

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

BCA SEMESTER: I

UNIT III: WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

3.1 MEANING OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

A 'Written Communication' means the **exchange** of messages, orders or instructions in **written form** through letters, circulars, manuals, reports, telegrams, office memos, bulletins, etc.

- It is:
 - A formal method of communication
 - Less flexible.
 - Time-consuming,
 - Costly
 - Unsuitable for confidential and emergent communication.
- A written document preserved properly becomes a permanent record for future reference.
- It can also be used as legal evidence.
- It is most efficient when communication is required for action in future.

Some helpful hints in written communication suggested by **Robert Degise** are:

- i. **Keep words simple**: simple and familiar words make the message easier to understand.
- ii. **Do not be bogged down by rules of composition**: the rules of grammar and composition should be respected but the ultimate purpose of communication is the message which should be the priority.
- iii. **Write concisely**: use as few words as possibly but giving complete details, expressing your thoughts, opinions and ideas in the fewest number of words possible.
- iv. **Be specific**: vagueness destroys accuracy which leads to miscommunication, therefore be specific about the point you are writing about.

3.2 TYPES OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: the following are various means of written communication used.

These **should** contain all necessary facts, should be complete, concise and clear.

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| 1. Reports | 4. Manuals |
| 2. Magazines | 5. Memoranda: written message in |
| 3. Circulars | business |

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| 6. Newspapers | 15. Notice Boards |
| 7. Notices | 16. Telegram: a message that is sent by a system (telegraph) that uses electrical signals and that is then printed and given to somebody. |
| 8. Agenda: provides information on the order in which topics will be discussed | 17. Tele-printers |
| 9. Minutes: are a written record of a meeting | 18. Telex: machines that send text messages. |
| 10. Agreements | 19. Fax (facsimile): machines transmit scanned images of documents over telephone lines |
| 11. Pictures/diagrams/graphs | 20. E-mail |
| 12. Orders | |
| 13. Rules and Regulations book | |
| 14. Instructions manual | |

3.3 PURPOSE OF WRITING:

Some crucial reasons for writing are: to inform; to entertain; to explain; to persuade; to argue; to evaluate; to express...

1. It is suitable for long distance communication and repetitive standing orders.
2. It creates permanent record of evidence. It can be used for future reference.
3. It gives the receiver sufficient time to think, act and react.
4. It can be used as legal document.
5. It can be sent to many persons at a time.
6. It is suitable for sending statistical data, chart, diagram, pictures, etc.
7. Order, allocation of work, job distribution, etc. in written form reduce doubt and help in fixation of responsibility.
8. Uniformity in work procedure can be maintained through written communication.
9. It is easy to send unpleasant or bad news through written communication.
10. A good written communication can create goodwill and promote business.

3.3.1 MERITS OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

1) Easy to Preserve:-

Documents are easy to preserve if they are in written form. Oral and Non-verbal communication is not preserved. Though it can be recorded, it is not convenient to record it every time. Written communication serves as a means of collecting important information from the previously preserved data.

2) Clarity and Clear Understanding:-

- It provides a clear and comprehensive grasp of the message to be conveyed.
- Provides us a facility to read the message many times until the recipient fully comprehends it.
- There are lower chances that any information in the communication is missing or not being conveyed. As a result, the recipient receives and comprehends the exact meaning that the sender wants to convey.
- Oral or non-verbal communication can be forgotten easily, and sometimes the recipient is not much focussed while listening.

3) Permanent Record:-

Act as a permanent record. Furthermore, an organization's records are usually in the written format, which can be very worthy for future references.

For Example:- Previous instructions and decisions might serve as guides for future decisions and other references. It will save time and effort in the future if it is in written form.

4) Makes Presentation Easy:-

Written communication provides us the advantage of representing any complex matter or information easily and more attractively.

For business organizations, the executives can present the information more accurately and clearly through written communication. It provides a direction to describe the facts in the simplest way.

5) Serves as a Legal document:-

Documents in the written format serve as legal evidence for important business activities and transactions.

In the event of a lawsuit, the one which is used as admissible evidence is written communication. As it is legal evidence, it is kept with due care and proper responsibility, and also, while drafting it, proper requirements are fulfilled.

6) No wastage of time and money:-

Prevents waste of time and money. It is because all the parties or members communicating their ideas or data can share it even without meeting each other, i.e., the communicators and the receiver can exchange their views without even meeting.

7) Fewer chances of distortion:-

- Written communication also reduces the chances of distortion.
- As in written communication, information is stored permanently, so the possibility of distortion or any alterations of the information decreases.
- In the case of oral communication, the communicator may lose specific points or some facts which are important while speaking.

8) Maintaining Image:-

Written communication helps the organization as well as the person to maintain its reputation and image in front of others.

Effective written communication also can create goodwill in the organization and promote its business.

9) Ease in verification –

Easily verify if there is some confusion. You can refer to the written record and verify if something acclaimed or said is true or not. It is easy to verify in case any misunderstanding occurs between the parties.

10) Other Advantages of written communication are:-

- Written communication is often used as a reference.
- It can be used as a controlling tool for controlling the activities of the organization.
- The recipient of the information gets sufficient time to think, act and react.
- In the case of long-distance communication and repetitive standing orders, written communication is very useful.

3.3.2 DEMERITS OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

1) Expensive:-

- One of the disadvantages of written communication is being costlier than other communications.
- For written communication, paper, pen, ink, typewriters, printing machines, and maintaining such equipment and machinery, a computer and a large number of employees are necessary for its execution.
- Also, it is expensive as a group of individuals to prepare and distribute the organization's letters which is quite costly for any organization. Hence it is expensive.

2) Time Consuming:-

- Written communication is not only expensive but also very time-consuming.
- Drafting and forming a message in written form takes much more time than conveying orally.
- A written message can take two or three days to reach its intended recipient, but an oral communication message can be conveyed in a matter of seconds over the phone.

- Furthermore, written communication is also time-consuming as the feedback is not immediate.
- Also, It requires a lot of time to encode and send a message.

3) Lack of confidentiality:-

- Keeping the information confidential is not always possible in written communication which serves as one of the biggest disadvantages of written communication.
- Forwarded to every person who is concerned with the information or particular matter, there is a possibility of leakage of information by any employees, which is likely to have negative effects on the organization and may also lead to losses.

4) Delay in response and decision making:-

If the recipient of the message lives far at a distance and has any doubt which is required to be clear, the response is not spontaneous as there is a lack of immediate response, which eventually leads to a delay in further decision making.

5) Red Tapism:-

- It is one of the biggest disadvantages of Written communication.
- The time taken for approval of any project is called Red Tapism.
- All the messages are usually conveyed on the basis of the Scalar chain, but sometimes it may happen that any written message or letter is kept on file without any immediate action. The concerned person intentionally caused a delay in response and which will eventually lead to a delay in further decision-making.

6) Impractical for Illiterate:-

- Another disadvantage of written communication is it becomes futile (useless) if the communicator or the recipient is someone who cannot read or write.
- If the sender is illiterate, then he won't be able to draft a written message, and if the recipient is illiterate, then that written message makes no sense for him as he can't read it, and this often leads to ineffective communication.

7) Fabrication of the information:-

- When any written message goes against the interest or concern of any higher officials or someone authoritative, there is a likelihood of fabrication of such messages by the employees.
- They may flatter or inflate the information conveyed to gain the recognition of the higher authorities for their personal benefits.
- Also, when the sender attempts to avoid criticism from others, they may flatter and exaggerate the facts in the written letter.

8) Complexity information:-

- Drafting and forming any written messages requires the use of various rules and procedures, and several formalities are to be fulfilled. It should be in proper format

as per the objective of drafting it, which often creates confusion for the sender/drafter of the information.

9) Other disadvantages of written communication are:-

- Written communication usually doesn't provide a personal touch. Therefore it becomes quite difficult to persuade and convince people through written forms of communication.
- Being written in nature, it is less flexible and cannot be changed easily.
- Sometimes due to the use of complex words, it becomes difficult for the reader to understand. Sometimes a lot of jargon (slang, improper words) is used in written records and reports, which makes them difficult to understand for laymen.
- There is often a delay in quick clarification and correction of the information. In oral communication, you can quickly ask a follow-up question to seek clarification. This is not the case for written communication.

Though there are some disadvantages of written communication, it is still a widely used mode of communication. It is a strong medium to communicate when it comes to legal and business affairs due to its manifold (multiple, various) advantages.

3.4 CLARITY OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

Clarity is a characteristic of a speech or a prose of composition that communicates effectively with its audience.

1. Know what you want to say:

- Clarity goes beyond a few writing tweaks. It's a whole new way of thinking. And it forces you to think about what you're writing before you start spilling words onto the page. Before you write a word, you should know the following:
 - ♣ Your subject. For example, this post is about clear writing.
 - ♣ Your point. My point in this article is to explain how to write with clarity.
 - ♣ Your outline. An outline is the basic structure of an article.

2. Know who you're talking to: Knowing your audience is an important feature of good writing. The better you know your audience, the more clearly you can communicate to them.

- Think of your audience as a five-year-old child. To communicate with them effectively, write the way you would talk to a five-year-old. It won't offend them or

insult their intelligence. Instead, it will allow them to process your message easily. Obviously, when explaining advanced topics, you will need to use bigger words and advanced concepts. For this reason, you should know what topics and concepts your audience is familiar with, and discuss such topics.

3. **Define unfamiliar words:** One simple technique to make your writing clear is to explain your terms. At the beginning of this article, I defined clarity. If I had just assumed you knew the definition, the article could have been confusing. Instead, I explained it. If you're going to write an article that focuses on a particular subject or concept, then be sure to explain that subject or concept. That way, readers know exactly what you're talking about.

4. **Create a sentence outline:**

- What is a sentence outline? A sentence outline is an outline of your article using complete sentences. When your outline consists of phrases or single words, it's not clear or helpful.
- Writing full sentences forces you to think through what you're saying. Plus, full sentences help the user understand what each point is about.

5. **Write one-sentence paragraphs:** Make your sentences short. Short sentences are easier to understand. If you try to pack a lot of words into a sentence, you lose clarity. Don't use long words. Long words impact clarity. To impress people? To flaunt your knowledge? To most ordinary people, these words mean nothing.

6. **Leverage writing tools:** Use of easy writing tools such as: **Hemingway Editor and Grammarly.**

- The **Hemingway app** is designed to make your writing clear.
 - Here are the benefits:
 - ♣ The Hemingway Editor cuts the dead weight from your writing by highlighting wordy sentences in yellow and more egregious ones in red.

♣ Hemingway helps you write with power and clarity by highlighting adverbs, passive voice, and dull, complicated words.

7. **Pay Attention to Commas:** missing commas can change the meaning of a sentence.

Eg: Originally selected students ... are different from: Originally, selected students...

8. **Watch for misplaced phrases:** the placement of phrases can obscure or clarify the meaning of your sentence.

Eg: Being a regular employee of the company, Mr. Roy deserves a bonus.

This means that I am referring to myself in the beginning but:

Mr. Roy deserves a bonus as he has been a hardworking employee of the company.

3.5 PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE WRITING

1. **Brevity:** It is bad manners to waste [the reader's] time. Therefore brevity first, then, clarity.

2. **Clarity:** It is bad manners to give [readers] needless trouble. Therefore clarity.... And how is clarity to be achieved? Mainly by taking the trouble and by writing to serve people rather than to impress them.

3. **Communication:** The social purpose of language is communication—to inform, misinform, or otherwise influence our fellows.... Communication [is] more difficult than we may think.

4. **Emphasis:** Just as the art of war largely consists of deploying the strongest forces at the most important points, so the art of writing depends a good deal on putting the strongest words in the most important places.... One of the most important things, to my mind, in English style is word-order. For us, the most emphatic place in a clause or sentence is the end. This is the climax and, during the momentary pause that follows, that last word continues, as it were, to reverberate in the reader's mind. It has, infact, the last word.

5. Honesty: As the police put it, anything you say may be used as evidence against you. If handwriting reveals character, writing reveals it still more. You cannot fool all your judges all the time... . Most style is not honest enough. Easy to say, but hard to practice.

6. Passion and Control: This, indeed, is one of the eternal paradoxes of both life and literature—that without passion little gets done; yet, without control of that passion, its effects are largely ill or null.

7. Reading: One learns to write by reading good books, as one learns to talk by hearing good talkers.

8. Revision: Every author's fairy godmother should provide him not only with a pen but also with a blue pencil.

9. Sophistication and Simplicity: My point is merely that the sophisticated (ready though they may be to suppose so) do not necessarily express themselves better than the simple—in fact, may often have much to learn from them.

10. Sound and Rhythm: Apart from a few simple principles, the sound and rhythm of English prose seem to me matters where both writers and readers should trust not so much to rules as to their ears.

3.6 WRITING TECHNIQUES:

Writing techniques in writing could be a vital variety of communication. if you cannot write then you will miss several opportunities in life.

Writing well needs techniques and writing functions such as:

- 1. Persuasion:** this is used to alter the reader's purpose of read on a specific subject or topic. The author presents a compelling format of facts and opinions so as to persuade the reader.

2. **Description:** an outline may be easy to write and understand the context. The aim is to assist the reader to use the senses of seeing, hearing, feeling and smelling to experience what the author experiences.
3. **Comparison and Contrast:** the aim of writing technique is to indicate to the reader the similarities and variations of topics. Comparison shows the differences between two terms like warfare (fighting, conflict) and warfare II and the similarities of the two wars.
4. **Exposition:** the aim is to explain, clarify the writer's concept and thoughts. It provides larger details and depth of understanding. These are mostly found in newspapers and magazines.
5. **Narration:** this technique is employed when telling a story. The story includes the setting time, downside and backbone of the matter, a main character, supporting characters and conclusions. Eg: children's books, play scripts.
6. **Communication through electronic media:** media states various means of communication that use devices.
 - a. **Electronic media:** a media that uses electromechanical devices to access the content, example the social media. This makes communication easier and faster to connect people from one end to another.

3.7 ELECTRONIC WRITING PROCESS:

E-communication puts new demands on language that prompts varieties in composed language utilization.

The language of email, chats, web based discourses and sms messages is set apart by highlights of casual speech and formal written work.

The electronic medium gives another set to the composition procedure.