

ICT - Communication Skills

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Study Notes and Communication Practice Guide

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Communication principles, written and oral expression, professional practice, and workplace communication

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This edition organises the supplied notes into readable sections and removes repeated scan artefacts while preserving the instructional content.

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Chapter 1

Introduction To Communication Skills

Meaning and Nature of Communication

The exchange of information or passing of information, ideas or thought from one person to the other or from one end to the other is communication. According to McFarland communication is, "a process of meaningful interaction among human beings. More specifically, it is the process by which meanings are perceived and understandings are reached among human beings." Newman and Summer defined communication as "an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons." Communication is the process of passing information from one person to another. The purpose of communication understanding of information. Whatever one wants to say to someone should be clearly

understood by him else the very purpose of the communication would be defeated.

In an organisation communication facilitates the flow of information and understanding between different people and departments through different media using all the channels and networks.

This flow of information is vital for managerial effectiveness and decision making in general and for human resource manager in particular as he has to be in contact with the managers of various departments, employees and workers and trade union leaders.

Communication thus helps understand people better removing misunderstanding and creating clarity of thoughts and expression. It also educates people. The communication may be written or oral, formal, informal, and upward, downward, horizontal, diagonal, interpersonal, intrapersonal, interdepartmental, intra-organisational.

The communication brings people together, closer to each other. The communication is an important management function closely associated with all other managerial functions. It bridges the gap between individuals and groups through flow of information and understanding between them. Information is the most vital aspect for communication. It is the information which is transmitted, studied, analyzed and interpreted and stored. The manager therefore has to spare time to collect, analyze and store the information for decision-making and routine day-to-day business.

Purpose Of Communication:

Management is getting the things done through others. The people working in the organisation should therefore be informed how to do the work assigned to them in the best possible manner.

The communication is essential in any organisation.

The purpose of the communication can be summed up into the following

Flow of Information:

The relevant information must flow continuously from top to bottom and vice versa. The staff at all levels must be kept informed about the organisational objectives and other developments taking place in the organisation. A care should be taken that no one should be misinformed. The information should reach the incumbent in the language he or she can understand better. The use of difficult words should be avoided. The right information should reach the right person, at right time through the right person.

Coordination:

It is through communication the efforts of all the staff working in the organisation can be coordinated for the accomplishment of the organisational goals. The coordination of all personnel's and their efforts is the essence of management which can be attained through effective communication.

Learning Management Skills:

The communication facilitates flow of information, ideas, beliefs, perception, advice, opinion, orders and instructions etc. both ways which enable the managers and other supervisory staff to learn managerial skills through experience of others. The experience of the sender of the message gets reflected in it which the person at the receiving end can learn by analyzing and understanding it.

Preparing People to Accept Change:

The proper and effective communication is an important tool in the hands of management of any organisation to bring about overall change in the organisational policies, procedures and work style and make the staff to accept and respond positively.

Developing Good Human Relations:

Managers and workers and other staff exchange their ideas, thoughts and perceptions with each other through communication. This helps them to understand each other better. They realize the difficulties faced by their colleagues at the workplace. This leads to promotion of good human relations in the organisation.

Ideas of Subordinates Encouraged:

The communication facilitates inviting and encouraging the ideas from subordinates on certain occasions on any task. This will develop creative thinking. Honoring subordinates' ideas will further motivate them for hard work and a sense of belonging to the organisation will be developed. It will provide them with the encouragement to share information with

their superiors without hesitation. The managers must know the ideas, thoughts, comments, reactions and attitudes of their subordinates and subordinates should know the same from the lowest level staff of their respective departments.

Importance Of Communication:

Effective communication is vital for efficient management and to improve industrial relations. In modern world the growth of telecommunication, information technology and the growing competition and complexity in production have increased importance of communication in organisations large and small irrespective of their type and kind. A corporate executive must be in a position to communicate effectively with his superiors, colleagues in other departments and subordinates. This will make him perform well and enable him to give his hundred percent to the organisation.

The following points can illustrate the importance of communication in human resource

management

Base for Action:

Communication acts as a base for any action. Starting of any activity begins with communication which brings information necessary to begin with.

Planning Becomes Easy:

Communication facilitates planning. Planning is made easy by communication. Any type of information regarding the human resource requirement of each department of the organisation with their qualifications, the type and kinds of job etc. can be collected through communication which helps in human resource planning. Policies and programmes for their acquisition can be prepared and implemented. In the entire process communication plays a vital role, it also facilitates managerial planning of the organisation.

Means of Coordination:

Communication is an important tool for coordinating the efforts of various people at work in the organisation.

Aids in Decision-Making:

The information collected through communication aids in decision-making. Communication facilitates access to the vital information required to take decisions.

Provides Effective Leadership:

A communication skill bring manager near to his subordinates and exchange ideas and submits appropriate proposals, knows their opinions, seeks advices and make decisions. This enables a manager to win confidence of his subordinates through constantly communicating with them and removing probable misunderstandings. In this way he leads his people to accomplish the organisational goal.

Boosts Morale and Motivation:

An effective communication system instills confidence among subordinates and workers ensuring change in their attitude and behaviour. The main cause of conflict and dissatisfaction is

misunderstanding which can be removed through communication skills. The removal of misunderstanding makes manager and his subordinates understand each other and create good industrial relations. This boosts up the morale of the people and motivates them to work harder.

Principles Of Communication:

Lack of effective communication renders an organisation handicapped. So to have effective communication certain principles are to be followed.

They are as follows

Clarity:

The principle of clarity means the communicator should use such a language which is easy to understand. The message must be understood by the receiver. The words used should be simple and unambiguous. The language should not create any confusion or misunderstanding. Language is the medium of communication; hence it should be clear and understandable.

Adequacy and Consistency:

The communicator must carefully take into account that the information to be communicated should be complete and adequate in all respect. Inadequate and incomplete message creates confusion and delays the action to be taken. The adequate information must be consistent with the organizational objectives, plans, policies and procedures. The message which is inconsistent may play havoc and distort the corporate interests.

Integration:

The principle of integration portrays that through communication the efforts of human resources of the organisation should be integrated towards achievement of corporate objectives. The very aim of communication is to achieve the set target. The communication should aim at coordinating the activities of the people at work to attain the corporate goals.

Economy:

The unnecessary use of communication system will add to cost. The system of communication must be used efficiently, timely i.e. at the appropriate time and when it is necessary. The economy in use of communication system can be achieved in this way.

Feedback:

The purpose of communication will be defeated if feedback is not taken from the receiver. The confirmation of the receipt of the message in its right perspective from its receiver fulfills the object of communication. The feedback is essential only in case of written communication and messages sent through messengers. In case of oral type of communication the feedback is immediately known.

Need for Communication Network:

The route through which the communication passes from sender or communicator to its receiver or communicate refers to communication network. For effective communication this network is essential. The managerial effectiveness will also depend upon the availability of adequate network.

Attention:

The message communicated must draw the attention of the receiver staff and ensure action from him in the right perspective. The efficient, sincere and prompt manager succeeds in drawing the attention of his subordinates to what he is conveying.

It is the psychology of the people that they watch their superiors closely and then respond to their orders or instructions. Lazy and insincere superiors fail to garner support for themselves and their instructions usually are not taken seriously by their subordinates. Adhering to the above principles shall make communication effective, minimize the human relations problems and increase the overall efficiency.

Essential Of Effective Communication

(1) Clarity of Information

Commenting on the 'communication realism' Terry says that first essential of effective communication is to 'inform yourself fully'. It implies that first of all the communicator must be clear in his mind with the information he wants to communicate. Communication should always be in common and easily understandable language so that it may not be misunderstood by the persons receiving it.

(2) Adequacy of Message

The message to be communicated should be adequate and complete in all respects since incomplete information turns out to be dangerous from the viewpoint of business. The adequacy of information being transmitted depends upon the intellectual capabilities of parties concerned.

(3) Consistency of Message

The message to be communicated should not be mutually conflicting rather it should be in line with the overall objectives, policies, programmes and procedures of the organisation. Self- contradictory messages always create chaos and confusion in the organisation which is highly detrimental to the efficient running of the enterprise. If the message is amended from the previous one, the fact should be clearly stated so that the chances of confusion can be reduced.

(4) Feedback

Feedback is an important method of ensuring effective communication. It refers to the confirmation of the idea communicated whether the message has been understood by the receiver in the same sense in which the sender makes or whether the recipient is agreed or disagreed to

the proposal of the communicator, makes it essential on the part of the sender to confirm it from the receiver.

In case of face to face communication, it is easier to get feedback information observing the emotions and expressions on the face of the receiver. But, for written communication, the management should devise or evolve suitable means and ways for making communication more effective.

(5) Understanding the Receiver

Understanding is the main aim of communication. The communication must create proper understanding in the mind of the receiver. Killian advised, "communicate with an awareness of the total physical and human setting in which the information will be received.

Picture the place of work; determine the receptivity and understanding levels of the receivers; be aware of social climate and customs, question the information's timeliness. Ask what, when and in which manner you would like to be communicated with if you were in a similar environment and position."

(6) Consultation

It is generally desirable to consult others in planning communication. This will provide additional insight and objectivity to the message. An important advantage of consultation will be that those who have been taken into confidence while planning communication will lend active support.

(7) Determine Medium

After having decided the subject matter it should be determined as to how best this message is to be communicated. All aspects of oral or written communication must be carefully examined.

(8) Tone and Content

The communicator must be careful about the language he uses while speaking or writing. His tone, expression and emotion will have a definite impact on the effectiveness or otherwise of what he is trying to communicate.

(9) Timing and Timeliness

Proper attention should be given to the timing and timeliness of the communication. The same message will be received or responded differently by different individuals and groups at one time and differently by the same individuals and groups at different times.

Even in an emergency one dare not overlook the situational, psychological and technical aspect of timing. Moreover, it is also necessary that information should be given in time as out-of-date information is as bad as or worse than none at all.

(10) Support with Action

It is highly necessary that the actions of the communicator should support his communication.

This is because action speaks louder than words. The most persuasive communication, it should be noted, is not what one says but what one does.

(11) Listening

A very important aspect of effective communication is that executives and supervisors should be good listeners. It is dangerous to be inattentive or indifferent when others are attempting to communicate. The ten commandments of American Management Association state: "Listening is one of the most important, most difficult and most neglected Skills M communications.

It demands that we concentrate not only on the explicit meanings another person is expressing, but on the implicit meanings, unspoken words, and undertones that may be far more significant.

Thus, we must learn to listen with the inner ear if we are to know the inner man. ”

(12) Environment of Trust and Confidence

F.E. Fischer has pointed out that ‘communication grows best in a climate of trust and confidence’. Every effort should, therefore, be made to win confidence by reporting facts honestly. Employees need to be convinced and feel that the company is truthful and sincere in its contacts.

Paul Arnold, President of Arnold Bakeries: “If your employee’s relation programme is a sound one, if your intent is true, if your people believe in that intent, and in that truth, then and only then you are successfully communicating.”

(13) Keeping the System Always Alive

The system of communication should be kept open and alive all the year round. It is only by honest attempts that good communication relations can be developed.

Role Of Ict In Communication

From the printing press to the computer, people have devised tools for facilitating learning and communication.

It is accepted that telecommunication is a basic infrastructure necessary for economic and social development of a country.

This is even becoming more strong than ever as information related economic activities are growing.

Information and communications technology may be described as the support of the central nervous system of complex societies, transmitting and processing information and commands among the various parts of such societies. Internet plays a fundamental function in ICT role

Essential Communication Skills That The Entrepreneur

They’re goal-oriented

Entrepreneurs are all about setting goals and putting their all into achieving them; they’re determined to make their business succeed and will remove any encumbrances that may stand in their way. They also tend to be strategic in their game plans and always have a clear idea in mind of exactly what they want to achieve and how they plan to achieve it.

They’re committed to their business

Entrepreneurs are not easily defeated; they view failure as an opportunity for future success, and if they don’t succeed the first time, they’ll stay committed to their business and will continue to try and try again until it does succeed. A true entrepreneur doesn’t take ‘no’ for an answer.

They’re hands-on

Entrepreneurs are inherently proactive, and know that if something really needs to get done, they should do it themselves. They’re ‘doers’, not thinkers, and tend to have very exacting standards.

They view their business as an extension of themselves and like to be integral in its day-to-day operations—even when they don’t have to be.

They thrive on uncertainty

Not only do they thrive on it—they also remain calm throughout it. Sometimes things go wrong in business, but when you’re at the helm of a company and making all the decisions, it’s essential to keep your cool in any given situation. True entrepreneurs know this and secretly flourish and grow in the wake of any challenges.

They continuously look for opportunities to improve

Entrepreneurs realize that every event or situation is a business opportunity, and they’re constantly generating new and innovative ideas. They have the ability to look at everything around them and focus it toward their goals in an effort to

improve their business.

They're willing to take risks

A true entrepreneur doesn't ask questions about whether or not they'll succeed—they truly believe they will. They exude this confidence in all aspects of life, and as a bi-product, they're never afraid to take risks due to their unblinking faith that ultimately they will triumph.

They're willing to listen and learn

The most important part of learning is listening—and a good entrepreneur will do this in abundance.

They have great people skills

Entrepreneurs have strong communication skills, and it's this strength that enables them to effectively sell their product or service to clients and customers. They're also natural leaders with the ability to motivate, inspire and influence those around them.

They're inherently creative

This is one trait that, due to their very nature, entrepreneurial business people have by the bucket load. They're able to not only come up with ingenious ideas, but also turn those ideas into profits.

SHOULD STRIVE TO ACQUIRE.

They're passionate and always full of positivity

Passion is perhaps the most important trait of the successful entrepreneur. They genuinely love their job and are willing to put in those extra hours to make their business grow; they get a genuine sense of pleasure from their work that goes way beyond just cash.

Chapter 2

Communication Process

Stages Of Communication Process

Communication process consists of some interrelated steps or parts through which messages are sent from sender to receiver. The process of communication begins when the sender wants to transmit a fact, idea, opinion or other information to the receiver and ends with receiver's feedback to the sender. The main components of communication process are sender, message, channel, receiver and feedback "Communication process is a chain made up of identifiable links. The chain includes sender, encoding, message, receiver, decoding, and feedback." "The communication process is the method by which the sender transfers information and understanding to the receiver." The following diagram represents the communication process. Thus, it is clear that communication process is the set of some sequential steps involved in transferring message as well as feedback. The process requires a sender who transmits message through a channel to the receiver. Then the receiver decodes the message and sends back some type of signal or feedback.

Communication cycle

The message goes through five stages when it is sent by the sender to the receiver. These stages are as follows:

Sender

who conveys the message.

Message

which consists of facts, ideas, opinions.

Symbol

-this is also known as encoding of message.

Channel

-the communication channel can be a telephone.

Receiver

is the person who receives the message. He decodes the message and draws meaning from it.

Feedback

-the receiver sends his response to the sender of the message

Steps or elements of communication process

The communication process refers to the steps through which communication takes place between the sender and the receiver. This process starts with conceptualizing an idea or message by the sender and ends with the feedback from the receiver. In details, communication process

consists of the following eight steps

Developing idea by the sender: In the first step, the communicator develops or

conceptualizes an idea to be sent. It is also known as the planning stage since in this stage the communicator plans the subject matter of communication.

Encoding: Encoding means converting or translating the idea into a perceivable form that can be communicated to others.

Developing the message: After encoding the sender gets a message that can be transmitted

to the receiver. The message can be oral, written, symbolic or nonverbal. For example, when people talk, speech is the message; when people write a letter, the words and sentences are the message; when people cry, the crying is the message.

Selecting the medium: Medium is the channel or means of transmitting the message to the

receiver. Once the sender has encoded his/her message, the next step is to select a suitable medium for transmitting it to the receiver. The medium of communication can be speaking, writing, signaling, gesturing etc.

Transmission of message: In this step, the sender actually transmits the message through

chosen medium. In the communication cycle, the tasks of the sender end with the transmission of the message.

Receiving the message by receiver: This stage simply involves the reception of sender's

message by the receiver. The message can be received in the form of hearing, seeing, feeling and so on.

Decoding: Decoding is the receiver's interpretation of the sender's message. Here the

receiver converts the message into thoughts and tries to analyze and understand it. Effective communication can occur only when both the sender and the receiver assign the same or similar meanings to the message.

Feedback: The final step of communication process is feedback. Feedback means

receiver's response to sender's message. It increases the effectiveness of communication. It ensures that the receiver has correctly understood the message. Feedback is the essence of two-way communication.

Barriers To Effective Communication

There are many reasons why interpersonal communications may fail. In many communications, the message (what is said) may not be received exactly the way the sender intended. It is, therefore, important that the communicator seeks feedback to check that their message is clearly understood.

The skills of Active Listening, Clarification and Reflection may help but the skilled communicator also needs to be aware of the barriers to effective communication and how to avoid or overcome them.

Common Barriers to Effective Communication

Physical Barriers: this has to do with poor or outdated equipment used during

communications, background noise, poor lighting, temperatures that are too hot or too cold.

Attitudes: emotions like anger or sadness can taint objectivity. Also being extremely nervous,

having a personal agenda or “needing to be right no matter what” can make communications less than effective. This is also known as “Emotional Noise”.

Language: this can seem like an easy one, but even people speaking the same language can

have difficulty understanding each other if they are from different generations or from different regions of the same country. Slang, professional jargon and regional colloquialisms can even hurt communicators with the best intentions.

Physiological Barriers: ill health, poor eyesight or hearing difficulties, pain.

Problems with Structure Design: companies or institutions can have organization structures

that are not clear, which can make communications difficult. Also to blame for faulty communications are bad information systems, and lack of supervision or training of the people involved.

Cultural Noise: people sometimes make stereotypical assumptions about others based on their cultural background.

Lack of Common Experience: it's a great idea to use examples or stories to explain a point

that is being discussed. However, if the speaker and the audience cannot relate to these examples because they do not have the same knowledge or have not shared the same experiences then this tool will be ineffective.

Ambiguity and Abstractions Overuse: leaving things half-said, using too many

generalizations, proverbs or sayings, can all lead to communications that are not clear and that can lend themselves to misinterpretations.

Information Overload: it takes time to process a lot of information and too many details can overwhelm and distract the audience from the important topics. Keep it Simple, Sweetie.

Assumptions and Jumping to Conclusions: This can make someone reach a decision about

something before listening to all the facts. ways of overcoming barriers to effective communication Communication barriers exist all around us. Misinterpretations abound in our discussions with team members. We delete, distort and generalise information in every conversation. And yet we think we clearly understand what others are saying and why they are saying it.

These barriers exist because we put them there. There are many ways we interpret information given to us by others, and these cause us to have a mis-alignment of understanding.

In order to remove hindrances in the way of communication the following steps are worth

consideration

(1) Clarify Ideas before Communication

The person sending the communication should be very clear in his mind about what he wants to say. He should know the objective of his message and, therefore, he should arrange his thoughts in a proper order.

(2) Communicate According to the Need of the Receiver

The sender of the communication should prepare the structure of the message not according to his own level or ability but he should keep in mind the level, understanding or the environment of the receiver.

(3) Consult Others before Communication

At the time of planning the communication, suggestions should be invited from all the persons concerned. Its main advantage will be that all those people who are consulted at the time of preparing the communication plan will contribute to the success of the communication system.

(4) Be Aware of Language, Tone and Content of Message

The sender should take care of the fact that the message should be framed in clear and beautiful language. The tone of the message should not injure the feelings of the receiver. As far as possible the contents of the message should be brief and excessive use of technical words should be avoided.

(5) Convey Things of Help and Value to the Listener

The subject matter of the message should be helpful to the receiver. The need and interest of the receiver should specially be kept in mind. Communication is more effective in such a situation.

(6) Ensure Proper Feedback

The purpose of feedback is to find out whether the receiver has properly understood the meaning of the information received. In the face-to-face communication, the reaction on the face of the receiver can be understood.

But in case of written communication or some other sort of communications some proper method of feedback should be adopted by the sender

(7) Consistency of Message

The information sent to the receiver should not be self-contradictory. It should be in accordance with the objectives, policies, programmes and techniques of the organisation. When a new message has to be sent in place of the old one, it should always make a mention of the change otherwise it can create some doubts.

(8) Follow up Communication

In order to make communication effective the management should regularly try to know the weaknesses of the communication system. In this context effort can be made to know whether to lay more stress upon the formal or the informal communication would be appropriate.

Similarly, suggestions can be invited in respect of the medium of communication (oral, written and gestural) to know as to which medium would be more effective and appropriate.

(9) Be a Good Listener

It is the essence of communication that both the sender and the receiver should be good listeners.

Both should listen to the each other's point of view with attention, patience and positive attitude.

A sender can receive much relevant information by being a good listener.

(10.) Understand others see things differently to you. Try to predict the feelings and attitude of the receiver. What will their expectation be? What about their state of mind when you are communicating? What prejudices might they have? If you know these things before communicating, you reduce the risk of misinterpretation.

(11.) As often as possible, speak face-to-face. This will allow for questions and, most importantly, allow you to see the body language, which will convey much more meaning than over the phone or through email.

(12.) Make it easy for others to listen to you. Make your communication style that one of a conversationalist, one who is able to make a point quickly, succinctly and with conviction. If

your key message is lost in the morass of a thousand words, people will wonder what you mean and what the purpose is. Clarity and brevity are the watchwords.

Basic Concepts Of Transmission And Receipt Of A Message

Encoding of the message by sender

The Source/ The Sender The process of communication begins with the 'source' also known as the 'Sender'. The source refers to the individual or group who intend to communicate an idea to their audience.

In regards to promotion/marketing communications, the source of the communication will be the organization that intends to promote their new product.

Encoding

When the source of the communication puts together their intended message, this is referred to as 'Encoding'. 'Encoding' can be defined as transforming an abstract idea into a communicable message. This is done using words, symbols, pictures, symbols and sounds.

In regards to promotion/marketing communication encoding involves transforming the organizations ideas about a product into various forms/types of promotion: advertisements, press releases, sales promotions or a personal sales pitch.

Transmission of message through a channel

Message Channel

The encoded message must now be delivered to its audience via a message channel. A message channel is a term that refers to the medium that carries the message from the sender to the receiver.

In marketing/promotions the message channel may be: television, radio, newspaper, or a sales person.

Decoding a message by receiver

The Receiver Anyone who is audience to the message is referred to as the receiver. For example, all viewers of a television advertisement can be referred to as the 'receivers' of the message.

Decoding

When the receiver views or hears the message they do what is termed 'decoding'. Decoding can be defined at the receiver interpreting the message and coming to an understanding about what the source is communicating.

In promotions, an example of this would be a consumer viewing an advertisement and coming to an understanding about what the product is.

Decoding of feedback by the sender

Feedback/Response

Feedback refers to any response the receiver offers to the message, this could be communication or behavior.

In marketing/promotions feedback refers to the way the consumer responds to the promotional campaign. For example, purchasing a product after viewing an advertisement is an example of feedback to a promotional campaign.

Measuring feedback is extremely important in a marketing/promotions campaign because it allows for a measure of the success of the marketing campaign. For example, negative feedback such as no increase in sales would show that changes need to be made in the promotional strategy.

Noise

Noise is the term given to anything that disrupts the communication. That is, anything that prevents the audience from receiving the message the way they source intended to. It doesn't necessarily involve and audible distraction.

In the case of promotion (marketing communications) noise could be – applications that allow audiences to skip advertisements – poorly placed billboards – advertisements in print that are too small or poorly placed.

Feedback mechanism

Receivers are not just passive absorbers of messages; they receive the message and respond to them. This response of a receiver to sender's message is called Feedback. Sometimes a feedback could be a non-verbal smiles, sighs etc. Sometimes it is oral, as when you react to a colleague's ideas with questions or comments. Feedback can also be written like - replying to an e-mail, etc.

Feedback is your audience's response; it enables you to evaluate the effectiveness of your message. If your audience doesn't understand what you mean, you can tell by the response and then refine the message accordingly.

Giving your audience a chance to provide feedback is crucial for maintaining an open communication climate. The manager must create an environment that encourages feedback. For example after explaining the job to the subordinated he must ask them whether they have understood it or not. He should ask questions like "Do you

understand?", "Do you have any doubts?" etc. At the same time he must allow his subordinated to express their views also.

Feedback is essential in communication so as to know whether the recipient has understood the message in the same terms as intended by the sender and whether he agrees to that message or not.

There are lot of ways in which company takes feedback from their employees, such as : Employee surveys, memos, emails, open-door policies, company news letter etc. Employees are not always willing to provide feedback. The organization has to work a lot to get the accurate feedback. The managers encourage feedback by asking specific questions, allowing their employees to express general views, etc. The organization should be receptive to their employee's feedback.

A manger should ensure that a feedback should

Focus on a particular behaviour - It should be specific rather than being general.

Impersonal - Feedback should be job related, the manager should not criticize anyone personally.

Goal oriented - If we have something negative to say about the person, we should always direct it to the recipients goal.

Well timed - Feedback is most effective when there is a short gap between the recipients behaviour and the receipt of that feedback.

Use "I" statements - Manager should make use of statements with the words like "I",

"However" etc. For example instead of saying" You were absent from work yesterday", manager should say"I was annoyed when you missed your work yesterday".

Ensure understanding - For feedback to be effective, the manager should make sure that the recipients understands the feedback properly.

While giving negative feedback to the recipient, the manager should not mention the factors which are not in control of the recipient.

Ethical issues in communication

Ethics

Can be defined as science of character of a person expressed as right or wrong conduct of action.

Ethics are principles that guide us in judging whether something is morally right or wrong.

Its objective is to establish moral standards and behavioral norms.

Business ethics

It concentrates on the moral standards as they apply to business policies, institutions and behavior. It attempts to apply general moral principles to business activities in order to resolve or at least clarify , the moral issues which typically arise in business.

Ethics and communication

Ethical communication involves all the relevant information. • It is true and accurate. • It avoids the language that manipulates, discriminates or exaggerates.

Some examples of unethical communication Plagiarism Stealing someone else's work and claiming it as your own. Selective misquoting Deliberately omitting damaging or unflattering comments to paint a better (but untruthful picture) of you or your company Misrepresenting numbers Increasing or decreasing numbers , altering statistics or omitting numerical data.

Distorting visuals Making a product look bigger or changing the scale of graphs and charts to exaggerate or conceal the differences.

Communicating ethically

Conveying the point without offending the audience • Maintain a relationship with the audience •

Avoid withholding crucial information • Accuracy of information

Chapter 3

Classification Of Communication

Types Of Communication

Formal

In formal communication, certain rules, conventions and principles are followed while communicating message. Formal communication occurs in formal and official style.

Usually professional settings, corporate meetings, conferences undergoes in formal

pattern.

In formal communication, use of slang and foul language is avoided and correct pronunciation is required. Authority lines are needed to be followed in formal communication.

Informal

Informal communication is done using channels that are in contrast with formal communication channels. It's just a casual talk. It is established for societal affiliations of members in an organization and face-to-face discussions. It happens among friends and family. In informal communication use of slang words, foul language is not restricted. Usually, informal communication is done orally and using gestures.

Informal communication, Unlike formal communication, doesn't follow authority lines.

In an organization, it helps in finding out staff grievances as people express more when talking informally. Informal communication helps in building relationships.

Internal

Internal communication: Internal communication refers to the flow of information to the internal participants of an organization. It happens only within the organization. The main purpose of this communication is to ensure smooth functioning of organizational activities.

Internal communication is the process of exchanging information among the people of different level or internal participants within the organization.

External

external communication is an informal exchange of information and messages between an organization and other organizations, groups or individuals outside its formal structure.

When an organization communicates with external or outside parties, it is called external communication. External parties include customers, suppliers, investors, bankers, insurance companies, government agencies, local communities etc. the main purpose of external communication is to exchange information with the outside parties.

Advantages of External Communication

External communication helps an organization to keep its outsourcing agencies like distributors, wholesalers, retailers and clientele well informed about the company's products, services, progress and goals. The information gets continuously updated and accurate. All organizations have to maintain cordial relationships with government agencies, licensing authorities, suppliers of raw materials, ancillary industries and financial institutions. Continual and updated information without any communication gap is essential for business houses.

Inter personal

Interpersonal communications refer to the type of communication where two or more people are provided with the means of interaction with one another and are able to exchange information. Interpersonal communication can be direct or mediated, depending on whether the sender and the receiver of the information in the process of communication use media, such as telephone or email. If technology is required for interpersonal communication, then it is a mediated communication. If, on the other hand, two people are exchanging information face to face, then it is a direct communication. Direct communication is characterized by immediacy and primacy. It happens here and now and has a stronger feedback component than a mediated interpersonal communication. It is preferable for people to discuss via means of direct communication things that require immediate feedback in order to continue the discussion.

Interpersonal communication can be categorized by the number of participants.

Dyadic communication involves two people. For example, a husband and a wife are discussing things during dinner.

Group communication involves three or more persons. Specialists cannot not agree on what should be the maximum number of people involved in order to categorize interpersonal communication as group communication. Often group communication is done for the purpose of solving a problem or making an important decision. Examples: focus group targeting marketing issues; United Nations assembly.

Public communication involves a large group with one speaker. There is only a minimal feedback in the course of public communication.

Sharing knowledge, entertainment and ideology-charged speeches are

common forms of public communication. Example: University lectures or political campaign speeches. Source

Intra – personal

Intrapersonal communication is a communicator's internal use of language or thought. It can be useful to envision intrapersonal communication occurring in the mind of the individual in a model which contains a sender, receiver, and feedback loop.

Intrapersonal communication is the communication process that happens

internally. Communication with others is dependent on individual perceptions, and those perceptions are developed with the communication that happens within the individual. Intrapersonal communication is the type of communication in which a person is communicating to himself. It takes place entirely within a single individual. Purposes of intrapersonal communication can be of various kinds- from clarifying things to meditating and reflecting on complex ideas. There are several levels of activity in intrapersonal communication

Internal discourse involving analysis and rendering information. Psychologists include various dreaming processes in this level of intrapersonal communication.

Solo vocal communication, which is performed in order to clarify things or to be relieved of certain thoughts.

Solo written communication. At this level of intrapersonal communication an individual expresses his thoughts on paper, being the sole possible reader of the written text. The example of this is a personal diary or an imaginary dialogue between two "identities" of a person via email. This level of intrapersonal communication has to be distinguished from the writings that are addressed to a future audience, such as poetry, love letters, etc.

Comparison chart

Interpersonal

Intrapersonal communication

communication

Requires two or more persons Requires only one person

Takes a form of exchanging Takes a form of thinking and ideas analysis

May require media Does not require media

A flow of information Information is circuited

Visible Invisible

Interpersonal vs Intrapersonal Communication

What is the difference between interpersonal and intrapersonal communication?

Intrapersonal communication requires only one person. On the other hand, for interpersonal communication, there are at least two individuals required.

Intrapersonal communication usually takes the form of thinking and analyzing. Interpersonal

communication, on the other hand, takes the form of exchanging ideas and developing concepts based on the results of the communication between the participating sides.

Intrapersonal communication doesn't require any media to be used. One doesn't need to call

himself via telephone in order to talk the matter over with oneself. Media such as email or a notebook can be involved in intrapersonal communication, but solely for the purpose of self-expression and in order to help analyze the inner processes of an individual. Interpersonal communication, on the other hand, requires either verbal or non-verbal media in order to be performed for obvious reasons. People cannot communicate their thoughts without using language and the technical means to convey thoughts. There is an exception to this, known as "communication via thoughts," where two minds feel connected, but the quality and productivity of such communication remain questionable.

The information in intrapersonal communication is intended only for the person who is

producing it. The flow of information is on an internal circuit. In the case of interpersonal communication, on the other hand, the information is shared between at least two people.

One of the consequences of this difference in the two types of communication, is that in the case of interpersonal communication the information shared is much more vulnerable and can theoretically be overheard and used by a third party.

Intrapersonal communication is invisible. Interpersonal communication in its direct form, on

the other hand, is visible. A bystander can tell that two people are communicating with each other. A bystander cannot be sure a person is in the process of intrapersonal communication even if he is talking aloud to himself. After all, there might be a Bluetooth device involved.

Chapter 4

Forms Of Communication

Types of communication based on the communication channels used are

Verbal Communication

Nonverbal Communication

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication refers to the the form of communication in which message is transmitted verbally; communication is done by word of mouth and a piece of writing. Objective of every communication is to have people understand what we are trying to convey. In verbal communication remember the acronym KISS(keep it short and simple).

When we talk to others, we assume that others understand what we are saying because we know what we are saying. But this is not the case. usually people bring their own attitude, perception, emotions and thoughts about the topic and

hence creates barrier in delivering the right meaning.

So in order to deliver the right message, you must put yourself on the other side of the table and think from your receiver's point of view. Would he understand the message? how it would sound on the other side of the table?

Verbal Communication is further divided into

■ Oral Communication

■ Written Communication

Oral Communication

In oral communication, Spoken words are used. It includes face-to-face conversations, speech, telephonic conversation, video, radio, television, voice over internet. In oral communication, communication is influence by pitch, volume, speed and clarity of speaking.

Advantages of Oral communication

It brings quick feedback.

In a face-to-face conversation, by reading facial expression and body language one can guess whether he/she should trust what's being said or not.

Disadvantage of oral communication

In face-to-face discussion, user is unable to deeply think about what he is delivering, so this can be counted as a

Written Communication

In written communication, written signs or symbols are used to communicate. A written message may be printed or hand written. In written communication message can be transmitted via email, letter, report, memo etc. Message, in written communication, is influenced by the vocabulary & grammar used, writing style, precision and clarity of the language used.

Written Communication is most common form of communication being used in business. So, it is considered core among business skills.

Memos, reports, bulletins, job descriptions, employee manuals, and electronic mail are the types of written communication used for internal communication. For communicating with external environment in writing, electronic mail, Internet Web sites, letters, proposals, telegrams, faxes, postcards, contracts, advertisements, brochures, and news releases are used.

Advantages of written communication

Messages can be edited and revised many time before it is actually sent.

Written communication provide record for every message sent and can be saved for later study.

A written message enables receiver to fully understand it and send appropriate feedback.

Disadvantages of written communication

Unlike oral communication, Written communication doesn't bring instant feedback.

It take more time in composing a written message as compared to word-of-mouth. and number of people struggles for writing ability.

Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is the sending or receiving of wordless messages. We can say that communication other than oral and written, such as gesture, body language, posture, tone of voice or facial expressions, is called nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication is all about the body language of speaker.

Nonverbal communication helps receiver in interpreting the message received. Often, nonverbal signals reflect the situation more accurately than verbal messages. Sometimes nonverbal response contradicts verbal communication and hence affects the effectiveness of message.

Nonverbal communication has the following three elements

Appearance

Speaker: clothing, hairstyle, neatness, use of cosmetics

Surrounding: room size, lighting, decorations, furnishings

Body Language

facial expressions, gestures, postures

Sounds

Voice Tone, Volume, Speech rate

Types of Communication Based on Purpose and Style

Based on style and purpose, there are two main categories of communication and they both have

their own characteristics. Communication types based on style and purpose are

Formal Communication

Informal Communication

Formal Communication

In formal communication, certain rules, conventions and principles are followed while communicating message. Formal communication occurs in formal and official style. Usually professional settings, corporate meetings, conferences undergo in formal pattern.

In formal communication, use of slang and foul language is avoided and correct pronunciation is required. Authority lines are needed to be followed in formal communication.

Informal Communication

Informal communication is done using channels that are in contrast with formal communication channels. It's just a casual talk. It is established for societal affiliations of members in an organization and face-to-face discussions. It happens among friends and family. In informal communication use of slang words, foul language is not restricted. Usually, informal communication is done orally and using gestures.

Informal communication, Unlike formal communication, doesn't follow authority lines. In an organization, it helps in finding out staff grievances as people express more when talking informally. Informal communication helps in building relationships.

Visual Communication

Visual communication is the transmission of information and ideas using symbols and imagery.

It is one of three main types of communication, along with verbal communication (speaking) and non-verbal communication (tone, body language, etc.). Visual communication is believed to be the type that people rely on most, and it includes signs, graphic designs, films, typography, and countless other examples.

Example

Imagine that you're on vacation in a foreign city, and you get lost while driving. If you were at home, you could stop and ask someone for directions. But here you don't speak the language very well, so asking directions won't do much good.

Instead, you can rely on a map, using landmarks, routes, and familiar signs, which successfully lead you back to your hotel. In this scenario, you have found your way back almost entirely through visual communication.

Visual communication in part or whole relies on vision, and is primarily presented or expressed with two dimensional images, it includes: signs, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, Industrial Design, Advertising, Animation colour and electronic resources. It also explores the idea that a visual message[2] accompanying text has a greater power to inform, educate, or persuade a person or audience Visual communication plays an important role in our daily life. Advertisement, teaching and learning, presentation and SEO and so on all involve visual communication to some extent.

If carried out properly, visual communication has various benefits. In the information era and fast-paced society in which time is limited, visual communication help to communicate ideas faster and better. Generally speaking, it offers these benefits: instant conveyance, ease of understanding, cross-cultural communication and generation of enjoyment.

Benefits of Visual Communication

Efficient - Instant Conveyance

Compared with verbal communication, visual communication prevails in the efficiency of communication. For example, a bar chart helps the audience find out the first and last item at a glance. A line chart on sales with an uprising arrow tells readers immediately that the sales trend is increasing and favorable.

Easy - Ease of Understanding

One of the primary advantage visual communication offers is simplicity. For example, when you get lost, you can find the place easier and faster by looking at a visual map and a 3D directional map will be much better.

Flexible - Cross-cultural Communication

Just think about the cross-cultural communication, when people cannot understand foreign language, a symbol or a picture will remove the language obstacles. This is the reason that many public places use signs in addition to words to send message. Visual charts and graphics can be posted online, put beside the highway and stacked on anywhere audible. Such flexible communication form can bridge geographic distance and cross cultural differences.

Enjoyable - Generation of Enjoyment

Visual materials are relatively more eye-pleasing. If highly artistic, it brings aesthetic enjoyment.

When presenting an amazing shot, it makes people relaxed. A funny picture makes people laugh and will help people memorize the information better.

Advantages of visual communication

Now-a-days, most of the business organizations are using visual techniques to present the information. It is becoming very popular day by day. Visual presentation is beneficial for many

reasons. Some of them are as follows

Effective for illiterate receiver: If the receivers are illiterate, the visual communication

will be more effective to exchange information. They can easily understand the information that is presented visually.

Helps in oral communication: Visual techniques can be used with oral communication.

Oral communication becomes more meaningful if graphs, pictures and diagrams are used with it.

Easy explanation: Everyone can explain the meaning of it very easily. Easy explanation

has made the visual techniques more popular.

Simple presentation: Complex information, data and figures can be easily presented very simply on graphs, pictures and diagrams.

Prevents wastage of time: Visual techniques help to prevent the wastage of time. Written

and oral communication takes much time to exchange information. But number of receivers can be communicated at a time through visual methods.

Helps in quick decision: Visual communication helps to take quick decision. So management prefers visual techniques to communicate with others.

Popular: Visual communication is very much popular because people do not like much speech and long explanation rather than a chart or a diagram.

Others: Artful presentation, Ads impact to the information, quicker understanding.

Disadvantages of visual communication

There are some limitations of visual communication as follows

Costly: The visual methods of communication are more costly than those of other methods.

To draw maps, charts, diagram is costly. That is why only large company or organization can use this technique.

Complex presentation: Sometimes visual presentation of information becomes complex.

The receivers cannot understand the meaning of the presentation.

Incomplete method: This technique is considered as an incomplete method. Visual

presentation is not sufficient to communicate effectively and clearly but also it can be successfully used with oral communication.

Wastage of time: Sometimes visual techniques take much time to communicate.

Whereas oral communication takes no time to exchange information.

Difficult to understand: Difficult to understand and requires a lot of repetitions in visual

communication. Since it uses gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, touch etc. for communicating with others which may not be understandable for the simple and foolish people.

Problem for general readers: General people are not prefers to communicate through

visual communication with others. Sometimes it cannot create an impression upon people or listeners. It is less influential and cannot be used everywhere.

Others: Ambiguity, situational problem, delays in taking decision.

Audio-Visual Communication

means possessing both a sound and a visual component, such as slide tape presentations,[1] films, television programs, church services and live theater productions.

Business presentations are also often audiovisual. In a typical presentation, the presenter provides the audio by speaking, and supplements it with a series of images projected onto a screen, either from a slide projector, or from a computer connected to a projector using presentation software.

Audiovisual service providers frequently offer web streaming, video conferencing and live broadcast services.[2] Computer-based audiovisual equipment is often used in education, with many schools and universities installing projection equipment and using interactive whiteboard technology.

Another audiovisual expression is the visual presentation of sound (visual music).

Advantages

gets the attention of the participants

easy to follow

participants feel more engaged

easier to explain or put things in perspective

easier to remember

helps keep mistakes at a minimum

Best Motivators

They are the best motivators. Students work with more interest and zeal. They are more attentive.

Fundamental to Verbal Instructions

They help to reduce verbalism which is a major weakness of our schools. They convey the same meaning as words mean. They give clear concepts and thus help to bring accuracy in learning.

Variety

Audio-Visual aids provide variety and provide different tools in the hands of the teacher.

Clear Images

Clear images are formed when we see, hear, touch, taste and smell as our experiences are direct, concrete and more or less permanent. Learning through the senses becomes the most natural and consequently the easiest.

Help to make the learning process more effective and conceptual.

Help to grab the attention of targeted audience.

Build interest and motivation.

Enhance the energy level of teaching.

Provide a realistic approach and experience.

Disadvantages

It's easier to lose focus

requires a well designed presentation or material

participants might pay more attention to the graphics than the audio

Technical problems

Expensive

Time-consuming

Need space

Chapter 5

Channels Of Communication

In an organization, information flows forward, backwards and sideways. This information flow is referred to as communication. Communication channels refer to the way this information flows within the organization and with other organizations.

In this web known as communication, a manager becomes a link. Decisions and directions flow upwards or downwards or sideways depending on the position of the manager in the communication web.

For example, reports from lower level manager will flow upwards. A good manager has to inspire, steer and organize his employees efficiently, and for all this, the tools in his possession are spoken and written words.

For the flow of information and for a manager to handle his employees, it is important for an effectual communication channel to be in place.

The Working of a Communication Channel Through a medium of communication, be it face-to-face conversations or an inter-department memo, information is transmitted from a manager to a subordinate or vice versa.

An important element of the communication process is the feedback mechanism between the management and employees.

In this mechanism, employees inform managers that they have understood the task at hand while managers provide employees with comments and directions on employee's work.

Importance of a Communication Channel

A breakdown in the communication channel leads to an inefficient flow of information.

Employees are unaware of what the company expects of them. They are uninformed of what is going on in the company.

This will cause them to become suspicious of motives and any changes in the company. Also without effective communication, employees become department minded rather than company minded, and this affects their decision making and productivity in the workplace.

Eventually, this harms the overall organizational objectives as well. Hence, in order for an organization to be run effectively, a good manager should be able to communicate to his/her employees what is expected of them, make sure they are fully aware of company policies and any upcoming changes.

Therefore, an effective communication channel should be implemented by managers to optimize worker productivity to ensure the smooth running of the organization.

Vertical communication

Vertical communication is the communication where information or messages flows between or among the subordinates and superiors of the organizational.

According to Stoner and his associates, "Vertical communication consists of communication up and down the organization's chain of command." According to Bovee and his associates, "Vertical communication is a flow of information up and down the organization's hierarchy." According to Ricky W. Griffin, "Vertical communication is the communication that flows both up and down the organization, along formal reporting lines."

The graphical presentation of vertical communications is as follows

So, vertical communication is the communication where information or messages flows within the top level of the organizational structure and bottom level of the organizational structure.

Advantages of vertical communication

Without communicating with superior and subordinate, no organization runs a single day.

Communication without upper level and the lower level employee is very much essential for

organization. Some advantages of vertical communication system are as follows

- Conveying message of subordinate: Through upward direction of vertical communication system, the upper level management convey their suggestions, complains and recommendations to the subordinates.
- Maintains good labor-management relations: There is systematic flow of information under his communication system, so a good relation can be developed between superior and subordinates.
- Maintains organizational discipline: There is a chain of command in vertical communication system. So, a sense of discipline may be developed among the employees.
- Explaining policies and plan: Through vertical communication system, upper level management can send the policies and procedures to the subordinates.
- Effective decision making: Superiors needed various information to take decision making in the organization. With the help of vertical communications, superiors collect information from subordinate.
- Help in decentralizations: Duties and responsibilities can be delegated among departments through vertical communication.
- Avoid by-passing: Under this communication system superior and subordinates exchange message directly. So there is no chance to by-passing.
- Maintains chain of command: proper chain of commands is easily maintains through vertical communication system.
- Assigning jobs and evaluating performance: Vertical communication facilitates job assignment and job evaluation of the employees.
- Increase efficiency: Necessary instructions are sent to subordinates and they perform their duties and responsibilities accordingly that is help to increase efficiency both superior and subordinate.

Disadvantages of vertical communication

In spite of having many advantages vertical communication, there are some disadvantages

which are given below

■ **Delay process:** Vertical communication system is a delay process. It maintains long chain of command in large organization to exchange information. ■ **Disturbing discipline:** In this communication, if the boss's role of direction is seen by doubtful eyes by the subordinates, the chain of command and discipline may be broken. ■ **Efficiency reduces:** Downward direction of vertical communication is commanding in nature. So, there is no opportunity of the workers to become efficient. ■ **Loss or Distortion of information:** Information may be fabricated by the employees to maintain lengthy channel. So, through his communication information may lose its originality. ■ **Reduces relationships:** By this communication system relationship between superior and sub-ordinate may be reduced due to inability and inefficiency. ■ **Slowness system:** Vertical communication is the slowest communication method because it requires passing through the various levels of an organization. For this, it may become ineffective. ■ **Negligence of superiors:** In this communication superiors can neglect to send message to their subordinates.

Upwards communication

The communication channel which pushes the flow of information upward is known as upward communication. Managers of the business organizations have to receive information continually from the levels below them to know about the progress of works. It occurs when information flows up the hierarchy from subordinates to superiors. Media of these types of communications are meetings, suggestions, direct letters, direct communications etc.

According to Bartol and Martin, "Upward communication is the vertical communication flows from lower level to one or more higher levels in the organization." According to Ricky W. Griffin, "Upward communication consists of messages from subordinates to superior." According to Weihrich and Koontz, "Upward communication travels from subordinates to superiors and continues up the organizational hierarchy." According to Bovee and others, "Upward communication is the flow of information from lower level to higher levels in the organization."

The graphical presentation of upward communication is as follows

So, upward communication is the communication where information or messages flows from the down or bottom of the organizational structure from the top of the organizational structure.

Advantages of upward communication

Development of plan: The information received from subordinate plays important role to help development of planning of the organization.

Providing suggestions and opinions: By upward communication system, subordinate takes necessary suggestions and opinions from superiors about the work related issues of the organization.

Motivating to employees: Upward communication system allows lower level staff to express their attitude or opinion to upper level staff. As a result subordinates are influenced to work more towards fulfillment to target.

Providing constructive suggestion: All employees are supplied with constructive and important messages that can help to implement the goals or objectives.

Good labor-management relationship: Upward communication is participative in nature. Here, information is invited from lower level executives and employees and on the basis of this information top executive makes a decision. So, a good relation between subordinates and bosses should create for the betterment of the organization.

Providing feedback: The subordinate's reaction is returned to the superior in this communication system. So, top level management can decide what to do and what not to do clearly understand and followed.

Creating favorable environment: Upward communication helps to develop a favorable working situation in an organization by creating a good relation among all employees.

Promote harmony: Upward communication creates friendly environment in the organization

which lead to peaceful and harmonious relationship among the subordinates and superiors.

Decision making: Top level executives or superiors needed much information before taking a decision on a particular issue. Subordinates supply this information through the help of upward communication.

Developing creative and innovative ideas: Upward communication facilitates easy excess of the employees or subordinate to the superiors in providing necessary constructive suggestions and opinions about the work related issues of the organization.

Facilitating collective decision: Since upward communication is participative in nature. It communication allows the subordinates to convey their feelings, constructive suggestions and opinions and the work related in the decision making process.

Disadvantages of upward communication

In spite of having many advantages upward communication it is not free from limitations of

disadvantages. The main disadvantages of upward communication are as follows

Changes of information: In upward communication subordinates may change their accurate information. So, top executive cannot take accurate decision.

Unwillingness: Sometimes subordinates don't send the information to their superior willingly. So, communication system may be disrupted.

Fear of inefficiency: The main problem of the upward communication is fair to superiors.

Generally superiors make a question about the employees work position and efficiency. Many employees fear to communicate and share their ideas, constructive suggestions and opinions with the superiors.

Indiscipline: Sometimes employees communicate directly to superior by avoiding proper channel or chain of command. Here disciplines are not properly maintained.

Bypassing: In the process of upward communication, sometimes workers directly approach the top most authority with their suggestions or by passing their immediate boss. This is harmful to any organization.

Flattery: In order to convince the superior bosses, subordinates can take the help of flattery and for this reason subordinates may conceal the true and provide incomplete information to top level.

Lake of initiative: Generally subordinate is reluctant to take the initiative to upward communication for different reason.

Risk of distortion of messages: In upward communication, subordinates willingly distort the message because they fear if they tell the original fact to their bosses, they may face some problems.

Delay: It is an important limitation of upward communication is the long and slow movement of information to the higher authority.

Supervisor's negligence: Sometimes top level executives discourage the upward flow of information and neglect the constructive suggestions and opinions about the work related issues of the organization.

Downward Communication

Downward communication occurs when information and messages flow down through an organization's formal chain of command or hierarchical structure. In other words, messages and orders start at the upper levels of the organizational hierarchy and move down toward the bottom levels. Responses to downward communications move up along the same path.

Advantages

Downward communication provides certain advantages to an organization

Organizational discipline

Downward communication follows the organization's hierarchy, meaning that organizational discipline and member compliance is much easier to maintain.

Efficiency

Downward communication offers efficiencies because instructions and information come from the sources in power that are able to coordinate activities from the top of the organization. Employees receive feedback from the supervisors who manage them.

Effective communication of goals

Upper management can easily communicate goals and assign responsibilities regarding achieving those goals.

Ease of delegation

Delegation is much easier if the delegation comes directly from the vertical communication structure representing the chain of command.

Disadvantages

Downward communication is not without disadvantages, including the following

Distortion

Ever played the grapevine game? Downward communications can become distorted as it proceeds through multiple levels of the organization.

Slow feedback

It takes time for messages to go down the organization and then up the organization and then back down again.

This means that feedback can be slow, resulting in problems, especially in a dynamic environment.

Interpretative problems

Downward communication presents interpretation problems because of the distortion effect and the slow feedback for message clarification.

Lowers morale

Given the time communication takes and the problem with distorted messages, downward communications can have a negative impact on organizational morale.

Not motivating

Given slow feedback and the dependence on formal channels of communication, this method of communication doesn't really help with motivation.

Horizontal Communication: Definition

Horizontal communication is the transmission of information between people, divisions, departments or units within the same level of organizational hierarchy. You can distinguish it from vertical communication, which is the transmission of information between different levels of the organizational hierarchy. Horizontal communication is often referred to as 'lateral communication.'

Advantages

Horizontal communication presents some distinct advantages. It decreases misunderstanding between departments working on the same project, thereby increasing efficiency and productivity. It may result in better implementation of top-level decisions because employees on lower levels are permitted to coordinate directly with each other in the implementation of the decision made at the top. Horizontal communication facilitates teamwork if a project requires tasks from different people or departments. It may also increase job satisfaction and motivation by creating more employee empowerment in communication.

Disadvantages

Horizontal communication does come with some disadvantages. Management may have a greater problem maintaining control as horizontal communication increases. This is, in part, because management can derive much control and power if it controls the flow of information. Horizontal communication can also create conflict between employees exposed to each other through the communication process. It is also more time-consuming if vertical communication is required to ratify decisions made during horizontal communication or to confirm information received through horizontal communication. Finally, it may create a lack of discipline if strict procedural rules of communications are not imposed and followed.

Diagonal Communication

The sharing of information among different structural levels within a business. For example, diagonal communication could involve higher level management communicating to lower level management a shift in organizational objectives, as well as the ensuing dialog about how best to achieve the new goals.

Cross-functional communication between employees at different levels of the organizational hierarchy is described as diagonal communication. Diagonal communication is increasingly common in larger organizations with matrix or project-based structures. Diagonal communication may overcome some of the barriers to communication within a business. It reduces the chances of distortion or misinterpretation by encouraging communication between the relevant parties. It also reduces a manager's communication workload because he doesn't have to act as an intermediary between his direct reports and other managers.

Chapter 6

Official Etiquette, Protocol & Diplomacy

What is Etiquette?

The term Etiquette is derived from the French language and is defined as the customary code of polite behaviour or the contemporary conventions, forms, manners, rules, or ceremonies governing social behaviour. This code or set of conventions and manners are recognised as acceptable and required in societal relations. Such rules or norms are not limited to society's interactions in general but also includes relations within a social or professional group. Thus, for example, Etiquette also refers to the code of conduct or ethics prescribed in certain professions such as the medical or legal profession. This code of ethics will govern the practice and actions of such professionals in their interactions with each other. Keep in mind, however, that the purpose of Etiquette is not to simply prescribe the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of polite behaviour or good manners, such as how to sit at a table, how to eat or how to converse with other people.

Above all, Etiquette seeks to ensure that people are treated with and shown respect. An example of this is a conversation between two people. Etiquette requires that you wait till a person finishes his/her explanation, narration or expression of a view before expressing your own thoughts or opinion on that matter. Interrupting a person while he/she is still talking, in a rude and impolite manner, is not an accepted norm of Etiquette.

What is Protocol?

As mentioned before, Protocol is like Etiquette but on a more official and international level.

Traditionally, it is defined as the etiquette of diplomacy and affairs of the state. This means that Protocol constitutes the code of behaviour, ceremonial forms, courtesies, and procedure accepted and required for interactions between heads of states, government and/or diplomatic officials. Protocols take on a more serious nature in that they are rules detailing how certain activities should be carried out and how government and international officials must conduct themselves. As with Etiquette, a Protocol establishes the correct, formal and polite behaviour that should be maintained by the above-mentioned officials. However, unlike Etiquette, which governs the polite behaviour of society in general, Protocol

focuses on the behaviour of government and/or diplomatic officials including heads of states.

Protocols facilitate the smooth interaction between such officials, the ultimate aim to avoid unnecessary confrontation or disharmony. Examples of such rules include the manner in which diplomatic ceremonies are conducted, demonstrating respect to a head of state and such others.

This represents one interpretation of Protocol. The term Protocol also has a legal connotation.

Thus, legally, it refers to an international agreement that amends or supplements a treaty or convention. Further, the term is also used to denote the first draft of a treaty or other diplomatic document.

What is the difference between Protocol and Etiquette?

Collectively, the terms Etiquette and Protocol refer to a set of rules, conventions, and norms that govern the behaviour of people in general and in certain situations. They differ in terms of their sphere of influence and nature of the rules.

Definition of Protocol and Etiquette:

Etiquette refers to the customary code of social behaviour or rather, a system of accepted

rules, conventions, and norms governing polite behaviour and interactions among society. It also includes the set of norms and ethics governing the behaviour of professional bodies such as the medical and/or legal profession.

Protocol, on the other hand, refers to the code of conduct and behaviour governing

diplomacy and affairs of the state. It constitutes a set of rules, forms, ceremonies, and procedures adhered to and adopted by diplomatic and government officials in their international relations with states.

Other meanings of Protocol:

A Protocol also refers to a legal document, more specifically, an international agreement that either supplements or amends a treaty or convention.

Diplomacy

skill in handling affairs without arousing hostility

Office Etiquette (Office Manners)

Office Etiquette or Office Manners is about conducting yourself respectfully and courteously in the office or workplace. First impressions are important! You are the ambassador/s of the business.

Always act with honesty and dignity

Chewing gum and popping bubble gum in the presence of co-workers is neither cool nor dignified.

Never do it whilst attending customers

Wear appropriate office attire, for example correct footwear, not thongs (flip flops) - they are strictly casual or beachwear. No exposed midriff to display tattoos and body piercing.

Be neat, clean and as conservative as the business requires you to be. We are put off by smelly people. So, be sure to shower regularly and use a suitable deodorant. Do not cough or sneeze in anyone's direction. Use a tissue, if possible, to contain the germs and then say "Excuse me".

The essence of good manners and etiquette is to be respectful and courteous at all times and with everybody. Therefore, treat your co-workers, cleaners, maintenance people and others with respect and courtesy. Good office etiquette is easily achieved by using common courtesy as a matter of course. Keep your interruptions of others to a minimum and always apologise if your intrusion is an interruption of a discussion, someone's concentration or other activity.

Show respect for each other's workspace. Knock before entering

Show appreciation for the slightest courtesies extended to you

Be helpful and co-operative with each other

Brush up on your computer skills so that you can help others Your employer would gladly invest \$24.99 (Aust) to add this magnificent 500 page manual of Step-by-Step Computer Lessons to its reference library to improve staff efficiency

Click here to check it out

Aim to improve your other workplace skills and attributes too You will find help from some of the sponsors listed at the top or right side of this page. Check them out as well

Speak clearly without shouting. Loud people are a vexation

Say, "Please; Thank you; You're welcome", as part of your everyday courtesy Be discreet and compassionate in your criticism of a co-worker

Don't gossip about any co-worker's private life

Do not try to sell things to your colleagues

Don't hover around while waiting for a co-worker to get off the phone. Leave a note for them to call you or return later It's not a good idea to take your iPod to your office. It hinders communication

Avoid sexist comments about a co-worker's dress or appearance

Surveys show that the office know-it-all proved to be the biggest gripe amongst co-workers.

Don't be a know-all

Take responsibility for your mistakes, apologise and go about correcting the mistakes Apologise if you are clearly in the wrong. If in doubt, apologise anyway. It's no big deal

Never blame someone else if it is your mistake

If your boss criticises your work, enquire about what precisely is wrong with it. Consider the comments, discuss them amiably if you disagree with the comments but defer to the bosses opinion if he/she is adamant The boss always gets the benefit of the doubt. Don't argue with the boss (however, there are standards of etiquette for employers too. See Employer Etiquette) Make new employees feel welcome and comfortable around you. Don't be a busy-body Office etiquette means being thoughtful when interacting with your peers Keep your work area tidy. Try not to be messy

Show consideration for other people's feelings

If there is conflict, do not get personal in your remarks It is extremely rude to arrive late for a meeting It is ruder still to not attend at all. Having a good excuse does not exonerate you Do not dominate the meeting. All communication must take place through the chairperson

Do not interrupt another speaker

Pay attention to the proceedings quietly. Don't shuffle your papers Do not leave the meeting until it is closed by the chairperson

Never be petty or small minded in your behaviour

Always be particularly respectful to those older than yourself even if they are junior to you in position Your elders are generally more mature in judgement and life's experiences and this deserves your respect even in the workplace Practice good manners and office etiquette at every opportunity; even in the toilet 'Mute' your cell phone in the office. No fancy ring tones

Chapter 7

Writing Skills

Punctuation Marks

There are fourteen punctuation marks commonly used in English grammar. They are the period, question mark, exclamation point, comma, semicolon, colon, dash, hyphen, parentheses, brackets, braces, apostrophe, quotation marks, and ellipsis.

Sentence Endings

Three of the fourteen punctuation marks are appropriate for use as sentence endings. They are the period, question mark, and exclamation point.

The period (.) is placed at the end of declarative sentences, statements thought to be complete and after many abbreviations.

As a sentence ender: Jane and Jack went to the market.

After an abbreviation: Her son, John Jones Jr., was born on Dec. 6, 2008.

Use a question mark (?) to indicate a direct question when placed at the end of a sentence.

When did Jane leave for the market?

The exclamation point (!) is used when a person wants to express a sudden outcry or add emphasis.

Within dialogue: "Holy cow!" screamed Jane.

To emphasize a point: My mother-in-law's rants make me furious!

Comma, Semicolon and Colon

The comma, semicolon and colon are often misused because they all can indicate a pause in a series.

The comma is used to show a separation of ideas or elements within the structure of a sentence.

Additionally, it is used in numbers, dates and letter writing after the salutation and closing.

Direct address: Thanks for all your help, John.

Separation of two complete sentences: We went to the movies, and then we went out to lunch.

Separating lists or elements within sentences: Suzi wanted the black, green, and blue dress.

Whether to add a final comma before the conjunction in a list is a matter of debate. This final comma, known as an Oxford or serial comma, is useful in a complex series of elements or phrases

but is often considered unnecessary in a simple series such as in the example above. It usually comes down to a style choice by the writer.

The semicolon (;) is used to connect independent clauses. It shows a closer relationship between the clauses than a period would show.

John was hurt; he knew she only said it to upset him.

A colon (:) has three main uses. The first is after a word introducing a quotation, an explanation, an example, or a series.

He was planning to study four subjects: politics, philosophy, sociology and economics.

The second is between independent clauses, when the second explains the first, similar to a

semicolon

I didn't have time to get changed: I was already late.

The third use of a colon is for emphasis

There was one thing she loved more than any other: her dog.

A colon also has non-grammatical uses in time, ratio, business correspondence and references.

Dash and the Hyphen

Two other common punctuation marks are the dash and hyphen. These marks are often confused with each other due to their appearance but they are very different.

A hyphen is used to join two or more words together into a compound term and is not separated by spaces. For example, part-time, back-to-back, well-known.

A dash is used to separate words into statements. There are two common types of dashes: en dash and em dash.

En dash: Slightly wider than a hyphen, the en dash is a symbol (–) that is used in writing or printing to indicate a range or connections and differentiations, such as 1880–1945 or Princeton–New York trains.

Em dash: Twice as long as the en dash, the em dash can be used in place of a comma, parenthesis, or colon to enhance readability or emphasize the conclusion of a sentence. For example, She gave him her answer — No! Whether you put spaces around the em dash or not is, again, a style choice. Just be consistent.

Brackets, Braces and Parentheses

Brackets, braces and parentheses are symbols used to contain words that are a further explanation or are considered a group.

Parentheses (()) are curved notations used to contain further thoughts or qualifying remarks.

However, parentheses can be replaced by commas without changing the meaning in most cases.

John and Jane (who were actually half brother and sister) both have red hair.

Brackets are the squared off notations ([]) used for technical explanations or to clarify meaning. If you remove the information in the brackets, the sentence will still make sense.

He [Mr. Jones] was the last person seen at the house.

Braces ({ }) are used to contain two or more lines of text or listed items to show that they are considered as a unit. They are not commonplace in most writing, but can be seen in computer

programming to show what should be contained within the same lines. They can also be used in mathematical expressions. For example, $2\{1+[23-3]\}=x$.

Apostrophe, Quotation Marks and Ellipsis

The final three punctuation forms in English grammar are the apostrophe, quotation marks and ellipsis. Unlike previously mentioned grammatical marks, they are not related to one another in any form.

An apostrophe (') is used to indicate the omission of a letter or letters from a word, the possessive

case, or the plurals of lowercase letters. Examples of the apostrophe in use include

Omission of letters from a word: I've seen that movie several times. She wasn't the only one who knew the answer.

Possessive case: Sara's dog bit the neighbor.

Plural for lowercase letters: Six people were told to mind their p's and q's.

It should be noted that, according to Purdue University, some teachers and editors enlarge the scope of the use of apostrophe, and prefer their use on symbols (&'s), numbers (7's) and capitalized letters (Q&A's), even though they are not necessary.

Quotations marks (" ") are a pair of punctuation marks used primarily to mark the beginning and end of a passage attributed to another and repeated word for word. They are also used to indicate meanings and to indicate the unusual or dubious status of a word.

"Don't go outside," she said.

Single quotation marks (') are used most frequently for quotes within quotes.

Marie told the teacher, "I saw Marc at the playground, and he said to me 'Bill started the fight,' and I believed him."

The ellipsis is most commonly represented by three periods (. . .) although it is occasionally demonstrated with three asterisks (***). The ellipsis is used in writing or printing to indicate an omission, especially of letters or words. Ellipses are frequently used within quotations to jump from one phrase to another, omitting unnecessary words that do not interfere with the meaning. Students writing research papers or newspapers quoting parts of speeches will often employ ellipsis to avoid copying lengthy text that is not needed.

Omission of words: She began to count, "One, two, three, four..." until she got to 10, then went to find him.

Within a quotation: When Newton stated, "An object at rest stays at rest and an object in motion stays in motion..." he developed the law of motion.

British vs. American English

There are a few differences between punctuation in British and American English. The following

charts details some of those differences

British English American English

The " . " symbol is called A full stop a period

The " ! " symbol is called an exclamation mark an exclamation point The " () " symbols are called brackets parentheses The " [] " symbols are called square brackets brackets The position of quotation marks Joy means "happiness". Joy means "happiness." The punctuation for abbreviations Dr, Mr, Mrs, St, Rd, Ct Dr., Mr., Mrs., St., Rd., Ct.

Make your writing clear

Becoming familiar with the basic punctuation marks in the English language will allow you to express yourself better in your writing. Punctuation marks will also make your sentences clearer and more understandable to the reader.

Read more by clicking here.

The Importance Of Courtesy When Writing Business Letters

Whether you see your clients and customers on a regular basis or communicate with them electronically across multiple zip codes and oceans, it's critical that the content of your formal business correspondence reflects the same level of politeness and thoughtful attention to detail that would be shown if your exchange were taking place in person

Professionalism

When someone has the advantage of interacting with you in person, she can tell by your eye contact, listening skills, body language and even the way you present yourself just how seriously you take your position and your company's reputation. Because a written letter lacks the immediacy and intimacy of a real-time conversation, its overall tone calls for a sustainable level of courtesy that projects as much professionalism six months from now as it does when first read. Always consider how someone unfamiliar with the issue that prompted the correspondence will perceive you and your business.

Respect

A courteous business letter conveys to your recipient that you are not only sensitive to his concerns but believe in the value of taking the time to acknowledge those concerns in writing. Customer letters, in fact, often open with a phrase that personally thanks the individual and references both the date of his correspondence and the topic. According to Marceau O'Neill, author of "I Know You Know I'm Out Here!: A Contrarian's Call For Respectful Communications," something as simple as using a person's name goes a long way in letting people know that you don't just think of them as faceless blobs who are bothering you. Even if you disagree with his

attitudes, opinions or decisions, courtesy is about respecting an individual's right to express himself and refusing to repay rudeness with hostility.

Clarity

Frustrations in correspondence occur when you either misinterpret what it is the correspondent really wants from you or assume a level of knowledge that the correspondent doesn't actually have. Courtesy in business letters is a combination of paraphrasing your understanding of the problem prior to addressing its solution as well as explaining policies, procedures and practices in a clear, concise way. To the customer, this communicates engagement, sincerity and a desire to inform without being arrogant or condescending, advises Andrea Geffner, author of "How to Write Better Business Letters."

Empathy

The more you can empathize with your customers' problems, the more receptive they'll be to your response even if it's not the one they were hoping for, says Ken O'Quinn, author of "Perfect Phrases for Business Letters." Expressing your understanding, apologizing for any confusion or inconvenience, and offering remedies are considerate ways to let customers know that trying to accommodate their best interests is a company priority. A courteous demeanor in writing, versus denial and defensiveness, is particularly at the heart of taking responsibility for any wrongdoing on your part or that of the business.

Appreciation

People like to know that they're appreciated. It validates their existence as human beings and affirms that even the smallest gesture has not gone unnoticed. Even if a customer expects nothing in return from you, the simple courtesy of expressing your gratitude in writing for just supporting your efforts with their patronage not only encourages ongoing loyalty but creates a chain reaction of paying kindness forward to others. Never underestimate the ripple effect of being well-mannered and polite in every form of the written word.

Paragraph Development

A paragraph is a collection of sentences which all relate to one main idea or topic.

Effective paragraphs have four main characteristics: a topic sentence, unity, coherence, and adequate development. Each of these characteristics is discussed below.

Unity

Unity refers to the extent to which all of the ideas contained within a given paragraph "hang together" in a way that is easy for the reader to understand. When the writer

changes to a new idea -- one which is not consistent with the topic sentence of the paragraph -- the writer should begin a new paragraph. Unity is important because it aids the reader in following along with the writer's ideas. The reader can expect that a given paragraph will deal only with one main topic; when a new paragraph begins, this signals that the writer is moving on to a new topic.

Consider the following example. Note that there are two main ideas presented in this paragraph. The topic sentence indicates that the paragraph will deal with the subject of "employees' attitudes," but the paragraph shifts unexpectedly to the topic of "management's attitudes." To achieve unity in this paragraph, the writer should begin a new paragraph when the switch is made from employees to managers.

Example

"Employees' attitudes at Jonstone Electric Company should be improved. The workers do not feel that they are a working team instead of just individuals. If people felt they were a part of a team, they would not misuse the tools, or deliberately undermine the work of others. Management's attitude toward its employees should also be improved.

Managers at Jonstone Electric act as though their employees are incapable of making decisions or doing their own work. Managers treat workers like objects, not human beings."

Coherence

Coherence refers to the extent to which the flow of ideas in a paragraph is easily understood by the reader. For this reason, coherence is closely related to unity. When a writer changes main ideas or topics within a paragraph, confusion often results. To achieve coherence, then, a writer should show how all of the ideas contained in a paragraph are

relevant to the main topic.

Consider the example below. In this paragraph, the writer begins with the topic of job- skills courses, but veers off onto the topic of algebra and history before returning to the subject of courses on employment. As a result, the paragraph is disjointed and difficult to understand.

Example

"Schools should offer courses to help students with the problems of unemployment.

Such a course might begin with a discussion of where to find employment, then cover resume writing and interviewing. Algebra and history don't help students with real- world needs. They are required courses that students aren't interested in, and this is

frustrating for students who would rather learn about other subjects. If schools offered job-skills courses, students would be well prepared for the difficult task of finding a job once they finish school."

Adequate Development

A paragraph is adequately developed when it describes, explains and supports the topic sentence. If the "promise" of the topic sentence is not fulfilled, or if the reader is left with questions after reading the paragraph, the paragraph has not been adequately developed. Generally speaking, a paragraph which consists of only two or three sentences is under-developed. A good rule of thumb to follow is to make sure that a paragraph contains at least four sentences which explain and elaborate on the topic sentence.

Consider the paragraph below. The topic sentence promises to discuss "several" points of comparison and contrast between leadership and management, but the remainder of the paragraph falls short of fulfilling this promise. Only one point of comparison is raised, and this point is left unexplained. Several questions remain unanswered. How are leaders different from managers? In what specific ways are the two alike? Why must a manager be a good leader to be effective? Why must good leaders know how to manage people effectively? To achieve adequate development in this paragraph, these questions should be addressed.

Example

"The topics of leadership and management are both similar to and different from one another in several important ways. To be effective, a manager should be a good leader. And good leaders know how to manage people effectively."

Generally speaking, a paragraph should contain between three and five sentences, all of which help clarify and support the main idea of the paragraph. When a writer begins a new paragraph, it signals to the reader that the writer is changing thoughts or ideas, or is moving on to discuss a different aspect of a main idea.

Topic Sentences

Beginning a paragraph with a topic sentence is one of the best ways to achieve clarity and unity in one's writing. The function of a topic sentence is to describe what the paragraph will be about, such that the reader has clear expectations about what will follow. An effective topic sentence typically contains only one main idea. The remainder of the paragraph then develops that idea more fully, offering supporting points and examples. After reading a topic sentence, one should be able to anticipate

the type of information contained in the rest of the paragraph. If the remainder of the paragraph does not fulfill the "promise" of the topic sentence, the paragraph will lack unity, coherence and adequate development.

Examples

"The cockroaches that inhabit many city apartments and homes are parasites that are almost impossible to exterminate completely."

Notice that this sentence clearly identifies that the key topic of the paragraph is cockroaches. It also indicates what the remainder of the paragraph will discuss: the difficulty of exterminating cockroaches. The reader can then expect the rest of the paragraph to explain how and why cockroaches are difficult to eliminate.

"Many television cartoons contain an unhealthy amount of violence."

Notice that this sentence clearly identifies that the key topic of the paragraph is violence in television cartoons. It also indicates that the remainder of the paragraph will discuss how much violence cartoons typically contain, and how/why this violence is unhealthy for viewers.

"An increasing number of people in America are enjoying the benefits of organically grown fruits and vegetables."

This topic sentence indicates that the remainder of the paragraph will cover the trend in the United States toward eating organic foods. The reader can also anticipate learning more in this paragraph about the specific benefits of organic foods.

Essay writing

Taken together, then, the overall structure of a five paragraph essay should look something like

this

Introduction Paragraph

An attention-grabbing "hook"

A thesis statement

A preview of the three subtopics you will discuss in the body paragraphs.

First Body Paragraph

Topic sentence which states the first subtopic and opens with a transition

Supporting details or examples

An explanation of how this example proves your thesis

Second Body Paragraph

Topic sentence which states the second subtopic and opens with a transition

Supporting details or examples

An explanation of how this example proves your thesis

Third Body Paragraph

Topic sentence which states the third subtopic and opens with a transition

Supporting details or examples

An explanation of how this example proves your thesis

Concluding Paragraph

Concluding Transition, Reverse "hook," and restatement of thesis.

Rephrasing main topic and subtopics.

Global statement or call to action.

Types of Essays

Four Major Types of Essays

Distinguishing between types of essays is simply a matter of determining the writer's goal. Does the writer want to tell about a personal experience, describe something, explain an issue, or convince the reader to accept a certain viewpoint? The four major types of essays address these

purposes

Narrative Essays: Telling a Story

In a narrative essay, the writer tells a story about a real-life experience. While telling a story may sound easy to do, the narrative essay challenges students to think and write about themselves.

When writing a narrative essay, writers should try to involve the reader by making the story as vivid as possible. The fact that narrative essays are usually written in the first person helps engage the reader. "I" sentences give readers a feeling of being part of the story. A well-crafted narrative essay will also build towards drawing a conclusion or making a personal statement.

Descriptive Essays: Painting a Picture

A cousin of the narrative essay, a descriptive essay paints a picture with words. A writer might describe a person, place, object, or even memory of special significance. However, this type of essay is not description for description's sake. The descriptive essay strives to communicate a deeper meaning through the description. In a descriptive essay, the writer should show, not tell, through the use of colorful words and sensory details. The best descriptive essays appeal to the reader's emotions, with a result that is highly evocative.

Expository Essays: Just the Facts

The expository essay is an informative piece of writing that presents a balanced analysis of a

topic. In an expository essay, the writer explains or defines a topic, using facts, statistics, and examples. Expository writing encompasses a wide range of essay variations, such as the comparison and contrast essay, the cause and effect essay, and the "how to" or process essay.

Because expository essays are based on facts and not personal feelings, writers don't reveal their emotions or write in the first person.

Persuasive Essays: Convince Me

While like an expository essay in its presentation of facts, the goal of the persuasive essay is to convince the reader to accept the writer's point of view or recommendation. The writer must build a case using facts and logic, as well as examples, expert opinion, and sound reasoning. The writer should present all sides of the argument, but must be able to communicate clearly and without equivocation why a certain position is correct.

Functional Writing

Functional writing is the practice of expressing specific information meant to mirror real-life scenarios such as how to make or do something, giving advice, inviting someone to something or telling what happened in a specific situation. Functional writing often turns a complex subject into something that is more understandable to the reader. Teachers can help students master this type of writing by assigning various functional writing activities.

Book Review

Students should be asked to write a review of a book that was recently read. The book review should contain a synopsis that gives the reader a general idea of what was covered in the book. Also within the book review, the student should offer her personal thoughts and state whether she would recommend the book to a friend.

Letters

Both formal and informal letters can be used to practice functional writing. Formal letters are typically used for official business, like applying for a job, leaving a job, asking for permission or contacting companies or school institutions. Informal letters are used when communicating with a friend or relative for the purpose of apologizing, inviting, explaining, thanking or expressing feelings. Teach the class the characteristics of each letter format and ask them to write examples of both.

Notices

A notice is used to announce something specific, such as an upcoming event, a warning or advice, and is typically placed in a location that is not only relevant to the information but will also be seen by the intended parties. Have the students create notices that can be hung around the classroom or school. Notices can be short phrases such as "Do not disturb," "Keep

the light on," "No food or drink" or "Testing in progress." In some cases, notices may start with a short phrase but then include additional information that explains the warning or advice in more detail. Events announced with notices should

answer the who, what, when, where and why questions.

Memorandum

Memorandum is a term that may be used in different contexts and it usually appears in its shortened form: Memo, which is derived from memorandum (the singular). When used in the context of an agreement (e.g. a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)), it involves a multi-party arrangement, through which responsibilities, privileges and other matters are clearly spelt out. In this sense, it is a document that prepares the grounds for a contractual agreement. In another sense, the term, memo, is used for a special type of correspondence that takes place within an organisation. In this sense then, the memo is an official, though simplified method of correspondence. All the writer needs to do is to fill in all the relevant sections of the document.

A memo has a rigid format (made up of headings): sender, receiver, subject and date - all stated at the 'head' of the paper. The memo has for long been the conventional means of corresponding quickly and efficiently in an office primarily because of the simplicity of its ready-made format.

Consider the example given below, in which a junior partner (assigned the identity A3) is corresponding with the Principal Partner in an Accounting firm (CSS is the Chief of Security)

Services; LCWs are late-comers-to-work): MEMO FROM: A3 (SIGNED) TO: Chief SUBJECT

Lateness to work DATE: 3rd June 1986 As directed at the breakfast meeting, CSS has been informed of the decision to turn back all LCWs at the gate with effect from tomorrow morning.

Nowadays, electronic mail (popularly referred to as e-mail) and other internet-based means of text messaging have greatly borrowed from the traditional format of the memo.

Agenda

Minutes

Advertisements

e-mail facsimile messages press release

Chapter 8

Summary

A summary is a shortened passage, which retains the essential information of the original. It is a fairly brief restatement ---in your own words---of the contents of a passage. Note: you simply report back what the writer has said, without making value judgments.

A summary is condensed version of a larger reading. A summary is not a rewrite of the original piece and does not have to be long nor should it be long. To write a summary, use your own words to express briefly the main idea and relevant details of the piece you have read. Your purpose in writing the summary is to give the basic ideas of the original reading. What was it about and what did the author want to communicate?

While reading the original work, take note of what or who is the focus and ask the usual questions that reporters use: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Using these questions to examine what you are reading can help you to write the summary.

Sometimes, the central idea of the piece is stated in the introduction or first paragraph, and the supporting ideas of this central idea are presented one by one in the following paragraphs.

Always read the introductory paragraph thoughtfully and look for a thesis statement. Finding the thesis statement is like finding a key to a locked door. Frequently, however, the thesis, or central idea, is implied or suggested. Thus, you will have to work harder to figure out what the author wants readers to understand. Use any hints that may shed light on the meaning of the piece: pay attention to the title and any headings and to the opening and closing lines of paragraphs.

In writing the summary, let your reader know the piece that you are summarizing. Identify the

title, author and source of the piece. You may want to use this formula

In "Title of the Piece" (source and date of piece), author shows that: central idea of the piece. The author supports the main idea by using _____ and showing that _____.

Here is a sample summary

In the short story "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," author James Thurber humorously presents a character who fantasizes about himself as a hero enduring incredibly challenging circumstances. In his real life, Walter Mitty lives an ordinary, plain life; he is a husband under the control of an overbearing, critical wife. Thurber uses lively dialogue to give readers an understanding of Mitty's character. The story takes place over a period of about twenty minutes; during this brief time, Mitty drives his wife to the hairdresser and runs errands that his wife has given him while he waits for her. In between his worrying that he is not doing what she wants

him to do, he daydreams about himself as a great surgeon, brilliant repair technician, expert marksman, and brave military captain. This story shows that fantasy is often a good alternative to reality.

Remember

Do not rewrite the original piece.

Keep your summary short.

Use your own wording.

Refer to the central and main ideas of the original piece.

Read with who, what, when, where, why and how questions in mind.

Do not put in your opinion of the issue or topic discussed in the original piece. Often, instructors ask students to put their opinions in a paragraph separate from the summary.

Before writing the summary

For a text, read, mark, and annotate the original. (For a lecture, work with the notes you took.)

highlight the topic sentence

highlight key points/key words/phrases

highlight the concluding sentence

outline each paragraph in the margin

Take notes on the following:

the source (author--first/last name, title, date of publication, volume number,

place of publication, publisher, URL, etc.)

the main idea of the original (paraphrased)

the major supporting points (in outline form)

major supporting explanations (e.g. reasons/causes or effects)

Characteristics of a good summary

Can be understood without reference to the original;

Is a faithful reproduction of, or contains only the ideas or information of, the original; Is brief without any unnecessary detail;•Is a readable unified whole An effective summary captures the most important information The important information usually includes controlling ideas (purpose statements and topic sentences), major findings, and conclusions or recommendations. It usually doesn't include any of the following: non-essential background information;

the author's personal comments or conjectures; introductions; long explanations, examples, or definitions; visuals; or data of questionable accuracy.

An effective summary is highly readable People read summaries to get the information they need as efficiently as possible. In a large document, the summary may be the only part a reader actually reads. Make sure to write in a readable, clear style. Translate specific details into general statements (e.g., instead of "47.3% of respondents polled said they agreed or strongly agreed that food labels should include information about the percentage of trans fats the food item

contained," summarize to "Almost half of respondents want food labels to include trans fats").

An effective summary can stand on its own Think of your summary as a highly condensed version of the source document. All the extras have been squeezed out, but the essential meaning should still be there. A reader should be able to read, understand and find the essential meaning by reading your summary. Readers should have to turn to the source document only if they need more detail—not to get the main ideas.

An effective summary is faithful to the original As a rule, add nothing to the original. Avoid adding comments or modifiers that add meaning that was not in the original (e.g. "The authors correctly point out," "The report seems to suggest," "This important recommendation").

An effective summary is as concise as possible Use the fewest words possible that still preserve all the essential meaning. Whatever you do, don't sacrifice clarity for economy.

Chapter 9

Report Writing Skills

Curriculum alignment. These supplementary notes are aligned to common Kenyan TVET communication competencies. Confirm the current institutional syllabus and assessment requirements with the relevant examining body.

Learning outcomes

Explain the purpose and types of workplace reports.

Collect, organise and present factual information clearly.

Prepare a report with findings, conclusions and practical recommendations.

Report writing

A report is a planned written account of an investigation, activity, event or set of findings. In a Kenyan workplace it may be prepared for a college department, county office, business, SACCO, project team or community programme.

Common types

Routine or progress reports record activities, outputs, challenges and next steps.

Incident reports record what happened, the facts established, immediate action and follow-up.

Inspection or field reports record observations made at a site, workshop, office or service point.

Research or feasibility reports present a question, method, evidence, analysis and conclusion.

Report-writing process

Clarify the purpose, audience, scope and deadline.

Collect evidence from observation, interviews, documents, registers or approved digital records.

Separate facts from opinions and record dates, names and sources accurately.

Organise, draft, edit and proofread; check figures, confidentiality and tone.

Submit through the required channel and retain a controlled copy.

Recommended report structure

Title page: specific title, organisation, author and date.

Executive summary: brief overview of purpose, key findings and recommended action.

Introduction: background, purpose, scope and objectives.

Method: how information was collected and any limitations.

Findings and discussion: evidence, patterns, causes and implications.

Conclusion: what the evidence shows, without new facts.

Recommendations: specific actions, owners and deadlines.

References and appendices: sources and supporting evidence.

Practical activity

Prepare a two-page field report on a visit to a college workshop, office or community service point. Include a title, purpose, method, three findings, one conclusion and three recommendations.

Chapter 10

Conducting Meetings and Minute Writing

Curriculum alignment. These supplementary notes are aligned to common Kenyan TVET communication competencies. Confirm the current institutional syllabus and assessment requirements with the relevant examining body.

Learning outcomes

Plan and participate in formal and informal meetings.

Prepare an agenda, notice and supporting documents.

Record accurate minutes and produce an action register.

Apply protocol, confidentiality, inclusion and digital-meeting etiquette.

Meetings

A meeting is a planned communication event in which people with a shared purpose exchange information, deliberate and make decisions. Kenyan workplace examples include departmental, staff, class, project, committee and annual general meetings.

Roles

Chairperson: guides discussion, manages time and confirms decisions.

Secretary: prepares notices and agendas, records minutes and circulates action points.

Members: read papers, contribute respectfully, declare conflicts and complete actions.

Guests: provide specialist information for the item for which they were invited.

Meeting procedure

Before: state the purpose, confirm date and venue or link, prepare the agenda, circulate papers and confirm quorum.

During: record attendance and apologies, approve previous minutes, follow the agenda, capture decisions and assign owners and deadlines.

After: draft promptly, submit for confirmation, circulate to authorised members and track unfinished actions.

Minutes format

Meeting details: organisation, committee, date, time and venue or platform.

Attendance: present members, apologies, absences and guests.

Opening: quorum, chairperson, declarations of interest and opening time.

Agenda items: discussion summary, decision and action.

Action register: action, responsible person, deadline and status.

Closing: time of closure and next meeting details.

Practical activity

Conduct a 20-minute departmental or class meeting. Prepare a notice and five-item agenda, appoint a chairperson and secretary, then submit minutes with an action register.

Chapter 11

Interviews

Curriculum alignment. These supplementary notes are aligned to common Kenyan TVET communication competencies. Confirm the current institutional syllabus and assessment requirements with the relevant examining body.

Learning outcomes

Explain the purpose and stages of an interview.

Prepare ethical, relevant questions and listen actively.

Respond clearly in selection, information, appraisal and customer-service interviews.

Produce an objective interview record or report.

Interviews

An interview is a planned conversation used to obtain information, assess suitability, solve a problem or provide a service. Types include employment selection, admission, research, appraisal, counselling, exit and media interviews. Interviews may be face-to-face, telephone or online.

Interview stages

Preparation: define the purpose, review information, prepare questions and arrange a suitable setting.

Opening: introduce participants, explain the purpose and confirm duration and consent where required.

Questioning: ask one clear question at a time, probe appropriately, listen without interruption and take accurate notes.

Closing: invite final comments, explain next steps, thank the participant and secure the record.

Evaluation: compare responses against agreed criteria and record evidence, not personal impressions.

Questioning and ethics

Open questions encourage explanation; closed questions confirm facts; probing questions seek evidence; clarifying questions prevent misunderstanding.

Avoid leading, discriminatory, humiliating or unnecessarily personal questions.

Protect personal information and obtain permission before recording audio, video or photographs.

Use accessibility support or alternative communication methods where reasonably required.

Practical activity

Work in pairs to conduct a structured interview for a fictional internship or customer-care role. Submit the questions, a one-page interview record and a reflection on listening skills.

Chapter 12

Public Relations and Customer Care

Curriculum alignment. These supplementary notes are aligned to common Kenyan TVET communication competencies. Confirm the current institutional syllabus and assessment requirements with the relevant examining body.

Learning outcomes

Explain public relations and its role in organisational reputation.

Identify internal and external publics and select suitable communication channels.

Apply customer-care principles in face-to-face, telephone, email and digital interactions.

Handle complaints ethically and recommend service improvements.

Public relations

Public relations is the planned management of relationships and communication between an organisation and its stakeholders. Publics may include learners, parents or sponsors, staff, regulators, suppliers, employers, media, community organisations and online audiences. PR depends on truthful information, listening and consistent conduct.

Tools and channels

Internal briefings, notices, staff meetings, email and approved messaging groups.

Letters, newsletters, media statements, websites, social media, open days and community forums.

Events, exhibitions, partnerships, stakeholder visits and feedback surveys.

Customer-care principles

Courtesy: greet people respectfully and use an appropriate tone.

Accuracy: give correct information and check before promising.

Responsiveness: acknowledge requests, explain timeframes and follow up.

Fairness and inclusion: serve people without discrimination.

Confidentiality: protect personal, academic, financial and organisational information.

Ownership: resolve or correctly refer the matter.

Complaint-handling procedure

Listen without interrupting.

Acknowledge the concern and apologise for the experience where appropriate.

Clarify the desired outcome, verify the record and explain what can be done.

Resolve within authority or escalate with a complete record.

Agree a follow-up time, communicate the outcome and record lessons for improvement.

Digital customer care

Use official accounts for official business. Write clear email subject lines, answer the requested points, attach the correct document, proofread before sending and move sensitive matters from public social-media threads to an approved private channel.

Practical activity

Role-play a complaint about delayed service or an incorrect document. Complete a complaint record and recommend one service-improvement action.

Tables and reference material

Sender	→	Encoding	→	Message	→	Feedback
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