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Communication & Presentation Skills

- **How often you communicate with people during your day?**
- **How clear is your communication?**
- You write emails, facilitate meetings, participate in conference calls, create reports, devise presentations, debate with your colleagues...the list goes on.

- We can spend almost our entire day communicating. So, how can we provide a huge boost to our productivity?
- We can make sure that we **communicate in the clearest, most effective way possible.**
- This is why the seven Cs of communication **provide a checklist for making sure** that your meeting, emails, conference calls, reports, and presentations are **well constructed and clear – so your audience gets your message.**

- To compose effective written or oral messages, you must apply certain **communication principles**. These principles **provide guidelines** for **choice of content and style of presentation**, adapted to the purpose and receiver of your message. Called the “seven C’s,” they are completeness, conciseness, consideration, concreteness, clarity, courtesy, and correctness.

# THE SEVEN C's

- Completeness
- Conciseness
- Consideration
- Concreteness
- Clarity
- Courtesy
- Correctness

# 1. COMPLETENESS

Business message is complete when it contains all facts the reader or listener needs for the reaction you desire.

As you strive for completeness, keep the following guidelines in mind;

- Provide all necessary information.
- Answer all questions asked.
- Give something extra when desirable.

# Completeness...continued

- **Provide All Necessary Information**

Answering the five W's helps make messages clear: Who, What, When, Where, and Why.

- **Answer All Questions Asked**

Look for questions: some may even appear buried within a paragraph. Locate them and then answer precisely.

- **Give Something Extra, When Desirable**

Use your good judgment in offering additional material if the sender's message was incomplete.

## EXERCISE

1. Give me apples.
  2. Today there is meeting in the office.
  3. You are the president of an industry association and have received the following inquiry from an out of town member, “I think I would like to attend my first meeting of the association, even though I am not acquainted with your city. Will you please tell me where the next meeting is being held?”
- How would you reply to this letter keeping in mind **Completeness** of the message?



## 2. CONCISENESS

Conciseness is saying what you want to say in the fewest possible words without sacrificing the other C qualities. A concise message is complete without being wordy.

To achieve conciseness, observe the following suggestions;

- Eliminate wordy expressions.
- Include only relevant material.
- Avoid unnecessary repetition.

## 2.1 Eliminate Wordy Expressions

- Use single words in place of phrases.
- **Example**
- **Wordy: At this time**
- **Concise: Now**
- **Wordy: In due course**
- **Concise: Soon**
- **Wordy: Due to the fact that**
- **Concise: Because**

## **2.2 Include Only Relevant Material**

- Stick to the purpose of the message.
- Delete irrelevant words and rambling sentences.
- Omit information obvious to the receiver.
- Avoid long introductions , unnecessary explanations, excessive adjectives and prepositions.
- Get to the important point tactfully and concisely.

# Include Only Relevant Material...continued

- **Example**
- **Wordy:** We hereby wish to let you know that our company is pleased with the confidence you have respond in us.
- **Concise:** We appreciate your confidence.
- **Wordy:** At this time I am writing to you to enclose an interview card, which has been post-paid, for the purpose of arranging a convenient time when we might get together for a personal interview.
- **Concise:** Please return the enclosed interview card to set up a convenient time for a interview.

## 2.3 Avoid Unnecessary Repetition

- Use a shorter name after you have mentioned the long one once. Instead of the “North Central Company,” use “North Central”
- Use Pronouns or Initials rather than repeat long names.
- Cut out all needless repetition of phrases and sentences.

# Exercise

**Find single word substitutes for the phrases**

- Along the same lines
- At this time
- Consensus of opinion
- Due to the fact that
- During the time of the day
- During the year of
- Few and far between
- For a price of

■ **Along the same lines**

■ **At this time**

■ **Consensus of opinion**

■ **Due to the fact that**

■ **During the time of the day**

■ **During the year of**

■ **Few and far between**

■ **For a price of**

**Similar**

**Now**

**Agreement, compromise**

**Because**

**Noon**

**Circa**

**Uncommon, few, scant**

**costing**

# Exercise

- **Make the following sentences concise:**
- Due to the fact that the seat belt broke, the passenger sustained a high degree of injury.
- In accordance with the will of the clients, we undertook the steps mentioned in the report.
- During the month of April, we will begin to package our product in boxes rectangular in shape and yellow in color.



- Due to the fact that the seat belt broke, the passenger sustained a high degree of injury.
- The broken seat belt caused severe injury of a passenger.
- In accordance with the will of the clients, we undertook the steps mentioned in the report.
- Steps from the aforementioned report are taken according the clients' will.
- During the month of April, we will begin to package our product in boxes rectangular in shape and yellow in color.
- In April, we will begin to package our product in yellow rectangular boxes.

**Make the following sentences concise:**

If we plan on showing an improvement of 20 percent, we will need to advance forward in our outlay and productivity.

The students and the faculty cooperated together to devise and develop a totally unique forum for discussion.

# 3. CONSIDERATION

Consideration means preparing every message with the message receivers in mind; try to put yourself in their place. You are considerate, you do not lose your temper, you do not accuse and you do not charge them without facts. the thoughtful consideration is also called “you-attitude”.

- Focus on “You” instead of “I” and “We”.
- Show audience benefit or interest in the receiver.
- Emphasize positive, pleasant facts.

## 3.1 Focus on “You” Instead of “I” or “We”

- Using “you” does help project a you-attitude. But overuse can lead to a negative reaction.
- **We-Attitude: I Am delighted to announce that we will be extending our hours to make shopping more convenient.**
- **You-Attitude: You will be able to shop evenings with the extended hours.**

## **3.2 Show Audience Benefit or Interest in the Receiver**

- Reader may react positively when benefits are shown them. Benefits must meet recipients needs, address their concerns, or offer them rewards. Most important they must be perceived as benefits by the receivers.

# Exercise

**Write with a 'you' attitude, it shows consideration**

- I want to send my congratulations for ---
- We will ship soon the goods your May 4 order--
- We pay eight percent interest on -----

## 3.3 Emphasize positive, pleasant facts.

Negative- Unpleasant	Positive - Pleasant
It is impossible to open an account for you today.	As soon as your signature card reaches us, we will gladly open an account
We do not refund if the returned item is soiled and unsalable.	We refund when the returned item is clean and resalable.
When you travel on company expense, you will not receive approval for first class fare.	When you travel on company expense, your approved fare is for tourist class.

## 4. CONCRETENESS

Communicating concretely means being specific, definite, and vivid rather than vague and general. Often it means using denotatives (direct, explicit, often dictionary based) rather than connotative words (ideas or notions suggested by or associated with a word or phrase).



The following guidelines should help you compose concrete, convincing message;

- Use specific facts and figures.
- Put action in your verbs.
- Choose vivid, image building words.

## 4.1 Use Specific Facts and Figures

- It is desirable to be precise and concrete in both written and oral business communication.
- **Vague, General, Indefinite**
- **Student GMAT scores are higher.**
  
- **Concrete, Precise**
- **In 1996, the GMAT scores averaged 600; by 1997 they had risen to 610.**

# Exercise

- **Rewrite the following in concrete form as the sentences are too general and vague.**
- This computer reproduces campaign letters fast
- Our product has won several prizes.
- These brakes stop a car within a short distance.

# Exercise

**Put action into the words by using active instead of passive voice.**

- Tests were made by us
- A full report will be sent to you by the supervisor.
- The contract had a requirement ....
- Mr. Singh will give consideration to the report ....

# 5. CLARITY

Getting the meaning from your head to the head of your reader (accurately) is the purpose of clarity. Of course you know it is not simple. We all carry around our own unique interpretations, ideas, experiences associated with words.

- Choose precise, concrete and familiar words.
- Construct effective sentences and paragraphs.

# 5.1 Choose Precise, Concrete, and Familiar Words

- Clarity is achieved in part through a balance between precise language and familiar language. Precise words need not be pretentious.

Familiar	Pretentious
About	Circa (L)
After	Subsequent
Home	Domicile
For example	e.g. (L)

## 5.2 Construct Effective Sentences and Paragraphs

- At the core of clarity is the sentences. This grammatical statement, when clearly expressed, moves thoughts within a paragraph. Important characteristics to consider are length, unity, coherence, and emphasis.
- **Unclear: Being an excellent lawyer, I am sure you can help us.**
- **Clear: Being an excellent lawyer, you can surely help us.**

# 6. COURTESY

True courtesy involves being aware not only of the perspective of others, but also their feelings. Courtesy stems from a sincere you-attitude.

The following are suggestions for generating a courteous tone;

- Be sincerely tactful, thoughtful, and appreciative.
- Use expressions that show respect.
- Choose nondiscriminatory expressions.



# 6.1 Be Sincerely Tactful, Thoughtful, and Appreciative

- Though few people are intentionally abrupt or blunt, these negative traits are a common cause of discourtesy.

<b>Tactless, Blunt</b>	<b>More Tactful</b>
<p><b>Stupid letter; I can't understand any of it.</b></p> <p><b>Clearly, you did not read my latest fax.</b></p>	<p><b>It's my understanding...</b></p> <p><b>Sometimes my wording is not precise; let me try again</b></p>

## **6.2 Use Expressions that Show Respect**

- **No reader wants to receive message that offend.**
- **Omit Irritating Expressions**
- **You are delinquent**
- **You failed to**
- **Contrary to your inference**
- **Inexcusable**
- **Simply nonsense**

## 6.3 Choose Nondiscriminatory Expressions

- Another requirement for courtesy is the use of nondiscriminatory language that reflects equal treatment of people regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, and physical features.

Questionable	More Desirable
Freshman	Entering students; first year student.
Manpower	Workers; employees; work force personnel

# Exercise

**Show courtesy by avoiding tactless & blunt language.**

- Your letter is not clear at all:

Obviously, if you would read your policy carefully you will be able to answer these questions yourself.

Apparently you already forgotten what I wrote you two weeks ago.

# Exercise

## Use gender friendly substitutes

- Mankind
- The best man for the job
- Manmade
- Manpower
- Businessman
- Sales man
- Chairman

# Exercise

- You guys should all be concerned about the issue.
- Each manger has an assigned place – he should park his car....
- Each customer will have change noted on his bill

# 7. CORRECTNESS

At the core of correctness is proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

However a message may be perfect grammatically and mechanically but still insult or lose a customer. The correctness, as applied to business messages, also means the following three characteristics:

- Use the right level of language.
- Check accuracy of figures, facts, and words.
- Maintain acceptable writing mechanics.

# 7.1 Use the Right Level of Language

- Informal writing is more characteristics of business writing—even more so if that writing occurs in an E-mail message.

More Formal	Less Formal
Participate	Join
Procure	Get
Endeavor	Try



## **7.2 Check Accuracy of Figures, Facts, and Words**

A good check of data is to have another person read and comment on the validity of the material.