
Professional Communication [HS1]

INDEX

1. Introduction to Communication	2
2. Group Discussion	9
3. Barriers to effective communication	11
4. 7Cs of communicationS	10
5. Notice Writing	13
6. Minutes	14
7. Presentation	15

Communication is a process of exchanging ideas, opinions, feelings and information from one person to another. The word “communication” comes from the Latin word “communicare”, which means “to share”, i.e., to share information, ideas, and knowledge between a sender and a receiver.

Features of Effective Communication

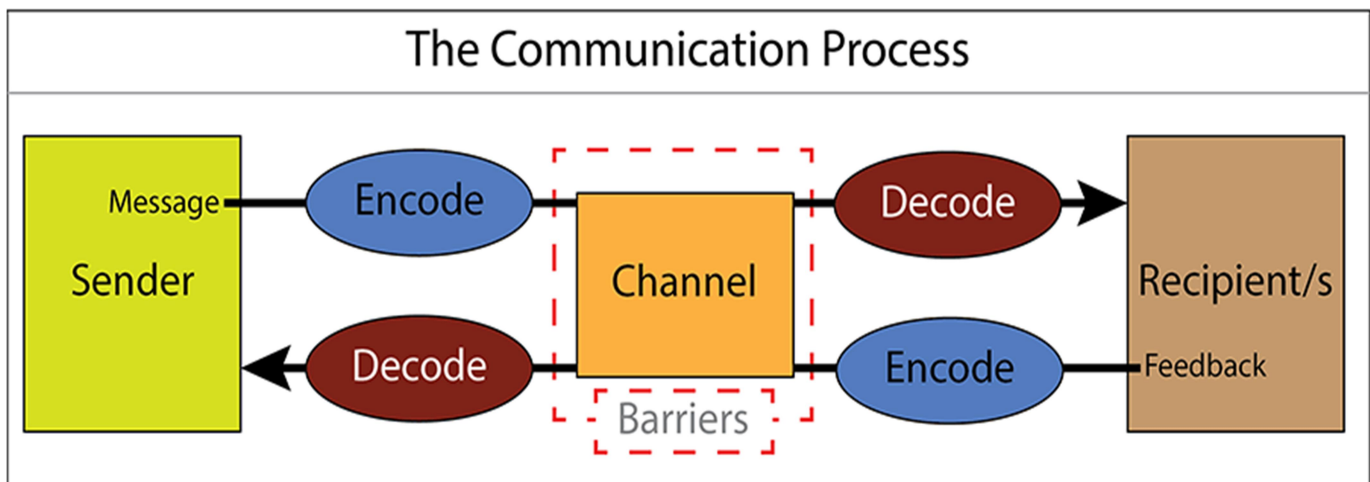
There are certain features which are essential for effective or productive communication. Among other factors, feedback (response) plays a major role in effective communication. It helps to ensure that the message is communicated properly and is understood by the receiver.

1. The most important features of effective communication is clarity and integrity of the message to be conveyed.
2. The communicator must know the main purpose and objective of the message he/she wants to achieve.
3. The language chosen should be known to both the parties.
4. An appropriate medium should be chosen to convey the message properly.
5. There should be appropriate feedback to the message.

The following are some important guidelines, which will help in inculcating effective communicative skills.

1. Before sending a message, one should analyze and simplify the content of the message.
2. One should ensure an appropriate atmosphere for delivering the message.
3. While communicating, one should be very careful about the content as well as paralinguistic features such as tone, pitch and voice.
4. One should emphasize verbal communication with the help of appropriate gestures and postures.

COMMUNICATION PROCESS



Elements of Communication

Communication is an entire process. It also has its elements which are listed below with explanations:

1. **Senders**: Sender means a person who initiates the communication and conveys its ideas to the receiver. It is the source of the process.
2. **Message**: The content, ideas, emotions, suggestions, order all fall under this element of communication.
3. **Encoding**: The method to convert the message into communication syllables like picture, word, gestures, etc.
4. **Communication Channel**: The trail along which the encoded message is transmitted to the receiver. The channel could be written, face-to-face, calls or any suitable manner. There are multiple communication channels available to us today. These include face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, text messages, email, the Internet (including social media such as Facebook and Twitter), radio and TV, written letters, brochures and reports. **Choosing an appropriate communication channel is vital for effective communication. Each communication channel has different strengths and weaknesses. For example. Informing about the election dates it is any day convenient to broadcast it over the television.** On the other hand, conveying complex, technical information is easier via a printed document than a spoken message. The recipients are able to assimilate the information at their own pace and revisit anything that they do not fully understand.
5. **Decoding**: The opposite of the encoding process, the conversion of the encoded syllables is done by the receiver.
6. **Receiver**: The last person in the chain who finally receives the message from the sender and takes an action as per requirement.
7. **Feedback**: It cumulatively involves all the actions of the receiver indicating that he received and understood the message by senders.
8. **Noise**: The obstruction or hindrance in the entire process in the communication. This hindrance might be caused by the sender, receiver or the message.

MODES OF COMMUNICATION

There are different modes of communication such as

1. Formal and Informal Communication
2. Oral and Written Communication
3. Internal and External Communication
4. Verbal and Non-verbal Communication

Formal and Informal Communication

- Relationship with person defines the formality or informality of the communication.
- On first meeting the communication is formal- the words used, tone and the way we address them are all formal.
- In an organization, discussion of business strategies is done in formal communication style. But sharing with colleagues impressions of the latest film can be informal. Both modes of communication are important but choice between formal and informal communication should be made on basis of relationship, purpose and occasion.
- When in confusion to choose a particular mode of communication, formal communication should be preferred. Formal communication does not offend the opponent.

- Written communication is not always formal communication. With familiarity informality creeps in – one needs to be very alert in formal communication and can afford to be carefree in informal/casual communication.
- Informal communication within a set-up is called **grapevine**- refers to rumour. Grapevine can both be useful and harmful for the growth of the organization as well as individual.

Oral and Written Communication

Some forms of Oral and Written Communication

Oral forms	Written forms
Face to face conversations	Memos
Telephonic conversations	Letters
Meetings	Emails
Seminars	Faxes
Conferences	Notices
Dictation	Circulars
Presentations	Newsletters
Group Discussions	Reports
Interviews (Employment and Press)	Proposals
Video-conferences	Research papers
	Bulletins
	Brochures
	Manuals and In-house journals

Advantages of Written Communication

Written mode of communication has several advantages over the oral mode.

- Written communication is convenient for lengthy messages, loads of information etc.
- Receiver gets ample time to respond to written communication.
- Written communication can also be supplemented with visual aids.

Disadvantages of Written Communication

- It takes longer to draft
- Takes long time to receive reply
- It cannot be supplemented with non- verbal gestures and postures.

Internal and External Communication

Internal Communication

- Communication within the organization is called internal communication, and it is usually formal. The interactions within the organization take place through preset formats.
- Internal Communication helps in achieving organizations' goals by informing the members of the general and specific objectives of the organization.
- Internal communication helps to circulate the information to various departments and employees within the organization.

External Communication

- External Communication is needed to expand boundaries of business.
- All official, technical, or professional communication with people outside the organization

is known as External Communication.

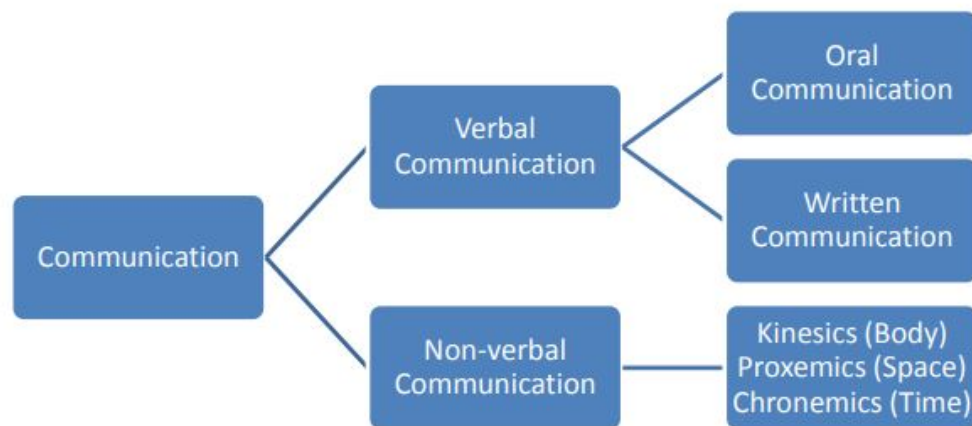
- It includes interaction with shareholders, regulators, vendors, service companies, customers and general public.

Verbal and Non-verbal Communication

Verbal Communication Includes both Oral and Written Communication.

Non-verbal communication refers to all communication that occurs without the use of words, spoken or written. Such as Body Language- Personal Appearance, Gestures, Postures, Facial Expressions, Eye contact, Kinesics, Proxemics, and Chronemics.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION



Kinesics	Proxemics	Chronemics
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal Appearance• Facial Expressions• Eye Contact• Gestures• Postures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intimate (Physical contact - 18 inch)• Personal (18 inch - 4 feet)• Social (4-12 feet)• Public (12 feet to range of seeing and hearing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time How we give meaning to time communicates to others

Communication can be both verbal and non-verbal. Verbal communication deals with words, sentences or spoken expressions, non-verbal language constitutes body movements, gestures and facial expressions. In fact, extensive research has proved that only 7 per cent of our communication takes place through words. About 38 per cent of the message is conveyed through tone, voice, inflection and so on and non-verbal physical behaviour accounts for around 55 per cent of our communication.

1. Non-verbal communication is concerned with body movements (kinesics); Space (Proxemics) and Vocal (Paralinguistic) features.
2. It includes all unwritten and unspoken messages, both intentional and intentional.
3. Non-verbal cues, however speak louder than words as even though speech can be made up.
4. Bodily expressions can rarely be masked well enough to hide one's true feelings and emotions.
5. The non-verbal part of any communication is not as deliberate and conscious as the verbal part. It is often involuntary.

KINESICS:

- Kinesics is the study of the body's physical movements.
- Body communicates without words through the various movements of its parts.
- In face-to-face communication, the message is conveyed on two levels simultaneously. One is verbal and the other is non-verbal.
- Nodding your head, blinking your eyes, shrugging shoulders, waving hands and giving handshake are kinesics which enhances the impact of your verbal communication.

Personal Appearance

- ✓ It plays an important role as people see before they hear.
- ✓ Appearance includes clothes, hair, accessories, and cosmetics and so on.
- ✓ Today the purpose of clothing has altered from a basic need to expressing oneself.
- ✓ Appearance communicates how we feel about ourselves and how we want to be viewed.

Posture

- ✓ Posture generally refers to the way we hold ourselves when we stand, sit, or walk.
- ✓ Pacing, bobbing the shoulders, fidgeting with notes, jingling coins, moving constantly or staying glued to the ground are a few postures when we are nervous.
- ✓ When we encounter an unfamiliar situation, we become more conscious of our posture.
- ✓ The way one sits reveals a lot:

Slumped posture	-	low spirit
Erect posture	-	high spirits, energy, and confidence
Lean forward	-	open, honest, and interested
Lean backward	-	defensive or disinterested
Crossed arms	-	defensive and not ready to listen
Uncrossed arms	-	willingness to listen.

Gestures

- ✓ Gesture is the movement made by hands, head or face.
- ✓ Skilful and appropriate gestures can add to the impact of verbal communication.
- ✓ A well timed gesture not only drives a point home but also enhances the value of what is being said.
- ✓ Similarly, an awkward gesture (like playing with a key chain or button) can mar the effectiveness of the message.
- ✓ Gestures should be quite natural and spontaneous.
- ✓ One should be aware of and avoid irritating gestures such as playing with a ring, twisting a key chain, clasping hands tightly or cracking knuckles.

Facial Expressions:

- ✓ The face is the most expressive part of our body.
- ✓ Facial expressions are subtle. They can be used in a variety of ways to aid, inhibit or complement communication.
- ✓ Facial expressions may show anxiety, recognition, hesitation and pleasure in quick succession.
- ✓ A smile stands for friendliness, a frown for discontent, raised eyebrows for disbelief, tightened jaw muscles for antagonism, etc.,
- ✓ The six basic facial expressions are Happiness, Disgust, Anger, Surprise, Fear and Sadness.

Eye-Contact

- ✓ Eyes are considered to be the window of the soul.
- ✓ Eyes of a speaker can convey the truthfulness of his/her words, intelligence, attitudes and feelings.
- ✓ In the professional world one should make personal and pleasant eye contact with the listeners.
- ✓ Eye contact shows one's intensity and elicits a feeling of trust.
- ✓ The eyes should convey the message, I'm pleased to talk to you, and do you believe in what I'm saying?

PROXEMICS

- Proxemics is the study of physical space in interpersonal relations.
- Space is related to behavioral norms.
- The way people use space says a lot about them.

Edward T.Hall divides space into four distinct zones.

Intimate

- ✓ This zone starts with personal touch and extends just to 18 inches (one and a half feet). Members of the family, lovers, spouses, relatives and parents fall under this zone.
- ✓ One can whisper or make unintelligible sounds but still be able communicate.
- ✓ A hand shake, a pat on the back or a hug all come into this zone.

Personal

- ✓ This zone stretches from 18 inches to 4 feet.
- ✓ Close friends, colleagues, peers etc. fall in this zone.
- ✓ Instead of whispering sounds, there can be normal conversations.
- ✓ It permits spontaneous and unplanned communication.
- ✓ Sitting or standing so close brings one closer to the listener and gives the impression of friendliness and warmth.

Social

- ✓ Social events take place in the radius of 4 feet to 12 feet.
- ✓ In this zone, relationships are more formal and official.
- ✓ These situations involve less emotion and more planning.

Public

- ✓ This zone starts from 12 feet and may extend to 25 feet to the range of eyesight and hearing.
- ✓ Events that take place in this zone are formal.
- ✓ Here the audience views what is happening as an impartial observer.
- ✓ The degree of detachment is very high.
- ✓ The audience is free to do whatever it feels like.
- ✓ Here the speaker has to raise voice to communicate to others or use a microphone.

CHRONEMICS

- Chronemics is the study of how human beings communicate through their use of time.
- In the professional world, time is a valuable resource. When we are late for an appointment people react negatively. If we arrive early we are considered either over- eager, or aggressive. So we should always be on time.
- By valuing someone else's time, we should communicate subtly and explicitly.

GROUP DISCUSSION

A process in which a group of people sit together and discuss various aspects of a given topic in the meanwhile the GD panel gauges them on a set of criteria.

The key skills that are ideally tested in a GD can be clubbed under:

- Leadership skills
- Listening skills
- Confidence
- Teamwork

Group discussion (GD) is a comprehensive technique to judge the suitability of an individual and his appropriateness for admission, scholarship, job, etc. GD assesses the overall personality – thoughts, feelings and behaviour - of an individual in a group. A topic is presented to the group members for discussion. While the discussion is going on, a group of panellists observe them. Through this observation they judge intellectual, social, leadership, communicative skills of candidates taking part in the GD.

A GD is conducted to test:

- How good you are at communicating with other
- How easily you behave and interact with the other group members
- How open minded you are
- How flexible or rigid you are in accepting the view- points of others in the group
- Your leadership skills
- Your analytical abilities
- Problem solving & critical thinking skills
- Time management skills
- Your skills at putting forth your ideas in an unbiased manner
- Social attitude and confidence

Do's of participating in a GD

- Think before you speak.
- Pick up clues from the discussion and intelligently add points that come to your mind with regards to the topic, in case you don't know much about the topic.
- Back up your points with facts and figures if needed.
- Be gentle and sure in your presentation of views.
- Speak to-the-point and make sure that you do not repeat the points.
- Be calm and composed while speaking.
- Listening to others is also an important aspect of participation in the group discussion, so listen to others.
- Have respectful attitude towards the viewpoints of others.
- Your body language should convey your ease of behaviour.
- Sometimes the discussion may take a hostile turn. In such a case it is a good idea to intervene to make the situation relaxed. This act of yours will show your leadership and problem solving skills.

Don'ts of participating in a GD

- Do not initiate the discussion if you do not know the topic well.
- Do not go overboard in exhibiting your knowledge even if you know the topic well.
- Do not interrupt other members when they are speaking.
- Do not change your opinion about the topic just because most of the other participants are having an opinion different from yours.
- Do not feel unconfident if a speaker prior to you has presented the points more effectively than you.
- Do not ask irrelevant questions.
- Do not let your personal biases about the topic enter the discussion

7 Cs OF COMMUNICATION

CLARITY

Clarity is the soul of a message. It means the accurate transfer of ideas from the sender's side to the receiver. Every message should be conveyed in a clear manner. Clarity comes through clear thinking. A good message shows the idea directly and clearly.

- A writer should not start the message unless he knows how (use of language) and what (central idea) he wants to say. A message written in the simple and ordinary language is always natural and appreciable.
- To achieve clarity, keep in mind the following points:
 - Use common and simple language.
 - Construct effective sentences and short paragraphs.
 - Use concrete words instead of abstract words.
 - Avoid unnecessary information.

CONCISENESS

- The beauty of diction lies in its conciseness. Conciseness means brief and complete. Be as brief as possible. But it must not be so brief as to be discourteous.
- Conciseness is a pre-requisite to effective messages. A concise message saves time and expense for both sender and receiver.
- To achieve conciseness, observe the following suggestions:
 - Remove the wordy expressions.
 - Include only relevant material.
 - Avoid unnecessary repetition.

CORRECTNESS

Language experts say that writing is art but difficult. There is no shortcut to being a good writer. It is learned through consistent practice and constant struggle. The message being communicated must be correct. Correctness refers to correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Though mistakes are never intentional yet they spoil the image.

- To achieve correctness, follow these guidelines:
 - Check the accuracy of facts and figures.
 - Check mistakes in punctuation, grammar, and capitalization.
 - Check misspelled words.
 - Use the right level of language.

COMPLETENESS

- A message should be complete to bring the desired result. A complete message contains all the facts required by the receiver. The receiver's reaction to an incomplete message is often unfavorable. An incomplete message shows negligence and carelessness of the writer.
- For completeness follow these guidelines:
 - Remember the five W's (what, when, where, why, who) and how.
 - Provide all the necessary information.
 - Answer all the questions asked.
 - Include additional information, if desired.
- It can be said that awareness of these 7 C's of effective communication makes you a good communicator.

CONCRETENESS

- Communicating concretely means being specific, meaningful and clear. Vague and general messages result in no response. It helps the receiver to understand the exact idea. Concrete use of available facts and figures adds to the authenticity of the message.
- To achieve concreteness, consider the following ways:
 - Use clear and image building words.
 - Use specific facts and figures.
 - Use active voice than passive voice.

COURTESY

- Courtesy is the most important quality of the messenger. “Everyone gains where courtesy reigns” is an old but wise saying. Courtesy means politeness. It is an attitude that shows respect for others. It helps in building goodwill.
- It is not enough to use polite expressions like “thank you”, “kindly”, “we appreciate”, “please” etc but the whole letter must have a courteous tone.
- To achieve courtesy, keep in mind the following points:
 - Be sincere.
 - Use expressions that show respect.
 - Be thoughtful and appreciative of the receiver’s point of view.
 - Avoid humor.
 - Avoid discriminatory language i.e., race, color, gender, creed etc.

CONSIDERATION

- Consideration is to put you in the place of the receiver. It means preparing every message with the message receiver in mind. This mode of consideration is called “you attitude”.
- When you are truly considerate, you try to show sincere regard for his interests and benefits. To be considerate, the following points should be kept in mind:
 - See your material from your reader’s point of view.
 - Focus on “you” instead of “we”
 - Be sure about the benefits of the receiver.
 - Consider the needs and problems of the receiver.
 - Use positive and optimistic

BARRIERS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is defined as the process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a system of signs, symbols. The concept of communication involves a sender, a message and a recipient.

The sender sends the message and the recipient is the receiver of the message. The process of communication is never smooth as it is affected by the barriers of communication.

Barriers to effective communication can result in confusion which can lead to incorrect information being conveyed or miscommunication which can lead to loss of business.

Following are some of the barriers to effective communication:

1. Semantic barriers
2. Psychological barriers
3. Organisational barriers
4. Cultural barriers
5. Physical barriers
6. Physiological barriers

Let us study in detail about the various types of barriers to effective communication.

Semantic barriers: Semantic barriers are also known as language barriers. These barriers are caused due to improper communication between the sender and the receiver. The following instances of semantic barriers can be witnessed in communication.

Poor quality of message: Message when communicated should be precise and easy to understand, that makes it easy for the receiver to grasp the information conveyed.

Sometimes, due to the lack of clarity or complexity of the way of providing information from the sender, there can be a case of semantic barriers.

For e.g. A manager is conversing in English to a group of workers who understand and speak Bengali. It will create confusion among workers as they will not be able to understand what is being conveyed by the manager.

Technical language: Language barriers also arise when the sender of the message is speaking in technical terms while the receiver is unaware of the terms. It creates confusion and misunderstanding between the sender and receiver by acting as a barrier to effective communication.

Psychological Barriers: Psychological barriers play an important role in interpersonal communication as the state of the mind of the sender or the receiver can make it difficult to understand the information that is conveyed, which often leads to misunderstanding.

Here are some instances where psychological barriers to communication can be seen.

1. Premature evaluation of information by the receiver even before it is transmitted can lead to barriers in communication, as it will create premature conclusion to the message, which withholds the original message.
2. Inadequate attention from the receiver's end at the time of communication can lead to barriers of communication as the information conveyed by the sender is not properly received by the receiver.
3. When information is passed within multiple sources, the final information is distorted as the receivers of the message are not able to retain everything that was conveyed. This can cause communication barriers.

Organisational barriers: Organisational barriers are those barriers that are caused due to the structure, rules and regulations present in the organisation. The various types of barriers that can be encountered due to superior subordinate relationships where the free flow of communication is not possible.

Sometimes the complexity of organisational structure and multiple managers make it difficult to convey information properly, and the information gets distorted leading to miscommunication.

Cultural barriers: Cultural barriers are those that arise due to lack of similarities among the different cultures across the world. A term that can be harmless in one culture can be regarded as a slang in another culture. Moreover, various beliefs can differ from one culture to another.

Physical barriers: Physical barriers to communication are those that arise due to certain factors like faulty equipment, noise, closed doors and cabins that cause the information sent from sender to receiver to become distorted, which results in improper communication.

Physiological barriers: Physiological barriers arise when a sender or the receiver of the communication is not in a position to express or receive the message with clarity due to some physiological issues like dyslexia, or nerve disorders that interfere with speech or hearing.

NOTICE WRITING

A notice is a formal means of communication. The purpose of a notice is to announce or display information to a specific group of people. Notices are generally meant to be pinned up on specific display boards whether in schools or in public places. Notices issued by the government appear in newspapers.

A well-written notice must inform the readers about the 5 Ws:

- What is going to happen, (that is, the event)
- Where it will take place
- When it will take place (that is, the date and time)
- Who can apply or is eligible for it
- Whom to contact or apply to (that is, the issuing authority)

- Only the most important points should be written.
- The sentences should be short and grammatically accurate. They should be in the passive voice as far as possible.
- The notice should be presented within a box.
- Information given in a notice must be clear and should not cause any misunderstanding or confusion.
- Standard abbreviations are allowed.

Normally the notice of a meeting includes the following information.

- the name of the organisation issuing the notice
- the title 'NOTICE'
- a heading to introduce the subject of the notice
- Name of the body/group which is to meet.
- Day, date and time of the meeting.
- Place of the meeting i.e. the address with email, telephone numbers and pin code along with the details of the specific place like room/hall.
- Agenda and subagenda items of the meeting.
- Information regarding provision of lunch and payment of travelling allowances.
- the writer's signature, name (in block letters) and designation

MINUTES OF A MEETING

- Minutes of a meeting are written records of the conversation and decisions that are made over the course of a meeting.
- This type of meeting notes can actually be written for any kind of meeting that requires an official record.
- This written record can then be used to either inform team members who weren't able to attend what happened or to keep track of decisions and action items that can be revisited.
- Minutes from previous meetings can therefore be used in order to make future organizational decisions.

PURPOSE

- They provide a historical record of the company's short and long-term planning. Participants have the ability to use the meeting minutes as a record for future reference, to understand what kinds of progression has taken place.
- Decisions made (motions made, votes, etc.)
- Next steps planned
- Identification and tracking of action items

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS

- Date and time of the meeting
- Names of the participants
- Purpose of the meeting
- Agenda items and topics discussed
- Action items
- Next meeting date and place
- Documents to be included in the report

PRESENTATION

A presentation is a form of communication in which the speaker conveys information to the audience. In an organization presentations are used in various scenarios like talking to a group, addressing a meeting, demonstrating or introducing a new product, or briefing a team. It involves presenting a particular subject or issue or new ideas/thoughts to a group of people.

It is considered as the most effective form of communication because of two main reasons:

- Use of non-verbal cues.
- Facilitates instant feedback.

In small presentations, we can make use of a blackboard, graphs, charts and slides as a visual aid.

Whereas, in large presentations, we can make use of films, slides, videos, animations or modern computer graphics, as a visual aid.

Presentations are a tool to influence people toward an intended thought or action.

Purpose of Presentation

1. To inform: Presentations can be used to inform the audience about new schemes, products or proposals.
2. To persuade: Presentations are also given to persuade the audience to take the intended action.

Things to be kept in mind while delivering a presentation

- Focus on the Key Message
- Plan the Structure
- Tell a Story
- Keep a Conversational Tone
- Command over language in which you are speaking
- Remember the Takeaway
- Time Your Speech
- Do Your Rehearsals
- Don't Read
- Don't Rely on Slides
- Don't Use Fancy Slideshows
- Don't Talk Too Fast (or Slow)
- Don't Forget Backup Slides
- Don't Neglect Body Language
- Don't Rush