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Higher Education for All

Business Communication

COURSE CODE: M26BS01AC
Master of Business Administration
Ability Enhancement Course
Self Learning Material



SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

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The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

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Vision

To increase access of potential learners of all categories to higher education, research and training, and ensure equity through delivery of high quality processes and outcomes fostering inclusive educational empowerment for social advancement.

Mission

To be benchmarked as a model for conservation and dissemination of knowledge and skill on blended and virtual mode in education, training and research for normal, continuing, and adult learners.

Pathway

Access and Quality define Equity.

Business Communication

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Semester - I

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(With Model Question Paper Sets)

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BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Course Code: M26BS01AC
Semester- I
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Master of Business Administration

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MESSAGE FROM VICE CHANCELLOR

Dear Learner,

It gives me immense pride and heartfelt satisfaction to welcome you to Sreenarayanaguru Open University—a transformative space where aspirations are nurtured, potential is unlocked, and futures are shaped with purpose.

Established in September 2020 as a pioneering state initiative, the University stands as a symbol of inclusive, accessible, and high-quality higher education. Anchored in our guiding philosophy—"access and quality define equity"—we are committed not merely to expanding educational opportunities, but to ensuring that every learner receives an education that is meaningful, relevant, and transformative.

Our journey is deeply inspired by the timeless vision of Sreenarayana Guru, whose ideals of knowledge, equality, and social empowerment continue to illuminate our path. His philosophy reminds us that education is not just a means to an end, but a powerful instrument for personal growth, societal progress, and human dignity.

In a rapidly evolving and digitally driven world, we recognize that learning must be flexible, dynamic, and future-ready. Our thoughtfully designed blended learning ecosystem—integrating Self-Learning Materials, Classroom Counselling, and Virtual Learning Platforms—ensures that you experience the best of both independence and guided academic engagement. This model empowers you to learn at your own pace while staying meaningfully connected to academic support systems.

The MBA programme at Sreenarayanaguru Open University is not just a degree—it is a gateway to leadership, innovation, and professional excellence. The curriculum is meticulously curated to reflect the realities of the contemporary global business landscape, seamlessly blending foundational management principles with cutting-edge developments in business and technology.
You will explore and engage with:

- Strategic management and entrepreneurial thinking
- Digital transformation, FinTech, and emerging technologies
- Logistics, supply chain, and global business ecosystems
- Consumer behaviour and evolving market intelligence
- Human resource management in the age of Artificial Intelligence
- Ethical leadership and sustainable decision-making

Designed with a multidisciplinary and future-oriented perspective, the programme offers diverse specializations, skill enhancement pathways, and exposure to innovative domains that align with industry expectations. It is structured to strengthen your employability, entrepreneurial mindset, and leadership capabilities—equipping you to excel in competitive and complex professional environments.

Our Self-Learning Materials are crafted with exceptional care, combining conceptual clarity with real-world relevance through case studies, contemporary examples, and practical insights. They are designed not only to inform but to inspire critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability—skills that are essential in today's disruptive and ever-changing business world.

At the heart of our mission lies an unwavering commitment to learner success. Our comprehensive learner support system is always within your reach, ensuring that your academic journey remains smooth, enriching, and fulfilling. We encourage you to actively engage, explore, question, and grow—because your success is the true measure of our purpose.

As you begin this important journey, I invite you to dream boldly, learn continuously, and lead responsibly. Let this programme be a stepping stone towards achieving your ambitions and making a meaningful impact in the world.

May your journey here be one of discovery, empowerment, and excellence.
With my best wishes for your success and lifelong learning,



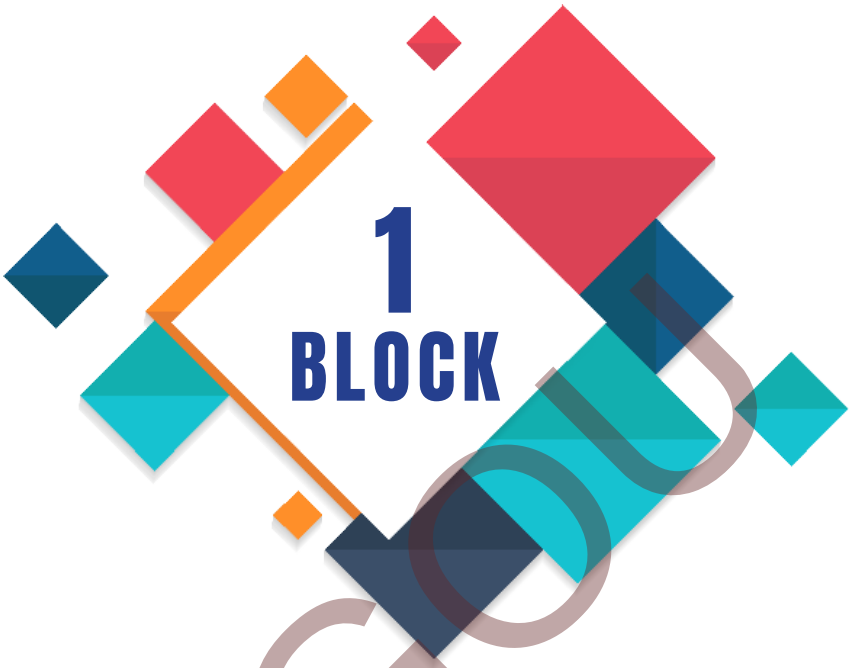
Prof. (Dr.) Jagathy Raj V. P.
Vice Chancellor

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Basics of Communication and Technology - Based Communication

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Unit 1

Introduction to Communication

Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learners will be able to :

- ◊ explain the fundamental components of the communication process
- ◊ develop an understanding of the significance of verbal and non-verbal communication in business contexts
- ◊ familiarise with different communication channels and apply them effectively based on audience and purpose
- ◊ explain the significance of intercultural communication and inclusive language in a global business environment
- ◊ identify and overcome communication barriers to foster clarity, collaboration, and cross-cultural understanding

Background

As social beings, humans constantly engage in communication. In today's fast-paced and interconnected environment, communication happens around the clock and is an indispensable part of management. It is the process of sharing information, ideas, and understanding between individuals or groups. In business, it forms the backbone of operations, enabling sound decision-making, teamwork, and relationship-building.

The communication process involves key steps such as encoding, transmitting, decoding, and providing feedback, while both verbal and non-verbal methods play critical roles. Successful communication also requires understanding audience needs, adapting to cultural differences, and using inclusive language for respectful and effective interactions. However, communication is not without challenges; barriers such as language gaps, emotional biases, and technological

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issues can hinder clarity. Addressing these through empathy, precision, and active listening ensures more meaningful exchanges.

This unit introduces learners to the fundamentals of communication, explores its various forms and channels, highlights the importance of intercultural and inclusive communication, and equips them with strategies to overcome barriers—laying a strong foundation for effective business communication in diverse professional settings.



Keywords

Communication, Verbal, Non-Verbal, Barriers, Audience, Intercultural, Inclusive Communication



Discussion

1.1.1 Meaning

Imagine walking into a boardroom where representatives from finance, marketing, HR, and other departments are gathered for a meeting, with a new idea shared for just five minutes. Or consider having to send a crucial email to a client abroad, where every word matters. These scenarios highlight the essential role of communication in business, which takes many forms in various contexts. However, communication is not just a business skill; it is the very foundation of professional life. Every moment of our workday involves sending and receiving information: pitching proposals, negotiating deals, motivating teams, or simply replying to messages. How we communicate, what we say, and how others interpret our message all depend on how we process it in our minds and align it with our goals. Therefore, mastering communication is not just a valuable skill but an essential one for every aspiring manager and leader.

The word communication has been derived from the Latin word “communicare / communis which means to ‘share’ or ‘participate. Communication is the process by which we exchange meanings, facts, ideas, opinions, or emotions with other people. It is an essential condition of our existence and the most important social activity. Let’s see a few definitions of communication:

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According to Keith Davis," Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another."

According to W.H. Murphy, "Business communication is the communication that promotes a product, service, or organization; relays information within a business; or functions as an official statement from a company."

Courtland L. Bovee and John V. Thill, "Business communication is the process of planning, drafting, sending, receiving, and interpreting messages in a business environment."

R.V. Lesikar and M.E. Flatley, "Business communication is a process of sharing information between people within and outside an organization that is performed for the commercial benefit of the organization."

Generally, communication often refers to everyday conversations. In contrast, business communication is more organized and focused. It specifically deals with business tasks and decisions. Now, let's discuss the key differences between business communication and general communication.

Table 1.1.1 Difference between Business Communication and General Communication

Basis of Difference	**Business Communication**	**General Communication**
Format	It uses a specific, formal, and structured format for communication.	Different formats are used based on circumstances.
Kind/Nature	Official and professional in nature	Personal and informal in nature
Feedback	This requires feedback	Feedback may not be important
Presentation	Business communication follows organizational rules and the company's policies.	It is informal and flexible methods can be used.
Aim	Focus is on achieving the goal of the organisation	It does not have a specific focus; it's casual.
Extent/Reach	It is usually practical, clear, and unbiased	It can be vast, and it can be fictitious and biased at times
Category	Usually formal in nature	Involves a personal touch

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1.1.2 Characteristics of Communication

i. Communication is a two-way process; there should be at least two persons involved in the process of communication, the sender and the receiver.

ii. Communication is an ongoing process

iii. Communication is essential in all types of organisations and at all levels of management. It pervades all human relationships.

iv. The basic purpose of communication is to create mutual understanding by giving/seeking information or influencing others and eliciting actions

v. Communication consists not only of facts but also of ideas and emotions too

vi. Communication is goal-oriented, as the result of communication is understanding between the sender and the receiver of information.

1.1.3 Importance of effective communication in business

Effective communication is the backbone of any successful business. It ensures smooth operations, strong relationships, and informed decision-making across all levels of the organization. The following points highlight the importance of effective communication in business.

a. Act as a basis for proper decision making and planning – Effective communication provides clear and timely information needed for understanding situations and making informed decisions. It also supports proper planning by making sure that everyone involved understands the goals, resources, and actions.

b. Improved Team Coordination - When teams communicate well, they work together more effectively and complete tasks more quickly. This reduces misunderstandings and confusion in group efforts.

c. Builds Strong Internal Relationships - Good communication helps to create trust and collaboration among employees. This leads to a more supportive and productive work environment.

d. Enhances Customer Relationships - Clear and professional communication with customers builds trust, loyalty, and satisfaction. It also helps resolve complaints and improve service.

e. Promotes Transparency and Accountability -Transparent communication ensures that employees understand what is expected of them. This fosters accountability and ethical behaviour in the workplace.

f. Helps Manage Conflicts Effectively - Open communication allows issues to be addressed before they escalate. It promotes problem-solving and mutual respect.

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g. Supports Organizational Growth – Effective communication helps all stakeholders clearly understand the company's vision, mission, and strategic objectives. Good communication keeps all stakeholders on the same page with the company's mission and goals. It drives innovation, motivation, and efficient execution of business strategies.

h. Encourages Innovation and Feedback - A culture of open communication welcomes new ideas and helpful feedback. This helps businesses remain adaptable and competitive.

1.1.4 Process of Communication

The communication process consists of distinct steps: creating, sending, receiving, and understanding messages between individuals or groups. This process facilitates the clear and purposeful transfer of information from sender to receiver. The following outlines the step-by-step communication process.

a. Sender - The sender is the person initiating the communication and conveying the message. He decides what information needs to be communicated.

b. Encoding - The sender encodes the intended message into a form that can be transmitted. It may involve translating the data into signals, such as speech, writing, visuals, gestures, etc.

c. Message - The encoded message is the actual information or ideas being exchanged between the sender and receiver. The message can be verbal or nonverbal.

d. Channel - The channel is the medium through which the encoded message is transmitted from the sender to the receiver. Examples of channels include face-to-face conversation, telephone, email, TV, and social media for communication.

e. Decoding - The receiver interprets the message using selective processes. The receiver decodes the message by assigning meaning to the symbols transmitted by the sender.

f. Receiver - The individual or individuals to whom the sender conveys the encoded message. The receiver has to be able to understand the communication.

g. Feedback - Feedback is the receiver's response or reaction to the message. It helps confirm the message was received and understood. It improves the effectiveness of communication.

h. Context - The situation, environment, and context in which the communication occurs influence how the message is conveyed, interpreted, and received.

i. Noise - Any interference or barriers that affect the transmission or decoding of the message. It distorts communication between the sender and receiver.

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This step-by-step process illustrates how information gets successfully shared or exchanged between the sender and receiver through encoding, transmitting, and decoding messages.

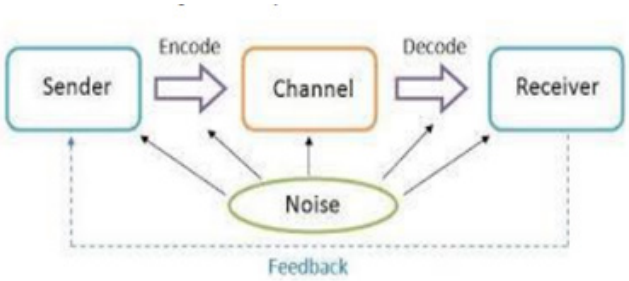


Figure 1.1.1 Process of Communication

1.1.5 Verbal and Non-verbal Communication

Communication happens not just through words, but also through gestures, expressions, and body language. Understanding both verbal and non-verbal communication is a key to expressing ideas effectively and building strong connections. Verbal and non-verbal communication are the main methods by which people exchange information and messages.

Verbal Communication

The term "verbal" denotes the use of words. When words are used in communication, whether spoken or written, it is referred to as verbal communication. In simple terms, it means the exchange of information or ideas through spoken or written words.

Oral Communication

It is a communication by way of uttering words, that is, through spoken words. It is a face-to-face interaction between the sender and the receiver. Oral communication can be of various forms in an organisation – meetings, conferences, face-to-face communication, and telephone calls.

Advantages

◊ It is a fast way of communication

◊ The speaker can get the personal attention of the receiver

◊ Instant feedback is possible.

◊ Confidentiality is assured as no records are created

Disadvantages

◊ Expensive, Time – consuming when distant locations are involved

◊ Leaves no documentary proof, more prone to physical noise.

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Non-verbal communication involves conveying messages without words. Nonverbal language is the communication of messages through unspoken signals like body language (gestures, posture), facial expressions, eye contact, touch (haptics), tone of voice (paralanguage), and personal space (proxemics).

Both verbal and non-verbal communication work together to transmit messages, express emotions, and build relationships. Using them wisely enhances understanding and improves interactions in both personal and professional settings.

7C's of effective communication

The 7 C's of communication are key principles that ensure effective and impactful communication, in both written and oral communication. These are as follows:

1. **Completeness** – Completeness means giving all necessary information so the receiver can act without confusion. The business message is complete when it contains all the facts that the reader or listener needs. Senders need to assess their messages through the eyes of receivers to ensure they have included all relevant information. Incomplete communication increases cost, delays decisions, and reduces credibility.

2. **Concise** – Concise means saying what is necessary in the fewest effective words. A concise message is complete without being too wordy. This principle is very important in effective business communication because it saves time and costs for both the sender and the receiver.

3. **Consideration –** Consideration means understanding the receiver's emotions, background, knowledge level, and expectations. It means preparing every message with the receiver in mind by trying to put yourself in their place. This is known as the 'you attitude' – also called empathy, human touch, or understanding of human nature**.**

4. **Concreteness** –Communicating concretely means being specific, definite, and vivid rather than vague and general. Concrete communication uses facts, figures, and clear data instead of general statements.

5. **Clarity** – Clarity means the message to be conveyed from the sender to the receiver should have one clear purpose of clarity and simple language.

6. **Courtesy** -Courtesy involves being aware of the feelings of others. Courtesy means politeness, respect, a positive tone, and concern for others.

7. **Correctness –** Correctness involves the use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and accurate facts and data**.**

The 7 C's of communication serve as a managerial compass, ensuring every message is clear, professional, and action-oriented. When managers consistently apply these principles, they reduce misunderstandings, build credibility, and strengthen organizational effectiveness.

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Table 1.1.2 Difference between Verbal and Non-verbal Communication

Verbal Communication	**Non-Verbal Communication**
Involves the use of words, spoken or written.	Involves using body language, facial expressions, gestures, posture, tone of voice, etc.
Can be easily recorded and transmitted through various media, such as text, email, or video conferencing.	It is often instant and difficult to record or transmit accurately.
Can convey a lot of specific information, such as facts, ideas, and instructions	Can convey emotions, attitudes, and social cues that may not be expressed through words alone.
Can be used to persuade, negotiate, or influence others through logical arguments	Can be used to build trust, establish rapport, and create emotional connections.
It can be easily edited or revised before it is delivered.	It is often spontaneous and immediate, making it harder to control or modify
Can be easily disrupted by external noise or distractions.	Can continue to communicate even without words or in noisy environments.
Can be delivered remotely through technology such as phone or video calls.	Can be hindered by technological limitations or lack of physical presence.
Can be formal or informal, depending on the context and relationship between communicators.	Can be spontaneous and informal, often reflecting genuine emotions and reactions.
Can involve interactive dialogue and questioning for clarification or feedback.	It can involve reciprocal non-verbal responses and cues between communicators.
It is typically learned through formal education, training, or practice.	It is learned through observation, experience, and cultural exposure.

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1.1.6 Communication channels

A communication channel refers to the medium or pathway through which a message, which forms the subject matter, is transmitted from the sender to the receiver during the process of communication. Communication channels facilitate the transmission of communication between multiple parties. They are essential in both personal and organizational contexts to ensure accurate and effective information flow. The major categories of communication channels include verbal, written and non-verbal channels, each can take various forms that influence how messages are sent and received. Communication channels include face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, video conferencing, emails, television broadcasts, social media platforms, written letters, reports, etc.

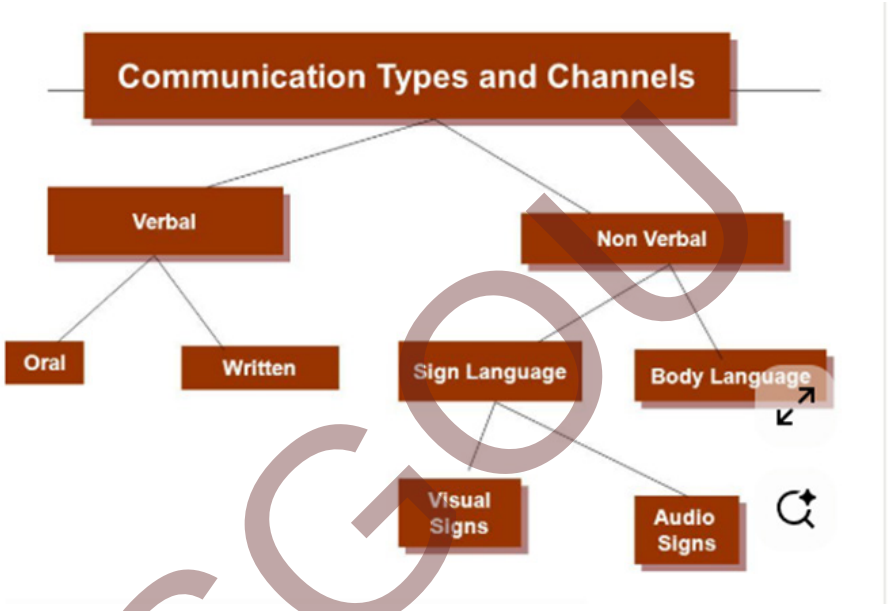


Fig.1.1.2 Communication Channels

1.1.6.1 Communication within the Organisation

Communication within an organisation flows in multiple directions based on hierarchy, roles, and functional needs.

- ◊ **Upward communication :** Upward communication moves from employees to higher management, such as when staff submit reports, provide feedback, or communicate challenges. This flow enables leaders to understand operational realities and take informed decisions.
- ◊ **Downward communication :** Downward communication travels from managers to subordinates and includes instructions, policies, targets, and performance feedback. It ensures clarity of expectations and alignment with organisational goals.
- ◊ **Horizontal communication :** Horizontal communication takes place between individuals at the same hierarchical level, such as coordination between

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department heads or collaboration among team members. It strengthens teamwork and improves efficiency.

◊ **Diagonal communication :** Diagonal communication cuts across both departments and levels, for example, when a finance officer directly interacts with a marketing manager to clarify budget allocations. This form promotes faster problem-solving and flexibility in dynamic organisations.

Effective management requires balancing all four communication flows to maintain transparency, coordination, and sound decision-making.

1.1.7 Audience Analysis

In 2007, when Steve Jobs took the stage to unveil the first iPhone, he faced a hall packed with journalists, tech enthusiasts, and Apple loyalists. The atmosphere buzzed with curiosity and high expectations. Jobs knew this was not just a product launch—it was a defining moment in technology. As he scanned the room, he saw a diverse mix: industry analysts expecting technical specifications, reporters looking for headline-worthy quotes, and everyday users eager to see innovation they could relate to. Jobs carefully balanced his presentation to connect with all groups—using plain language for non-technical listeners, delivering sleek visuals to appeal to design lovers, and dropping key performance details for the tech-savvy crowd. His storytelling framed the iPhone as "three devices in one": a music player, a phone, and an internet communicator, which made the announcement both simple and revolutionary. The result was a message that not only impressed but also transformed the way people thought about mobile technology.

Audience analysis is the process of understanding who your audience is, so you can craft and deliver a message that truly resonates. It involves assessing demographics (age, profession, background), knowledge of the subject, attitudes and beliefs, needs and interests, and preferred communication styles. Performing audience analysis enables a sender to tailor their communication approach and messages to be most effective for the receivers. It helps answer key questions like:

◊ What key points need explanation?

◊ What tone and language choices will resonate best with the audience?

◊ What communication channels or formats will the audience be most receptive to?

◊ How can the information be made most interesting and relevant?

◊ What objections might the audience have, and how can they be addressed?

Considering these factors through audience analysis allows communicators to shape their message and delivery in a way that will meaningfully connect with that particular audience. It leads to more targeted, impactful communication

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1.1.8 Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication is the process of exchanging ideas, information, and meaning between people from different cultural backgrounds. It brings together individuals with diverse languages, values, customs, attitudes, and behaviours, intending to communicate effectively and appropriately across these differences. This requires an understanding of how each culture approaches verbal and nonverbal communication, such as the level of directness, comfort with confrontation, and ways of expressing intimacy. Even concepts like space, time, and silence hold different meanings across cultures, making cultural awareness essential to avoid misunderstandings.

Different cultures also vary in how they share information. Some rely heavily on nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, gestures, and tone, while others focus more on the literal meaning of words. High-context cultures depend on situational clues to convey meaning, whereas low-context cultures prefer direct and explicit communication. Successful intercultural communication often involves building relationships, fostering trust, and adapting one's communication style to align with cultural norms, which demonstrates respect and openness.

In today's globalised world, these skills are crucial for collaboration, negotiation, and teamwork. By bridging differences in mindset and communication styles, we create healthier dialogue, stronger cooperation, and more inclusive connections across cultures.

1.1.9 Inclusive Language

Inclusive language is the practice of using words and expressions that respect and acknowledge the diversity of people, while avoiding terms that exclude, stereotype, or make assumptions about individuals based on attributes such as gender, race, age, ability, or background. It ensures communication is fair, respectful, and accessible to everyone. For example:

- **Exclusive language :** "The chairman told all the cleaning ladies to tidy up the room before the businessmen arrived."
- **Inclusive language :** "The chair asked the cleaning staff to tidy up the conference room before the attendees arrived."

In this case, the exclusive version uses gender-specific terms, "chairman," "cleaning ladies," and "businessmen," which assume certain roles are tied to specific genders. The inclusive version replaces these with gender-neutral alternatives such as "chair," "cleaning staff," and "attendees," making the statement applicable to all genders and backgrounds without losing clarity.

Inclusive language avoids gendered terms like "workmen" or "salesmen," opting instead for "staff" or "employees." It also replaces gender-specific pronouns ("he/him/his") with neutral options like "they/them" when gender is unknown or irrelevant. Additionally, it avoids ableist expressions (e.g., "blind spot," "falling on deaf ears")

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that can marginalize people with disabilities. Instead, it uses respectful identity-first phrasing such as "person with a disability" rather than defining someone solely by their condition.

Using inclusive language is more than just political correctness; it is a professional responsibility that promotes respect, equality, and belonging in all forms of communication. It ensures messages are not only accurate but also considerate, helping build stronger relationships and more inclusive workplaces.

1.1.10 Barriers to Communication

Communication barriers are obstacles that interfere with the smooth exchange of ideas, facts, or feelings between a sender and a receiver. These barriers can distort or block the message, reducing the effectiveness of communication. Common barriers include:

a. **Language barriers** : It occurs when the sender and receiver do not share a common language, or when the same words/phrases carry different meanings for each party.

b. **Cultural barriers** : Differences in cultures and norms can lead to misinterpretation. For instance, a gesture that's friendly in one culture may be offensive in another.

c. **Physical barriers** : Physical barriers are things in the environment that make it hard to hear or send messages clearly, like loud noise, bad sound quality, or being too far apart.

d. **Emotional barriers** : Such barriers happen when feelings like anger, fear, or distrust get in the way of understanding others. Strong emotions like anger, fear, distrust, etc., can inhibit objective listening and understanding the message.

e. **Perceptual barriers** : It occurs due to the differences in perceptions, thoughts, opinions, ideas, and viewpoints between communicators. When people interpret information differently due to differences in viewpoints, past experiences, or expectations.

f. **Attitudinal barrier** : Any pre-existing negative attitudes, biases, or assumptions that a sender or receiver holds about the other person can lead to prejudice and closed-mindedness, hindering effective communication between them.

g. **Stereotyping** : A barrier to effective communication because it involves making biased assumptions about individuals based on preconceived notions about their groups rather than understanding them as unique individuals.

h. **Prejudice** : A major barrier to effective communication because it leads us to judge or dismiss others before truly listening to and understanding their perspective.

i. **Behavioural barriers**: This barrier refers to actions or behaviours that prevent the effective exchange of information between people, such as inattention, impatience, distraction, or defensiveness.

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j. **Gender barriers** : Miscommunication arising from male-female differences in communication styles can also be a barrier.

k. Information overload : Too much information can overwhelm and confuse the receiver. When the volume of message, data or constructions becomes excessive, the receiver may feel confused stressed, or unable to make decisions clearly.

Ways to overcome barriers

Now, let's discuss the various measures to overcome the communication barriers.

a. Two – way channel : A communication system should be a two-way process of transferring knowledge, information, views, etc, and it should move from the sender to the receiver and vice versa without any interruption.

b. Mutual Trust : Mutual understanding and trust are essential between the sender and the receiver, which necessitates the existence of a healthy interpersonal relationship between the superiors and subordinates in an organisation.

c. Clarity of message : The message to be conveyed should be clear and conveyed properly in an appropriate language.

d. Timely message : Considerable attention should be given to the timeliness of communication. The message should be delivered on time; if it is not transmitted on time, it will not serve its purpose.

e. Consistency of message : The message to be communicated should always be consistent with the objective, policies, and goals of the organisation.

f. Empathetic listening : Empathetic listening is essential in the process of communication when the message is transmitted to the receiver.

g. Body Language : Appropriate use of body language is essential during communication. It is said that over 55% of communication occurs through body language.

Example : Eye contact shows confidence and sincerity. Appropriate body language means using facial expressions gestures and posture in a way that supports and strengthens the message being communicated

Communication barriers are not accidental; they arise from differences in language, culture, emotions, perceptions, attitudes, and even workplace systems. If managers ignore these barriers, misunderstandings multiply, trust declines, and organizational performance suffers.

However, organizations can overcome these obstacles through two-way communication, mutual trust, clarity, timeliness, consistency, empathetic listening, and appropriate body language. When leaders consciously remove communication barriers, they create an environment where ideas flow freely, decisions improve, and relationships strengthen — ultimately driving better managerial effectiveness and business success.

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Summarised Overview

Communication refers to the process of transferring information and understanding from one person to another, providing employees not only the skill to work but also the will to work. It is the exchange of information, ideas, and understanding between individuals or groups, forming the backbone of business operations. Effective communication drives decision-making, enhances teamwork, and strengthens relationship-building through both verbal and non-verbal methods. This unit explores the essential steps of the communication process, highlights the importance of audience awareness, cultural sensitivity, and inclusive language, and addresses common barriers that can hinder clarity. Learners will gain practical strategies to communicate effectively, overcome challenges, and foster collaboration, innovation, and growth in diverse business environments.

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain the importance of effective communication in modern business.
2. Explain the steps involved in the communication process. Illustrate your answer with an example
3. Explain the barriers to effective communication in modern organisations
4. Highlight the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication. Provide one example.
5. Why is it important to analyse your audience and adapt your communication style and message accordingly? Provide examples.
6. How can inclusive language be used in a job advertisement to attract applicants from diverse backgrounds? Give an example

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Assignment Questions

1. Communication is often described as the backbone of modern organisations. Analyse the concept of communication and explain its importance in business organisations. Discuss how effective communication supports decision - making, team work and organisational growth with suitable exaples.
2. Explain the major barriers to communication in organisation and suggest ways to overcome them.
3. Explain the role of intercultural communication in global business environments

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Unit 2

Technology-Based Communication

Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ◊ assess the purpose and functions of email as a key tool in professional communication
- ◊ compose clear, concise, and well-structured formal and informal emails tailored to specific audiences and contexts
- ◊ develop effective presentation materials using slides, visuals, and audio-video elements to support clear messaging
- ◊ participate actively and confidently in webinars and virtual discussions across various digital platforms

Background

In today's fast-paced digital world, effective communication is a cornerstone of professional success. Technology-based communication methods like emails, presentations, webinars, and real-time chats are now an essential part of the business world. Emails are a key medium for both formal and informal communication, demanding precision, clarity, and the ability to adapt to different audiences. Presentations, enhanced with slides and visuals, serve as impactful tools for delivering ideas persuasively and professionally. Webinars and live discussions facilitate real-time collaboration and knowledge exchange across distances, promoting inclusivity, engagement, and innovation. mastering these skills is essential for leadership, teamwork, and decision-making. The ability to craft compelling emails, deliver impactful presentations, and participate actively in virtual discussions can significantly influence career growth and organizational success. This unit provides practical guidelines, case studies, and self-assessment tools to help learners develop these competencies and apply them effectively in real-world business scenarios.

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Keywords

E-mail, Presentation slides, Body language, Webinar, Video Conferencing, Online etiquette, Seminar

Discussion

1.2.1 E-mail : An Introduction

An email is an electronic mail. It is a digital communication tool used to exchange messages and information between individuals or groups over the internet. It allows users to send and receive messages very quickly. It has largely replaced traditional postal mail due to its speed and cost benefits, revolutionizing the way humans communicate across distances. Born in the early days of the internet, email quickly became the backbone of digital correspondence, offering speed, reliability, and global reach. Unlike traditional mail, which can take days or weeks to deliver, email transmits messages almost instantaneously, making it indispensable in both personal and professional spheres. Let's see the various components of an e-mail:

Components of an e-mail

1. The sender and the recipient : An e-mail has a sender who initiates the message and a recipient who receives it. The sender specifies the recipient's e-mail address in the "To" field.
2. Subject Line : The subject line briefly summarizes the content or purpose of the e-mail and helps the recipient to understand its context. It is necessary to make your subject clear, precise, and straightforward. For example: Application for the post of Marketing Manager, Requesting a vacation for August from 10-20.
3. Message : The message body contains the main content of the e-mail. Here, the sender expresses thoughts, provides information relating to his needs. The message should be simple and short.
4. Attachments : E-mail allows users to attach files such as documents, images, or other types of files to the message. The attachments can be downloaded and accessed by the recipient.
5. Cc and Bcc : The "Cc "field (carbon copy) allows the sender to include additional recipients who will receive a copy of the e-mail. The "Bcc" field (blind carbon copy) also sends a copy to recipients, but their names are hidden from other recipients.

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6. Signature – Many people include their signature at the end of their e-mails, which typically contains their name, contact information, job title, or relevant details. This aids in providing additional context and adds professionalism to the message. Here are the polite phrases you can use to sign off your email:

   Yours sincerely,

   Best regards,

   Yours truly,

   Yours respectfully,

   Kind regards,

   Thanks again,

To send and receive e-mails, users require an e-mail address, which typically consists of a username followed by the "@" symbol and the domain name of the e-mail service provider. For example, samanthajonse@easylearning.com

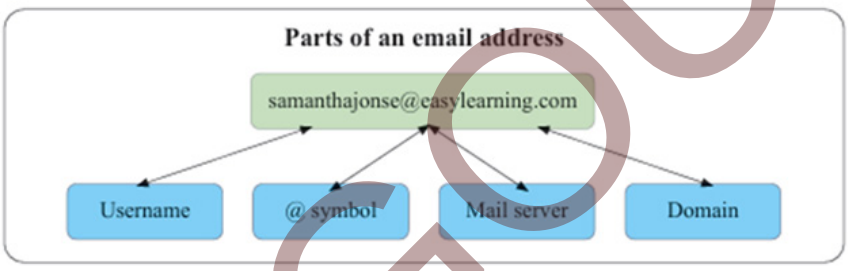


Fig.1.2.1 Parts of an email address

Guidelines when writing an e-mail

1. Subject Line – the subject line used should be a clear and concise subject line that summarizes the content of the e-mail. This helps the recipient understand the purpose of the e-mail at a glance.

2. Greeting – Always begin by greeting the person by name. Your opening can range from "Hi" for informal emails to "Dear Mr/Ms/Dr/ Professor..." for more formal situations. For very formal emails, use a colon rather than a comma after the greeting. You can use the recipient's name if you know, for example, "Dear Ms Smith:" or else use a generic greeting like Dear Sir/Madam.

3. Opening – Always begin your e-mail with a friendly and engaging opening sentence to set a positive tone. You can express gratitude, reference a previous conversation, or provide appropriate context for your message.

4. Body – Keep your email concise and focused. Use short paragraphs to increase readability. Clearly state your purpose and provide any relevant details or information. Be specific and avoid ambiguity.

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5. Tone and Language – Maintain a professional and respectful tone throughout the e-mail. Use clear and simple language, and avoid jargon or technical terms that the recipient may not understand.

6. Proofreading and attachments – Before sending, double-check that you have attached any necessary files or documents mentioned in the e-mail. Proofreading is necessary to ensure accuracy and clarity of the message to be conveyed.

7. E - mail writing is a fundamental skill in business communication. A well-crafted email can convey your message effectively, build professional relationships, and streamline business processes.

1.2.2 Formal and Informal Email

A formal email is written for professional and business purposes. Formal emails are written in a structured, polite, and precise manner. They are often sent to clients, managers, stakeholders, or external parties.

Key Features

◊ Clear subject line that reflects the purpose.

◊ Professional greetings (e.g., Dear Mr. Sharma, or Dear Team).

◊ Well-structured content with a clear introduction, body, and closing.

◊ No slang or casual abbreviations are used.

◊ Formal sign-off (e.g., Sincerely, Kind regards).

Short Case – Formal Email

Situation : An MBA intern needs to request approval for a market research survey.

Example :

Subject : Request for Approval – Market Research Survey

Dear Mr. Kumar,

I am writing to request your approval to conduct a market research survey for the new product launch. The details of the questionnaire and target audience are attached for your review.

Kind regards,

Priya Nair

Informal e-mail

Informal emails are casual, friendly messages used for non-official communication, often between colleagues, friends, or peers. Here, the tone is relaxed and conversational.

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Key Features:

- ◊ May have a friendly or creative subject line.
- ◊ Casual greetings (e.g., Hi Raj, or Hello everyone).
- ◊ Conversational tone; may include contractions, emojis (if appropriate), or light humour.
- ◊ Shorter and less rigid in structure.
- ◊ Simple closing (e.g., Thanks, Cheers).

Short Case – Informal Email:

Situation : A colleague is checking in to see if you can help with a quick task.

Example :

Subject : quick favour

Hi Ann,

Hope your morning's going well! Can you help me review the slide deck for tomorrow's client call? It'll only take 10 minutes. I'll send it over in a bit.

Thanks a ton,

Rohan

Formal emails build credibility and maintain professionalism, while informal emails strengthen relationships and make day-to-day interactions smoother. Successful managers must know when to switch between the two to match the audience and context. Now let's see the difference between formal and informal emails.

E- mail Etiquettes

An e-mail looks simple. You type, hit send, and it reaches the other person in seconds. But in professional life, especially in business, academia, and corporate settings, an email is not just a message. It is a reflection of your clarity, discipline, emotional intelligence, and respect for others' time. Many careers rise or fall because of how people handle email communication.

Let's understand what good email etiquette really means and how to practice it effectively.

- ◊ **Use a Clear and Specific Subject Line :** The subject line should immediately communicate the purpose of the email. Avoid vague words like "Important" or "Update." Instead, write something precise, such as "Submission of Project Report – MBA Semester II." A clear subject helps the recipient to prioritize and respond efficiently.

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- ◊ **Begin with an Appropriate Greeting :** Address the recipient respectfully based on the level of formality. Use "Dear Dr. Nair, in an academic or professional contexts and "Hi Rahul" only when you share a friendly or informal relationship. A simple, respectful greeting sets the right tone for the rest of your message. A proper greeting establishes tone and shows respect.

- ◊ **State the Purpose Early :** Professionals appreciate clarity. Always mention the reason for writing an e-mail within the first few lines. This avoids confusion and saves time for both sender and receiver.

- ◊ **Keep the Message Concise and Structured :** Avoid long, unbroken paragraphs. Use short paragraphs or bullet points when necessary. Focus only on relevant details. A clear structure reflects organized thinking.

- ◊ **Maintain a Professional Tone :** Generally, emails are considered a formal communication, not a casual chat. Hence, it is necessary to avoid slang, too many emojis, short forms, and emotional expressions. Even if you disagree, stay polite and focus on finding a solution rather than blaming.

- ◊ **Be Careful with "Reply All"** : Use "Reply All" only when everyone genuinely included needs the response. Unnecessary replies increase inbox clutter and reduce organizational productivity.

- ◊ **Respect Confidentiality :** Do not forward emails that contain sensitive information such as financial details, internal plans, exam materials, or personal data without proper permission. Protecting confidential information is a basic professional responsibility.

- ◊ **Check Attachments Before Sending :** If you refer to a document or file in your email, make sure it is attached before clicking send. Forgetting attachments and sending correction emails later can affect your professional image**.**

- ◊ **Proofread for Accuracy :** It is always advisable to take a moment to review spelling, grammar, names, dates, and numbers before sending. Even small mistakes, especially in official details or someone's name, can leave a poor impression.

- ◊ **Respond Within a Reasonable Timeframe :** Timely replies show accountability. If a detailed response requires time, acknowledge receipt and indicate when you will respond to it.

- ◊ **Use a Professional Sign-Off and Signature :** Close with phrases such as Best regards or Kind regards. Include your full name, designation, and contact information. A structured signature enhances professionalism.

- ◊ **Think Before You Send -** Ask yourself: Is the tone appropriate? Is the message clear? Would I be comfortable if this email were forwarded? Once sent, emails become permanent records.

In modern organizations, email etiquette is not merely about politeness; it is about professionalism, efficiency, and personal branding. Mastering it helps managers build credibility, avoid misunderstandings, and strengthen workplace relationships.

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Table 1.2.1 Difference between formal and informal e-mail

	Formal Email	Informal Email
Definition	A formal email is written in standard language for official purpose and follows a fixed form.	An informal email is composed in a casual tone and is a friendly letter written to someone for an unofficial purpose
Format	Has a fixes format	No fixed format
Language	Formal tone, matter-of-fact, passive voice	Informal tone, personal tone, slang, colloquialisms and abbreviations allowed, active voice
Length	Ideal to keep in short and simple unless it is essential to elaborate	Can be longer rambling
Target recipients	Businesses, Workplaces, Organizations, Institutions, etc.	Friends, family, acquaintances, etc .

1.2.3 Presentation skills

Imagine yourself in a situation at work where you have a great idea about something that would win your client's trust, get financial aid for your project, or convince your boss to adopt your working method. Picture that opportunity slipping from you, simply because you couldn't explain it well enough. That's the power and risk of presentation skills.

Not everyone will be a professional public speaker, but we may have to make a presentation at some point in time or the other. Whether one is a student, a professional engineer, an academician, one may have to make oral presentations in front of one's colleagues or professional peers. A professional student may be required to make presentations in the form of progress reports, student seminars, research presentations, and so on. Professionals in different fields, including scientists and engineers, also have to make oral reports, present seminars, deliver project presentations, or present a proposal orally. Similarly, business executives may have to prepare and present orally in their daily life about various activities in the organisation.

In business, success is often not just about what you know, but how you present it. A presentation is a live way of sharing information with a specific audience. It is a formal talk that delivers ideas or information in a clear, structured manner. Strong presentation skills help you organise your thoughts, bring them to life visually, and deliver them in a way that captures attention, builds credibility, and inspires action. Effective presentation skills cover three key aspects:

◊ What you say – the content and message the presenter tries to convey.

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◊ How you structure it – the order and flow of ideas that the presenter offers.

◊ What supports it – visuals like slides, videos, or images that strengthen your points.

Great presentations blend creativity, confidence, audience connection, preparation, style, adaptability, and clear communication. A skilled presenter doesn't just share facts; they tell stories and create vivid mental images that stick with the audience.

An effective presentation is more than just words; it's the combination of your message, tone, facial expressions, and body language working together to leave a lasting impression.

1.2.3.1 Purpose of Presentations

Mini Corporate Case: How a Presentation Won a $2 Million Deal

A young sales manager at a tech company was pitching a new cloud solution to a hesitant corporate client. The competition had more features and a lower price. Still, during the presentation, the manager focused on the client's pain points, used relatable visuals, and shared a short success story from a similar industry. The delivery was confident, interactive, and tailored to the client's needs.

Instead of just presenting the product, the manager explained the client's future with the product. The result? The client signed a $2 million contract not because it was the cheapest, but because the presentation made them believe it was the smartest choice.

Lesson: Presentation is not just about transferring information—it's about shaping perception, building trust and moving people to action.

Oral presentations have the following three basic purposes:

◊ **To inform** : The main aim of delivering a presentation is to inform, educate, or teach the audience regarding new schemes, new proposals, or new products, etc. For example, an internal HR briefing may inform employees about revised performance appraisal systems. The focus here is accuracy, clarity, and ensuring the audience gains a complete understanding of the topic.

◊ **To persuade** : Presentations have another distinctive purpose of influencing the audience to act or to believe in a certain way. Persuasive presentations are common in sales pitches, project proposals, investor meetings, and fundraising events. For example, sales presentations are made to persuade buyers to buy the product.

◊ **To build goodwill** : Presentations can also serve to enhance relationships, improve the speaker's credibility, and foster trust between the presenter and the audience. Such goodwill-building presentations may occur during customer

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appreciation events, community outreach programs, or annual general meetings. The intent is to create a positive impression, strengthen bonds, and convey genuine commitment toward stakeholders' interests. This type of presentation often leaves a lasting impact, even beyond the meeting room.

1.2.3.2 Preparation of slides

Imagine that you have to announce the launch of a new product for your company. Instead of speaking for 10 minutes, you prepare a set of visually appealing slides that highlight your main points. This instantly makes your presentation more engaging and easier to follow.

These are called presentation slides or PowerPoint Slides. PowerPoint slides are visual aids used to support and boost an oral presentation. They summarise key points and help to convey information to an audience. An effective presentation slide is not overloaded with text; it uses keywords, visuals, charts, and diagrams to make your message stand out.

The basic elements of an effective presentation include the 4 P's: Plan, Prepare, Practice, and Perform.

Do You Know?

Lenny Laskowski, an international professional speaker and an expert on presentation skills, has used the word A-U-D-I-E-N-C-E as an acronym and has defined some general audience analysis categories that all surveys should include. The "acronym is reproduced below:

Audience – Who are the members? How many will be at the event?

U- Understanding – What is their knowledge about the topic I will be addressing?

D- Demographics – What is their age, sex, and educational background?

I – Interest – Who asked them to be there? Why will they be at this event?

E- Environment – Where will I stand when I speak?

N-Needs – What are the listener's needs? What are my needs as a speaker?

C-Customised – How can I custom-fit my message to this audience?

E-Expectation – What do the listeners expect to learn from me?

1.2.3.3 PowerPoint Do's – The golden rules for great slides

i. **Identify the audience**: Know your audience (CEO, VP, Director, etc.). Each can require a different type and amount of information.

ii. **Attention Gaining**: Use simple, minimalist designs and focus on clarity to keep your audience's attention on the message rather than distractions.

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iii. **Visuals:** Make presentation slides more engaging using powerful, relevant visuals like images, charts, and infographics to reinforce key messages and make data memorable. Keep text minimal, fonts readable, and animations simple to enhance understanding without distraction. Visuals always catch the mind of the audience, so it is essential to make the visuals impressive.

iv. **Audio-Video Materials**: Use short, relevant videos or animations to clearly explain ideas, show processes, or inspire your audience. Select only high-quality, focused clips that add value without distracting from your core message.

v. **Body Language**: Your appearance, gestures, posture, hand movements, eye contact, and facial expressions all send messages to the audience. This nonverbal communication, known as body language or kinesics, plays a key role in creating the right impact. When used effectively, it can make your presentation more engaging, help maintain audience attention, and strengthen your message without you even saying a word.

vi. **Personal appearance**: This creates the first impression, with neat, well-groomed dressing boosting the presenter's confidence and winning audience appreciation. Dressing appropriately for the occasion is key, as sloppy or overly flashy attire can create bias or distract from the message.

vii. **Posture:** Good posture plays a big role in how confident and engaging you appear during a presentation. Stand tall with a relaxed stance, avoid slouching or leaning on the podium, and walk to the stage with a steady, natural pace. Keep both feet firmly on the ground, avoid fidgeting, and make gentle eye contact with the whole audience by turning your head slightly from side to side. Whether standing or sitting, stay comfortable yet composed, letting your body language reflect confidence and interest.

viii. **Gestures**: Gestures and hand movements can strongly influence how your audience perceives you during a presentation. Use open, natural movements like a thumbs up for encouragement or gentle hand waves to draw attention, while avoiding defensive, aggressive, or nervous gestures such as crossed arms, pocketed hands, or constant face touching. Keep your hands relaxed, purposeful, and aligned with your message to project confidence and engagement.

ix. **Eye contact**: This is a powerful tool in presentations, as it conveys confidence, connection, and sincerity. A presenter should look at all sections of the audience, engage directly with questioners, and avoid staring at walls, floors, or notes. Using eye contact effectively helps build trust and keeps listeners engaged.

x. **Facial expressions**: It has a great influence on how a presenter is perceived, as they reveal emotions and set the tone for communication. Maintaining a pleasant, confident look and beginning with a genuine smile helps to convey positivity and engagement. Avoid negative cues like smirking, frowning, or appearing anxious to keep the audience connected and receptive.

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1.2.4 Participating in Webinars and Live Discussions

1.2.4.1 Webinars: An Introduction

Imagine sitting in your room with a cup of coffee, yet being able to join a business strategy talk in Singapore, a leadership panel in London, and a marketing workshop in New York, all in the same week. Impressive right? That's the magic of webinars and live discussions. They let you connect with experts, industry leaders, and peers in real time, without the limits of location. We all witnessed their growing relevance during the pandemic, when they became a lifeline for learning and collaboration. Today, webinars can achieve nearly everything a traditional seminar can and sometimes even more.

We are all familiar with seminars, and many of us may have attended a few. A seminar is a gathering where people come together to discuss about a specific topic in an interactive setting, encouraging active participation and exchange of ideas. In such meetings, participants usually meet in person at a common venue to deliberate on the subject. A webinar is essentially an online version of a seminar where people gather, talk, and discuss in real time, but through a virtual platform instead of a physical location.

The relevance of webinars has grown significantly, especially during the COVID era, as they can achieve almost all the objectives of a seminar. However, activities that require physical, hands-on participation may not be feasible in a webinar format. Seminars, whether physical or online, are not the same as workshops, since workshops typically involve practical, hands-on activities, whereas seminars focus more on discussions and idea-sharing around a chosen topic. Let us discuss the various aspects of both.

Table No. 1.2.2 Comparison between Seminar and Webinar

	Seminar	**Webinar**
Definition	A meeting of a group of people with expertise in a particular area for discussion.	Webinar is an online seminar.
Objective	Discussion, deliberation and knowledge sharing on a specific topic by people with some expertise.	Discussion, deliberation and knowledge sharing about a particular topic by people with some expertise online.
Mode	Seminars are conducted in a venue where people meet with each other and discussions are held.	Online mode, Platforms like Google Meet, Zoom and Webex are used.

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Ease of conducting	The participants come from different places, some travelling great distances to participate in a seminar. Also, all the equipment needed for the conduct of the seminar has to be brought to the venue. Therefore, logistics become a major concern in the conduct of a seminar.	Logistics is not a concern as far as a webinar is concerned. People can log in from any part of the world if they have a steady internet connection. The rest of the resources are all online resources
Expense	More expensive as a seminar needs to cover expenses related to travel, resources, food, accommodation, etc.	Much cheaper than a seminar. Only the purchase of online resources is necessary. Most participants might be using electronic devices that they already have with them.
Barriers	Apart from the difficulty of physically travelling to the location, a seminar may be free from disturbances. In that sense, a seminar may give people more focus.	A webinar may have more distractions based on where the participant is logging in and from. If the participant is logging from their workplace, they might have many other things taking their attention away.
Networking	A seminar may be a better place to meet, know people and get valuable information from them, and collaborate for further endeavors.	Webinars limit the possibility of networking and collaborating for future projects.
Reach	A seminar has limited reach unless recorded and posted on the web.	A webinar has greater reach as unlimited people can view it through online platforms. It can be streamed live, and a large amount of feedback can be received, too.
Comfort	Seminars can be uncomfortable to attend because people have to sit in conference rooms for a long time. Apart from the fact that these rooms can be uncomfortable, dusty, crowded, too hot or cold, there is also the physical s train of sitting still for long hours on a chair.	A webinar can be attended from the comfort of one's home. All the resources of one's home can be utilised by the person while attending a webinar, making the experience less tiring and even quite pleasant. One could attend a webinar from one's terrace garden over a coffee

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Current Relevance	Seminars can be a concern during an era where there is pandemics like COVID-19 spreading. Physical distancing can become a major concern in a seminar. Seminars also need people to travel large distances and increase carbon emissions.	Webinars are more suited for a world plagued by pandemics and pollution. It ensures social distancing, and decreases pollution and traffic as people are not unnecessarily moving around.



A Seminar A Webinar

Tips for presenters

a. Log in well in time – Always join the session early to avoid keeping the audience waiting. Being punctual shows professionalism and respect for participants' time.

b. Test the software in advance – Familiarize yourself with the video conferencing platform before the webinar begins. Avoid figuring out controls during the session; prior practice ensures a smooth presentation.

c. Do not read the slides – Use slides with concise bullet points and clean visuals, and speak naturally rather than reading word-for-word. Treat webinar slides the same way you would in an in-person seminar.

d. Greet the attendees – Start by politely welcoming the audience, even if their cameras and microphones are off. Simple courtesies help create a warm and engaging atmosphere.

e. Be patient with technical difficulties – Expect occasional glitches and handle them calmly. Listen to feedback, resolve issues where possible, and avoid creating unnecessary confusion.

f. Know your audience – Even with a large group, try to understand who your attendees are. Encourage interaction through chat boxes or other non-disruptive methods to gauge their interests and reactions, helping you tailor your delivery to their needs.

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g. Avoid unnecessary controversies – Focus on sharing valuable ideas and information. While online platforms offer freedom of expression, avoid intentionally provoking disputes; keep the tone constructive and informative.

h. Be polite and maintain a pleasant demeanor – Even if you can't see the audience, remain courteous and approachable throughout the session. Treat the webinar as if you were speaking face-to-face with a large crowd.

Tips for Attendees

◊ Show up on time – Join the webinar before it starts to avoid disturbing the flow and to get a complete understanding of the topic, requirements, and expectations.

◊ Turn off audio and video – Keep your microphone muted unless speaking, and switch off your camera unless requested, to avoid unnecessary distractions.

◊ Use the chat room responsibly – Participate in the chat only for relevant discussions and with permission from the host; avoid off-topic or casual chatter.

◊ Have a clear agenda when asking questions – Frame your questions clearly and concisely so they don't consume excessive time or cause confusion.

◊ Remove distractions – Focus entirely on the webinar by eliminating background noise, unrelated activities, and interruptions, ensuring productive participation and better learning.

1.2.4.2 Live Discussions

Imagine a group of colleagues who are passionate about cricket. During a high-stakes match between India and Pakistan, they open a shared chat group to talk while watching the game. As each ball is bowled, they exchange comments on the players' performances, cheer for boundaries, and debate team strategies. Someone even posts a quick poll asking, "Who's going to win today?" The conversation moves rapidly, filled with excitement, predictions, and friendly banter, and even those who join later can scroll through earlier messages and still share their thoughts. This captures the essence of live discussions and real-time conversations that bring people together around a shared event, no matter where they are physically.

Live discussions are conversations that happen instantly, often through online platforms or chat rooms, while an event is unfolding. Instead of waiting to post or read comments later, participants interact at the same time, sharing opinions, asking questions, and reacting to developments as they happen.

For example, in a webinar, participants use the chat box to ask questions and share feedback with the speaker. During corporate town halls, employees engage through live Q&A platforms while leaders present, and in virtual conferences, attendees exchange views in dedicated live chat rooms alongside the sessions. Some of the key features of live discussions are as follows:

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a. Real-time interaction – People share ideas and respond instantly, without having to wait.

b. Shared experience – Everyone is focused on the same topic or event at the same time.

c. Active engagement – Quick comments, fun polls, questions, and reactions keep the conversation lively.

d. Flexibility – Anyone can join or leave whenever they want, though a core group usually stays involved

Live discussions create a more dynamic and engaging experience than traditional threaded forums or comment sections. Live discussions let people interact instantly, sharing ideas and reactions while following the same event together. They stay lively through quick comments, polls, and questions, with participants free to join or leave at any time, though a core group often remains active. Moderation and rules are important to keep live discussions productive. Moderators may delete abusive messages, ban problematic users, and encourage positive conversations. Participation also tends to be fluid, with different people joining and leaving the live chat at different times. However, a core engaged group usually participates actively. Compared to other online discussions, live chats feel more spontaneous and conversational.

Do You Know

A well-known example of creating powerful engagement can be seen in the presentation style of Steve Jobs. During Apple product launches, he transformed simple announcements into shared experiences by using storytelling, minimal and focused slides, strategic pauses, and carefully structured moments of anticipation. He often asked thought-provoking questions and built suspense before revealing key information, which kept audiences fully involved. These techniques mirror the principles of live discussions, where clarity, emotional connection, timing, and active participation make the interaction more dynamic and memorable.

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Summarised Overview

Effective use of technology-driven communication tools in professional settings has immense relevance in the digital age. It covers email communication by explaining the structure and components of both formal and informal emails, along with strategies to tailor messages for clarity and audience impact. Presentation

skills focus on creating engaging slides with visuals, audio-video elements, and minimal text, while using body language, tone, and structure to deliver messages persuasively. Webinars and live discussions train learners to participate confidently in virtual seminars and real-time conversations, following best practices for both presenters and attendees to ensure productive exchanges.



Self-Assessment Questions

1. What are live discussions in online communities, and elaborate on the role of moderation?
2. How are formal and informal emails different from each other?
3. Briefly explain the components of e-mail.
4. Differentiate between a seminar and a webinar.
5. Why are presentation skills important in professional and personal settings? Discuss 2-3 reasons.



Assignment Questions

1. Email communication has become one of the most widely used tools in professional environments. Discuss the structure, components and etiquetle of effective email writing.
2. Virtual communication methods such as webinars and live discussions have become essential in today's global business environment. Critically examine the advantages, challenges for participating in webinars and online discussions
3. Presentation skills are considered a critical competency for managers and business professionals . Evaluate the importance of effective presentation skils, including slide preparation, audience analysis and body language in delivering impactful presentations.

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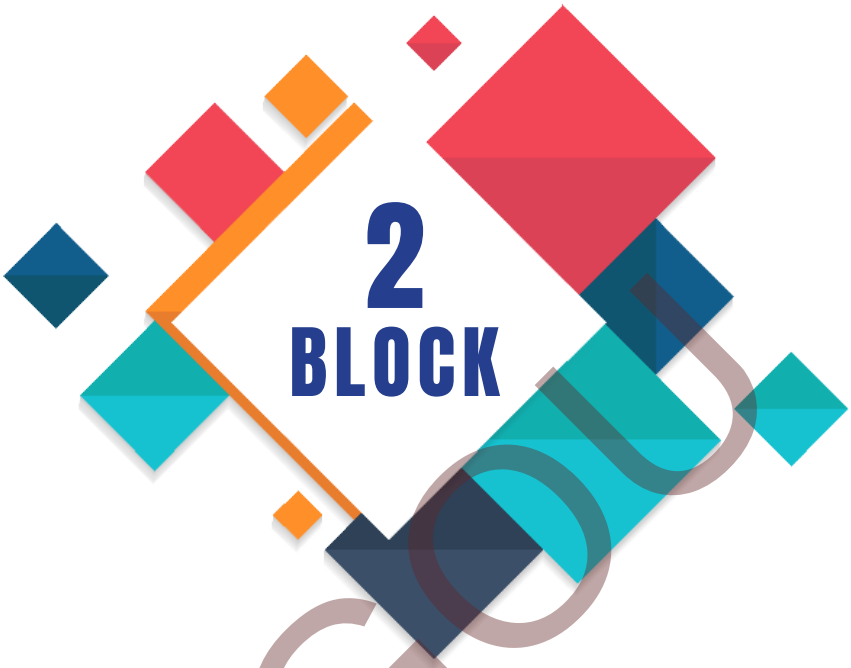
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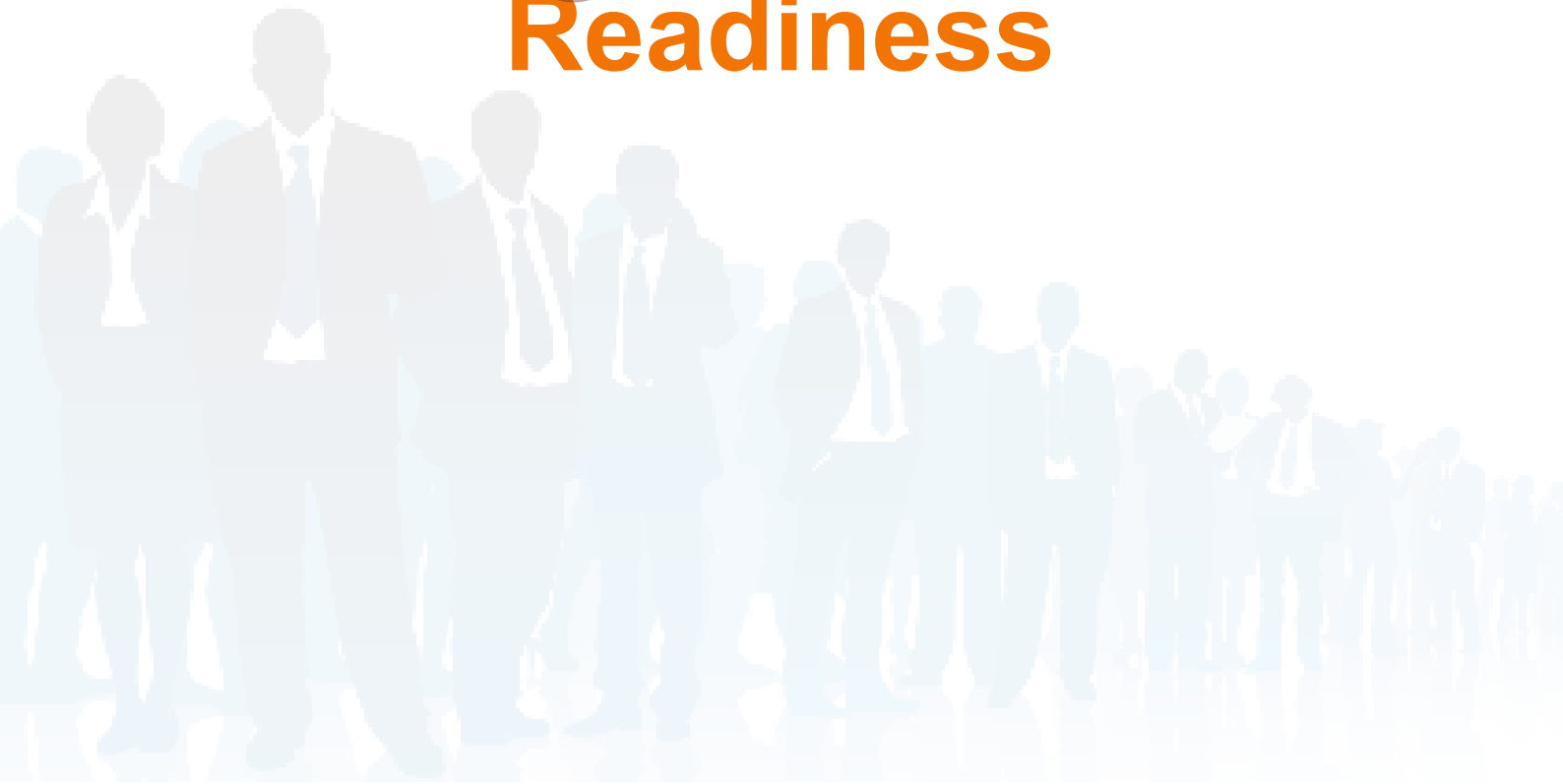
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Technical Writings and Placement Readiness



Unit 1

Business Correspondence

Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ◊ Draft professional internal business correspondences: memos, circulars, notices, and agenda
- ◊ Prepare effective external business correspondences, including sales letters, problem letters, goodwill messages, advertisements, and press releases
- ◊ Select suitable formats and styles of business communication for varied audiences and purposes
- ◊ Apply professional etiquette and language conventions to maintain cordiality in complaint resolution and goodwill messaging
- ◊ Create impactful advertisements and press releases that align with branding strategies

Background

In the modern business landscape, organizations rely heavily on written communication for its smooth functioning. So, the ability to write business letters and documents is no longer a choice—rather a pre-requisite skill that everyone should possess to enhance employability. Whether communicating internally through memos, circulars, notices, and agendas, or externally through sales letters, goodwill messages, advertisements, and press releases, employees must know how to convey information accurately and persuasively with professional tone. For instance, a well-written memo can prevent misunderstandings, a persuasive sales letter can win new business, a carefully crafted complaint resolution letter can turn dissatisfied customers into loyal. On the other hand, poorly written correspondence can lead to misunderstanding, confusion, delays, spoil relationships, and lost opportunities.

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Beyond simple language skills, successful business correspondence demands an understanding of audience needs, organisational priorities, and the cultural and ethical context of the message. It involves designing content that is both professional and engaging, selecting the right medium for delivery, and ensuring that every word serves a clear purpose. Employers expect graduates to draft internal and external communications with clarity, courtesy, and strategic intent. For managers, entrepreneurs, and professionals alike, mastering this skill means being able to influence decisions, resolve issues, and create a lasting positive impression.

This unit is designed to equip learners with the skills to produce structured, purposeful, and contextually appropriate business correspondence. By mastering these competencies, learners will be better prepared to meet workplace expectations, contribute confidently to organisational communication, and enhance their employability in managerial, administrative, and professional roles.



Keywords

Organisational communication, Memo, Circular, Notice, Agenda, Sales Letter, Complaint Resolution Letter, Goodwill Message, Advertisement, Press Release, Professional Tone



Discussion

2.1.1 Internal Business Correspondences: Memo, Circular, Notice and Agenda

2.1.1.1 Memo

Memo is an important communication tool in all business organisations. The word 'memo' is a clipped form of the Latin word 'memorandum', which means "thing to be remembered". It is a written communication used for internal business correspondence. Memos are short in structure, brief in format and intended to be shared internally with a limited number of people. Memos are used for immediate purposes like announcing important information, emphasising certain protocols, updates on personal transfers etc. They are framed for providing quick updates and announcements to people within the organisation. Sometimes, it is shared with close firms, organisations, vendors and consultants. Its impact is similar but less formal to a business letter. A formally

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communicated memo is a permanent record of communication. Even though it is less formal than a business letter, it should not be too informal. The language of the memo should be short, precise and simple. It's written in the third person and should maintain a professional tone.

It is always preferable to maintain a structured format for the Memo. There is a standard format to be followed, but not strictly and particularly. It can be framed into two sections: the heading section can include who writes to whom, when and why. It may also have lists of recipients' names, a list of (if any) writers or the name of the authority who drafted the memo, the date of the draft, the subject, and a list of readers who should keep a copy of the memo for their reference. The body of the memo is brief in structure with three parts: first is the purpose part, second is the details, and the third concludes the memo with the action. Memos do not have a signature line because it ends with a call to action. The opening of a memo or the purpose statement should be direct and concise. It should state the purpose and reason for the memo. It sets the tone, and therefore explains it very clearly. Secondly, the detailing part contains the context, background and necessary descriptions to make the content effective. One must choose and frame the most important details to share. The final action statement focuses on the action that is required. It conforms to the purpose and states the follow-up. Based on the requirement, one can include an attachment line or enclosure line showing the number of documents attached to a memo. Depending upon the situation, No matter the size, long or short, all memo drafts should maintain an opening, content with relevant details and concluding remarks. If the draft is lengthier, it's better to frame numbered lists or bullet points for order and clarity. Long memos can ideally be divided into logical sections with brief headings.

Memos are commonly used for the following workplace purposes:

- ◊ To communicate official instructions, directives, or guidelines from management to employees.
- ◊ To confirm meetings, events, schedules, or deadlines.
- ◊ To provide a brief report or record of a meeting
- ◊ To summarise actions required after meetings or discussions.
- ◊ To inform amendments or updates to organisational policies, rules, or procedures.
- ◊ To notify employees about a problem or to inform others that a problem was solved
- ◊ To document disciplinary matters, i.e., issue of show cause memo to employee to explain an act of misconduct, negligence, or non-compliance.

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Types of Memos can be three:

1. Information Memo (to deliver or request information)
2. Problem-solving Memo (suggests a specific and immediate action to solve a situation)
3. Internal/proposal (convey suggestions to authorities)

Let us now examine a sample Memo

MEMORANDUM

Date : September 21, 2021

To : All Employees

From : Varsha, Business Development Department

CC : Sunil, HR Department

Subject : Back to Office

Our offline office hours will commence from October 1 onwards. All employees must ensure that they have received 2-dose vaccinations.

The company is ready to provide Work from Home provisions for those with significant reasons to validate.

Make sure to maintain social distancing while you start work from the office. All employees are requested to follow Covid Protocol strictly.

Please send a request mail to abcd12@gmail.com if you want to continue WFH.

Let us now examine another sample memo

MEMORANDUM

Date : January 10, 2022

To : All employees

From : Sreenivas, CEO, XYZ

Subject : Annual Bonus Leave

There is a significant change in the policy with regard to the annual leave. One employee from each department will be awarded special annual bonus leave for outstanding performance.

A total of 5 days will be credited to eligible employees, which can be availed of either as continued leave or in parts.

Current years' eligible employees will be announced during the meeting on 31/01/2022.

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2.1.1.2 Circular

A circular is a written means of communication to inform a group of people, mainly employees or members of an organisation. It is commonly used for interdepartmental communication and is officially shared through notice boards, emails, or internal circulation. Circulars usually contain information of official meetings, invitations to functions, instructions, or general announcements. Depending on the purpose, a circular may be formal or informal. In some cases, circulars are also used for advertising or promotional purposes.

It is an economical and effective way of communication. Since it reaches many people at the same time, a clearly written circular saves time and effort. Circulars are widely used in inter-office communications. Due to the wide circulation, circulars are also useful for sharing marketing or informational messages. There is no fixed format. However, it should be clear, concise, and easy to understand. A sample circular is given below for reference.

Circular No. December 2021

Offline/Online Work Hours- Revised

All Employees of A & B Company,

This is to inform all employees that a new pattern of working hours will be followed with effect from 1 January 2022. To ensure the quality of working hours of the organisation, please follow the revised working pattern.

- ◊ Offline/online Working hours: 9.00 am to 7.00 pm (including short breaks)
- ◊ Prior permission is needed to opt for Online work hours.
- ◊ Need a valid reason to opt for an online pattern.
- ◊ Continuous three days online pattern should shift to offline on the 4th day. All employees need to note this pattern. Please contact the HR department for further queries.

CEO
A & B Company

Let us examine another circular

Date : 25 July, 2022

Sub : Appointment of new Business Development Manager

Dear all,

I am happy to announce that Ms. Jasmine Walton has been appointed our new

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Business Development Manager.

Ms. Jasmine has taken over from Mr. Sajith Devan, who has recently resigned from the organisation for unavoidable reasons.

Ms. Jasmine will be reporting to Ms. Mallika, the General Manager.

With your constant support and full dedication, we hope that Ms. Jasmine will take our reputation to new heights.

All the best, Jasmine.

Sincerely yours,

Sd/-
Remeena Babu
HR Manager

2.1.1.3 Notice

A notice is a written communication tool used for sudden, immediate, and formal announcements within an organisation. It is primarily intended for internal members, such as employees, staff, or students. The main purpose of a notice is to ensure smooth and effective communication between the organisational authorities and its members.

In organisations, important matters such as resignation, relieving of duties, holidays, meetings, examinations, or policy-related information are communicated in advance through notices. The concept of a "notice period" clearly highlights the importance of official communication through notices in organisational functioning.

Notices are generally brief and precise, containing only essential information. For official use, notices are usually printed or displayed on the official letterhead, bearing the institution's name, seal, and the signature of the issuing authority.

Often, learners may confuse a notice with a memo due to similarities in format. However, their purposes differ. A memo is addressed to a limited or specific group, whereas a notice is intended for a wider. Notices are normally displayed publicly on notice boards or official platforms and are accessible to all concerned members.

A standard notice includes the following elements:

- ◊ Name of the issuing authority/organisation audience at the top
- ◊ A clear and attractive title that draws attention
- ◊ The body, which contains details such as: relevance or purpose, occasion or event, date, time, and venue (if applicable), reason or instructions
- ◊ Signature, name, and designation of the issuing authority

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Here is one sample notice.

A& A Proprietors

East Mumbai

Notice

Date : November 24, 2021

An urgent meeting is planned on December 1, 2021at 2.00 PM in the Head Office to decide on the company's offline and online working pattern. All employees are requested to attend the meeting without fail.

Signature :
Divakar M.
HR Manager

Let us now examine another sample notice

Carton Pack

Bengaluru

Notice

Date : 19 April 2022

Medical Camp

The company in collaboration with Chaithanya Hospital is hosting a medical camp on 25 April 2022 at the Lounge on the second floor from 9.30 am. Certified Medical practitioners will be available for service. All employees can attend the camp free of cost.

Ms. Nisha Sabu

PRO

2.1.1.4 Agenda

Official meetings demand formal procedures, and such documents need to be shared among the members of the organisation. Agenda is an important document that is essential to conduct organised meetings. It is meant to be shared in advance with members attending meetings. It is the list of items to be discussed. Items in the agenda are discussed sequentially.

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The procedure of a meeting includes:

◊ Welcome address,

◊ Presentation of previous minutes,

◊ Lists of items (Agenda),

◊ Any other information that needs to be discussed,

◊ Date of the next meeting,

◊ Conclusion.

Here is a sample Agenda.

Department of Business Development Management

A&A Company

15/11/2021

Calcutta

A meeting of all employees of the BDM Department will be held on 20/11/2021 at 10:00 AM at the section.

Agenda:

◊ Evaluate the sales of the quarter

◊ Congratulate Meera for her recent sales achievement

◊ Familiarise new e-application to employees

◊ Any other matter, permitted by the chair

Let us examine another sample.

IT Wing

PCS Limited

28/09/2022

Cochin

Inviting all to discuss product launch on 03/10/2022 at GM's chamber.

Agenda:

◊ Presentation of previous meeting minutes

◊ Presentation of the completed project

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◊ Open discussion on the completed project

◊ Discuss and finalise the date of the product launch

◊ Any other matter, permitted by the chair

2.1.2 External Business Correspondences: Sales Letters, Problem Letters, Goodwill Messages and Advertisements

2.1.2.1 Sales Letter

"How to boost the sales?" This question remains the prime concern for all business organisations across industries. While advertising is the first-choice sales promotional tool, sales letters also serve as an effective second choice. A sales letter is a form of external business correspondence that performs the role of a salesperson, by directly communicating with prospective customers. The main intention of a sales letter is to attract the reader's attention, generate interest in the product or service, and ultimately convert the reader into a customer. Therefore, drafting an effective sales letter requires a thorough understanding of the target audience, including their needs, preferences, and expectations. Sales letters should focus on presenting a product or service in terms of its benefits and value to the customer.

The expensive and time-consuming component of an advertisement can, in a way, be replaced by an effective sales letter because a good sales letter is similar to a popular advertisement. The language used should be clear, engaging, and appealing, as it should generate curiosity and grab the attention of the targeted person. To capture attention, sales letters may begin with striking questions, powerful statements, interesting quotations, or brief testimonials. Including customer endorsements, guarantees, or limited-time offers can further enhance persuasion.

Guidelines for Drafting an Effective Sales Letter

1. **Catchy opening :** Catchy opening can be achieved through striking statements, stating facts, relating a story, joke, or testimonial, promising special offers and appeals, or asking questions.

2. **Body :** It should highlight key features, unique selling propositions, and customer benefits. Supporting elements such as offers, guarantees, test results, comparisons, and statistical evidence may be included to strengthen persuasion.

3. **Conclusion :** The final paragraph should motivate quick and positive action. It is the final chance to recapitulate your claims.

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Here is a sample sales letter:

Dear Sir/Madam

Feeling the heat as summer nears? We understand how sweltering offices can drain productivity. That's why we've developed a line of top-notch room coolers to keep your workspace relaxed and comfortable.

Our enclosed pamphlet highlights the specifications of our expertly crafted coolers in various capacities. We guarantee these units against defects for the whole five years and will repair or replace any troubled part free of charge. You can count on us to keep things cool.

Simply fill out the card inside the pamphlet and ~~mail~~ send it back to us. Our technician will then visit your office, assess your unique needs, and advise on the ideal cooler placement for optimal temperature control.

Act fast to beat the heat and save money! Order by April 30th to receive a special 5% discount. We'll handle the delivery and installation of your new coolers, expertly placing them wherever you'd like. Consider it our gift to you.

Give your team the refreshingly cool and comfortable workspace they deserve this summer - at an unbeatable value. Trust us to keep your office running in peak condition when temperatures skyrocket. Act now to schedule your free consultation and customised cooling solution. Stay cool and beat the heat!

Yours faithfully,

Roshni M.

Sales Manager

Let us examine another letter:

Dear Vijayarajamallika,

We've got exciting news for go-getters like you! Our annual sale is live, and we're thrilled to connect with so many familiar faces again. Over 90% of our customers have taken advantage of this mega money-saving opportunity. Will you be one of them?

If you've been considering selling your current car, do it at our showroom this week and get the highest value. Due to popular demand, we're also providing home services for your convenience during this pandemic.

Simply call our energetic sales officer at 180000000098756 anytime between 9 AM and 7 PM to schedule an appointment. We'll ensure you get top dollar for your trade-in.

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Don't miss out on these limited-time huge savings! We can't wait to help you upgrade your ride and hit the road in style again soon.

Rev up your engines and call us now!

Sincerely,

Raja Motors
Thiruvananthapuram

In these sample letters, you can find the very basic structure of a sales letter. Three basic parts are included in a sales letter: introduction, body/content and conclusion. The introductory paragraph/ opening statement should grab the attention of the reader. There are different ways to make the opening statement attractive by a) framing a striking statement, b) stating an important fact, c) framing a curious question, etc. Try to provide some thought-provoking situations like 'saving time or money' and 'attain the best service'. The body/ content paragraph is targeted to arouse the customer's interest in the product or service. It is the body of the letter that convinces the benefits of the product, which will create desire in the second party. It convinces the reader through substantial claims. A sales letter ends with a call to action. Draft the points in terms of motivation for comfort, leisure, saving of time or money. The concluding passage can be framed with evidence and information on services and guarantee terms.

2.1.2.2 Problem Letter (Complaint Letter)

A problem letter, also known as a complaint letter, is a form of external business correspondence used to bring attention to mistakes, errors, defects, deficiencies, delays, or unsatisfactory services provided by a person or an organisation. Such letters are written to formally communicate a grievance and seek corrective action.

A problem letter serves a dual purpose; it should aim to resolve the problem at hand while also maintaining cordial relations between the two parties involved. Therefore, careful consideration must be given to both the tone and content of the letter.

The language used should be clear and precise when describing the problem. One should explain the impact of the issue in detail, for example, any losses to business, interruptions in service, or inconveniences faced. Suggesting potential solutions can also be advantageous. However, unpleasant or offensive language should never be used. It is advisable to use passive voice when addressing the issue or problem. The concluding paragraph can be structured as a formal request to address the issue promptly. Grievance letters written to government agencies or public authorities also fall under the category of problem letters. The manner in which the problem is addressed demonstrates organisation's professionalism and customer service orientation.

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Problem letters can serve two functions.

1. **Communicating a Complaint**
   These letters are written to inform the concerned party about a problem related to goods or services received and to seek redressal.

2. **Responding to Complaints or Claims**
   Organisations may also issue problem letters in response to complaints or claims raised by customers, explaining the situation and proposing solutions.

Sample 1 : Communicating a Complaint

Purchase Manager
Q& Q Industries 15 January 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

We have received our order No. 6758, and we are extremely sorry to inform you that the products are not up to the usual standards. We are sorry to express disappointment about the product quality. The quality of the base material is poor. We have always appreciated your service, and this inconvenience is a first-time occurrence.

Could you please make the necessary arrangements for replacement of these articles and their delivery?

Kindly do the needful at the earliest.

Yours faithfully,

Manager
A&A Company

In the above sample, you can find the basic structure of a problem/complaint letter.

When you draft a problem letter, make sure you follow these steps:

◊ Write promptly.

◊ Mention clearly the kind of compensation that you expect.

◊ Finish it with a tone that expresses confidence that the recipient will grant your request.

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Sample 2: Dealing with customer's complaint

Imagine you have received a complaint/ problem letter from your customer. Let us take the above problem letter in sample 1 and frame a reply for that complaint.

January 20, 2020.

Manager
A&A Company

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter dated January 15, 2020 regarding the quality of the product that you received. We have investigated your complaint and identified the problem with that batch of the product.

Please accept our sincere apologies for the inconvenience caused. We assure you that it will never happen again. We have appointed a committee to ensure the final quality of dispatched products.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention.

Sincerely,
Purchase Manager
Q & Q Industries

There are instances where the customer may make a false complaint. A rejection letter is needed when you identify a false complaint. We will take sample 1 as a reference again. Imagine you have identified sample 1 as a fake complaint. How will you respond?

Let us see:

20/01/2020

Manager
A&A Company

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter dated January 15, 2020. We have inspected the product, and based on the results of stringent testing, we regret to inform you that your complaint is not admissible. We hope you will not be disappointed with this decision. We have enclosed the product quality report for your review. We hope you will understand our position after examining the report's findings.

We are sorry that we cannot be more accommodating regarding your complaint this time. As our valuable customer, we welcome any additional suggestions you may have. Please feel free to contact me if you need any further clarification on this matter.

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We appreciate the opportunity to address your concerns and strengthen our business relationship.

Yours Sincerely,

Purchase Manager

Q&Q Industries

So, the very problem letter was drafted from three different perspectives based on the situation. The language is clearly polite, and it will help sustain the business bond. Rather than the structure of the content, it is all about how you deal with it.

2.1.2.3 Order Letter

An order letter is a formal written communication used by a buyer to place an order for goods or services with a seller. It is an important form of business correspondence that establishes a clear and official request for the supply of products or services according to specific terms and conditions. Order letters are commonly used in business transactions between organisations, suppliers, wholesalers, and retailers.

The primary objective of an order letter is to provide accurate and complete information about the purchase so that the supplier can process the order without confusion. A well-written order letter ensures that both parties clearly understand the quantity, quality, specifications, price, delivery schedule, and payment terms related to the order. This clarity helps avoid misunderstandings and supports smooth business operations.

An order letter also serves as a formal record of the transaction. It provides documented proof of the buyer's request and can be referred to in case of discrepancies regarding delivery, pricing, or product specifications. In many organisations, order letters are issued after preliminary discussions, negotiations, or quotations from suppliers.

When drafting an order letter, clarity, accuracy, and completeness are essential. The tone should remain polite and professional, and all relevant details must be included so that the supplier can fulfil the order efficiently.

Essential Elements of an Order Letter

A well-structured order letter generally contains the following elements:

1. **Reference to previous communication :** The letter may begin by referring to previous discussions, quotations, catalogues, or advertisements that prompted the order.

2. **Description of the product or service :** Clear details of the items being ordered should be provided, including specifications such as model, size, colour, quality, or other relevant features.

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3. **Quantity and price details :** The number of units ordered and the agreed price or reference to a quotation should be mentioned.

4. **Delivery instructions :** The expected delivery date, shipping method, and delivery location should be clearly specified.

5. **Payment terms :** Information regarding payment method, credit terms, advance payment, or other financial arrangements should be included.

6. **Additional instructions :** Any special requirements regarding packaging, insurance, installation, or documentation may also be mentioned.

By including these details, the order letter ensures that the supplier receives complete instructions for processing the order.

Sample Order Letter

Apex Retail Stores

MG Road

Kochi – 682011

Date: 12 March 2023

To

The Sales Manager

Bright Electronics Pvt. Ltd.

Bengaluru – 560045

Subject: Order for LED Television Sets

Dear Sir/Madam,

With reference to your catalogue and price quotation dated 5 March 2023, we are pleased to place an order for the following items:

◊ 20 units of 42-inch Smart LED Television (Model: BE-42S)

◊ 10 units of 55-inch Smart LED Television (Model: BE-55P)

We request that the above items be delivered to our warehouse at the above address on or before 25 March 2023. Kindly ensure that the products are properly packed to prevent damage during transit.

Payment will be made through bank transfer within **15 days of receiving the invoice,** as per the credit terms discussed earlier.

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Please confirm receipt of this order and inform us once the goods have been dispatched.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Ramesh Nair
Purchase Manager
Apex Retail Stores

An effectively written order letter ensures that the purchase process is clear, systematic, and professionally documented. By specifying product details, delivery instructions, and payment arrangements, organisations can facilitate smooth transactions and maintain strong business relationships with suppliers.

2.1.2.4 Goodwill Messages

In official communication, there is a need for messages of appreciation and kindness - known as goodwill messages. Unlike regular business documents focused on information, goodwill messages express positive sentiments. These can motivate people and develop good business relationships. Goodwill messages include:

- ◊ Positive feedback
- ◊ Congratulatory notes
- ◊ Words of appreciation

When drafting a goodwill message:

- ◊ Use a sincere, straightforward tone in simple language.
- ◊ Keep it concise yet specific.
- ◊ Send soon after the occasion that led to it.
- ◊ Focus content on the recipient with a selfless spirit.

Goodwill messages convey feeling over facts. Timely, thoughtful messages of praise and congratulations build relationships and morale amidst routine business communication.

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Here are samples:

1. Thank you note

Purchase Manager

Q & A Company

Dear Sir/ Madam

Thank you for delivering our package safely and without delay. Your team made a great effort to handle this situation, and I appreciate it. Please find enclosed a cheque for the balance amount. Let me know if any transaction was left out or requires follow up. Once again, thank you for your efficient service. I am glad we could rely on your company to transport our package securely in a timely manner.

Regards

Manager,

A & A company.

---

2. Congratulatory note

HR Manager
Alva Medicines
Coimbatore

Dear Menaka ,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as HR Manager at Alva Medicines. This position will greatly benefit your abilities, enthusiasm, and sincerity.

I wish you all the best in your new role.

Regards,
Arjun
Purchase Manager
R&R Pharmaceuticals
Salem

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2.1.2.5 Advertisements

Advertisements are the prime promotional tools for creating awareness and popularity for products and services in the marketplace. An advertisement is a form of promotional communication designed to inform, persuade, and remind the public about a product, service, or idea. Advertisements highlight a product's specifications, benefits, and uniqueness to influence prospective consumers. Advertisements can be published through various media such as print media (newspapers, magazines, brochures), electronic media (television and radio), and digital platforms (websites, social media, and mobile applications). Whether in print or digital, advertisements are preferred to be brief, yet complete regarding the relevant details.

Features of a good advertisement are:

- ◊ A good advertisement grabs the audience's/reader's attention.
- ◊ Brevity is key to advertisement success.
- ◊ Clarity and completeness further support an effective advertisement
- ◊ The message should be persuasive and memorable

Key aspects in Advertising

Headline: The opening statement that captures attention.

Tagline / Slogan / Punchline : A short, memorable phrase that conveys the brand message or positioning and remains associated with the product or company.

Advertising Message : The central idea or promise communicated to the audience, highlighting customer benefits.

Visuals and Illustrations : Images, graphics, or symbols that reinforce the written message and enhance recall.

Structure of a printed advertisement:

- ◊ Catchy Headline
- ◊ Tagline / Slogan ("Har Ghar Kuch Kehta Hai")
- ◊ Brief informative body (eg. innovative and durable paint solutions that enhance the beauty of homes while providing long-lasting protection)
- ◊ Subheads, if applicable (eg. "Beautiful Homes, Lasting Impressions"/"Advanced Colour Technology")
- ◊ Company details

Illustrations in an ad can draw the reader's eyes and effectively reinforce the written content.

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Look at these two samples:



Fig. 2.2.1 A sample advertisement



Fig. 2.2.2 A sample advertisement

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2.1.2.6 Press Release

A press release is an official and formal communication issued by an organisation to convey information to the public through the media. Press releases are widely used to communicate globally, nationwide or regionally. In business, press releases convey an organisation's public relations strategy. Organisations commonly use press release to announce new product launches, company mergers, product updates, official events, rebranding, awards, achievements etc.

When drafting a press release, the writer should have clarity on the topic and its objective. The content should be factual, concise, and newsworthy. Maintain clarity starting with the headline that is informative and attention-grabbing. The first paragraph should highlight key information, covering the 5Ws (who, what, when, where, why) and how. Include a summary statement, highlighting the significance of the announcement. It can also include quotes from reputable individuals to draw attention and data to provides authenticity.

See the following sample:

Healthcare Ayurvedic Products Ltd.

Arvindpur-623004

Bhavnagar

Goodbye to Diabetes and Dyspepsia

Healthcare Ayurvedic Products Ltd. is pleased to announce the launch of the following new products:

- ◊ Diabof - 250mg tablets
- ◊ Dyspocar - 300mg capsules

These medicines were developed after over a decade of intensive research by our R&D division on using indigenous herbs for healthcare. They have been successfully clinically tested on a large number of patients across a wide geographical area.

Diabof is for patients with insulin-dependent diabetes. One tablet daily helps control blood sugar within healthy limits. Its continued use can activate the pancreas in most cases, aiding natural insulin production.

Dyspocar is for chronic stomach conditions like dyspepsia, dysentery, acidity, etc. Two capsules daily after meals can regulate and improve the entire digestive system.

For further information and bulk orders, please contact:

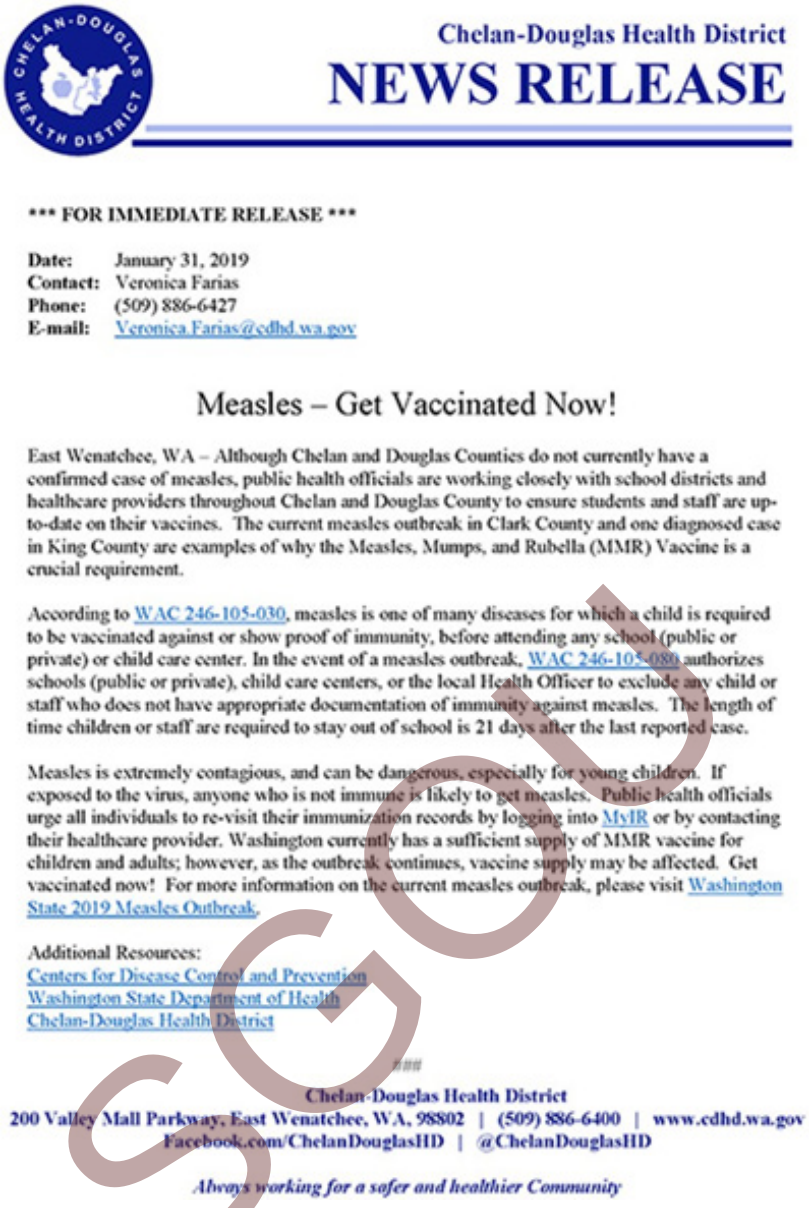
Mr Shyam Saxena,

Research Director

Mob: XXXXXXXX

December 16, 2021

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Chelan-Douglas Health District

NEWS RELEASE

*** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ***

Date: January 31, 2019
Contact: Veronica Farias
Phone: (509) 886-6427
E-mail: Veronica.Farias@cdhd.wa.gov

Measles – Get Vaccinated Now!

East Wenatchee, WA – Although Chelan and Douglas Counties do not currently have a confirmed case of measles, public health officials are working closely with school districts and healthcare providers throughout Chelan and Douglas County to ensure students and staff are up-to-date on their vaccines. The current measles outbreak in Clark County and one diagnosed case in King County are examples of why the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine is a crucial requirement.

According to WAC 246-105-030, measles is one of many diseases for which a child is required to be vaccinated against or show proof of immunity, before attending any school (public or private) or child care center. In the event of a measles outbreak, WAC 246-105-080 authorizes schools (public or private), child care centers, or the local Health Officer to exclude any child or staff who does not have appropriate documentation of immunity against measles. The length of time children or staff are required to stay out of school is 21 days after the last reported case.

Measles is extremely contagious, and can be dangerous, especially for young children. If exposed to the virus, anyone who is not immune is likely to get measles. Public health officials urge all individuals to re-visit their immunization records by logging into MyIR or by contacting their healthcare provider. Washington currently has a sufficient supply of MMR vaccine for children and adults; however, as the outbreak continues, vaccine supply may be affected. Get vaccinated now! For more information on the current measles outbreak, please visit Washington State 2019 Measles Outbreak.

Additional Resources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Washington State Department of Health
Chelan-Douglas Health District

###

Chelan-Douglas Health District
200 Valley Mall Parkway, East Wenatchee, WA, 98802 | (509) 886-6400 | www.cdhd.wa.gov
Facebook.com/ChelanDouglasHD | @ChelanDouglasHD

Always working for a safer and healthier Community

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Fig. 2.2.3 A sample press release

Case : The Costly Memo Miscommunication

At Horizon Insurance Company, a poorly drafted internal memo caused significant client dissatisfaction. The claims department issued new guidelines for processing accident claims, but the 600-word memo failed to highlight crucial changes in the reimbursement procedure. Eleven Claim officers interpreted the instructions differently, resulting in underpayments to 23 policyholders. When angry clients began calling, management discovered the memo's critical updates were buried in dense paragraphs without visual cues.

The HR manager intervened by implementing a new memo template with three sections: (1) a red "URGENT" header for policy changes, (2) numbered step-by-step instructions, and (3) a checklist for compliance confirmation. The first revised memo about medical claim procedures achieved 97% accuracy in implementation. Over six months, this format reduced client complaints by 40% and shortened staff training time for new policies by 35%.

Questions :

1. What specific weaknesses in the original memo led to the client underpayments?
2. How did the three structural changes improve communication effectiveness?
3. Why might this solution work equally well for external business letters?



Summarised Overview

Effective written communication serves as the backbone of organizational operations, enabling clear information sharing and stakeholder engagement. Internally, documents like memos, circulars, notices, and agendas facilitate structured communication for announcements, policies, and meetings. Externally, sales letters promote products by emphasizing benefits, while problem letters address complaints with diplomacy to preserve relationships. Goodwill messages foster positive connections through appreciation and congratulations. Strategic branding tools—advertisements and press releases—publicize initiatives with compelling narratives. Success hinges on tailoring tone and format to the audience, whether employees, clients, or the public. Well-crafted correspondence drives action, resolves conflicts, and upholds organizational reputation, proving that clarity, professionalism, and adaptability are indispensable in today's globalized workplace.



Self-Assessment Questions

1. What are the key differences between a memo, a circular, and a notice in terms of purpose and audience?
2. Explain the importance of maintaining a professional tone in business correspondence.

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3. Describe the essential components of an effective sales letter.
4. How does a problem letter differ when addressing a genuine complaint versus a false claim?
5. Identify the main features of a well-drafted press release and explain why clarity is critical.



Assignment Questions

1. Draft a memo announcing a change in workplace timings, ensuring clarity, brevity, and proper structure.
2. Prepare a circular inviting employee to a corporate training programme, maintaining an appropriate tone and format.
3. Set agenda for annual business meeting of sales team of an organisation, to be presided by the Sales Head.
4. Write a problem letter to a supplier highlighting delays in delivery and suggesting suitable solutions.
5. Create a goodwill message congratulating a team on achieving their quarterly sales targets.
6. Draft a persuasive sales letter to the Head of an educational institution for promoting innovative educational videos.
7. Design an advertisement for a new product launch, incorporating key features and a compelling call to action.
8. Draft a press release announcing the launch of a new herbal hair care product that is 100 per cent organic and free from side effects.



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Unit 2

Placement Readiness

Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ◊ Prepare professional and appealing resumes and cover letters, highlighting qualifications, skills, and achievements
- ◊ Apply Applicant Tracking System (ATS) requirements to optimise job application documents to improve visibility in automated screening
- ◊ Apply strategies for successful interview preparation, execution, and follow-up to enhance employability
- ◊ Participate effectively in group discussions by applying clear communication, analytical thinking, and teamwork skills.
- ◊ Exhibit professional language etiquette and interpersonal behaviour in recruitment-related interactions.

Background

In today's competitive job market and entrepreneurial landscape, professional success often begins long before the first day at work. For job seekers, the journey starts with the creation of a compelling resume and cover letter—documents that act as gateways to opportunities. These materials are often the first point of contact with employers, recruiters, or admissions committees, making their precision, relevance, and presentation vital.

With the widespread adoption of Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), understanding how technology filters and ranks applications has become a crucial employability skill. Knowing how to navigate these systems can determine whether a profile is shortlisted or overlooked.

Beyond application documents, the ability to excel in interviews, group discussions, and other selection processes directly impacts professional outcomes.

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These stages test not only technical knowledge but also soft skills such as communication, critical thinking, leadership, and adaptability—qualities valued equally in corporate roles and entrepreneurial ventures.

Placement readiness is, therefore, not a single skill but a combination of strategic preparation, personal branding, and confident execution. For aspiring professionals and entrepreneurs, mastering these abilities ensures they can present themselves effectively, make strong first impressions, and stand out in a crowded field of competitors.



Keywords

Resume, Cover Letter, Applicant Tracking System (ATS), Resume Parsing, STAR Method, Interview Preparation, Group Discussion, Communication Skills, Professional Etiquette, Critical Thinking



Discussion

2.2.1 Preparing Resume and Cover Letter

A resume and cover letter are essential documents for applying to jobs and higher education programs. A résumé is a brief structured document that summarises an individual's educational qualifications, skills, work experience, achievements, and other information relevant to a specific job position. It is usually 1-2 pages long. The purpose of a resume is to highlight your strengths and convince the reader that you are qualified for the position or program you are applying to. It is primarily used for employment applications in the corporate and private sectors.

A cover letter is a 1-page document that sent along with a résumé (or C.V.) when applying for a job, internship, or professional position. It introduces the applicant to the employer and explains why the applicant is interested in and suitable for the position. The cover letter is your-best chance to make a good first impression.

2.2.1.1 Importance of Resume and Cover Letter

Your resume and cover letter offer that critical first glimpse into your background for recruiters and admission officers. Like a strong handshake, a well-crafted resume and cover letter make a powerful first impression. With so many applicants to evaluate, these documents must be engaging and polished to grab positive attention. In today's

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fast-paced hiring and admissions processes, many organisations depend on resumes and cover letters to screen applicants effectively. Only the most promising candidates advance to the interview round. To pass the initial screening, your resume and cover letter must clearly and convincingly showcase your suitability for the role or program. Invest sufficient time in refining these crucial screening tools.

The resume and cover letter act as a snapshot, summarising your academic performance, skills, experiences and achievements. Clearly and compellingly, they highlight the core qualifications you bring to the table. This high-level summary is your chance to strengthen your case before the in-depth interview stage. While the resume summarises your credentials, the cover letter allows you to customise your application to each role or program. This tailored approach shows you have carefully researched the opportunity. Such attention to detail is essential for admission officers and hiring managers reviewing many applicants.

2.2.1.2 Resume Sections

A strong resume presents your credentials effectively in an easy-to-scan format. Here are key sections to include:

1. **Contact Information :** List your name, postal address, mobile number and professional email at the top of the page. This header gives easy access to your details.
2. **Profile/Objective :** Summarize your professional strengths or objectives for the position/program in 2-3 targeted lines. This snapshot sets the tone for your resume.
3. **Education :** Starting with your most recent degree/institution, list your academic qualifications and details like major, expected completion date, and any honours or notable projects. Showcase your academic background.
4. **Experience :** List your work and internship experiences in reverse chronological order. Include organisation, position title, employment period, role performed, and achievements/responsibilities focused on quantifiable contributions.
5. **Skills :** Include the technical skills, soft skills, languages or programming expertise relevant to the role or program. Back up with examples to showcase your capabilities.
6. **Certifications :** Highlight professional certifications and additional credentials like first aid certificates to exhibit your commitment to growth.
7. **Activities :** Optionally include notable co-curricular activities, volunteer work or hobbies to present well-rounded interests.

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Table 2.2.1 Resume, Curriculum Vitae and Biodata : Key differences

Point of Difference	Résumé	Curriculum Vitae (CV)	Bio-Data
Meaning	A brief summary of skills, qualifications, and work experience	A detailed account of academic and professional background	A data sheet containing personal and family details
Purpose	Used for job applications in corporate and private sectors	Used for academic, research, and professional positions	Used mainly for government jobs, membership in professional bodies, and other personal purposes
Focus	Skills, achievements, and experience relevant to the job	Education, research, publications, teaching, and experience	Personal details along with education and work experience
Educational Details	Brief and relevant	Detailed with dates, institutions, and specialisations	Listed, but less detailed than CV
Flexibility	Highly flexible and tailored for each job	Less flexible, mostly standard	Least flexible

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2.2.1.3 Cover Letter Guidelines

A compelling cover letter follows these key guidelines:

1. **Header :** Include your contact information and the date at the top. Address the letter to a specific person/department, if possible, for a personalised touch.
2. **Opening :** Begin with a personable introduction and state the position/program you are applying for and where you learned about it.
3. **Main Body :** Explain how your specific qualifications, experiences and interests make you an excellent fit for the opportunity. Refer to key details from the job description/ program overview and tie them to your background. Keep to 1-3 concise, targeted paragraphs.
4. **Conclusion :** Close by expressing appreciation for their time and consideration. Offer to provide more information.

Signature - End with a formal closing like “Sincerely” and sign your full name.

2.2.1.4 Resume Sample

Now let's look at examples of key resume and cover letter sections:

Profile Section Resume Sample:

Profile/Objective

A third-year B.Tech undergraduate with expertise in data structures, algorithms, and fullstack web development. Quick learner recognised for developing innovative solutions and collaborating effectively with teams. Seeking internship opportunities to expand technical skills and deliver impactful software projects.

Education Section Resume Sample:

Education

B.Tech in Computer Science

College of Engineering, Trivandrum

CGPA: 8.7/10

Expected graduation: May 2025

Relevant Coursework: Data Structures and Algorithms, Database Management Systems, Operating Systems, Computer Networks.

Experience Section Resume Sample:

Experience

Web Development Intern, June - Aug 2022

ABC Software Technologies, Kochi

- ◊ Developed front-end website features using ReactJS, optimising load times by 22%.
- ◊ Assisted back-end developers in building REST APIs and integrating user authentication.
- ◊ Led testing of new features across browsers/devices to identify bugs prior to release.
- ◊ Documented codes and API endpoints to improve developer collaboration.

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2.2.1.5 Cover Letter Sample

Dear Hiring Manager

I am writing to express my interest in the Software Developer role at XYZ Technologies Pvt. Ltd. I am a final year B.Tech Computer Science student at the College of Engineering, Trivandrum, with expertise in building full-stack web applications. As evidenced by my resume, I have hands-on experience developing and deploying programs using Java, Python, JavaScript, React, Node.js, and MongoDB.

Through my ~~past~~ internship at ABC Software Technologies, I have successfully translated user requirements into high-quality software solutions. I implemented new UI components in ReactJS that improved site performance by over 20%. I am adept at working in fast-paced environments and can quickly learn new technologies required for the role.

I am excited by XYZ Technologies' goal of developing cutting-edge enterprise platforms. I am confident that my strong technical skills, coupled with my ability to collaborate cross-functionally, will enable me to contribute to impactful projects. This role is an excellent match for my abilities, and I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my qualifications personally. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Your full name]

By following these tips and guidelines, the candidates/applicants can create powerful resumes and cover letters tailored to jobs or higher education programs of interest. The resources provided offer a starting point, but you should continuously refine your documents and obtain feedback from experts in your field. With a strong resume and cover letter, you can maximise your chances of landing exciting opportunities.

2.2.1.6 Professional Networking through LinkedIn

In today's digital recruitment environment, professional networking platforms play a significant role in career development. LinkedIn is one of the most widely used professional networking platforms that enables individuals to showcase their qualifications, connect with industry professionals, and explore employment opportunities. In the contemporary recruitment environment, a well-developed LinkedIn profile is considered nearly as important as a professional resume for individuals pursuing career opportunities.

A LinkedIn profile functions as an online professional portfolio that presents a candidate's academic background, work experience, skills, certifications, and professional interests. Unlike a traditional resume, which is usually shared only during job applications, a LinkedIn profile remains accessible to recruiters, employers, and

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professional networks at all times. Many organisations now use LinkedIn to search for potential candidates, making it an essential platform for professional visibility.

LinkedIn provides opportunities for individuals at early stages of their careers to build professional networks, follow companies, join industry groups, and stay updated with current trends in their fields of interest. The platform also allows users to showcase achievements such as internships, projects, research publications, and professional certifications. Recommendations from professors, supervisors, or colleagues can further strengthen the credibility of a profile.

When creating a LinkedIn profile, certain best practices help maintain professionalism and effectiveness:

- ◊ Use a professional profile photograph and a clear headline reflecting career interests.
- ◊ Write a concise summary describing academic background, skills, and career goals.
- ◊ List educational qualifications, internships, and work experiences in reverse chronological order.
- ◊ Highlight key skills and certifications relevant to the intended industry.
- ◊ Engage with professional content such as articles, discussions, and industry updates.

Maintaining an active LinkedIn presence contributes to the development of a professional identity and digital footprint. Professional networking with alumni, industry experts, and recruiters through LinkedIn can improve access to employment opportunities and provide valuable insights into industry practices. Thus, LinkedIn serves as a powerful complement to traditional job application documents such as resumes and cover letters.

2.2.2 Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

An Applicant Tracking System (ATS) is a specialized recruitment software designed to streamline and automate the hiring process for organizations. It serves as a centralized platform where employers can post job vacancies, collect applications, screen resumes, monitor candidate progress through various hiring stages, and facilitate communication with applicants. This technology has become indispensable for companies, particularly large enterprises, as it efficiently manages high volumes of applications. Leading examples of ATS platforms include Taleo, Workday, Greenhouse, iCIMS, Zoho Recruit, and BambooHR.

2.2.2.1 Why Employers use ATS

Employers adopt ATS primarily to enhance efficiency in hiring by automating tasks such as resume collection, keyword-based scanning, and candidate sorting. The system

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ensures consistency by applying standardized filters to shortlist applicants based on predefined job requirements. Additionally, ATS aids in compliance by maintaining detailed records for legal and reporting purposes. Another significant advantage is improved candidate management, as the system tracks each applicant's journey through the recruitment pipeline, from initial submission to final selection.

2.2.2.2 How ATS Works

The ATS workflow begins with job postings, where vacancies are published directly from the system to job boards and social media platforms. As applications are submitted, resumes and cover letters are stored and processed. The system employs resume parsing to extract and structure relevant data, focusing on keywords, skills, and professional experience. Candidates are then ranked or scored based on their alignment with the job description. Automated communication features, such as acknowledgment emails, interview scheduling, and rejection notices, further streamline the process.

2.2.2.3 Practical Implications for Job Seekers

Because the first stage of screening is often handled by software, the way a resume is formatted and worded becomes critical. ATS tools rely on keywords—specific terms used in the job posting—to identify suitable candidates. If a resume lacks these terms, it may not appear in the shortlist, regardless of the applicant's actual qualifications.

To improve the chances of passing this automated filter, resumes should use clear section headings such as "Work Experience" or "Education" rather than creative alternatives. Skills and experience are best described using the same wording found in the job description whenever possible. Overly complex formatting, graphics, or unusual fonts can confuse ATS software, so a simple, clean design is preferable. File formats also matter—while some systems can process PDFs, others work best with Word documents (.docx).

2.2.2.4 Advantages and Limitations of ATS

ATS offers several benefits, including time savings for recruiters, reduced administrative burdens, enhanced candidate experiences through timely updates, and improved collaboration among hiring teams. However, the system is not without limitations. It may inadvertently overlook qualified candidates if resumes lack keyword optimization, and poorly designed algorithms could introduce bias. Over-reliance on automation may also diminish human judgment during early screening phases, potentially affecting the quality of shortlisted candidates.

2.2.3 Interview

An interview is a formal interaction between an employer and a candidate, conducted to assess the candidate's knowledge, skills, attitude, and suitability for a specific job role or programme. The interview is one of the most critical stages in the job search process. The interview is an opportunity for the candidate to present his/her qualifications in a

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face-to-face setting and convince the employer that he/she is the right candidate for the role. How one perform in job interviews throughout the career can significantly impact the employment prospects, level of compensation, satisfaction, and progression. It is essential to develop strong interview-cracking skills if you want to land your dream job and fully capitalise on the opportunities along your professional journey. In today's highly competitive job market, employers look for any reason to disqualify candidates. Even well-qualified candidates may be rejected if they fail to communicate their strengths effectively. Knowing how to make a great impression and communicate your value during an interview gives you an invaluable edge. With preparation and practice, you can learn to effectively highlight your skills, experiences, passion, and cultural fit. Mastering interview cracking skills and putting your best foot forward will open doors to exciting new possibilities. Interviews can seem daunting, but being well-prepared can help you feel confident and perform at your best. Here is a comprehensive guide on how to effectively prepare for and succeed in a job interview.

2.2.3.1 Pre-Interview Preparations

1. **Research the Company :** Learn as much as you can about the company by visiting its website, reading recent news articles, and checking out its social media. Understanding their mission, values, history, products/services, and culture will help you determine if they are a good fit for you. Make a note of any questions you have about the company that you can ask the interviewer. This demonstrates your interest in the role.

2. **Practice Answering Common Questions :** Go through typical interview questions and practice responding to them. Focus on displaying your skills and presenting yourself effectively. Come up with illustrative examples from your past experiences that show relevant skills and accomplishments. Quantify your achievements when possible. Consider using the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to structure your responses in an engaging, logical way.

   Situation - Set the context by briefly describing the background. Provide details about the circumstances to frame the story. For Example: "When I was working as a sales representative at ABC Company..."

   Task - Explain the challenge, problem, goal, or objective you need to accomplish. What were you trying to achieve? For Example: "I was challenged to increase sales of a new product line by 20% in a short timeframe."

   Action - Elaborate on the specific steps you took to address the situation. Be precise about your role. For example: "I redesigned the sales pitch to highlight the key benefits better and tailored it to different customer segments. I also increased touchpoints through email campaigns."

   Result - Share the outcome or impact of your actions. Use quantitative facts and figures when possible. What changed for the better? For Example: "Within two quarters, my efforts drove a 32% increase in sales of the new product line, exceeding the goal."

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Using the STAR framework ensures your response tells a compelling story in a simple yet powerful way. The hiring manager gains key insights into your thought process, skills, and achievements.

3. **Review the Job Description :** Analyse the job description thoroughly. Make a list of the duties, knowledge, skills, and abilities it calls for. Think of examples from your past experiences that show how you meet the requirements. Highlight these selling points in your interview.

4. **Prepare Questions to Ask :** Ask about things like the top priorities for the position, the onboarding process, opportunities for advancement, or company culture if the interviewer gives you the chance to ask. Avoid questions about salary and benefits until an offer is on the table.

5. **Keep Documents :** Keep extra copies of your resume, cover letter, reference list, transcripts, portfolio, and other application materials to bring to the interview. Review your materials before the interview to remind yourself of your qualifications and key selling points.

6. **Know the Interview Location :** Confirm the exact address and office number for the interview. Calculate how long it will take to get there so you arrive 10-15 minutes early. Identify nearby parking if driving.

7. **Dress Professionally :** Dress appropriately for the role and company culture. It's usually best to wear on the formal side. Make sure your interview outfit is clean and ironed. Shine your shoes, fix any missing buttons, lint, etc. Avoid loud colours, revealing attire, or distracting accessories. Keep hair and makeup simple.

2.2.3.2 Day Before the Interview

1. **Stay Hydrated and Well Fed :** Drink plenty of water in the days leading up to the interview to stay hydrated. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, or sugary drinks before the interview, as they can make you jittery. Eat healthy and energising meals. Don't skip breakfast - opt for protein, whole grains, and fruit.

2. **Visualise Success :** Picture yourself nailing the interview and getting the offer. Envision handshakes and smiles. Use positive affirmations like "I am qualified for this role. I will ace this interview!" Visualisation can boost confidence, lower stress, and prime you for success.

2.2.3.3 Tips for Interview Day

1. **Allow Extra Time :** Allow plenty of extra time to account for traffic, transportation issues, parking, walking to the building, etc. Arrive 10-15 minutes early. You can review notes while you wait. Late arrivals create a poor first impression.

2. **Dress for Success :** Wear your prepared professional interview outfit. Check for wrinkles, stains, missing buttons, untied laces, lint, etc. Limit fragrances. Skip flashy jewellery. Neatly style your hair. Perfect hygiene is essential. Dress

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shoes should be polished. Carry breath mints and a compact mirror. You want to look your best. Make sure you have directions, contact information, parking details, and your ID. Don't forget your phone on silent!

3. **Make Good First Impressions :** Greet warmly. Use names when introduced. Make eye contact and smile. Give a firm handshake. Speak clearly and make small talk while you wait. Avoid complaining or gossiping. Be polite to everyone you encounter. Project confidence through your body language. Sit up straight. Avoid fidgeting or foot tapping.

4. **Listen Carefully :** Focus closely on each question you are asked. Take a moment to think before you respond. Ask for clarification if needed. Look at the interviewers while they speak to show you are carefully listening. Limit distractions. Don't interrupt or talk over them. Thoughtful listening builds rapport.

5. **Answer Questions Confidently :** Speak slowly, clearly, and loud enough to be heard. Sound energetic and enthusiastic, not monotone. Provide specific examples that paint a picture and make your skills come alive. Quantify achievements. Keep responses concise yet detailed. Don't ramble. Pause periodically to allow for follow-up questions. It's fine to take a moment to gather your thoughts. Silence is better than rushing a poor answer.

6. **Ask Good Questions :** Have intelligent, engaging questions ready that demonstrate your interest and fit. Prioritise those you really want answered. Ask about things like the top priorities for the position, the onboarding process, opportunities for advancement, or company culture if the interviewer gives you the opportunity to ask. Avoid questions about salary and benefits until an offer is on the table.

7. **Express Interest and Confidence :** Verbally indicate if you are interested in the position. Share why you would be excited about the opportunity. Speak confidently about your qualifications throughout your responses. Cite relevant accomplishments. Convey a positive attitude and energy. Use body language like smiling and nodding to show engagement. Ask about the next steps in the hiring process timeline. Share that you are eager to join the team.

8. **Mind Your Manners :** Avoid sensitive topics like politics, religion, money, or personal drama. Watch your language. Handle any technical issues with grace and humour, not irritation. Remain professional if hard questions arise. Portray yourself as someone pleasant to work with. This can be as important as skills. Make sure to thank everyone for their time.

2.2.3.4 After the Interview

1. **Thank you Note :** A thank-you note is a brief follow-up communication sent after an interview to express appreciation for the interviewer's time and consideration. In modern recruitment practices, thank-you notes are commonly sent via email within 24 hours to each person who interviewed you. In this mail, you can also include any helpful information you forgot to mention that reinforces why you're an excellent candidate.

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2. **Follow Up Appropriately :** If you don't hear back after the specified timeline, follow up politely via email or phone. Be professional. Don't harass the company with endless contacts if they go silent after interviews. Take the hint gracefully. If you receive and accept an offer, notify other companies you have been interviewing with. Decline any other offers. Keep networking even after taking a position in case it falls through for any reason.

3. **Continuously Improve :** Take what you learned to strengthen your interview skills even more. Update your responses and examples. Practice answering questions you fumbled. Role-play with a friend. Refine your professional image. The more interviews you do, the more comfortable and effective you'll become. Each one makes you more marketable.

Preparation is crucial to interview success. Research the company, practice responses, review your materials, visit the location, dress professionally, and visualise yourself succeeding. Listen closely, express confidence, and watch your manners. Follow up promptly with thank you notes. Continuously refine your interview skills over time. With practice, you can master the art of effective interviewing. Remember to relax, be yourself, and discuss your qualifications. If you present your background and abilities positively and make meaningful connections, you are sure to impress. Stay focused on showcasing the unique value you can bring to the company. With the right mindset and preparation, you have got this! You are ready to put your best foot forward and excel in your upcoming interviews.

Types of Interviews

Organisations adopt different types of interviews depending on the nature of the job, level of responsibility, and assessment requirements. Understanding these interview types helps candidates to prepare for them effectively.

HR Interview

The HR interview focuses on assessing the candidate's personality, attitude, communication skills, career goals, and cultural fit with the organisation. Questions generally aim to measure the strengths, weaknesses, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, and long-term aspirations.

Technical Interview

A technical interview evaluates the candidate's subject knowledge, technical competence, and problem-solving ability related to the job role. It is common for the jobs in the fields such as engineering, IT, finance, analytics, and research.

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Panel Interview

In a panel interview, the candidate is interviewed by a group of interviewers representing different departments or functions. This allows the organisation to assess the candidate from multiple perspectives in a single session.

Personal (One-to-One) Interview

This is a direct interview between the candidate and a single interviewer. It enables in-depth interaction and is often used in final selection stages or for senior positions.

Virtual / Online Interview

Conducted through digital platforms such as video conferencing tools, virtual interviews assess both professional competence and digital communication skills. They have become increasingly common in remote and hybrid work environments.

Group Interview

In a group interview, multiple candidates are assessed simultaneously. Here, employers observe the communication, leadership, teamwork, and interpersonal skills of candidates through discussions, tasks, or role plays.

Stress Interview

A stress interview places the candidate in challenging or uncomfortable situations to evaluate emotional stability, patience, and decision-making under pressure. This type is usually used for high-pressure roles.

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2.2.4 Group Discussions (GD)

A Group Discussion (GD) is a structured interaction in which a group of candidates discuss a given topic, issue, or situation within a specified time. It is commonly used by recruiters and academic institutions to assess a candidate's communication skills, analytical ability, critical thinking, leadership qualities, and ability to work in a team.

A group discussion involves multiple participants conversing together on a topic, issue or situation. It tests both communication and analytical abilities.

Following are some of the key features of Group Discussion.

1. **Structure:** A group discussion typically involves 6 to 12 participants and is conducted for 15 to 30 minutes. The discussion is usually observed by one or more evaluators.

2. **Set-Up:** Participants may be given a topic/situation and some preparation time before the discussion starts.

3. **Flow of Discussion:** The tone is conversational. Participants are expected to express their views and opinions backed by logic. There should be a meaningful exchange of ideas between participants.

4. **Assessment:** Participants are evaluated on multiple dimensions, including communication skill, content quality, analytical thinking, problem-solving, cooperation, leadership, listening skills, and overall group behaviour.

2.2.4.1 Preparing for Group Discussions

Thorough preparation is key to being confident during group discussions:

1. Build Knowledge: Keep up to date with current affairs, issues in your field, and broad themes like economics, society, ethics, technology, etc.

2. Organise your thoughts: For common topics, outline 2-3 key ideas you can discuss and relevant examples or data points to cite.

3. Practice aloud: Choose a topic and vocalise your ideas and speech out loud. Get feedback on content and delivery.

4. Brush up on soft skills: Review communication techniques, teamwork, time management, persuasive speech, and active listening.

5. Know evaluation criteria: Understand exactly how evaluators assess group discussion performance.

6. Visualise success: Envision yourself engaging thoughtfully and maintaining a positive attitude, which instills confidence.

2.2.4.2 Participating Group Discussion

When the actual group discussion begins, keep these tips in mind:

1. **Initiating the Discussion :** When beginning a group discussion, first listen carefully to the exact topic or situation presented and any instructions from the coordinators/evaluators. If anything is unclear, politely ask for clarification. Review any notes you may have prepared beforehand. If no one else initiates the discussion after 10-15 seconds, go ahead and get things started. Avoid letting the group sit in long, awkward silence. You can initiate the discussion by saying something like "I would like to start the discussion by highlighting..." or "In my opinion, some key points include..." Starting things off prevents uncomfortable pauses and gets the ball rolling. By listening to the prompt, seeking clarification if needed, consulting your notes, and taking the lead if necessary, you can successfully kick off the dialogue.

2. **Communicating Ideas :** When presenting your ideas in a discussion, speak audibly and clearly, but avoid shouting. Maintain eye contact with your audience and use natural hand gestures as you speak. Provide brief context

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before making a point, for instance, “Linking with the point on conservation, another perspective is...” Express your ideas concisely and stay on topic, avoiding irrelevant off-topic elaborations. Support your statements with data, facts, examples or logic and cite sources when appropriate. Use persuasive language like “The data indicates...” rather than unconvincing phrases like “I think...” Vary your tone, pace and volume for emphasis or interest, but don’t be overly theatrical. Repeat key points to drive them home, for example, “To reiterate the main issue here...” By speaking clearly, making eye contact, gesturing naturally, contextualising points, staying concise, citing evidence, using persuasive language, varying vocal dynamics, and repeating main ideas, you can communicate your perspective effectively.

3. **Engaging in Debate :** When participating in a discussion, it’s important to listen to others’ views and perspectives respectfully. If you need clarification on something that was said, politely ask for more details. Suppose someone states questionable facts, assumptions, or logic. In that case, you can politely challenge those by saying something like “While that view has merit, recent research indicates...” Look for opportunities to build on points raised by others to strengthen the overall discussion, such as “Adding to Amir’s example of crowdsourcing funds...” It’s also valuable to offer counterarguments thoughtfully, for instance, “I see where you are coming from, but an alternative lens is...” Remain open-minded throughout the discussion, and don’t be afraid to change your stance if someone presents an argument that convinces you. By listening, seeking understanding, challenging ideas, building on others’ points, and considering different perspectives, you can contribute to a constructive and meaningful dialogue.

4. **Teamwork and Conduct :** When participating in a group discussion, it’s important not to dominate the conversation. Make sure to give others a chance to share their perspectives by providing openings for them to contribute. If someone interrupts you, politely interject by saying something like, “Excuse me, I have not yet completed my point”. The discussion goes off track or an argument arise, gently guide things back to the main topic.

   Throughout the discussion, use open and encouraging body language, such as nodding to signal agreement with points being made. When referencing something a participant said previously, give them credit, for example: “As Neha pointed out earlier, the data shows...” By allowing others to share their views, diffusing conflicts, and acknowledging contributors, you can keep the discussion productive.

5. **Concluding the Discussion** : As a discussion nears its end, summarise some of the key themes and highlights that were raised throughout to synthesise the main ideas. Thank all the participants for their insights and perspectives. Close by making a final statement or posing an insightful question that encourages further thought on the issues even after the discussion concludes. This impactful ending allows the conversation to end on a strong note. Once the discussion organisers signal that time is nearly up, start wrapping things up. Avoid introducing entirely new topics at the end that can’t be properly discussed, given the remaining time.

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By recapping important points, thanking everyone, finishing with a thoughtful final comment, and heeding time constraints, you can provide effective closure to the group dialogue.

6. **After the Group Discussion :** After participating in a group discussion, take time to evaluate your performance objectively. Identify areas where you excelled as well as aspects that need improvement. Seek feedback from any observers who may have additional insights. Incorporate both your observations and others' input to continue honing your skills. Discussion abilities develop with deliberate practice over time. Refine approaches that worked well while modifying those that were less effective. Maintaining helpful mindsets can also boost discussion abilities. Remain open to learning and adopting new perspectives. Stay conscious of your weaknesses and consciously work to address them. Discussion skills require continual refinement and development. With regular practice, self-assessment, feedback from others, and a growth mindset, you can steadily enhance your discussion capabilities over time.

7. **Cultivating Certain Mindsets :** Approach group discussions as an opportunity for an intelligent debate, not a confrontation. Remember, the goal is to demonstrate your abilities, not to "win" against others. Maintain flexibility and open-mindedness rather than rigidity in your views. Having unique perspectives adds value, but avoid being a contrarian just for the sake of it. Build confidence through preparation and command of the material, not bravado. Stay curious - asking thoughtful questions is highly valued. Balance assertiveness in voicing your perspectives with respectfulness and cooperation. With mindsets of engaging in debate, showcasing abilities, flexibility, adding value, preparation, curiosity, and respectful assertiveness, you can have productive discussions.

8. **Some Frequent Errors That Hurt Performance :** Group discussions can easily go not in your favour if certain mistakes are made. Failing to listen closely to the exact topic, instructions, and other participants' comments is a crucial error. Not preparing enough relevant points to contribute and rambling vaguely instead also derails discussion. Speaking too softly, quickly or inaudibly makes it hard to understand. Letting nerves take over leads to getting overwhelmed or freezing up. Disrespecting others' perspectives and repeatedly interrupting creates friction. Aggressively dominating the conversation and not allowing others to speak prevents dialogue. Getting frequently side-tracked from the main topic is unproductive. Using slang or inappropriate language or lacking proper discussion etiquette undermines credibility. Making illogical arguments not backed up by facts or citing unreliable sources diminishes persuasiveness. Finally, failing to properly engage with rebuttals or acknowledge good counterpoints misses opportunities for meaningful exchange. Avoiding these common missteps is key to participating effectively.

9. **Field-Specific Preparation :** Certain fields focus on specific areas in group discussions; therefore, candidates should tailor their preparation accordingly.

   ◊ Management: Demonstrate leadership, teamwork, ethics, competitive thinking, decision making and communication skills. Discuss case studies in depth.

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- ◊ Engineering/IT: Showcase technical knowledge. Analyse challenges logically and systematically. Offer innovative solutions.
- ◊ Humanities: Exhibit strong communication abilities: articulate views clearly, listen attentively and empathise. Cite authors, theories and texts.
- ◊ Medicine: Discuss ethical dilemmas in healthcare. Propose solutions that balance practical constraints. Demonstrate compassion and dedication to service.
- ◊ Arts/Media: Present creative approaches. Evaluate artistic works/trends critically. Reference styles, influences and techniques. Brainstorm engaging content ideas.
- ◊ Finance: Analyse business scenarios using financial models. Weigh pros/cons of fiscal decisions. Demonstrate quantitative skills and strategic thinking. Discuss markets/economy.
- ◊ Analytics: Leverage data and metrics in arguments. Showcase analytical rigor, structured problem solving and attention to detail. Cite statistical findings.

2.2.5 Language Etiquette for Group Discussions

Use professional and formal language. Avoid slang, colloquialisms, or inappropriate terminology. Articulate your perspective clearly and succinctly. Summarise periodically to ensure understanding.

- ◊ Define any technical jargon, acronyms, or shorthand when using them for the first time.
- ◊ Adapt your tone and complexity based on the knowledge level in the room without talking down to others.
- ◊ Remain calm and collected. Don't use aggressive, dismissive or condescending phrasing, even when disputing a point. Allow others space to share their views. Don't interrupt or talk over participants.
- ◊ Thank those who summarise useful points or provide good insights. Recognise solid contributions from others.
- ◊ Mastering discussion etiquette demonstrates respect for the group, aids comprehension, and enables productive dialogue where all feel valued.

Proper language and comportment leave a positive impression and facilitate an open exchange of perspectives.

2.2.6 Resources for Strengthening Performance

A variety of resources can help build group discussion abilities over time. Read books on communication, leadership, critical thinking and interpersonal skills to gain knowledge. Stay up to date by reading reputed newspapers, journals and publications.

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Watch videos of sample group discussions and analyses to observe techniques. Take courses on public speaking, debate or facilitation to get training. Do practice discussions with peers and get their feedback. Observe actual group discussions during recruiting processes to learn from others. Leveraging these diverse resources allows you to continuously expand your knowledge, get objective input, and learn by example. Making use of available books, publications, videos, courses, peer feedback, and real-world observation enables continual improvement of your group discussion skills.

In conclusion, preparation, mindsets, language and etiquette are critical for group discussion success. Listen actively, communicate ideas clearly, work cooperatively and demonstrate analytical thinking. Avoid dominating conversations. Continued practice strengthens skills over time. With the right techniques, group discussions can become occasions to have thoughtful intellectual exchanges and highlight your abilities. By developing expertise on commonly debated topics, honing soft skills, correcting common errors, and crafting thoughtful responses, you will be equipped to participate effectively in any group discussion. Approach them as opportunities to engage in substantive conversations that bring out your best. With a mix of rigour, respect and relationships, you can excel in group discussions.

Case: The ATS-Rejected Resume

Rahul, a computer science graduate with strong technical skills, applied to 50+ jobs but received no interview calls. After seeking career counseling, he discovered his resume was being automatically rejected by Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS). His resume contained creative graphics, two-column layouts, and terms like "coding ninja" instead of standard job titles like "Java Developer."

His career counselor helped him optimize the resume by: 1) Using a simple single-column format, 2) Including keywords from job descriptions (e.g., "Python," "SQL," "Agile"), and 3) Replacing informal phrases with professional terminology. Within two weeks of submitting the revised resume, Rahul received interview invitations from three tech companies.

This experience taught Rahul that modern job searches require both technical qualifications and an understanding of how recruitment technology works. He later practiced STAR-method responses for behavioral interviews and secured a position at a mid-sized IT firm.

Questions:

1. How did Rahul's original resume design hinder his job search, and why do ATS systems favour simpler formats?
2. What are the risks of using informal language (e.g., "coding ninja") in professional documents?
3. Beyond ATS optimization, what other preparation steps helped Rahul succeed in interviews?

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Summarised Overview

Placement readiness involves a blend of practical skills and strategic preparation to succeed in recruitment processes. Crafting strong resumes and cover letters is the first step, as these documents act as gateways to opportunities by effectively presenting qualifications and achievements. With the widespread use of Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), optimising documents with the right keywords, structure, and formatting has become essential to move past automated filters. Success in interviews depends not only on subject knowledge but also on communication, confidence, and adaptability, with frameworks such as the STAR method offering structured responses. Group discussions further test analytical ability, teamwork, and leadership, requiring clarity of thought and respectful engagement. Throughout these stages, professionalism in language, etiquette, and conduct strengthens personal branding and leaves lasting impressions. Together, these elements shape the foundation for standing out in a competitive job market.

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain the purpose of a profile/objective section in a resume.
2. List three resume sections that should appear in reverse chronological order and explain why.
3. Describe the STAR method and its role in answering behavioural interview questions.
4. Identify three common criteria evaluators look for during a group discussion.
5. Explain two ways Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) influence resume formatting and keyword choice.

Assignment Questions

1. Prepare a professional resume for a job role of your choice.

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2. Write a cover letter applying for a job-position in your preferred industry.
3. Create a checklist of items to review before attending a job interview
4. Design a simple flow diagram showing how an ATS processes a job application from submission to final selection.
5. Prepare a short opening statement you could use to initiate a group discussion on a current affairs topic.



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MODEL QUESTION PAPER SETS

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QP CODE: …… Reg. No: ……....

Name: ……

FIRST SEMESTER

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)EXAMINATION

ABILITY ENHANCEMENT COURSE

M26BS01AC – **BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

MODEL QUESTION PAPER SET-1

Time: 3 Hours **Max Marks: 70**

SECTION A

*Answer any **five** questions.* Each question carries ***two*** marks. **(5 × 2 = 10 Marks)**

1. What is communication?
2. List any 2 importance of communication
3. What is feedback?
4. What is verbal communication?
5. What is a notice?
6. What is ATS?
7. What is an interview?
8. What do you mean by group discussion?

SECTION B

*Answer any **six** questions.* Each question carries ***five*** marks. **(6 × 5= 30 Marks)**

9. Explain the features of a good advertisement briefly.
10. List the relevance of a resume and a covering letter in business communication.
11. Differentiate between a panel interview and a group interview.
12. Prepare a circular inviting employees to a corporate training programme, maintaining an appropriate tone and format
13. Explain the major differences between a seminar and a webinar with examples.

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14. Explain the differences between formal and informal e-mail.
15. What are the key differences between a memo, a circular, and a notice in terms of purpose and audience?
16. Highlight the major difference between verbal and non-verbal communication.
17. Explain the various components of an e-mail
18. Explain the purpose of presentations

SECTION C

*Answer any **two** questions.* Each question carries ***fifteen*** marks. **(2 × 15 = 30 Marks)**

19. Explain the concept of an Applicant Tracking System (ATS). Discuss its functions, advantages, limitations, and implications for job seekers in the modern recruitment process**.**
20. What do you mean by communication barriers, and suggest ways to overcome barriers?
21. Explain the term communication and elaborate on the steps involved in the communication process. Illustrate your answer with an example
22. Discuss the stages of interview preparation. Explain the key steps a candidate should take before, during, and after an interview to improve the chances of success.

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Name: ……

FIRST SEMESTER

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)EXAMINATION

ABILITY ENHANCEMENT COURSE

M26BS01AC – **BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

MODEL QUESTION PAPER SET-2

Time: 3 Hours **Max Marks: 70**

SECTION A

*Answer any **five** questions.* Each question carries ***two*** marks. **(5 × 2 = 10 Marks)**

1. What is meant by encoding in the communication process?
2. What is intercultural communication?
3. What is inclusive language?
4. What is a sales letter?
5. What is a circular?
6. What is a goodwill message?
7. What is meant by a cover letter?
8. What is meant by a personal interview?

SECTION B

*Answer any **six** questions.* Each question carries ***five*** marks. **(6 × 5= 30 Marks)**

9. Explain the major characteristics of communication and discuss their relevance in organisational contexts.
10. Discuss the importance of audience analysis in designing effective business messages.
11. Explain the guidelines for writing effective professional emails in organisations.
12. Compare seminars and webinars in terms of communication effectiveness and organisational benefits.

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13. Explain the purpose and structure of a circular in organisational communication.
14. Draft a memo informing employees about a change in office policy regarding hybrid work arrangements.
15. Discuss the key components of an effective resume for managerial positions.
16. Explain the role of group discussions in evaluating candidates during recruitment processes.
17. Discuss the importance of body language in delivering effective presentations.
18. Explain the structure and importance of an agenda in professional meetings.

SECTION C

*Answer any **two** questions.* Each question carries ***fifteen*** marks. **(2 × 15 = 30 Marks)**

19. Explain the importance of effective communication in organisations. Discuss how effective communication contributes to coordination, decision-making, and organisational performance.
20. Discuss the role of presentation skills in professional environments. Explain how slide preparation, body language, and audience engagement contribute to effective presentations.
21. Examine the different forms of internal business correspondence such as memos, notices, circulars, and agendas. Discuss their purposes and organisational relevance.
22. Explain the purpose and importance of resumes, cover letters, group discussions, and interviews in the placement process.

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സർവ്വകലാശാലാഗീതം

വിദ്യയാൽ സ്വതന്ത്രരാകണം
വിശ്വപൗരരായി മാറണം
ഗ്രഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം
ഗുരുപ്രകാശമേ നയിക്കണേ

കൂരിരുട്ടിൽ നിന്നു ഞങ്ങളെ
സൂര്യവീഥിയിൽ തെളിക്കണം
സ്നേഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം
നീതിവൈജയന്തി പാറണം

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ജാതിഭേദമാകെ മാറണം
ബോധരശ്മിയിൽ തിളങ്ങുവാൻ
ജ്ഞാനകേന്ദ്രമേ ജ്വലിക്കണേ

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DON'T LET IT
BE TOO LATE

SAY NO TO DRUGS

LOVE YOURSELF AND ALWAYS BE HEALTHY



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