

ENGL 158: COMMUNICATION SKILLS II

2019/2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

Contents

LECTURE ONE.....	4
What is communication?	4
LECTURE TWO.....	7
Types of Communication (Verbal Communication).....	7
1. The Intra-personal Communication.....	7
2. The inter-personal communication.....	8
3. The impersonal communications.....	8
LECTURE THREE	9
NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION	9
FORMS OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION	9
1. Proxemics	9
2. Chronemics	9
3. Oculesics.....	9
4. Haptics / Tactility	10
5. Kinesics	10
6. Vocalics	10
7. Objectics.....	10
LECTURE FOUR.....	11
THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN HUMAN EXISTENCE	11
CREDIBILITY, CONGENIALITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY	11
1. CREDIBILITY.....	11
2. CONGENIALITY	12
3. CONFIDENTIALITY.....	12
LECTURE FIVE.....	12
BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.....	13
1) DISTORTION	13
2) NOISE	13
LECTURE SIX.....	13
COMMUNICATION IN ORGANISATION.....	15
1. DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION	15
2. UPWARD COMMUNICATION	15
3. HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION	16
4. DIAGONAL COMMUNICATION	16
	17

LECTURE SEVEN	18
COMMUNICATION FORMATS	18
LETTER WRITING	18
LECTURE EIGHT	22
MEETING	22
CONDUCT OF FORMAL MEETINGS	22
THE AGENDA	23
THE INVITATION LETTER	23
LECTURE NINE	25
WRITING MINUTES	25
STRUCTURE OF MINUTES	25
FURTHER EXPLANATION	26
THE LANGUAGE OF MINUTES	28
TYPES OF MINUTES	29
LECTURE TEN	31
REPORT WRITING	31
THE STRUCTURE OF A REPORT	31
LETTER OF SUBMISSION	32
LECTURE ELEVEN	36
THE MEMORANDUM	36
THE FORM OF THE MEMORANDUM	36
THE CURRICULUM VITAE (C.V.)	39
ASPECTS OF THE C.V. (CONTENT)	39
LECTURE TWELVE	43
LISTENING SKILLS	43
IMPROVING LISTENING (RECEPTIVE) SKILLS	43
TESTING MASTERY OF LISTENING PRINCIPLES	44
READING	45
READING ALOUD	45
READING FOR COMPREHENSION	46
TECHNIQUES FOR READING	46
IMPROVING SPEAKING (PRODUCTIVE) SKILLS	48
LECTURE THIRTEEN	49
THE PARAGRAPH	49
TYPES OF PARAGRAPHS	49
THE INTERVIEW	54

TYPES.....	54
LETTER OF REFUSAL	56

LECTURE ONE

What is communication?

The term communication refers to the process of receiving and giving information for the purpose of enhancing one's life and the life of others around him or her. Communication is bipolar, involving a speaker (source) and a listener (destination or interlocutor) and for it to be effective, it must end in the achievement of desired goals. Hence the speakers should be able to use the correct sound and speak intelligibly in order to facilitate the understanding of the message and to give back the appropriate or desired response.

Communication is very crucial to our existence so when we communicate, it is an attempt to solve a problem or a need of survival. Here, we should not see survival as mere existence, but rather meaningful existence. It is difficult to imagine how life would be if we were not receiving and giving information. Man, and even animals are involved in communication in very complex way.

- A twitch in the tummy communicates to us that we are hungry and that we need food.
- The physical world also communicates to us; a darkening of the sky and with the movement of clouds and other signs communicate to us that it is about to rain.
- The horns of cars, road signs, zebra crossing, road topography and vehicle behaviour signs also communicate.
- We listen and read from people around us. Our children tell us they are hungry, they need this or that, and our parents call, instruct and advise us.

In all these, we are involved in communication because we receive some information to which we respond.

It must be noted that we don't only receive information; we also send information to others. As children, we communicate to our parents our wishes and expectations. We also tell people how we feel about them, about other things and also about ourselves. In these actions, whether in speech or in writing, we expect a response, reply or feedback. There is the need for exchange (a give-and-take exercise)

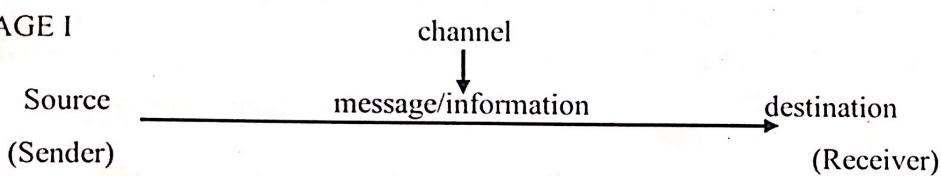
Communication can thus be understood as a process (of transmitting and receiving information); it is the organization and transmission or transfer of information. As a process, communication

involves a combination of different activities. This is evident in the changing roles of people (as speaker or listener) and the movement from the beginning to the end of the communication interaction. As a process also, communication is influenced by various factors such as the nature of participants, the place, goals of interaction and the nature of the subject.

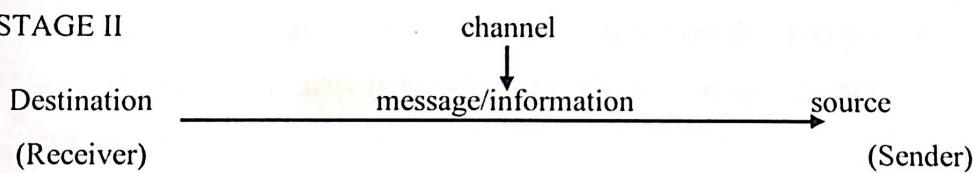
Communication may be seen as a system because it may not only be the simple activity of speaking and listening. It could involve a number of persons, resources and activities which are organised and harnessed in order to make the transferring and receiving of information possible for the fulfilment of the desired goals or intention or response of the speaker(s) making it effective communication.

The interplay of the component elements for effective communication is demonstrated below.

STAGE I



STAGE II



NOTE

The diagram represents the general and simplest form of communication. We may have more than one source or destination, and the message and the channel involved can be dynamic and complex. Note also that in conversations and question-and-answer contexts, the questioner, who is the source in STAGE ONE, becomes the receiver in STAGE TWO when the answerer also speaks.

TERMS / KEY EXPRESSIONS

1. Effective Communication
2. Bipolar

3. Interlocutors
4. Noise
5. Distortion
6. Impersonal Communication
7. Intra-personal Communication
8. Interpersonal Communication
9. Feedback
10. Verbal/Nonverbal Communication
11. Credibility
12. Congeniality
13. Confidentiality
14. The grapevine
15. Skimming
16. Scanning
17. Message overload

LECTURE TWO

Types of Communication (Verbal Communication)

Communication may be distinguished by looking at the number of people involved in the transfer or processing of ideas or information as well as the relationship between them. Upon such consideration, communication may be viewed in three groups or types.

1. The Intra-personal Communication

This could be described as communications within oneself. It may be the mental response to external or internal stimuli or data. Non-linguistic stimuli such as sound, heat, light, may be interpreted. For example:

- If by applying one's mind, one comes to the realisation that the twitch in one's tummy means hunger, then one has engaged in intra-personal communication.
- If one interprets the dark atmosphere as the approach of night, then one has as well engaged in intra-personal communication.

The intra-personal communication may also involve interpreting linguistic data such as getting information through reading or listening and reaction (or feedback).

Things to note about the intra-personal communication.

- It involves the mental attempts to receive linguistic and non-linguistic stimuli.
- It involves a mental activity by which one gives meaning to or add value on the data one has received.
- It embodies assembling the various strands of information one has obtained from words, interpret or analyse them and give them meaning or value.
- The internal reaction involved in intra-personal communication, includes planning, applying information to the problems, taking decisions and evaluating and recollecting information.

Note:

since individuals have to listen, interpret as well as react internally to the data/information they receive. It should be understood that intra-personal communication takes place in individuals even during inter-personal and public communication.

2. The inter-personal communication

Inter-personal communication refers to the concrete act of transferring or procession information. It could be between two individuals (one-on-one communication) or between one individual and a group (where there is a need to address a group) or where communication it is between a group and an individual (i.e. message is transmitted on behalf of an organisation, institution or corporation to its workers).

Inter-personal communication is direct communication between the source (sender) and the specific receiver(s) with a high potential for feedback and interaction. It includes;

a. Monolineal forms (one-way out forms) i.e.

- i. Giving information
- ii. Giving commands
- iii. Writing letters

b. Bilineal forms (give-and-take forms) i.e.

- i. Conversation
- ii. Question-and-answer
- iii. Interviews discussion
- iv. Letter and reply
- v. Prosecution and defence

c. Multilineal forms

- i. Meetings
- ii. Interviews
- iii. Conversations
- iv. Discussion

3. The impersonal communications

In impersonal or mass public communication, the message is directed to large diffused audience with no direct contact between source and receiver. Channels that are most suitable for mass or impersonal communications include television, film, radio, newspapers, magazine, posters, billboards, etc. Note that the basic difference between interpersonal and public (impersonal) communication is in the number of people who are listening or reading. Because of the great number, the personal or the informal is played down and the social and the formal is heightened.

Public communication, thus, tends to be business oriented. Examples of such communications are radio and television speeches and announcements as well as other forms of public speeches

and sermons; teacher-student; teacher-learning situation; meetings and convocations. In such situations people may speak and may be spoken to collectively or individually.

LECTURE THREE

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication is simply anything that conveys a message without using words. No communicator can ever deny having communicated non-verbally. In fact, the non-verbal communication complements the verbal one.

FORMS OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1. Proxemics

This refers to how SPACE is used to communicate. This is associated primarily with the particular place or location of communication.

- The church room communicates situations of reverence, quietude, solemnity, etc.
- The discotheque communicates an atmosphere of chaos, turbulence, lawlessness, merriments, etc.

2. Chronemics

Here, one may communicate with one's perception and use of TIME.

- That is the point in time at which we communicate. For example, one would interpret a phone call that comes at 2 o'clock a.m. as having a serious or urgent issue.
- We may also communicate by the way we respond to an appointed time. Lateness may be communicated as lack of seriousness, disrespect or laziness.
- Slowness and fastness speak to us. We sing slowly to signify a pensive, prayerful or mournful mood. When people sing very fast, we sometimes interpret it to mean they are in some kind of trouble.
- People who focus on the past may be viewed as being lazy, unforgiving or sometimes reflective, those on the present as selfish, and unwise and those who focus on the future as dynamic or progressive.

3. Oculistics

This is communication by nature of EYE CONTACT between or among people. Eye contact can communicate interest, attention and, at other times, disrespect or when the people we talk to fail to look us in the face, we sometimes interpret it to mean that they are aloof or perhaps are telling lies.

4. Haptics / Tactility

It refers to the way in which TOUCH communicates, i.e. a gentle, emotional touch communicates affection even to the new baby. The place one touches, the depth, as well as the length of such contact all communicate. Examples include functional professional touch by a doctor on duty; hand shake; pecks; walking in arms; embracing; caressing; hugging and kissing; touching the thigh, breast, buttocks or the region on the sexual organ functions generally to communicate and to arouse sexual ideas and feelings.

5. Kinesics

This kind of communication involves MOVEMENT consisting of facial expression, general movement of limbs, movement of the head and the body as a whole. Nose winking, nodding, nudging, curtsying, beckoning, etc.

6. Vocalics

This form of the non-verbal communication is associated with the VOICE or sound, it manifests in the following ways:

- the speed, pitch, intonation, stress and volume of one's speech.
- laughter, crying, hissing, clearing of the throat, yawning, whistling, etc.
- silence communicates the absence of people or serious business such as meeting taking place.

7. Objectics

This is in reference to the way ARTIFACTS and the environment speak to us;

- the personal – things with which we adorn ourselves e.g. clothes, hairdo, perfume, make-up, bag.
- the environment – the condition within which people are found – the nature of their abode, the furniture, car, decoration, colour, objects, etc.
- aids – the things which actually used to help one in rhetorical communications. Examples are the teaching aids, the pen, pencil, ink or the paper used..

LECTURE FOUR

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN HUMAN EXISTENCE

Communication as we have already learnt is the process of finding out information and receiving information. There are several reasons why we communicate as human beings.

1. To initiate actions by passing on a message/information.
 - a. By expressing our needs and requirements.
 - b. By persuading and motivating others in order to inform them or win them over to our new point. We can achieve this through conversation, speeches, letters, briefings, instructions, procedures, manuals, etc. Note that we are constantly bombarded with advertisements by business matters in order to persuade and motivate us to buy or patronise their products.
2. To impart information, ideas, opinions, etc. in order to create understanding or awareness. This is often done through the use of explanations, descriptions, summaries, analyses, anecdotes, illustrations, etc. It must be noted that all the above are ways of communicating information in order to enhance the perception and understanding of one's audience regarding one's subject or point of view, or product or service.
3. To establish, acknowledge or maintain links or relations with other people. Letters may be written to pen-pals in order to initiate friendship or to sustain friendship. We may also write and express our feelings to a friend or relative. Non-verbal communication forms such as a nod, a smile, a hug, a wink or a wave of the hand at a person indicate that we recognize the presence of our listener or the recipient of our message/information.

CREDIBILITY, CONGENIALITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

During communication we are most likely to attend to and accept a message if it has credibility and congeniality.

1. CREDIBILITY

A message or piece of information is said to be credible when it inspires trust and belief in the recipient.

For a message to be credible;

- a) it must come from the right authority on the basis of the sender's position or status or
- b) on the basis of his prestige or reputation or

c) on the basis of his knowledge, skills, expertise or experience.

In a nutshell, we believe the message by virtue of the status or authority of the service/originator. Credibility could also be obtained if the sender appears honest, objective and straight-forward so that he does not make his message ambiguous (having a double meaning)

2. CONGENIALITY

A message is congenial when it is favourable or appeals to the recipient's need for satisfaction or confirmation without any fear or unpleasantness, difficulty or dissatisfaction.

Congeniality is therefore a state of pleasantness when one's tastes are in agreement with the message. The message becomes acceptable because of its appeal on the values, attitudes, beliefs and expectations that the receiver holds or finds attractive.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

This is based on the principle of keeping information received as a secret without divulging or disclosing it. There should be a high level of secrecy between;

- a doctor / patient.
- police / informant.
- lawyer / client.
- counsellor / counselee.

LECTURE FIVE

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Communication is faced by two main problems and these are

1. distortion.
2. noise.

1) DISTORTION

Distortion refers to a change in the meaning of a message or information so that it is no longer true or accurate. This means that distortion results in the loss of the meaning of a message or utterance during handling or transmission.

Distortion occurs in the following ways:

- At the encoding and decoding; stage when exact or precise intention of the sender is not accurately transmitted or expressed in language and so the wrong message is sent.
- When the language used is either ambiguous or unclear. For example, using different dialects, idiolects, not being able to articulate the current sound.
 - i. "He had a cup/cap in his travelling bag."
 - ii. Those are my eyes; those are my ears; (instead of using these)
 - iii. That is my mouth (instead of using "this")
- When unfamiliar or unexplained pictures, diagrams etc. are used to communicate.
- When different opinions, attitudes, inattentiveness or uncooperativeness cause either party (that is the sender and the receiver) to decide to deliberately make the message unclear; (a) by either twisting the information or (b) by choosing to understand only what he expects to hear from the message (perceptual bias or selectivity)

2) NOISE

Noise refers to distractions/interferences in the environment in which communication takes place thereby obstructing the process of communication by affecting the accuracy, clarity or even the arriving of the message.

SOURCES OF NOISE

1. **PHYSICAL NOISE**; e.g. Other people talking in the place of communication, passing traffic, clatter of machinery, the cry of babies in the room; the barking of dogs.
2. **SOCIAL NOISE**; interference created by differences in
 - a. personality, e.g. between the rich and the poor; literate and the illiterate, male and female, boss and subordinate, student and teacher.

- b. cultural differences- e.g. language dialect/ tribe/costume.
- c. religious outlook; e.g. between a Muslim and a Christian/a Christian and a Hindu, etc. such as, "Father John, do you weed on Tuesday?"

Euphemism used in the Akan culture but not understood by Father Pascal Goodsmann in *Ancestral Sacrifice* because of religious and cultural differences existing between them.

3. **TECHNICAL NOISE;** this is failure or breakdown of the medium or channel of communication while the message is being transmitted e.g. the breakdown of the computer, printer, mobile phone, illegible handwriting, etc.
4. **PSYCHOLOGICAL NOISE;** sometimes our emotions or the state of our mind can affect the meaning of the message we receive e.g. when in excitement or sorrow, in anger or fear, with prejudice or nervousness, we easily interpret or react to the message we receive differently depending on the mood we are in. The state of the mind also affects the message from the source (sender).

OTHERS

5. Code of credibility due to poor preparation and presentation.
6. Poor listening or poor reading skills, loss of concentration.
7. Not communicating – deciding to keep quiet or remain silent at certain times during communication.
8. Sending the wrong message – one that is not meaningful or irrelevant or unsuitable for the purpose.
9. Over-loading – giving the recipient more than what he can digest in the available time.
10. Non-verbal signals such as pictures, facial expression or appearance, postures or poise which contradict the verbal message are likely to confuse the recipient.
11. Failure to seek or offer feedback or even injuring the feedback often.
12. Choosing an unsuitable channel or medium of communication.

LECTURE SIX

COMMUNICATION IN ORGANISATION

In organisation, communication flow is mostly downward, upward, horizontal and diagonal.

1. DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION

This kind of communication is carried out **from superior to subordinate**.

- a. It may be delegation of authority involving giving information about instructions or job schedules.
- b. An induction or orientation, giving information about procedures and practices in the organisation.
- c. It may be an appraisal informing the subordinate about how well or badly he is performing his duties.
- d. A job description – informing the subordinate about what role his job plays in the realisation of the organisation's objectives.
- e. Indoctrination – instilling in the employees, the company's culture, goals and customs.

IMPROVING DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION.

1. Management should institute systems and mechanisms such as holding fora, issuing bulletins, giving briefings, holding meetings/interviews, publishing house journals/newsletters, running in-service courses for the staff.
2. Management should establish in each organisation a culture of communication.
 - a. Exchange pleasantries, views and opinions.
 - b. Have very brief morning prayers together just before work starts every day.
 - c. Encourage top level management to be role models by setting examples.
3. Train and coach managers to communicate more effectively using the organisation's house style.
4. Create opportunities and stings for social interactions in the work place e.g. Tea/coffee breaks, monthly parties, end of year dinner, picnics, etc.
5. Insist on good communication skills as a criterion for recruitment, appraisal of work and promotion.
6. Encourage staff to communicate confidently without fear of victimisation.

2. UPWARD COMMUNICATION

This is communication from subordinate to superior. It may be:

- a. An information from a subordinate about his problems, fears, his performance and prospects.
- b. A report from a subordinate on a task he has been assigned to perform.
- c. A comment about the organisation's policies or practices by a subordinate.
- d. An information about his colleagues – their attitude to work and their problems.
- e. A suggestion about what needs to be done, how it is to be done.

IMPROVING UPWARD COMMUNICATION

1. Organisations should have collective bargaining agreements to offer their employees channels for complaints, comments, suggestions etc.
2. Hold regular meetings with representatives of employees. Discuss issues related to workers welfare.
3. Introduce suggestions' box where workers can write their suggestions, comments and complaints on pieces of papers and drop them inside the boxes.
4. Operate an open policy where management is accessible to even the most junior member of staff.

3. HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION

In this kind of communication, the direction is **between or among people at the same hierarchical level of the organisation**. Formally, horizontal communication allows people to co-operate and co-ordinate their activities, or tasks towards achieving the set goals of the organization. This could take the form of inter-departmental or inter-sectional meetings. Informally, it describes and enhances emotional and social support (fellow-feeling) among colleagues on the same level.

Horizontal communication may face problems associated with office politics, professional rivals or territorial rivalry and even power struggles. Some officers may resist the expert authority of other officers. Again, a manager or department head or even a whole department or section may rigorously resist co-operation with another head or department that may be encroaching on his or their area of jurisdiction or authority. There may also exist conflicts of interests between and among individuals or groups because of widely different work habits, attitudes and perceptions. Some workers may go to the extent of

sabotaging one another to the detriment of the individual institution or company; professional rivalry.

IMPROVING HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION

1. Institute – (inter-sectional or inter-departmental work teams or committee) and task them to hold regular meetings and discuss issues or problems as where and when they crop up.
2. Rotate jobs – thereby allowing each individual manager/officer to experience the job of the other.
3. Encourage peer counselling as a means of resolving conflicts.
4. Appoint a communicator as a sort of liaison officer to promote communication between departments by issuing newsletters or bulletins relevant to all departments at appropriate times.

4. DIAGONAL COMMUNICATION

Here, a subordinate or a worker at the lower ranges of the ladder may communicate with someone at a different level of the hierarchy and in a different section or department. This type of communication is generally discouraged in most organisation. In every organisation, individuals are encouraged to follow normal official channels of communication with its norms and procedures. This means that communication should follow the line of command – a superior will deal only with his own immediate subordinates and vice versa.

LECTURE SEVEN

COMMUNICATION FORMATS

LETTER WRITING

Formal letters:

The term "formal letter" is used to include those letters classified as "business" or "official". Business letters are those concerned with work or employment and the execution of the activities of an entrepreneur. The official would be those which are coming from or going to people who are considered to hold some public offices. They include;

- a. Letters of application for employment
- b. Letters to the Press or Editors of newspapers or magazines.
- c. Letters in answer to advertisements.
- d. Letters to government Departments, Councils, Corporations, Business Firms or Public organisations.
- e. Letters to one's Headmaster or Principal.

Formal features of formal letters

When writing a formal letter you must tackle the following aspects systematically;

1. Writer's own address (without name). Use the indented form of address here, punctuated.
2. Date i.e. 21st March, 2015.
3. Recipient's Address.

NB. Use the block style of address and it must be written in small letters with capital letters beginning each word. Remember to use the designation or official position/status of the recipients. E.g. The Personnel Manager, The Secretary, The Permanent Secretary, The Managing Director.

4. Salutation (greeting)

The salutation is basically a call to the recipient for his attention. It is expected to exhibit as much politeness as possible. Generally, we use *Dear Sir* (if the recipient is a man) and *Dear Madam* (if the recipient is a woman). Where the sex of the direct recipient of the letter is not known, the male form, *Dear Sir*, is used. *Dear Sir/Madam* is not to be used for such occasions. Note that the *Dear Sir/Madam* is used when the letter is a circular and thus have a communal recipient, who could be both male and female.

5. The Heading (Title)

This is always the main topic of the letter. It is always written on the line below the salutation. It is advisable one writes it in capital letters, and in a telegraphic form and it should be underlined.

6. Content

The content of a letter may manifest itself in the following elements:

- a. Introduction
- b. Main Body (i.e. subject matter) and
- c. Conclusion.

Examples of a complimentary close (for replies)

- a. It would be much appreciated if you could inform me as soon as it may be convenient.
- b. I should be most grateful if you could let me have the information as soon as it may be convenient.

7. Subscription

End the letter with "Yours faithfully," only. Note that capital "Y" begins the 'yours and small 'f', the faithfully, followed by a mandatory comma.

8. Signature/Name

You are to sign your name (or write your signature). Write your full name below your signature. You **may** put this in brackets. In some situations, you may be required to provide your designation/identification.

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

1. The language of the formal letter should be verified or specialised in vocabulary. It is precise and has an unflinching preoccupation with the subject and focus of the interaction.
2. There is a high degree of deference/politeness and social distance between the writer and the recipient.
3. There should be strictness of form. Nothing should be taken for granted. As much as possible, things are supposed to be stated in their full form. Do not use contracted forms of words. This quality affects the nature of the address, the name or the complementary close and generally the way in which facts are represented.
4. Never use verbose sentences like: "bye for now" or participial phrases such as "Thanking you in advance", "Hoping to hear soon from you", etc.
5. Do not 'beg' or sound very religious in your business or application letter. Use words such as plead or implore instead of "beg".

6. Avoid artificial elegance. The tendency is for writers to use language in order to merely create artistic beauty.
7. It is important to remember that strict adherence to object of communication, and precision of communication are features of the language and style of the formal letter.

ABOUT THE MAIN BODY

What one does in a letter is one's intent of the purpose of the letter, which is generally stated in the introduction. We are using the writing or letter as medium to achieve or arrive at our ultimate aim (i.e. to be given appointment, compensation or supply at the time and manner we want.) So we should know as writers what one wants to do in a letter and what one wants to do with a letter.

The main body of the formal letter is seen to contain information facts and details, which will make it possible for the writer to achieve his objectives.

1. In an application of employment, the main body answers the following questions. What information will I produce to make the employer give me the job?
 - a. My education
 - b. My experience
 - c. My abilities
 - d. Reference.
2. If you are writing an invitation to make someone come and deliver a keynote address or any talk, you need to tell him that following;
 - a. the topic.
 - b. why you chose the topic.
 - c. why he was chosen to deliver it.
 - d. the date, time and place.
 - e. the duration.
 - f. the nature of participants.
3. In a letter of requisition, the following elements must be included;
 - a. the items and quantities.
 - b. where they are to be delivered.
 - c. when to be delivered
4. A letter of appreciation which intends at making the recipient see how we value his gift or service should contain such things as;
 - a. what has been contributed, and perhaps time and place.

- b. how useful the contribution has been.
- 5. A petition should make the recipient see the unacceptability of the existing situation and perhaps the usefulness of the alternatives we are proposing. We therefore need to talk about:
 - a. why the present situation is wrong or unacceptable.
 - b. what we claim is right.
 - c. what we think should be done.

LECTURE EIGHT

MEETING

The meeting is an important medium of face to face communication. A well-organised, well-focused and well-conducted meeting can be extremely important in several ways which include:

1. To make or take decisions.
2. To relay decisions or instructions (downward briefings).
3. To provide information and advice for management to come to a decision (upward briefings).
4. To initiate participatory problem solving through consultation with colleagues and staff in different departments or fields.
5. To brainstorm with a view to generate new approaches and ideas for the purpose of progress of the organisation, society, association or family.

Basically, there are two kinds of meetings and there are formal meetings and informal meetings.

- a. Formal Meetings are either required by government legislation or by the Articles of the Company or organisation or they are formed by rules and regulations or conventions laid down in that organisation or company's formal constitution, which may specify when meetings could be held - once a year, once every month, twice a year, beginning of school term, middle, of the term and end of term meetings in schools.
- b. Informal Meetings or everyday meetings, on the other hand, can be held at any time if it is deemed expedient to do so. They are held for the purposes of exchanging views and opinion in the view to forestall a problem or to take an immediate decision on a pressing issue.

CONDUCT OF FORMAL MEETINGS

Formal meetings by their nature are formed by laid down rules, regulations and conventions.

There will have to be;

- a notice of meeting or an announcement or an invitation to the meeting
- an agenda - i.e. a list of items of business to be discussed and
- minutes – the written records of the proceedings of previous meeting(s), approved by those present.

THE AGENDA

The agenda is a clear ordering of steps to be followed in the conduct of a meeting. It shows the clear order in which various issues are to be discussed or handled at a meeting. Usually the agenda is prepared as part of a letter summoning the members of an organisation, club or society to a meeting and is normally sent out well in advance of the time of the meeting depending on how widely scattered the member of the society or club members.

THE INVITATION LETTER

A notice of meeting will be normally prepared and circulated by the secretary to any laid down resolutions in writing in this letter of invitation, the secretary has to provide in the letter of invitation the date, venue, time and a full agenda of the meeting. This is a circular and therefore is formal or official letter. If it is a mere meeting, the invitation could be posted on the notice board or in the newspapers. If it is for a special committee, personal letters could be sent. It might also be necessary for internal meetings.

Consider the circumstances below.

“Of late, there has been a start or increase in the rate of indiscipline among the students. The Vice Chancellor of the university has directed the disciplinary committee to address the issue and make recommendations on how to arrest the sad situation”

Let us examine the following of what the secretary of the disciplinary committee may write.

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology,
U.P.O.,
Kumasi-Ashanti,
30th March, 2015.

Dear Sir/Madam,

INVITATION TO A MEETING

I have been directed to invite all members of the disciplinary committee to a very important meeting in the S.R.C office on Friday, 27 March, 2015 starting at 3.30pm prompt.

AGENDA

- Opening Prayer
- Chairman's Opening Remarks
- Reading and adoption of previous minutes.
- Matters arising from the minutes.
- Main Business for the Day; Disciplinary problems and suggestions for solving problems.
- Any other business (other Problems)
- Chairman's Closing Remarks.
- Closing Prayer.

All members of the committee are kindly requested to attend the meeting, and promptly too.

Yours faithfully,

(BOAMAH JOSEPH)

Secretary

DISTRIBUTION

All members of the Disciplinary Committee

Cc: The Vice-Chancellor,

KNUST

U.P.O, KNUST

Kumasi.

LECTURE NINE

WRITING MINUTES

Minutes are basically an account of the various issues raised and discussed at a meeting and the decisions taken on such issues. Minutes are therefore records and points of reference for the dissection and most importantly, the decisions which are made to guide the activities of an organisation. Minutes also constitute a reflection of consensus. Generally, decisions are arrived at after open and through discussions. Hence, when minutes are read, they represent not individual decisions but what the group in total has decided. Such atmosphere promotes a sense of responsibility and belonging.

The writing of minutes passes through two stages. The first stage is when the secretary makes notes or takes down notes during the actual meeting. As the discussion proceeds very fast, all that the secretary does is to make rough notes of the salient points.

STRUCTURE OF MINUTES

1. Name of organisation or committee.
2. Kind of meeting e.g. 24th PTA Executive meeting, Academic Board Meeting, Board of Governors Meeting, etc.
3. Such details as time, date, place of meeting.
4. Members present/absent and apologies received.
5. Opening
6. (a) Reading of previous minutes/acceptance
 (b) Matters arising
7. Main discussion / Main Business for the day.
 Details of resolutions adopted, decisions arrived at, motions and counter motions tabled, voting and results as well as ad-hoc committee appointed and what assignments.
8. Any Other Business (Other Matters)
9. (a) Chairman's Closing Remark
 (b) Closing Prayer.
10. Endorsement.

The second stage of minutes writing is when the secretary in his own spare time after the meeting sits down and re-writes the information notes taken during the meeting into a comprehensive record of matters as they transpired at the meeting.

In writing up the minutes, the secretary must be sure that the language mistakes are avoided as far as possible since the minutes will be read out at a follow-up meeting and he will lose face if the House should detect many errors and point them out to him for correction.

The secretary must also ensure that he records the facts and not his own personal opinions so that the minutes can pass as truly representing business as it was carried out at the meeting under review.

FURTHER EXPLANATION

1. TITLE

The title of minutes contain the following elements.

- a. Name of organisation
- b. Nature of meeting
- c. Place, time, date. e.g. minutes of English Departmental Board Meeting held in the Department's General Office on Wednesday 20th March, 2015 at 3.00pm.

2. ROLL CALL: members present/in attendance/absentees

3. OPENING: Items here generally include the following;

- a. Time and opening (if not stated in the title)
- b. Method of opening – Prayer and/or introductory remarks by Chairman.

4. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of previous meetings are read in order to acquaint members with the house's previous discussions and decisions and to evaluate the organisation and individuals on this basis. These minutes are also important because they provoke further discussions which help the house or organization. Items recorded are based on the deliberations that ensued and these include the following.

CORRECTION - Corrections are generally not recorded except where they produce some discussions or agitations.

MOVING FOR ACCEPTANCE – The one expected to move for the acceptance of such minutes depends on the organisation's regulations. Important items to record in minutes are;

- (a) who moved for acceptance of minutes?
- (b) who seconded it?

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

These usually comprise

- (a) reports and questions on implementation of decisions taken.
- (b) items deferred to a next meeting or the current meeting precisely.

Questions asked here as well as the people who asked them are generally not recorded in detail.

Reports on matters arising are generally given by Chairman or anyone called upon by him to do so. Such reports may be documented or not. Documented reports are recorded in summary in the minutes. The undocumented ones are however, recorded in some detail for record purposes.

5. MAIN BUSINESS

The various topics that constitute the main business are usually provided on the agenda. The Chairman generally introduces these. He also ensures also that discussions are orderly and exhaustive so that a good decision could be arrived at. He regulates discussions and prevents one member from talking too much. The main business deliberations can be put into two (a) Discussions and (b) Briefings.

1. Discussion

E.g. issues and their discussions, decisions taken on these issues. And issue and discussion is generally written or stated in sub-leading. This is to make it explicit and unmistakable in the minutes. Note that contributions and discussions are usually not recorded individually and in detail in resolution and action minutes. They are rather often generalised and summaries. In narrative minutes however, the various contributions of members are recorded.

2. Briefing

Some of the items in the main business do not necessarily entail discussions and decision taking. They are opportunities for members to be briefed on very important issues of the enterprise or association. They may be led by the chair or anybody he appoints to do so. Briefings may sometimes generate questions, discussion and may also lead to decision making.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (A.O.B)

This is also referred to as Other Matters. Here, we record discussions that do not form part of the agenda drawn from the meeting. The issues are pertinent items raised by members and may generally be in the form of announcements, remarks, complaints, suggestions and enquiries. These are also recorded under sub-headings, as in the main business.

7. CLOSING

In the minutes, the closing generally covers the following details as applicable.

- a) Final or concluding remarks made by the Chairman
- b) Motion for closing and seconding
- c) Prayer

For example: *The Chairman thanked the members for their co-operation and charged them to be always alive to their duties. In the absence of any further discussion, a motion to close the meeting was moved by Mr. Ossei and seconded by Dr. Sam. The meeting finally ended at 6:30 p.m. with a short prayer by Mr. Fouke.*

8. ENDORSEMENT

After the closing comes the endorsement. This comprises the names and signatures of the person who recorded the minutes. (The Secretary and the Chairman respectively e.g.)

Recorded by:.....

Endorsed

by:.....

(JOHN OPOKU)

(HURBERT OFOSU)

SECRETARY

CHAIRMAN

THE LANGUAGE OF MINUTES

Minutes are a formal document and therefore the language should be formal. Features such as colloquial language, contractions, slang expressions, figurative expressions are not advisable in minutes.

The tense for minutes is generally the simple past. This is because minutes are a record of past speeches and decisions. Sometimes however, the present tense or the future time is used for decision and directives to give them force and live.

Reported (indirect) speech is used in minutes instead of direct speech. This facilitates summary and helps to remove untidy and irrelevant parts of contributions. E.G. (direct) "I will come" becomes, (indirect). He said that he would come.

The Passive voice is frequently used. This stems from the fact that what is said and the decisions made are considered more important than the persons who said them. Passive constructions are a way of highlighting the information and the decisions and pushing the speakers to the background. E.g. we prefer, "It was pointed out" to "Mr. Mensah pointed out that,"; "It was agreed that" NOT "We agreed that"

This practice highlights the group interest and plays down the individual.

Since the resolution and action minutes concentrate on consensus or group decisions rather than an individual contributions. General terms such as "The meeting", "The Committee Members", are used frequently in order to efface the actual speaker or officer. Where it is only one person the indefinite forms 'a' or 'an' or 'one' are used as in 'a member'.

TYPES OF MINUTES

Minutes could be differentiated according to their information and focus (or weighting given) however, there is no clear-cut distinction between one type and another since minutes seem to address these aspects identified at the same time. The idea here is on focus or concentration of issues raised and discussed at a meeting. Thus we have *narrative*, *resolution* and *action* minutes.

1. NARRATIVE MINUTES

This kind of minutes seeks to describe the various contributions which precede decisions as well as votes in detail. In this way, it becomes quite easy for one to see how thorough discussions were. (What happened or what was said at the meeting)

Details could be how the meeting was begun and conducted, who initiated issues and what he actually said; contributions made in support or in dissension; motions and counter-motions, decisions made, how decisions were arrived at by voting, unanimity, etc.

2. RESOLUTION MINUTES

Resolutions minutes concentrate in responding to what decisions were taken at a meeting. The minutes will record the decisions reached, whether they were unanimous or whether there was dissent and also other details which are essential to the description and implementation of the decisions. Hence, they are more common and easier to read.

3. ACTION MINUTES

These are closer to resolution minutes. In fact, it can be seen as a kind of resolution minutes in which further emphasis is placed on the person and the strategies by which the decisions are implemented. Though the action minutes are said to be in answer to the question of who executes the decisions, it is difficult to talk about who is to do something without reference to what he is expected to do and how that fulfils the goals and decisions of the organisation.

Action minutes usually contain the following information.

- a) Executive Officer(s)
- b) Time frame for execution
- c) Equipment/Methodology/Procedure to be used for the execution.
- d) Supervising Officers.

LECTURE TEN

REPORT WRITING

A report is an account and interpretation of observations or information which is presented to another to enable him understand issues at stake, so that he can make informed decisions. A report looks at the past or the present situation in order to make a decision for the future. A report is thus an intervention between the present and the future. It is based on an objective position that we cannot make good decisions for the future unless we are adequately informed about the details of how things are, have been or were. Based on this information we make decisions.

THE STRUCTURE OF A REPORT

1. TITLE

Subject of the report, name of authoriser, name of reporter.

2. THE INTRODUCTION

The introductory part of a report serves to prepare the mind of the reader for the findings and conclusions, which constitute the main subject of the report. It does this by informing the reader about the problem at hand. This may include knowledge about the background of the report i.e. events which prompt the authorisation of the investigation, the nature of authorisation or the terms of reference, the identity of the authoriser and the purpose and scope of the investigation. It also comprises several information on the research, interpretation and presentation of the report.

3. THE MAIN BODY

This is the part of the report which formally follows the introduction. It is here that the data collected is related to the problem. The body of effective report is generally demarcated into parts. These demarcations are made according to the scope of the problem itself as given by the authoriser or to the divisions as perceived by the investigator. The demarcations helps to group data and findings. It helps the investigator to present his findings coherently and this prevents him from jumbling his presentations. He also presents each part of the report as a report on its own, and makes the report easily understandable. It helps the reader also to follow the report since he is guided by the topic headings and the summaries or conclusions of the various parts of the report. The investigator is to provide as much information as would make his findings and conclusions justifiable. These are thus the need for specific references to facts, tables, maps, charts and other kinds of figures which are necessary to direct and convince the reader about our findings.

4. THE ENDING OF THE REPORT

The ending of a report answers at least one of the following questions.

- a) What information have I gathered from the search?
- b) What meaning do I make from this information?
- c) What decision can be made from these data and analyses?

Answers to these questions may correspond to the following.

1. FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

When arriving at conclusions, we attempt to analyze the implications the information has for the problem under review. Conclusions are a conscious attempt to discover cause and effect relationships and relationships of comprising or to evaluate some phenomena. For clarity and conciseness, conclusions are usually tabulated.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are decisions or some course of action which the investigator suggest to the authorizing body. Such decisions or actions are expected to resolve or minimize the problems which necessitated the research. They aim at helping the authorizing body to change things for the better.

LETTER OF SUBMISSION

This is a document which finally transmits the report to the recipient. It is also called **letter of transmittal**. It has all the features of a formal letter. It may refer to the problem and the authorization. Basically, it serves to hand over the report and this is its main business. It sometimes carries a summary of the findings or recommendations and also provides information which explains the presentation, nature and use of the report. It usually **ends on a note of hope** that the report will be useful. Also, the investigator sometimes promises that he would be available in case of any future work. It may also open acknowledgements. Consider a sample of a letter of submission below.

The Research Committee,

C/o KNUST Sr. Sch.,

P.O. BOX 26.

KNUST, Kumasi.

March 20th, 2016.

The Headmaster,

KNUST Sr. Sec. Sch.,

P. O. BOX 26

KNUST, Kumasi.

Dear Sir,

SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH REPORT

We are pleased to submit the report on the sharp increase in the rate of indiscipline among students of the school, undertaken between January and March 2014.

We are very grateful to have been given the opportunity to investigate on issues of concern to teaching-learning situation and to the proper up-bringing of our students. Based on our findings, we have made recommendations for combating the sad state of affairs.

It is our hope that this report would be found informative enough, and that we would tackle its recommendations and any others with the needed objectivity, good will and will power.

Yours faithfully,

1).

(Yaw Amoako)

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

(2)

(Kwasi Asiedu Addo)

COLLABORATIVE INVESTIGATOR

(3)

(Kwabena Amoah)

COLLABORATIVE INVESTIGATOR

SAMPLE QUESTION AND ANSWER ON REPORT WRITING

QUESTION

Write a report in about 1000 words on a fire outbreak in a factory canteen riding of employees who have often complained about unsanitary conditions in the canteen. Make special recommendation.

ANSWER

A REPORT ON THE FIRE OUTBREAK IN THE KNUST JUNIOR STAFF CANTEEN, PRESENTED BY MR. KWAME NTIAMOAH

INTRODUCTION/FORMS OF REFERENCE

This report is prepared at the request of management on the causes of the recent fire outbreak in the Junior Staff Canteen of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. It also deals with possible remedies to prevent reoccurrence of the incidents.

PROCEDURE/METHOD

All the members of the canteen staff, leaders of the Workers' Union and the Personnel Manageress were interviewed. A visit was also made to the canteen. Individuals who had vital information towards the realization of the reporters' objectives were duly invited and their contributions were kept with efficiency, open-mindedness untiring diligence and a high sense of confidentiality.

FINDINGS

Information gathered during investigations revealed that in the morning of 20th December, 2006. There was a workers' forum to discuss the outcome of requests presented to management for action. These issues included sanitation at the canteen.

On the hearing of her name mentioned at the forum, the Domestic Bursar telephoned the leaders of the workers and challenged their power to discuss her in public. This infuriated the workers and they attempted to march against the Domestic Bursar at the canteen. Sensing the danger ahead, she fled from the canteen together with her staff, leaving the cookers still burning. The cookers eventually over-heated and caught fire burning stock of food and furniture there.

CONCLUSIONS

The fire was caused by the negligence and gross disrespect for authority demonstrated by the Domestic Bursar.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *The Domestic Bursar should be summarily dismissed and her entitlement used to defray the cost of maintaining the canteen.*
2. *There should be the formation of canteen committee with representation of workers' views and interest on it.*

LECTURE ELEVEN

THE MEMORANDUM

The memorandum is a kind of formal communication which usually operates within an organisation. It may be sent from one individual to another or from one department to another; from one individual to a department or section. It may be used for brief messages, providing a confirmation and record of the different plans, decisions and activities of the organisation. Hence, the memorandum is usually used for the day-to-day running of the organisation.

Memorandum is considered less formal than formal letters. They bridge the distance between communicators who believe that they share common interest as a result of a common organisation (which has brought them closer together).

THE FORM OF THE MEMORANDUM

I. The corresponding heading

This heading which appears at the top usually in bold print seeks to identify the nature of the correspondence. For most organisations, this heading comprises the word *Memorandum* or *Memo*.

II. Specific heading

These headings come below the correspondence heading. They serve to identify the people and the subject or focus of communication. It is important in every written communication that the people in the communication event are all identified.

MEMORANDUM

TO.....

FROM.....

DATE.....

SUBJECT

THE BODY OF THE MEMO

1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the memorandum usually uses the direct delivery form. With this form, you reiterate your focus as identified in your subject heading and expand it into a sentence whose verb is what you actually want to do or what you want to be done about the subject.

This expansion also includes any information you think can help define your subject as well as what you want to do or to be done about it.

2. THE MAIN BODY

Here, you state the details of what you want to do or what to be done about your subject if the introduction, for instance, does not identify this. The main body is not always structurally separate from the introduction as a different paragraph or paragraphs. Sometimes, it is separated from the introduction only by a column, which indicates that the main body only explains or expands the idea in the introduction.

The memo aims at addressing issues concerning the day-to-day running of an organisation. It therefore aims at clarity of expression. Ideas should be made as distinct as possible. In the main body, one can number or tabulate the message one wants to present. Such itemisation makes the message specific and distinct. Where the ideas are similar, the use of parallel structures give order and beauty to the work.

3. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the memorandum basically reiterates and emphasises the fact that the correspondence is done in the interest and furtherance of the organisation's goal and success. Any of the following elements are therefore very likely to appear in the conclusion of a memo.

- Goodwill among members in furtherance of organisational goals.
- Promise or desire for co-operation.
- Expression of OPT the activity suggested or executed in the main body would be successful.

QUESTION

Write a memorandum to another member of staff to whom you are instructed to hand over prior to your departure to attend a two-week course in personnel management at GIMPA. Outline your duties as a personnel assistant in the training department and include matters requiring special attention during your absence.

ANSWER

LIVING GOD INDUSTRIES LIMITED

MEMORANDUM

TO: *Poku Wright*

FROM: *Peter Wilde*

SUBJECT: *Temporary Handing Over of Duties*

REFERENCE: *Letter No IRGS/Vol. 2 dated 20/3/07*

DATE: *10th April, 2007*

Reference is made to the quoted subject and please find below an outline of duties to be performed under the Personnel Assistant Schedule. The schedule is directly under the supervision of and in collaboration with the Personnel Manager. It involves the following:

- *Forecasting for the various departments the categories of staff who need training.*
- *Collaborating with departments to convict training of newly employed persons.*
- *Arranging with institutions and resource persons for the provision of staff development and in-service training courses to junior staff to upgrade themselves to enhance their efficiency on the job.*
- *Organisation in-service courses for both new and old supervisors in their duties and in the control and training of staffing.*
- *Loading with staff trainers for reports on trained staff for subsequent revision of their records.*
- *Organising in -service courses for the management and executive staff to enhance their capabilities on the job.*

The following actions are due and they need urgent attention.

- *Writing to remind the Resource Personnel for the proposed in-service training for Accounts Clerks. The programme comes on early June.*

- *Compilation of quarterly report on the activities of the section on behalf of the Personnel Manager for the information of Board of Directors. The first draft must reach Personnel Manager by next week-end.*

THE CURRICULUM VITAE (C.V.)

The resume, personal data and curriculum vitae are different names for a single document with social qualities and experience of a person. It is a document of personal advertisement and its direct aim is sell a person out to a prospective employer. It is an advertisement of a person in the world of work. It is also a job-seeking or promotion seeking document. It is sometimes used to help one gain admission into a course.

ASPECTS OF THE C.V. (CONTENT)

- A. Personal Details
- B. Career Objectives
- C. Education
- D. Work Experience
- E. Extra-curricular Activities
- F. Special Capabilities
- G. Interests/Hobby
- H. Referee

A. PERSONAL DETAILS

Details implications here include:

Name:	Sex:
Address:	Marital status:
Age:	Nationality:
Date of Birth:	Religious Denomination:
Place of Birth:	Language(s) spoken:
Email:	Mobile No.:

These are however not always arranged as listed above. Some of the items may be left out.

B. CAREER OBJECTIVES

Appraisal of your objectives or aim of self-development into the future.

EDUCATION

Indicate schools, colleges, universities attended with dates of attendance in chronological order (beginning with the most recent; certificates, diplomas and degrees obtained, with their dates, positions or offices held in the institutions attended. List the first class, second upper or lower, etc.). For example.

SCHOOLS AND CERTIFICATES

a) Schools Attended

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 2000 – 2004 | University of Ghana, Legon. |
| 1974 – 1998 | University of Ghana, Legon. |
| 1986 – 1989 | Advanced Teacher Training College, Winneba. |
| 1975 – 1979 | Akrokerri Teacher Training College. |

b) Degrees/ Certificates Obtained:

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| 2004 | - | Master of Philosophy in English |
| 1998 | - | Bachelor of Arts (Hons) English (2 nd Class Upper Division) |
| 1989 | - | Diploma in English (2 nd Class Upper Division) |
| 1979 | - | Tr's Certificate 'A' 4 years (Distinction in Practice Teaching). |

B. WORK EXPERIENCE

Indicate places/organisations/institutions you have worked in and in what capacity, including a brief job description. You may show accomplishments achieved. For example, Served as Senior Marketing Officer in charge of Research. Worked for the establishment of marketing offices at Cape Coast, Asankrugua, Oda and Mankessim. Company sales had 60% growth in terms of general turn-over and 51% in respect customers. Proposed the establishment of Donwell Educational Insurance.

C. ACTIVITIES/MEMBERSHIP/APPOINTMENT/WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS/FORUMS

Chairman: PTA, Winneba Secondary School.

Chairman: Board of Directors, Akim Swedru

Member: Association of Marketing Managers.

Member: Resurrection Presbyterian Church, Accra.

D. SPECIAL CAPABILITIES

Computer literacy

Communication skills

Organisational skills

Team player

Driving

Multi lingual

Leadership qualities

Marketing skills.

E. INTERESTS/ HOBBY

Carrying out researches.

Engaging in a cause of freedom for all

Reading and listening to music

Footballing/Sports.

F. REFEREES

Give names and addresses of at least three people who know you well and who can vouch for your qualification, work experience and character. Ideally, one of them would be your former lecturer/professor, academic counsellor, etc. Another would be a reputable person in the community such as a medical or legal practitioner, an engineer, an educationist, a religious leader (belonging to the orthodox churches) a banker, etc. Who know you well; and a third might be a person or present one. In a nutshell, there should be a/an

- i. Academic referee
- ii. Social referee and
- iii. Religious/ Spiritual referee

Select references (referees) that can speak with authority about your ability and character.

They should be people who have agreed to write strong positive assessments of you, and

not ones who know you hazily. Note that a non-committal or mediocre letter of reference is more damaging than no letter at all.

LECTURE TWELVE

LISTENING SKILLS

Listening is an active process of learning. It involves paying attention to sound and making meaning out of the way it has been composed.

There are various reasons why we listen:

1. Listening for information
2. Listening to evaluate
3. Listening to empathize
4. Listening for employment

IMPROVING LISTENING (RECEPTIVE) SKILLS

Effective listening involves attention, understanding, judgement, memory and courtesy.

1. Adjust to the listening situation. During a lesson or discussion, pay close attention to explanations, directions opinions and similar information.
2. When listening to an informative discussion or lesson, be prepared to take notes. Jot down each important point immediately and repeat it to yourself. Keep reviewing the main ideas that the speaker has covered.
3. Listen whole-heartedly but thoughtfully. Do you agree or disagree with the speaker's ideas? Is the speaker offering facts and reason to back up opinions? If you have a question, make note of it and ask it at the appropriate time.
4. Beware of unfairness, yours or the speaker's. Before coming to a conclusion, keep your mind open to both sides represented in a battle of ideas. Judge whether the speaker is fair towards the opposition.
5. Watch for relationships between a speaker's main ideas and the details or examples. The poor listener may wonder why the speaker included a detail, when in fact, it was intended as an example of a main point.
6. Look closely at the speaker for clues to his or her feeling about what is said, but resist being carried away by looks, manner, voice or gestures. Being too impressed by looks makes the listener less alert to sense and nonsense.

7. Be a courteous member of an audience. Laugh with, not at the speaker. Remain until the speaker has finished. If you must leave early, do so quietly. When audience reactions are invited after a speech, be kind in criticizing, questioning, and objecting.
8. Be polite in conversation. Show interest by an occasional nod or a word of agreement. Avoid inattention, interruption, and ridicule.

TESTING MASTERY OF LISTENING PRINCIPLES

Select the best three choices to complete each of the ten statements.

1. While a speaker is addressing a group, a listener in the audience should
 - a. never leave until the speaker has finished
 - b. publicly show disapproval of a dull speech by leaving early.
 - c. leave only in unavoidable circumstances, and then in a quiet manner.
2. The listener who judges remarks thoughtfully is
 - a. bound to lose track of a speaker's argument.
 - b. likely to get more out of the speech
 - c. sure to forget what is said.
3. Any listener who looks closely at a speaker will
 - a. get a better notion of how the speaker feels about the topic.
 - b. automatically be influenced by the speaker's looks.
 - c. be distracted from the ideas being presented.
4. A speaker who favours one side in a battle of ideas
 - a. is unfair to the other side.
 - b. should try to be fair to the other side.
 - c. should not mention that there is another side.
5. A listener should accept a speaker's view
 - a. because everyone is entitled to an opinion
 - b. since otherwise the listener would be unfair
 - c. when the speaker has presented convincing facts and reasons to support the opinions.
6. The degree of attention should be at maximum
 - a. in all listening situations.
 - b. in listening to explanations, directions, and opinions.
 - c. in listening to actors in a comedy.

7. If the listener wants to remember what is said, taking notes will be
 - a. useless.
 - b. useful.
 - c. harmful.
8. Asking a question of a speaker is
 - a. always wrong.
 - b. never wrong.
 - c. sometimes proper.
9. The listener should recognise that in a speech
 - a. some points are details or examples of main ideas.
 - b. all points are equally important.
 - c. main ideas are all that can be presented because of the usual lack of time.
10. If a listener agrees with some statements during a conversation, he or she should
 - a. break in and express agreement.
 - b. nod his or her head and wait for an opening to speak.
 - c. make no indication whatsoever of the fact.

READING

Reading is not merely a physical or visual contact with written symbols. It is rather a way of decoding, interpreting or making meaning from these symbols. There are basically two different kinds of reading these are **Reading Aloud** and **Reading for Comprehension** (silent reading).

READING ALOUD

Emphasizes the ability to:

- a. identify and pronounce words well.
- b. read longer structures with correct intonation.
- c. observe punctuation and show its effect on reading.

In adult years, reading aloud features in such activities as news-reading, public reading of speech, Bible lessons, etc, and recitation of poetry. Here, the emphasis is on pronouncing words with correctness and clarity. Using stress, intonation and speech effectively are marks of good reading.

READING FOR COMPREHENSION

It is the kind of reading which focuses on the meaning of a text. It is a direct relation between orthography (writing) and meaning. Phonetic interpretation (as in pronouncing) may not come in here at all and that is why we even expect the deaf and dumb to be able to read and understand.

TECHNIQUES FOR READING

We approach printed or written material with different forms of focus and different levels of attachment. This is determined by what exactly we want from the text. Techniques of Reading refer to the different ways in which we achieve our objective for coming into contact with a material. From the material we may just seek to identify certain words, to get the gist of some information or to get the full meaning of the material. The three parts of this scenario correspond to the three techniques for reading, *Scanning*, *Skimming* and *close Reading*.

SCANNING

This is an exercise to identify or locate some words/expressions or figure in a written or typed material. It is not to give meaning per say but to find out the presence of a language item. In scanning, one arms oneself with the following information: The spelling of a word, the length of composition of a word or phrase, the nature and composition of a figure or number.

Scanning operates on the following characteristics:

1. The reader has an idea about the items he is looking for.
2. Reading is a different activity, which focuses on some specific items.
3. Reading may not cover all the material. It may focus on certain places in the alphabetical or numerical arrangements.

Information sought is usually short-words, expressions and figures.

Scanning manifests in such activities as:-

1. Locating words in a dictionary.
2. Locating words, expressions, figures or names on an index or list.
3. Identifying particular names, words, figures or expressions from a passage.
4. Locating a book title from a list of books or catalogue.
5. Locating author's name in a catalogue.
6. Locating a book from a shelf using its name.

SKIMMING

Unlike scanning, skimming is a reading technique that aims at understanding or at obtaining facts. It does not seek to identify words, figures or phrases. Rather, it seeks to identify the gist of a story or text, unlike close reading also, one does not skim a text to get its full meaning and the details. It seeks to answer such questions as "What is the gist of this story?"; "What is this passage or chapter about?"; "What are the various elements treated in this passage/chapter?"; etc. Skimming is generally a fast reading which is expected to use as little time as possible. Skimming thus, concentrates on the main or skeletal facts or ideas and not on details.

CLOSE READING

Unlike scanning and skimming, close reading aims at yielding the full meaning of a text. It does not seek to identify particular structures or to get to gist of a text. To this end, therefore, all the various aspects of a text are important if any close reading exercise is to be effective. Such aspects are words, punctuation, graphology, style of presentation, analytical descriptive, etc.

Close reading is certainly the technique for the student or the researcher. The student in that capacity must come into contact with any text in its fullness so as to make the full meaning or get the details of the information it presents.

Close reading improves vocabulary. It also equips the student with the specialized vocabulary associated with the particular field of study or business. This vocabulary is what we call metalanguage. The student of Economics, for instance, gets such expressions as demand, supply, scale of preference, utility and their specialised meanings in the field of Economics.

Similarly, close reading offers training in the art of writing. Whether for pleasure or for academic or business purposes, close reading latently offers training on how best to organise one's work in the ways listed below:

- a. how to introduce or conclude one's essay or presentation.
- b. how to introduce new points.
- c. linking one paragraph to another.
- d. linking points.
- e. artistic and effective way of making forceful presentations.

IMPROVING SPEAKING (PRODUCTIVE) SKILLS

1. Think about what your audience should know about your topic. Plan to include

- a. an introduction telling the topic and getting interest.
- b. the points of information you want to present.
- c. a conclusion that supplies a satisfying ending.

Note that, while preparing your talk you must recognise the age, interest and educational standard of your audience.

2. Write out your talk either in full or in brief notes reminding you of what you will say. Use these notes when you speak.

3. Rehearse (practise) saying your speech several times at home but do not aim to repeat it word for word. Sound like a person expressing ideas, not like a talking computer. Use the correct stress, intonation, pitch and accent. Give regard to punctuation such as pauses, full stop, questions, exclamations, as demonstrated below;

1. Well? Meaning: I am waiting for your answer.
2. Well! Meaning: Look who's here?
3. Well Meaning: I'm answering your question about whether I am sick or well.
4. Well... Meaning: I'm not sure about the answer to the question you asked me.
5. No? Meaning: I am surprised about that.
6. No! Meaning: That is silly (exclamation /gesture).
7. No. Meaning: Negative response. E.g. (i) My mother will not let me go. (ii) Yes/no.
8. No... Meaning: Not certain about what to say or add.
4. While speaking, stand up straight, but avoid stiffness. Hold any notes in one hand so that you can glance down for help if you forget. Do not place your notes on a low desk so that you must bend over to look at them. Avoid mannerisms.
5. Talk. Don't read. Let your voice be lively and clear. Speak loudly enough to reach your listeners that are farthest away – but don't bellow at them. Well-trained speakers say they always talk to the back row.
6. Look to them, not to somebody dangling outside the window or from the ceiling.

LECTURE THIRTEEN

THE PARAGRAPH

A paragraph is described as a distinct section or sub-division of a chapter, letter, etc. usually dealing with a particular point. It is always begun on a new line and it often indented. Paragraphing then involves creating a unit of discourse. This unit and others should fit within the framework of a larger unit, and can together constitute a single unit of communication which could be a letter, article, chapter, etc. Paragraphing is not a mere assemblage of facts or sentences but a system of putting generally two or more sentences together to present a single idea or focus. Here, a long discourse especially in writing is divided up according to the various points or issues that it is made up of. Then each such point or issue is introduced and developed in order to make it contribute to the overall picture which is given by the letter, chapter or passage.

TYPES OF PARAGRAPHS

Paragraphs are often differentiated by their position and function in a discourse. Under this focus we may have **mainstream** and **structural** paragraphs.

Structural Paragraphs

The introductory and concluding paragraphs as well as the transitional paragraph which links different parts of an essay or letter are called structural paragraphs. They are so called because they do not actually discuss any particular point or issue. They function rather to bring out the structure or form of the essay.

THE INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH (INTRODUCTION) – GENERAL

The first one or two paragraphs of an essay generally constitute the introduction. Three possible parts are seen in the introduction.

- a. The general introduction which introduces the focus and arrests readers' interest.
- b. The focus – states the intentions or subject of the essay.
- c. The plan – outlines the various points to be discussed in the paragraphs.

Ways in which the general introduction is written.

- a) With an interesting story/event
- b) With historical account.
- c) From General to Particular
- d) With Definition of Important Concepts.

- e) With Quotations
- f) With Rhetorical Questions.
- g) With an Opposite View.

THE MAINSTREAM PARAGRAPH

The mainstream paragraph contains the topic or issue which is part of the concern of the topic as a whole. It serves to provide information that is germane to the discussion of the topic or focus of the essay as a whole. It is these paragraphs – the mainstream – which generally have topic sentences.

The good mainstream paragraph should have three main qualities and these are;

- a) Unity
- b) Coherence
- c) Adequacy of development.

UNITY

The unity of a paragraph is associated with its purpose, that is, what single message it is intended to present to its readers or listeners. Thus, the unity of a paragraph is a response to the question. What part of the whole message do I want to present in this paragraph? Or what is the purpose of this paragraph?

That a paragraph has unity means that all the sentences, ideas and images are controlled by a single purpose of focus. A writer violates the principles of unity if he brings in any idea which does not contribute to this purpose or focus. The focus is usually expressed at the early part of the paragraph in the topic sentence. It can also be discerned from ending the whole of the paragraph.

Unity is certainly not to be understood just as unity of subject – which means that the paragraph should talk about a single object, incident or person. No, it is rather a unity of focus. This means that there could be different subjects but all this would be towards a single aim or focus.

COHERENCE

Coherence refers to the orderly or logical arrangement of sentences and ideas in a paragraph. A paragraph may have a single focus and thus exhibit unity, but it is still not considered a good paragraph if these ideas are haphazardly arranged.

If a paragraph has coherence it means the ideas are arranged in a way as to ensure some order. This order makes the reader be able to follow the train of thoughts of the writer and also get vividly the relevant mental picture. A paragraph which exhibits the above characteristic is said to be **chronologically coherent**.

ADEQUACY

By adequacy, we mean simply that a paragraph should not be so short that it cannot sufficiently prosecute the idea for which it was written. At the same time, it should not be too long, for more than is necessary. For instance, a paragraph on the arms of government cannot be adequate if it discusses only the legislature and the judiciary leaving the executive. One may achieve adequacy with examples or illustrations, explanations, definitions, and especially, details.

THE CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

The concluding paragraph may contain a writer's own impression of the essay he has written. It may also help the writer to link his work to the larger world of experiences as he suggests solutions. One may use the summary form of conclusion which is the reiteration of the thesis of the essay. Whereas the thesis may state just the bare focus or only a skeleton of the plan, the conclusion goes further to restate the details mentioned in the main body of the essay.

Other ways through which we may write the concluding paragraph are discussed below.

1. REFERRING TO CAUSE OR EFFECT OF THE ISSUE DISCUSSED

When the cause or effect of a social issue is not concentrated on, then the concluding part of the essay may highlight them. This is an effective way of linking one's subject to the world around it.

2. SUGGESTING SOLUTIONS

Where the essay concentrates on the problems associated with a phenomenon, the conclusion could be used to suggest a number of ways in which these problems could be solved or forestalled.

3. PROJECTING INTO THE FUTURE

Such conclusions are usually used for trips that discuss an issue or a phenomenon. One projects into the future of the phenomenon by trying to foresee success or failure or problems. One also foresees the effect of the activities of individuals or organisations on the phenomenon. In the real world, such conclusions give hope; create alertness and direct attention to pertinent issues.

4. MAKING DEDUCTIONS

These deductions are the writer's personal judgment of the issue under consideration. They are the conclusions he arrives at through an in-depth appraisal of the various factors at work, and the nature of the issue as a whole.

The conclusion itself states generally with a summary of the main points raised in the main body of the paper. The use of "if then" structure and the signpost "therefore" and "so" are quite notable of deductive conclusions to link the facts and one's deductions.

5. TAKING A STAND OR REITERATING ONE'S STAND

This generally occurs in argumentative topic or in topics in which one raised both the pros and cons of an issue. This kind of conclusion also involves some summary or a reiteration of some pertinent facts on which one's stand is based. It could be an acceptance of a point or a position or middle – way stand which seeks to declare that the issue cannot be won by any of the sides.

6. STATING OTHER ISSUES OF RESEARCH

Max Weber was clear to state that research must generate further research. This is done as a result of the arguments and discussions one's research provokes, or the suggestions we make at the end of our work. When we state other areas of research we are only drawing to other areas. It is believed that research into these areas would complement the claims, coverage and usefulness of one's own research.

THE TRANSITIONAL PARAGRAPH

Coherence is not needed only in the paragraph. The essay as a whole also needs to have coherence so that the various things discussed in the various paragraphs are linked up in sequence and topic. The use of transitional words and phrases is one such device for coherence.

Sometimes also a paragraph is used for this purpose and that is the transitional paragraph. Unlike the main stream paragraph, the transitional paragraph is not used to state any point or fact about the subject. It only serves as a link between parts of an essay. Its main business is to show the change in focus and to show what discussion follow. Sometimes it does this by referring back to the preceding discussion.

The transitional paragraph is normally used when the essay is made up of distinct parts which are cohered into a single argument or discussion. It seems to say "we have finished with this part and what follows is another part of the discussion". Transitional paragraphs help to prepare the reader for the succeeding part of the discourse. Again, they help the reader to follow the movement of the writer's discussions so that he would understand his (the writer's) argument.

In a way, the transitional paragraph can be seen as the introductory paragraph of the succeeding part of an essay. It contains the focus of that part of the essay sometimes, by listing the various aspects to be discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

THE TOPIC SENTENCE.

The topic sentence with its support sentence has been the most explicit and effective way of ensuring the unity, coherence and adequate development of the paragraph. It is a sentence usually placed at the beginning of a paragraph. It states the focus of the paragraph.

NOTE:

1. Any sentence which states the focus of a paragraph – no matter its place in the paragraph – can be described as the focus sentence or theme sentence or topic sentence.
2. Topic sentences usually occur at the beginning part of paragraphs but they can occur in the middle and concluding parts of paragraphs also.
3. The topic sentence is the **controlling** idea of the paragraph. Each sentence or idea must be directed towards this focus. The topic sentence is then a unifying force in the paragraph. It is a restricting idea because it restricts the ideas that can be admitted into the paragraph.

There are two kinds of topic sentences. These are the simple and the complex. The **simple topic sentence** just states the focus or subject of the paragraph without adding the form in which the rest of the paragraph is going to take. The **complex** one, on the other hand, goes beyond this. It states in addition to the subject, the skeleton on which the succeeding part of the sentence would be based.

THE INTERVIEW

- An interview is a medium of one-to-one or one-to-many interpersonal communication.
- It is a planned interaction characterised by specific objectives.
- Interviews involve interaction between an interviewer (that is the person conducting the interview) and the interviewee (that is the person being interviewed).

TYPES

Selection interviews

They are used to assess the applicant's suitability for employment (a job/an appointment) for placements; for promotion at the office; for admission in an institution or a training programme.

Information-gathering interviews

These interviews conduct records or investigations to ascertain the suitability of a product or they may involve investigation into the conduct of a person. They include market survey, audience survey, probes of committees of enquiry.

Conflict-resolution interviews

These are conducted to diffuse a potentially explosive situation in an organisation. They may be conducted to resolve grievances of staff or in situations where there is a potential breakdown in relations between one organisation and another or between an organisation and a customer or within the organisation.

Counselling interviews

This takes the form of finding the problems of a sufferer and suggesting remedies or solutions to them through guidance, advice or admonition. The problems may be associated with bereavement, redundancy, lay-off, dismissal, sickness, or a domestic one such as a quarrel between a couple or a divorce.

Disciplinary interviews

They are used for investigation to determine the action required when an employee has been accused of misconduct.

Hints to the interviewee during interview:

1. Use the body language effectively.
2. Listen attentively and actively.
3. Put others at ease in order to persuade or smooth over difficult situations. Be diplomatic.

4. Read between the lines of a message by recognising attitudes, bias, prejudice or deliberate ambiguity.
 5. Construct and present logical views.
 6. Recognise how much information and what kind of information the interviewers need.
 7. Convey enthusiasm, support, sympathy, trust, and reliability. Be lively.
 8. Ask appropriate questions to elicit relevant, complete and accurate information.
 9. Answer questions directly, clearly and briefly too.
- 10.** Some interviewers may deliberately antagonise you in order to observe your reactions go stressful or vexatious situations. When it happens, compose yourself and answer in a very calm and polite atmosphere. Do not feel irritated or embarrassed and consider it as one of the expected situations.

NOTE

The follow up for a selection interviews may be that of a successful interviewee you will receive.

- a) Phone call or a letter of admission. Most often, you will be required to write a letter of acceptance- meaning that you accept the offer, the terms and conditions of appointment or admission. Respond immediately or at least before the expiry date on your letter of offer.
- b) Job description. Job description spell out what schedule or task you will be performing. Sometimes, they are included in the advertisement of a vacancy which appears in the dailies. Otherwise you should be officially informed following your appointment. This is done through the written medium.

The content of a job description includes the following.

- a. The title of the job, department, section and job code number (if any); the person to whom the job holder is responsible to, etc.
- b. Job summary – the main function or duty tools, machinery, and equipment needed for the job.
- c. Job sequence – list of the sequence of operation that constitute the job i.e. itemised duties of the employee.

- d. Working condition – structures and benefits opportunities for further training or study, transfer, promotions, health matters, education, etc.
- e. Objectives and job expectations – what the organisation expects the employee to achieve at the end of each day. This is a criterion for appraisal of the employee's performance. (i.e. monthly or yearly assessment)
- f. The name(s) and position(s) who have/has a prepared and agreed to the job description as well as the date of preparation of such descriptions.

LETTER OF REFUSAL

A prompt and cordial letter of refusal should be written to the organisation or institution which has offered a job/admission, and which you may find yourself unable to accept.

Explain your reasons for not accepting the offer and apologise for the inconvenience caused by your action, leaving the door open for future possibilities.