise and accurate than oral. Choice of precise words is possible in written communication because the writer has the time to look for suitable words and phrases, and to revise and change the draft, if necessary. In oral communication, it is not always possible to be so precise in the choice of words; there is no time to seek and consider words while speaking; however, the recipient can seek clarification on the spot.