



SREENARAYANAGURU
OPEN UNIVERSITY

B21EG01SE

ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

Skill Enhancement Course for BA English Programme

Self Learning Material

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

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

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

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.

English for Business and
Professional Communication
Course Code: B21EG01SE
Semester - III

Skill Enhancement Course
BA English Language and Literature
Self Learning Material



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B21EG01SE
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and Professional
Communication
Semester III



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Dear

I greet all of you with deep delight and great excitement. I welcome you to the Sreenarayanaguru Open University.

Sreenarayanaguru Open University was established in September 2020 as a state initiative for fostering higher education in open and distance mode. We shaped our dreams through a pathway defined by a dictum 'access and quality define equity'. It provides all reasons to us for the celebration of quality in the process of education. I am overwhelmed to let you know that we have resolved not to become ourselves a reason or cause a reason for the dissemination of inferior education. It sets the pace as well as the destination. The name of the University centres around the aura of Sreenarayanaguru, the great renaissance thinker of modern India. His name is a reminder for us to ensure quality in the delivery of all academic endeavours.

Sreenarayanaguru Open University rests on the practical framework of the popularly known "blended format". Learner on distance mode obviously has limitations in getting exposed to the full potential of classroom learning experience. Our pedagogical basket has three entities viz Self Learning Material, Classroom Counselling and Virtual modes. This combination is expected to provide high voltage in learning as well as teaching experiences. Care has been taken to ensure quality endeavours across all the entities.

The university is committed to provide you stimulating learning experience. The UG programmes are benchmarked with similar programmes of other state universities in Kerala. The curriculum follows the UGC guidelines of having three disciplines in a bundle with an impressive spread of other academic components. Skill Enhancement Courses occupy the curriculum of the UG programme with a view to expose the learner to discipline specific skills. This is an important step of the university to provide new experiences of vibrant content of the discipline. The details have been designed at par with similar courses of other premier institutions imparting skill training. We assure you that the university student support services will closely stay with you for the redressal of your grievances during your studentship.

Feel free to write to us about anything that you feel relevant regarding the academic programme.

Wish you the best.



Regards,
Dr. P.M. Mubarak Pasha

01.10.2023

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BLOCK - 01

Basics of Communication and Technology- Based Communication

Unit 1

Introduction to Communication

Learning Outcomes

The content, assignments, and assessments for this unit are aligned to the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ familiarise with communication and its process
- ▶ describe verbal and non-verbal communication
- ▶ identify communication channels
- ▶ analyse barriers to communication

Prerequisites

A charming village, nestled in a serene valley, had a bustling marketplace, where folks would gather in the morning to trade their wares. Fresh produce, handcrafted tools, delicious baked treats - you could find it all! But the villagers noticed something strange. Though they smiled and nodded in greeting, they struggled to communicate their needs. "I wish to buy cabbage!" one would shout, holding out an apple. "Alas, I desire a cake!" another replied, handing them a shovel. Absolute chaos it was! Until one bright villager had an idea. Why not create symbols - pictures, sounds, gestures - representing each item? They could point to a drawing of cabbage or imitate eating to request food. And it worked like a charm!

Soon, the villagers happily traded away, using this common set of symbols. Understanding grew, and with it, the community did too. All it took was finding a way to share the ideas in their minds with others. So, you see, communication is sending thoughts via symbols we agree on. It builds bridges between people. With it, we summon empathy, convey meaning, and avoid chaos. It is the gift that allows us to share our inner worlds.

Keywords

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

Discussion

1.1.1 Communication

The ability to communicate is one of the most magical things about being human. It is a fact that we can understand each other through language and gestures, which is quite amazing! Let me tell you a story about two friends, John and Emma. One day, they decided to play a game together. Emma thought of a word in her mind and gave John clues to help him guess the word. "It is something round and juicy that grows on trees," said Emma. John scratched his head, looking confused. Emma gave another clue: "It is red and sweet, and we eat it for dessert." A smile spread across John's face as he excitedly shouted, "Apple!" Emma smiled and nodded - John guessed correctly! Without saying the exact word aloud, Emma could communicate her thoughts to John through verbal clues. And John was able to understand the meaning behind Emma's words. This simple interaction between friends highlights the essence of communication. We create shared understanding through our ability to convey information, ideas and emotions. We build connections, share knowledge, express creativity, and accomplish much more through communication.

Thus, communication is the exchange of information between two or more people. It involves one person transmitting an idea or message to another person or group. The aim

of communication is shared understanding between the sender and receiver. Both parties must use the same system of symbols, words, signs or behaviours to understand each other. Misinterpretation can occur if the receiver decodes the message differently than intended.

1.1.2 Process of Communication

Jack loves to play football. One day during the holiday, he scored an amazing goal past the goalkeeper. He was so thrilled that he wanted to share this with his friend Lucy. First, Jack had to think of the message - "I scored an incredible goal in football today!" This is the encoding step where he formats the message to be sent. Excitedly, Jack runs over to Lucy and calls out, "Lucy! I have awesome news!" It gets her attention as the receiver. Next, Jack uses gestures like pretending to kick and arms raised in celebration to convey his message. Lucy observes these movements and noises as Jack's encoded message. She decodes the meaning behind Jack's gestures and sounds, realising he has been sharing some brilliant news. Finally, Lucy understands Jack's message that he scored a brilliant goal in football. "That's amazing, Jack. Well done!" she says, giving him a highfive. This is the feedback Lucy provides, completing the communication cycle. Jack smiles happily as his message is successfully conveyed from encoding to decoding to understanding! With excitement and gestures, he can share the thrilling news about his football achievement with his friend.

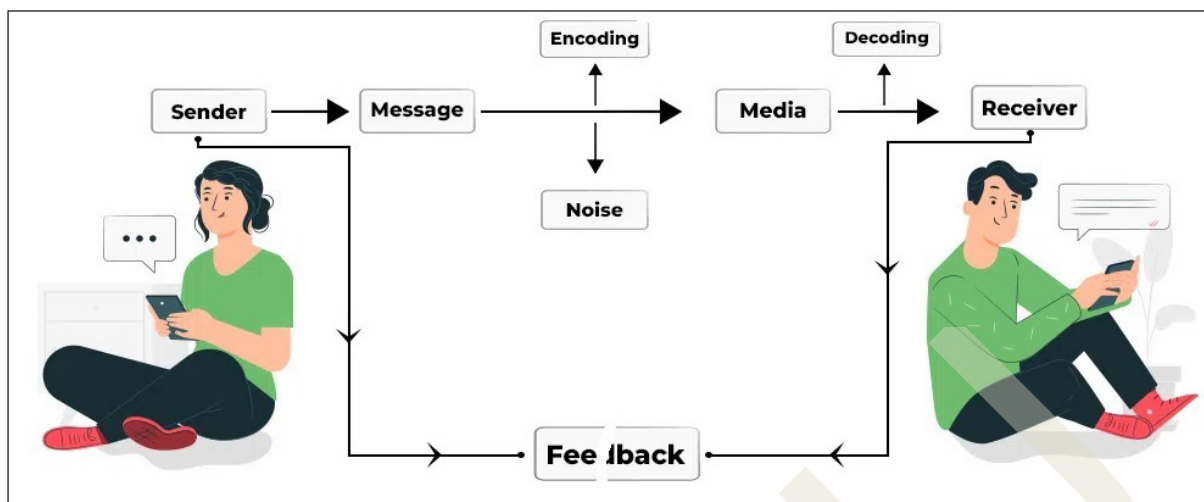


Fig. 1.1.1 Communication Process

Here is a short description of 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 kind of interference or barriers that affect the transmission or decoding of the message. It distorts communication between the sender and receiver.

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

1.1.3 Verbal and Non-verbal Communication

Veer and Rahul are brothers playing in the park. "Watch how high I can push you on the swing!" said Veer. He was using verbal communication to convey his message through spoken words. Rahul gave a big smile and ran excitedly to the swing set. His facial expression and eager body language displayed non-verbal communication that showed he was thrilled to play on the swings with his brother. As Rahul swung higher and higher, he kicked his legs in delight and yelled, "This is so much fun!" His sounds, motions and energetic tone were powerful non-verbal communication forms expressing his happiness. After some time, Rahul began to look nervous and anxious. He bit his lip and tightened his grip on the swing chains, communicating non-verbally that he was scared of swinging too high. Noticing this, Veer slowly brought the swing to a stop. "I think that's enough swinging for now," he said calmly and reassuringly. Veer used verbal communication to comfort his brother. Rahul gave Veer a highfive and a big grin, conveying non-verbally that he felt better.

Verbal and non-verbal communication are the main methods by which people exchange information and messages. Verbal communication refers to the exchange of information or ideas through spoken words. It includes communication that uses speech and language to express a message. Examples of verbal communication include speaking face-to-face, phone conversations, lectures, presentations, and written communication like emails, texts, books and reports. Non-verbal communication involves transmitting information without the use of words. It relies on non-spoken cues like facial expressions, gestures, body language, posture, tone of voice, touch and visuals. It can include smiling, crying, yawning, grimacing, laughing, etc. Other examples include making hand motions, nodding or shaking the head, raising eyebrows, rolling the eyes, and shrugging shoulders. Both types of communication work together to effectively transmit messages, express thoughts and feelings, build relationships and interact with others. Using verbal and non-verbal communication strategically can facilitate understanding between people.

Table 1.1.1 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 mediums, such as text, email, or video conferencing.	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.

Can be easily edited or revised before it is delivered.	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.	Can involve reciprocal non-verbal responses and cues between communicators.
Is typically learned through formal education, training, or practice.	Is learned through observation, experience, and cultural exposure.

1.1.4 Communication channels

Aravind and Zara are friends. One day, Aravind finds out he got selected for the cricket team tryouts and wants to tell Zara immediately. Aravind can use different communication channels to send his message to Zara. Aravind could call Zara on the phone. This verbal communication channel uses spoken words, allowing Aravind to hear Zara's voice. But Zara might not be able to talk over the phone if she is somewhere noisy! Instead, Aravind decides to send Zara a text message. This written channel gets the news to Zara quickly without needing her to answer the phone. But Zara won't feel as excited over text as hearing Aravind's tone of voice. Knowing how thrilled Zara will be for him, Aravind really wants to see her reaction. He uses a video call and sees Zara's huge smile and excitement when he shares the news! This visual channel lets Zara congratulate Aravind face-to-face. Finally, when they see each other, Aravind tells Zara in person. Sharing the message verbally and seeing Zara's celebratory gestures helps Aravind know she got the news he was so excited to deliver! Aravind learned that selecting the best communication channel greatly affects how messages are received and understood!

A communication channel refers to the medium or pathway through which a message is transmitted from the sender to the receiver during communication. They are how information and messages get conveyed between a sender and receiver. Communication channels facilitate the transmission of communication between multiple parties. Channels can use different senses for communication - auditory (hearing), visual (sight), tactile (touch), olfactory (smell), etc. Communication channels include face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, video conferencing, emails, television broadcasts, social media platforms, written letters, reports, etc.

Channels may be verbal (use of words/language) or non-verbal (body language, gestures, etc.). Effective communication requires selecting an appropriate channel for transmitting the message to the intended audience. Channels influence communication by filtering, clarifying or distorting the message during transmission. They can have different capacities for carrying information based on attributes like speed, reach and accessibility. Multiple channels are often used together in modern communication rather than relying on just one medium or mode.

1.1.5 Audience Analysis

The great Jawaharlal Nehru is about to give an iconic speech celebrating India's independence in 1947. Looking out at the cheering crowds gathered before him, Nehru feels a rush of excited energy. He knows this is a historic moment for his people. As people wave flags and chant slogans for freedom, Nehru observes their joyful faces. But he also detects the shadows of sacrifice and loss from India's long struggle for independence. His speech must honour those struggles. Nehru watches closely as the diverse gathering settles in. He spots farmers, labourers, students and professionals. His message must resonate across

social classes. He also sees adherents of various religions - Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. Unity must be emphasised. Channelling the crowd's infectious enthusiasm, Nehru begins drafting his speech. He includes patriotic poetry and Sanskrit verses to engage this learned audience. He evokes Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence to inspire their ideals. And he lays out his vision for a bright future - a democratic, pluralistic India. As midnight strikes, Nehru feels the crowd hushed in anticipation. Smiling, he realises his careful audience analysis will ensure words that comfort, inspire, and touch the soul of the newly independent India. This is a classic illustration on how a famous orator might energetically study his audience before a major speech.



Fig. 1.1.2 Nehru's speech celebrating India's independence on August 15, 1947

Audience analysis refers to evaluating the intended audience for a communication message to determine the best way to craft and

deliver information to that particular group. It involves efforts to understand an audience, including demographic characteristics, such

as age, gender, ethnicity, education level, profession, etc.; knowledge level, such as their degree of familiarity with the topic being communicated; attitudes and beliefs, such as their current feelings, opinions and cultural values related to the subject; needs and interests like what information they find useful and relevant; and communication preferences like how they like to receive communications.

Performing audience analysis enables a sender to tailor his communication approach and messages to be most effective for the receivers. It helps answer key questions like:

- What key points need explanation versus can be assumed as familiar?
- 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.

1.1.6 Intercultural Communication

Pico Iyer is a British-born, renowned cross-cultural writer who has lived in California for over 30 years and also spent much time in Japan. In his writings and speeches, Iyer shares how he initially struggled to adjust to communication norms in Japan. He real-

ised that his blunt, opinionated style typical of Western debates did not translate well in Japanese business meetings. Rather than directly stating disagreements, his Japanese colleagues relied on silence, understatement and reading between the lines. Over time, Iyer learned the value of letting go of his perspectives to truly listen and understand different viewpoints. He embraced Japanese cultural practices like circular discussion, long pauses, and becoming the “silent listener”.

Gradually, Iyer was able to adapt their communication approach, focusing more on implicit cues and restraint in expression. Iyer’s intercultural flexibility has allowed him to build strong relationships and trust across cultures. His success demonstrates that the willingness to adapt, learn across barriers, and bridge different communication styles can lead to meaningful global connections. He is now a renowned intercultural ambassador, skilfully navigating divides through respectful dialogue. Iyer’s real-world experience highlights the importance of intercultural communication, which also requires patience, compromise and an openness to expanding one’s assumptions. He shows how we can achieve greater cooperation and understanding by embracing diverse perspectives.



Fig. 1.1.3 Siddharth Pico Raghavan Iyer (Pico Iyer)

Intercultural communication refers to exchanging ideas, information, and meaning

between people from different cultural backgrounds. It involves bringing together people of diverse upbringings, languages, values, customs, attitudes and behaviours. The goal is to communicate effectively and appropriately across these differences. It requires developing an understanding of various cultures. Each culture has its distinct patterns of verbal and nonverbal communication. For instance, cultural norms around self-expression, directness, confrontation, and intimacy vary widely. Even space, time, and silence take on different meanings. Being aware of these variations can help prevent miscommunications.

Beyond just words, intercultural communication considers different modes of information sharing. Some cultures rely heavily on non-verbal cues like facial expressions, gestures and tone, while others focus more on the literal meanings of words. Context is also important. Cultures that get meaning from situation clues are high-context. Cultures that favour direct communication are low-context. Building relationships is critical for successful communication between cultures. Taking time to build rapport and trust can lay the foundation for effective information exchange. Flexibility and openness to different views is also key. Adapting one's communication style to match cultural norms shows respect. With globalisation steadily connecting people across cultures, skilful communication between cultures is essential. Healthy dialogue and cooperation can thrive across diverse societies by bridging differences in mindset and ways of expression.

1.1.7 Inclusive Language

Let us learn inclusive language from the example below:

Exclusive language: “The chairman told all the cleaning ladies to tidy up the room before the businessmen arrived.”

Inclusive language: “The chair told the cleaning staff to tidy up the conference room before the attendees arrived.”

In the above example, the exclusive language relies on gendered terms like “chairman” and “cleaning ladies” and makes assumptions about gender roles. It also uses the term “businessmen,” excluding women and non-binary individuals in business roles. The inclusive version uses gender-neutral terms like “chair,” “cleaning staff,” and “attendees”. This avoids assumptions and includes all genders. Replacing “businessmen” with a more neutral “attendees” is more inclusive of people with diverse backgrounds and roles who may be attending the event. It illustrates how small changes in word choice can make language more inclusive. It also demonstrates the importance of using neutral terms when possible and avoiding assumptions regarding gender, race, age, ability or other attributes when communicating. Inclusive language acknowledges diversity while still getting the message across clearly.

Inclusive language refers to words and phrases that aim to avoid excluding particular groups or making assumptions about people's identities. Some examples are:

- Using gender-neutral terms like “staff” or “employees” rather than “workmen” or “salesmen”. Avoiding gendered pronouns like “he/him/his” when the gender is unknown or irrelevant. Using “they/them” as a singular pronoun.
- Avoiding ableist language (discriminating words in favour of non-disabled people) that marginalises people with disabilities, like “blind spot” or “falling on deaf ears”. Using identity-first language like “person with a disability” rather than “disabled person”.

- Avoiding ethnic, racial, or cultural stereotypes in metaphors and analogies. For example, not using phrases like "gypped" or "Indian giver", which have offensive origins.
- Using respectful terms for different age groups, like "older adults" rather than "seniors" or "elderly".
- Being sensitive to economic and social class differences by avoiding blanket terms like "the homeless".

You must avoid generalising and assuming anyone's background, experiences, or preferences based on their perceived identity. The goal is to make language more inclusive of all people and avoid marginalising, stereotyping or making assumptions about entire groups. Inclusive language acknowledges diversity and treats all people with respect.

1.1.8 Barriers to Communication

John wants to tell Mary something important, but obstacles are getting in the way of communicating clearly. John speaks very softly, while Mary is a bit hard of hearing. It is hard for Mary to determine what John says (Physical barrier). There is loud music playing in the background. This makes it difficult for Mary to concentrate on John's words (Physical barrier). John uses very complicated, academic language because that is what he is used to. But Mary does not understand those big words (Language barrier). John is upset about something that happened earlier in the day. His anger makes it hard for him to explain things calmly and clearly (Emotional barrier). Mary thinks John is arrogant and does not listen closely to his words. She makes assumptions rather than listening openly (Attitudinal barrier). They have very different backgrounds and perspectives. This makes it hard for them

to find common ground (Cultural barrier). So, while John and Mary want to communicate, all these barriers are getting in the way! It takes extra patience and effort to overcome these obstacles. But clear communication is possible if both make the effort to speak, listen and understand more clearly.

Communication barriers refer to factors that can hinder the effective exchange of information between the sender and receiver of a message. Some common barriers include

- a. Language barriers - When the sender and receiver do not speak the same language or use different meanings for words/phrases.
- b. Cultural barriers - Differences in cultures and norms can lead to misinterpretation. For example, gestures, signs and body language can have different meanings across cultures.
- c. Physical barriers - Environmental factors like noise, distance, faulty equipment, etc. hinder message transmission.
- d. Emotional barriers - Strong emotions like anger, fear, distrust, etc., can inhibit objectively listening and understanding the message.
- e. Perceptual barriers - Differences in perceptions, thoughts, opinions, ideas and viewpoints between communicators.
- 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: Refers to actions or behaviours that prevent the effective exchange of information between people, such as inattention, impatience, distraction, or defensiveness.
- j. Gender barriers - Miscommunication arising from male-female differences in communication styles.

- k. Technological barriers - Problems with technology mediums like email, video conferencing, etc. can disrupt communication.
- l. Information overload - Too much information can overwhelm and confuse the receiver.

Overcoming barriers requires identifying and addressing the specific barriers at play in each communication scenario. Effective communicators need to be aware of potential barriers and try to minimise them.

Recap

- ▶ Communication is the exchange of information between two or more people.
- ▶ Process of Communication: Involves a sender encoding a message and transmitting it via a channel to a receiver, who then decodes the message to understand the information being conveyed.
- ▶ Verbal and Non-verbal Communication: Verbal communication involves using words in speech or writing, while nonverbal communication includes body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, eye contact, and other wordless signals between people.
- ▶ Communication Channel: Means or medium used to convey information between a sender and receiver, such as face-to-face conversation, video call, telephone, email, report, presentation, etc.
- ▶ Audience Analysis: Process of evaluating the background, needs, interests, and characteristics of your intended audience before communicating with them to shape your message and choose your communication channel appropriately.
- ▶ Intercultural Communication: The exchange of information between people from different cultural backgrounds which requires mindfulness of potential differences in norms, perspectives and communication styles.
- ▶ Inclusive Language: Words and phrases that ensure various social groups are represented and depicted respectfully, sensitively, and non-discriminately.
- ▶ Barriers to Communication: Anything that distorts, filters, or blocks the proper sending and receiving of messages between the communicator and the recipient.

Objective Questions

1. Who encodes information into a message?
2. What do you call the intended recipient of a message?
3. What type of communication uses signals like facial expressions?
4. What creates obstacles that disrupt communication?
5. Speaking and writing are examples of what type of communication?
6. What is the name of the process of interpreting a message?
7. What is the name of the medium used to convey the message?

Answers

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Sender | 5. Verbal Communication |
| 2. Receiver | 6. Decoding |
| 3. Nonverbal communication | 7. Communication Channel |
| 4. Communication Barriers | |

Assignments

1. What is the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication? Provide one example.
2. What is an example of inclusive language that could be used in a job advertisement to encourage diverse applicants?
3. Identify three different barriers to effective communication and explain how each hinders clear transmission of messages between a sender and receiver.
4. Think about a presentation you will have to give for class on a topic of your choice. In 4-5 sentences, explain what types of non-verbal communication you could intentionally use to enhance the audience's understanding and engagement with your presentation. Give at least two specific examples of non-verbal cues you plan to use and explain how each would be effective for your goals of understanding and engagement. Explain your choices to actively engage your audience and help them comprehend and retain the information you present.
5. Why is it important to analyse your audience and adapt your communication style and message accordingly? Provide examples.

Suggested Reading

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Unit 2

Effective Emails (Formal and Informal)

Learning Outcomes

The content, assignments, and assessments for this Unit are aligned to the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ assess the function and purpose of email writing.
- ▶ compose clear and well-structured formal and informal emails.
- ▶ identify the use and misuse of emails.
- ▶ practice proper etiquette in composing an email.
- ▶ write impactful emails and capture the reader's attention.

Prerequisites

Email. For better or worse, it dominates modern communication. Our inboxes overflow with messages from bosses, coworkers, businesses, and friends. But how many of those emails make you want to hit reply? Crafting effective emails is an art. Read the following scenario.

It was Monday morning, and Raj had two important emails to send - one to his boss requesting a day off work, and another to his friend planning their weekend get-together. In a hurry, Raj hastily typed out the emails. "Yo, buddy! Let's hit up the new pub downtown on Saturday. Should be a rager!" he excitedly wrote to his friend. To his boss, he put, "Hello Sir, I hope you are doing well. Please pardon me but I urgently need to take Friday off as my grandmother is ill. I will make up for it by working late on Thursday. Regards, Raj." Without double checking, Raj hit the send button on both emails. Moments later, his phone buzzed. His boss said, "Raj, I am concerned about this pub plan on Saturday you mentioned. That is highly inappropriate content for a work email. Please see me in my office right away." Raj's eyes widened in horror as he realised he had swapped the emails! He rushed to his boss's office to apologise and explain the inadvertent mix-up. Thankfully, his boss was understanding, though disappointed. "This highlights why it's crucial to be careful with email tone and content, Raj. Always double-check who you are

addressing formal vs. informal emails to,” he advised. Raj learned a valuable lesson about paying attention to the context when emailing that day. A small slip can have embarrassing repercussions at work! From then on, Raj resolved to be more prudent with his professional email etiquette. In this unit, let us learn to write an effective mail.

Keywords

Email, Formal, Informal, Etiquettes, Composing, Samples

Discussion

1.2.1 Email: An introduction

There is hardly anyone who has not written a letter. A letter is a message written on a piece of paper. In the olden days, when print paper was not readily available, letters used to be written on metal, wooden tablets, animal skin, pottery fragments and papyrus.

Have not we waited for the postman to arrive to deliver a letter to us? The letter may have been from a family member who regularly wrote to you, or it may have been an official communication posted to you. Have you considered who might have delivered letters before the postman? Do you know pigeons and men riding on horseback have delivered letters?

We have come a long way from all that. Today, we live in a fast-paced world, and our communication has become faster. Letters that were

physically transported from one place to the other were a chief form of communication before telegraphy, telephone, and emails largely replaced them. Of these, emails are the latest form of the written letter.

An email is an electronic mail. Instead of writing on a piece of paper, we note (type) on the screen of our electronic devices and the letter is sent across large expanses of space within seconds through the internet. While traditional letters take weeks to reach their destinations that are far away, emails only take seconds to reach any corner of the world!

A few people first used emails, mostly for communication within an institution. Quickly, it gathered popularity with the advent of the internet and computers, and soon took over from other methods of communication, especially because of its user-friendly nature, speed and cost-effectiveness.

Can we look at the differences between the traditional mail (postal mail) and the email?

Table 1.2.1 Differences between postal mail and email.

1	Postal mail is slow as it is carried physically across distances.	Email is fast and reaches any destination in seconds.

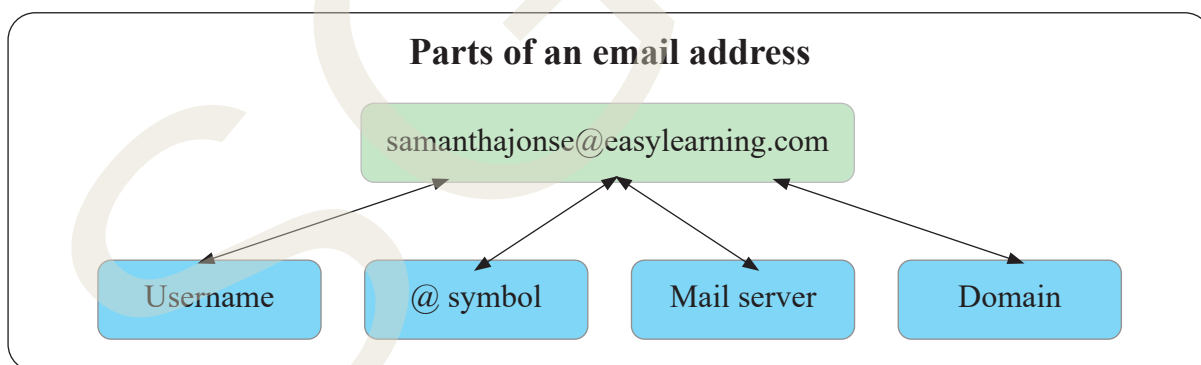
2	The delivery of postal mail gets delayed or disrupted due to the difficulty in delivering it to certain places. It can also get lost or damaged due to its physical nature.	Email reaches any remote place fast, provided there is an internet connection available there and an electronic device that can display it. It doesn't get damaged, torn or distorted in any way.
3	Postal mail can be costlier as the price of postal stamps increases in proportion to the increase in distance.	Emails do not need postal stamps. Provided there is an internet connection, letters can be sent to any part of the world free of cost.
4	One can only send written words or printed material as the message in a postal mail.	Voice, videos and images can be sent in addition to written words in an email.
5	The variety in appearance of the message is limited to the handwriting or the font used to type or print the mail.	Various fonts, colours and images can be used in an email.
6	Recipients can receive mail only at a particular address	The recipient can receive mail from anywhere, even while travelling.

1.2.2 Email format: What to include in your email?

Let us look at each of the format's elements.

1. To

Here, you must mention the receiver's email address. Neither the sender nor the receiver can send or receive an email without an email address.



2. Cc/Bcc

Cc in an email is Carbon Copy. It means that when sending an email to a recipient, it can be copied to another person added in the header Cc. The primary recipient can see to whom this carbon copy has been sent. Bcc is a blind carbon copy. It is the same as the carbon copy

in an email, except that the recipients in the To and Cc header will not know that the Bcc has been sent.

3. Subject-line

The subject line is important as it decides if someone opens your email. A good subject

tells the recipient what the email is about and why they should read it. Make your subject clear, precise and straightforward. Some examples are:

Marketing Budget Q4: Please review till August, 31

Meet the new VIP of Engineering

Spark for Android: First impressions from our users

Requesting a vacation for Aug, 10-20

4. Email greeting

How to start an email? 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 - for example, "Dear Ms Smith:" Here are some email greeting examples:

Hi [Name],

Hello [Name],

Dear [Name],

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr./Professor [Last name],

Greetings,

Hi there,

Hi everyone,

Always do your best to find out the recipient's name to address them in your email. If your research wasn't successful, use a generic salu-

tation like "Greetings."

5. Email body

In the main body of the email, focus on one topic. For instance, do not ask a colleague to review a report and discuss hiring strategy in one message - send separate emails for each subject. This makes responding easier, making you more likely to get a quick reply. Explain what you're emailing about. If contacting someone new, briefly introduce yourself, then get to the point - clearly state why you're emailing so they understand what you need. Some instances are:

I would like to invite you to speak at our annual developer conference.

I'm running a YouTube blog about cats, and we'd love to feature your brand in our next video.

I've been using your service for a while, and I would like to report an issue i've recently encountered.

Give the recipients any extra details required to respond, but keep your email short and simple and do not overload it. Remember, email isn't ideal for long discussions. Make your email easy to read. Break it into paragraphs and use headings and bullet points where helpful. Bold or italicise key info when suitable, but don't overdo it. Aim to structure your email to be skimmed easily.

6. Email closing

The closing tells the recipient what happens next. Give a clear, specific call to action if you need them to do something. If you're just finishing a previous discussion, end politely to

show you're happy to stay in contact.

Here's how to end an email:

Please let me know by Friday, August 15th if you'd like to speak at the conference.

It would be great to jump into a quick call tomorrow to discuss our collaboration.

Thank you for help and feedback. Let's keep in touch!

Sincerely,

Best regards,

Best,

Yours truly,

Respectfully,

Kind regards,

Thanks again,

7. Signature

Here are the polite phrases you can use to sign off your email:

Let us now see how composing an email in Gmail will actually look like:

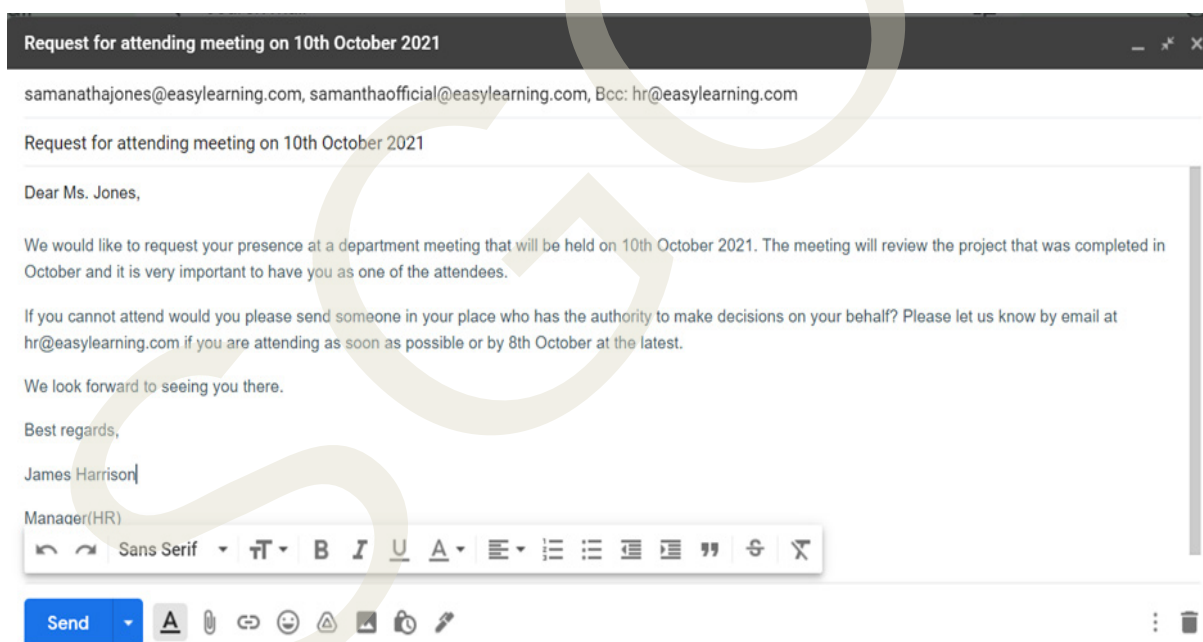


Fig. 1.2.1 A sample of composing an email

1.2.3 Formal and Informal Email

A formal email, like formal mail, is written

for professional and business purposes. It is straight to the point, matter-of-fact, and employs passive voice in its construction. Informal emails, as the name suggests, are written

to relatives and friends for personal communication, and they have a casual tone.

Let us review the differences between formal and informal emails:

Table 1.2.2 Characteristics of formal and informal emails.

	Formal Email	Informal Email
Definition	A formal email is written in standard language for official purposes 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.
Objective	Professional Communication	Personal Communication
Example	All business letters, letters of recommendation, letters of complaints and enquiry, cover letters, letters for a formal invitation	Letters that convey personal messages, give advice and ask for help written to friends, siblings, parents and other close ones.
Format	Has a fixed 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 and rambling
Target recipients	Businesses, Workplaces, Organizations, Institutions, etc.	Friends, family, acquaintances, etc.

Now, let us look at the key differences in the formats of formal and informal emails in Table 1.2.3.

Table 1.2.3 Format of formal and informal emails.

Formal Email	Informal Email
Receiver's mail ID	Receiver's mail ID
Subject (A formal subject in a few words)	Subject (Can be informal)
Sender's Address	Sender's address not necessary
Salutation (Formal salutation like Dear Ms Peters, Dear Sir)	Salutation (Informal like Hello, Hi, Dear Daddy, etc.)

Body of the letter (Formal style, to the point, preferably divided into paragraphs of equal length, not too lengthy, avoid repetitions and verbosity)	Body of the letter (Informal style, can be long or short according to whom and what is written, can have paragraphs of differing lengths, tone can be personal and emotional)
Complimentary close (Yours faithfully, Kind regards, Regards, Yours sincerely, Sincerely, etc.)	Complimentary close (Love, Yours, Best wishes, Lots of love, etc.)
Name of the Sender (Official name)	Name of Sender (Official name or the popular nickname that the reader of the letter knows)

Now, read the email below framed following the above details and figure out if the letter is a formal or informal one:

maplefieldeducation@mped.edu
Application to the post of IT Manager
Sam Donegan
65, Bosch Fields, Zurich, Switzerland

Dear Ms Hill

I would like to express my interest in the position available for IT Manager at Maplefield Education Ltd as advertised in The Job Finder.

My education, career history, acquired skills, and previous work experience align perfectly with the required qualifications mentioned in the job advertisement. I strongly believe that I can be an ideal candidate for the job at your organisation.

I have previously worked with Stellar Data Center as the Network Support Engineer, where I was in charge of technical support, troubleshooting IT-related issues and working on improving the network system.

I have a master's degree in Computer Science and am proficient in all the software programs required for the job. In addition, I have attained certification from Google in System Administration and IT Infrastructure Services and CISCO (CCNA, CCNP).

Kindly find attached my detailed resume, which details my educational and work experience. I look forward to hearing from you and will be awaiting a call for an interview.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards,
Sam Donegan

Is it not obvious that it is a formal email? What features made you immediately realise that the email is a formal one?

Now look at another formal email for practice:

imperialauto@pacemake.com

Resignation of Emilie Doe from Imperial Auto

Emilie Doe

1100, Hyde Park Road, Ontario, Canada

Dear Ms Parker

I write to thank you for accepting my request to resign from your company and thank you for giving me all the benefits that were due to me. I had given notice of resignation two weeks back as I wanted to return to college, as my programme starts in early September.

I am grateful for the time I worked under your leadership and guidance, and it has added much value to my work experience. Your support throughout has meant so much to me.

Best regards,

Emilie Doe

Now, let us see what an informal email will look like:

ninanick@gmail.com

Thank you for the book!

Dear Nina

First of all, sorry to have missed you on your last visit. I was a hundred kilometres away, attending an alum meeting. Sorry about that, Neens! And thank you for the book you sent. I was thrilled to see it in the mail today, and just as I received it, I thought I should write to you.

It's been a while since I heard from you, and as they say, "No news is good news." I hope, even though the Covid scenario has curtailed your physical movements, it has had no restraining effect on your mind, and you should be active as ever.

I heard the song you sang and uploaded on YouTube; it was so amazing! Way to go, Neena. In two weeks, I plan to travel to that side and trust me, I'll give you a surprise visit. Although, half the surprise is gone, now that I told you this!

See you soon.

Love,

Cicila

Here is another example of an informal email. In this case, a son is greeting his father on his birthday.

amitkiran@gmail.com
Happy Birthday Daddy!
Dear Daddy

Wish you a very happy birthday! I am travelling to Patna this morning on train, and I am unsure when the mobile coverage will die on me. That's why I am sending you an email that you can read just as you wake up.

I wish I were there with you and could bake a cake for you. Mummy would have loved it, too, and we both would have decorated it beautifully with whipped cream and delicious strawberries. And guess what? I recently bought a heart-shaped baking tray when I went shopping, and I thought of your love for cakes as I bought it.

How is our dog Bruno doing? I miss him sometimes and I know on all your birthdays you give him a treat. I am sure he is waiting for it today. Give him a hug from me. And also, daddy, on the last day I was travelling, I saw a roadside plant nursery selling neem saplings. I bought two and will bring it to you soon. I know you have been wishing for one recently and when I saw it, I immediately bought it. That is one of the birthday presents I have for you, the other one is a secret!

Sorry, dad, I could not be there today. But I promise I will make it up to you.

Love you.

Yours,

Amar

As you have now looked at both formal and informal emails, it is good to consider why emails are so popular.

1.2.4 Why are Emails Popular?

Let us account for the popularity of emails:

Emails are ubiquitous: Today, emails are widely used because of the spread of internet access and electronic gadgets like computers. Another reason why it has become popular

today is because it is extensively used. People have figured out that they can now send email from anywhere at any time, at little or no cost. Emails can also be received from any location. Therefore, it is not wrong to say that you can communicate or engage in business, whether on the beach or the boardroom, thanks to email.

Emails are fast and cheap: One reason emails gained popularity is their efficiency in terms of speed and cost. Emails cater to the needs of today's fast-paced world. It reach-

es any part of the world in seconds without the expense of postage stamps or envelopes. These two factors have largely been why emails quickly replaced all other modes of communication like postal mail or telegrams.

Emails offer flexibility in mode and style: Emails offer a wide range of options when it comes to communication. Through emails, the sender can send voice messages, videos or pictures, not just written messages. Even when one sends a typed message, one can choose from various fonts and colours in an email. This flexibility that is in tune with the age attracts users to emails.

Emails have become legal and valid: When emails first began gaining popularity, it was understood that ‘valid mail’ is the postal mail and that emails are not legal or valid documents. But today, the authenticity of any electronic communication can easily be established, and therefore, emails are as valid as postal mail. Moreover, the origin of an email can more thoroughly and accurately be traced, perhaps even more than postal mail.

Automated message handling: We can mark certain messages as spam in an email service. In Gmail, for instance, the messages get automatically divided into groups such as Inbox, Social, Spam, etc. This makes it much easier to handle communication. Also, depending on the electronic device that we are using, we can set voice alerts to let us know when we receive an email. Moreover, the software used in the email can help us send automatic messages at regular intervals. The software also allows us to group messages intelligently into different folders, making them easier to sift through the emails later.

1.2.5 Risks of Emails

Emails can have certain pitfalls, too.

Challenge to privacy: If we type the email address wrong, our email can end up in another person’s inbox, and then there is nothing we can do about it. Within institutions, a system administrator can access our emails from that institution's email address. A more serious vulnerability is the interference of hackers who might access emails without the owner’s knowledge or send messages from them.

Unsolicited emails: Email spam, junk email, or spam is unsolicited messages sent in bulk by email. Most spam emails are commercial in nature, reducing the email's storage space and creating confusion and annoying situations. Spammers often collect emails from websites, customer lists and chatrooms and send endless advertisements to these email addresses.

Cyber-attacks: Emails can have malicious links that, when clicked, release viruses into the electronic gadgets that steal information or install malware. Email users can be phishing victims if they do not use discretion in clicking on random links and websites circulated through emails.

Economic challenges: Although internet connectivity is becoming cheaper, electronic devices are still expensive. To send and receive emails seamlessly, one needs a steady internet connection and devices like a smartphone or a computer. People who cannot afford all this cannot take advantage of the benefits that emails offer.

Peril of too much access: An email reaches fast and to the device of the recipient no matter where the recipient is. Even on a holiday or on a vacation, work related mails can reach the recipient, and it is often expected that the receiver replies immediately. As a result, people find it difficult to disconnect from work or stop such external interferences and

are constantly checking their emails and replying to them. This can cause anxiety and burn-out, not to mention a lack of attention in other matters of life while investing all their attention to scores of emails.

tice of sending emails pretending to be from reputable companies in order to make individuals reveal their personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers.

Phishing: Phishing is the fraudulent prac-

Recap

- ▶ Email is an electronic message sent over the internet. It has largely replaced traditional postal mail due to speed and cost benefits
- ▶ Parts of an email include recipient address, subject line, greeting, body, closing, and sender's signature
- ▶ Formal emails are for professional purposes and have a fixed format. Informal emails are for personal communication and have a casual tone
- ▶ Emails are popular due to being ubiquitous, fast, flexible, valid for legal purposes, and allowing automated handling
- ▶ Risks of emails include privacy issues, spam, cyber attacks, costs of devices/internet, over-accessibility leading to burnout, and phishing

Objective Questions

1. What is an email?
2. What has email largely replaced?
3. What goes in the subject line of an email?
4. What kind of email has a fixed format?
5. Why are emails popular?
6. What is a risk of emails related to privacy?
7. What is a risk of emails related to unwanted messages?
8. What is phishing?

Answers

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. Electronic mail | 5. Ubiquitous |
| 2. Postal | 6. Hackers |
| 3. Topic | 7. Spam |
| 4. Formal | 8. Fraudulent practice of sending emails |

Assignments

1. How are formal and informal emails different from each other?
2. List some of the reasons for the popularity of the email.
3. Write an email to your friend inviting her to your birthday.
4. What are some of the disadvantages of using an email?
5. Write a letter to your employer asking for sick-leave for 4 days.
6. Write a letter to the principal requesting her to conduct a few remedial classes for a group of students of your class.
7. You saw an advertisement where a school is hiring for a teaching post. Write an email with the subject 'Application to the post of Teacher of English.'

Suggested Reading

1. Liu, Christine. *Step by Step Effective Writing: Formal/informal Letters & Emails*. Hong Kong, Junius Publications, 2022.
2. Campbell, Fiona E. *How to Easily Write Effective E-mails in English*. United States, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013.
3. Trask, R. L. *Penguin Writer's Guides: How to Write Effective Emails*. United Kingdom, Penguin Books Limited, 2005.
4. Assey, Gerard. *The Professional Business Email Etiquette Handbook & Guide*. India, Gerard Assey, 2020.

Unit 3

Presentation Skills, Preparation of Slides, and Body Language

Learning Outcomes

The content, assignments, and assessments for this unit are aligned to the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ Prepare effective slides for presentation.
- ▶ Combat stage fright while making a presentation.
- ▶ Participate in academic/business individual/group presentations successfully.
- ▶ Employ body language effectively to enhance communication during a presentation.

Prerequisites

The crowd fell silent as Martin Luther King Jr. stepped up to the podium, his powerful voice echoing across the National Mall. Like a preacher capturing his congregation, King held the audience in rapt attention like a preacher capturing his congregation with his masterful oratory and cadence. His "I Have a Dream" speech was a work of art - carefully crafted through weeks of preparation yet delivered with spontaneity and fluidity. King transformed complex ideas into simple truths, turning oppression into poetry. His rhetorical devices - repetition, allusion, metaphor - painted vivid pictures that stirred emotions. He responded gracefully to the crowd's mood, seamlessly adjusting the tone and flow of his speech. King combined passion, conviction and charisma into a performance that spoke directly to the hearts of Americans. His dream was transformed into a shared vision through the artistry of his delivery. Through continuous practice, King perfected the craft of captivating oration. His unique style blended Black preaching traditions with his own raw talent. Every carefully chosen word, every pregnant pause, was orchestrated to deliver maximum impact. King turned speeches into symphonies, the stage into a pulpit, and words into weapons for justice. His artistic presentation made him the master conductor of audiences, elevating communication into a force for change.

Keywords

Presentation, Slides, Visual, Audio-Video, Body Language, Presentation Skills

Discussion

1.3.1 The Ace of Presentation

Giving a presentation is like showing off a part of yourself; your thoughts, feelings, hopes, likes, whatever, to whoever is listening. In professional settings like meetings or interviews, you intentionally bring information to hit certain goals - selling something, convincing the crowd, teaching new stuff, motivating peeps to take action. With your friends, you may try swaying them to your views. Whether professional or personal, presenting shares information with an audience to accomplish stuff like persuading them, gaining goodwill, inspiring action, or a mix of those.

1.3.2 The Art of Presentation Skills

Presentation skills need creativity, stage presence, connection with the crowd, preparation, style, ability to adapt, and communication - a lot like acting, music, or dance. The presenter is on stage, commanding attention with his voice, gestures, and charm. He turns data into compelling stories and visuals, relying on creativity to engage and stick in people's minds. Like an actor, the presenter builds rapport with the audience, making an emotional connection and leading the room. Delivering a polished, seamless presentation that seems effortless takes hours of practice and rehearsal. Great presenters develop distinct styles, tones, and rhythms that match their personalities. Their unique flair shines as they improvise and adapt to different audiences and situations. Impactful presentation

artfully combines verbal and nonverbal techniques to influence and communicate ideas. Just like artists experiment with different tools and styles, presenters constantly improve their skills over time. With practice, natural talent, and artistry, they can deliver creative, memorable presentations that connect with audiences. Presentation skills are an art form for the stage, needing many of the same talents as the performing arts.

Effective presentation skills are important because they keep a presentation interesting, help the presenter communicate confidently, and motivate the audience to listen, such as creating variety, optimal audibility, etc. So, presentation skills mean effectively sharing information, ideas, and messages with an audience through speaking and visual aids. Strong presentation skills include:

Organization - Structuring information logically and clearly. Using an introduction, main points, and conclusion.

Clarity - Speaking clearly and projecting your voice well. Explaining concepts and ideas coherently.

Engagement - Making eye contact, connecting with the audience, keeping their attention. Inviting participation by asking questions.

Visual aids - Designing slides, handouts, and charts to improve understanding. Using visuals effectively without distracting.

Body language - Using posture, gestures, and movement purposefully. Showing confi-

dence through poise.

Adaptability - Adjusting content and style based on audience reaction. Thinking quickly when responding to questions.

Preparation - Practicing and rehearsing the presentation to ensure smooth and polished delivery. Managing time well.

Strong presentation skills allow you to convey ideas and persuade audiences effectively. These skills can be developed through preparation, practice, feedback, and experience presenting to different audiences.

1.3.3 Preparation of Slides

Let's say you have got to present your company's new product launch. Instead of just talking about it for 10 minutes, you create a visual document to illustrate your main points and make the presentation more engaging. This is called presentation slides or PowerPoint slides. Presentation slides are visual aids used to support and boost an oral presentation. They summarise key points and help convey information to an audience clearly. Here is an example of making effective presentation

slides inspired by famous speaker Steve Jobs.

In 1997, Jobs was appointed as the CEO of Apple and had to make a major presentation about the company's future. He spent weeks preparing the perfect set of slides to communicate his vision. The night before showtime, Jobs showed the slides to his colleague Joanna. At first glance, she said "Steve, these slides are dense with text and charts. You've got over 20 wordy bullet points per slide! The audience will be bored to death." Jobs realized she was right - his slides weren't effectively communicating his ideas. So he went back to the drawing board and created simple, image-focused slides complementing his speech. The next day, Jobs delivered a legendary presentation that re-energized the audience about Apple. By visualizing his story and key ideas, rather than cramming slides with too much text, he made his message memorable. The lesson is that images and visuals are powerful. Convey key messages clearly with just a few words per slide. And let your personality and passion shine through in the live presentation. Create slides that engage your audience, not just display data. With the right balance of compelling visuals and an impactful narrative, you too can deliver inspiring presentations.

When we think of a presentation today, we think of a computer and PPT.

What is PPT? PPT is the abbreviation of PowerPoint Presentation. PPT is a presentation program run by Microsoft under Microsoft Office.

Today we create a presentation in PPT in a computer and connect this computer to a projector so that an audience can see the PPT slides projected on the wall.

Presentation slides are usually created using presentation software like PowerPoint or Google Slides. The main purposes of presentation slides are:

- Visualize data - Charts, graphs, dia-

grams, and images allow audiences to digest information quickly.

- Highlight key points - Slides allow speakers to emphasise important topics, main takeaways, and big ideas.

- Provide supporting details - Slides can give explanatory text, stats, examples, and quotes to back up points.
- Outline structure - Slides can create a framework for the presentation's flow and organisation.
- Engage audiences - Well-designed slides are visually interesting and keep the audience attention.
- Provide takeaways - Slides can be a reference that audiences can review

long after the presentation.

- Set tone - Images and design choices create an overall style and tone.

Effective presentation slides are simple, clear, and visually appealing. Limit text and bullet points, and use visuals like charts, graphs, illustrations to engage the crowd. Insert multimedia like audio or video clips for added impact. Slides should support the speech instead of duplicating or distracting from it. When used properly, slides comple-

Is PPT the only presentation software?

Not at all! There are plenty of other application softwares that can be used for presentations like Perzi, Vyond, Zoho Show, Google Slides, Keynote, Haiku Deck, Slidedog, CustomShow and Visme.

ment and boost the presentation. Speakers shouldn't just read off slides but use them to illustrate important points.

Here are some ways to make presentation slides more engaging using visuals, audio and video:

1.3.3.1 Visuals

Use powerful images that convey emotions and reinforce key messages. Stock photos of people, animals, objects, etc. reacting in ways related to your content can connect with the audience. Include charts, graphs and infographics to communicate data visually. Visualisations stick in people's minds more than numbers alone. Use basic charts that are easy to understand. Use icons, illustrations and animations sparingly to improve understanding, not distract. Simple animated graphics can

help explain a process or idea. Limit text and use large and readable fonts. Use keywords and concise bullet points rather than full sentences.

1.3.3.2 Audio

Insert short music clips to set the mood or transition between topics. Upbeat music can energise, and slow music can soothe. Match the music tone to your content. Use sound effects like chimes to emphasise or alert something important. Do not overdo sound effects. Narrate key points if not presented live. Record your own voice explaining a slide so the audience can both see and hear it.

1.3.3.3 Video

Play short 1-2 minute video clips from YouTube or your own library to mix things

up. Pick energetic and inspiring videos related to your topic. Insert animated GIFs to show processes or ideas in motion quickly. Choose clear, simple animations that are easy to understand. Embed inspirational video quotes from scholars related to your topic to add credibility. The key is to enhance your slides and presentation with multimedia, not create distractions. Use them strategically to communicate and engage your audience effectively.

1.3.4 Body Language

Communication does not always happen just through words. Even when a presenter is talking clearly to the audience, he communicates to them through more than just words. The presenter speaks to the audience through personal appearance, gestures, posture, hand movements, eye contact, facial expressions, etc. All this is part of body language and is very important in making the right impact during the presentation.

Body language or kinesics is the unspoken element of communication. It is using physical behaviour, expressions, and mannerisms to communicate nonverbally, often done instinctively rather than consciously. The correct use of body language can make a presentation attractive and will aid in grabbing the attention of the audience.

1.3.4.1 Personal appearance

Personal appearance is important to make the first impression. A person who is neatly dressed and well-groomed looks more prepared for the presentation. Good personal appearance helps to win the appreciation of the audience. A well-groomed appearance will boost the confidence of the presenter. Also, a sloppy and dishevelled appearance can also

cause the audience to be biased or prejudiced about the presenter. It is also important not to be over-dressed. Rather, dressing appropriately for the occasion will be a good idea.

1.3.4.2 Posture

Posture is how we sit, stand and generally carry ourselves. We might have seen people walking around with hunched shoulders. Do they elevate confidence? No, they do not. It is good to keep these points in mind while making a presentation:

- Keep a straight posture; leaning slightly forward will show interest, while slouching will convey the opposite message.
- While walking to the podium, do not drag and drop one's feet on the floor. Lift your legs clearly off the floor and walk in a normal gait. Do not be too fast or too slow when walking.
- Do not put keys or coins in the pocket or put the hands in the pocket and jingle. This makes it obvious that the speaker is nervous, apart from distracting the audience from the presentation.
- Do not lean on the podium.
- Do not fidget or sway. Stand reasonably still and maintain a calm demeanour.
- Look at the audience by slightly turning the head from side to side. Avoid staring at one person or spot or only looking straight. More important is to avoid looking at the floor.
- Keep a good posture that is relaxed

and at ease. Do not be stiff.

- Practice good posture in front of a mirror and ask friends to give feedback on this non-verbal aspect of your communication.
- Avoid crossing one's legs while standing in front of the audience.
- If you are taking a seat during the presentation, do not sit on the edge of the chair. Sometimes, when people are nervous, they tend to sit on the edge of the chair. Sit comfortably in the chair and use the backrest.

1.3.4.3 Gestures and Hand Movements

Imagine talking to a person, and they stand in front of you with crossed arms or arms locked behind their backs. Does it show interest or lack of interest? Someone does not talk to you but shows you an enthusiastic thumbs up. What does that convey? Isn't that a sign of encouragement? The right use of hand movements is crucial in a presentation, enhancing the non-verbal part of communication. Let us look at some common gestures and hand movements and their meanings:

- Thumbs up is a common gesture and shows approval, encouragement or agreement.
- Making a fist indicates anger and aggression.
- Waving one hand indicates greeting, like saying hello or good-bye.
- Waving both hands can indicate inviting attention to something urgent.
- Pointing with the index finger is to say 'look' at what is being pointed at.

- Crossed arms show defensiveness and indicate that the person does not want to be involved in the activity around them.
- Locking hands behind one's back indicates dominance and control.
- Hands on knees show readiness.

Rubbing one's eyes shows uncertainty, disbelief and doubt.

Hands on one's hips show the person is ready for an assertive action.

A speaker's hand movements can indicate their state of mind. Below are tips that should be considered while using gestures and hand movements:

- Hand movements must not be jittery. Use hands gracefully and stick to gentle movement of hands.
- Don't hang your hands awkwardly or keep them stiff without any movement.
- Avoid aggressive movements of hands.
- Do not lean on the podium and appear as though one's arms support the whole body on the podium.
- Do not keep your hands crossed in the front or folded at the back.
- Avoid putting one's hands in the pocket and playing with keys or coins.
- Wringing one's hands or rubbing the palms together shows a lack of confidence.
- Touching one's face often, scratching

the nape of one's neck, etc. are tell-tale signs of dwindling confidence.

1.3.4.4 Eye Contact

In any human discourse, eyes play a significant role. Avoiding eye contact is a sign of confusion, evasion, doubt and vulnerability. A presenter can keep the following in mind to use eye contact as a point of strength in a presentation:

- Maintain good eye contact with the listeners and avoid staring at the wall or the floor.
- Look in all directions and not in a single direction.
- If someone asks a question, look them in the eye, not the papers in front of you or elsewhere.
- Express a willingness to connect and communicate through your eyes.
- Exude confidence through one's eyes.

1.3.4.5 Facial Expressions

Just like the eyes, one's facial expressions are important in making the right impact on the audience while making a presentation. The expressions on one's face indicate one's state of mind. It is evident from a person's expressions if the person is happy, unpleasant, anxious, sad or enthusiastic. During the entire communication, a person's face gets the most attention. So, if the facial expression of a speaker indicates negativity of any type and the person appears confused, irritated, afraid or dejected, it affects the effectiveness of communication. Hence, having a pleasant disposition and training oneself to use facial

expressions to enhance the presentation and communicate positivity and pleasantness to the audience is important.

The tips below can go a long way in maintaining pleasant facial expressions while communicating with others or presenting:

- Start with a smile. It creates a pleasant expression on one's face. However, it is unnecessary to keep smiling throughout the presentation as it might take the seriousness away from the presentation
- It is natural that one might be nervous at the beginning of a presentation and look anxious. Therefore, one must be aware of this and try to make one's facial expression pleasant.
- Avoid having a dull expression on your face; express confidence and ease.
- Be conscious about looking dejected, sad or indifferent.
- Do not smirk.
- Avoid raising one's eyebrows while speaking or listening to others.
- One can have a pleasant expression on one's face, showing a willingness to associate oneself with others.

1.3.4.6 Vocal Techniques

The way we speak greatly impacts our interactions with others. It is important to speak at an appropriate rate - neither too fast nor too slow - to keep the audience engaged. Proper pacing with well-timed pauses makes a presentation sound natural and emphatic. Avoiding excessive vocal fillers like "um" and re-

petitive phrases keep the focus on the content. An optimal volume allows everyone to hear clearly without being too loud. A moderate pitch and suitable intonation help convey the right meaning. Good pronunciation and clear

articulation are vital so the audience can easily understand every word. Mastering these vocal techniques can transform a presentation from mediocre to impressive.

Recap

- ▶ Giving presentations is like a performing art - requires creativity, presence, and communication skills to engage the audience
- ▶ Strong presentation skills include organisation, clarity, audience engagement, visual aids, body language, adaptability, and preparation
- ▶ Presentation slides visually support speeches - highlight key points and data; too much text bores audiences
- ▶ Use visuals, audio, and video in slides to engage audiences - powerful images, simple charts, short music/sound clips and inspiring videos
- ▶ Body language impacts presentations - appearance, posture, gestures, eye contact and facial expressions
- ▶ Use posture and movement purposefully to convey confidence
- ▶ Hand gestures enhance meaning and aid communication
- ▶ Maintain eye contact; express confidence through eyes
- ▶ Facial expressions indicate the state of mind; convey positivity
- ▶ Vocal techniques like pacing, volume, pitch, pronunciation keep the audience engaged

Objective Questions

1. What aspect of presentation skills involves creativity and stage presence like performing arts?
2. What element of body language shows approval or agreement?
3. What vocal technique involves speaking at an appropriate pace to engage listeners?
4. What type of slide content quickly allows audiences to digest information?
5. What nonverbal communication expresses emotions and self-assurance?
6. What preparation technique ensures smooth and polished delivery?

7. What body movement indicates dominance and control?
8. What facial expression conveys positivity and pleasantness?
9. What slide content outlines the presentation structure and flow?
10. What element of vocal techniques keeps the focus on content?

Answers

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Artistry | 5. Eye contact | 9. Key points |
| 2. Gestures | 6. Rehearsal | 10. Minimal fillers |
| 3. Pacing | 7. Locked hands | |
| 4. Visuals | 8. Smile | |

Assignments

1. Why are presentation skills important in professional and personal settings? Discuss 2-3 reasons.
2. Explain some ways visual aids like charts and images make presentations more engaging.
3. Describe 2-3 tips for using proper body language during a presentation.
4. What are some benefits of maintaining good eye contact with the audience during a presentation?
5. Discuss 1-2 techniques speakers can use to keep their audience engaged through vocal delivery.

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Unit 4

Participating in Webinars and Live Discussions

Learning Outcomes

This unit is aligned to the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ describe the difference between a webinar and a seminar.
- ▶ identify the advantages and disadvantages of webinars and seminars.
- ▶ identify various webinar platforms.
- ▶ analyse the role and value of live discussions in building an online community

Prerequisites

When the pandemic hit, Rachel's yoga studio had to close down temporarily. All in-person classes were cancelled to prevent the spread of the virus. However, Rachel still wanted to find a way to teach yoga and connect with her regular students. While searching for a solution, she came across the facility of conducting seminars through the internet, called webinar. She decided to start offering webinars using a video conferencing platform. At the scheduled time each week, Rachel would log in and start the webinar. Her students would join the webinar from their homes. Rachel would lead the yoga class live, and students would follow along in their own spaces at home. The webinar format allowed Rachel to continue teaching yoga when in-person classes were not possible. Students were grateful as they could still participate in Rachel's classes and have some normalcy. It provided social connection and stress relief during a difficult time. Rachel started getting positive feedback from students who said the online classes were very helpful for their mental and physical health while stuck at home. Some students were immunocompromised and felt safer joining virtually.

The webinars allowed Rachel's studio to stay afloat financially. This example illustrates how webinars became very relevant and important during the pandemic by allowing virtual interaction when in-person activities were unsafe. It enabled business continuity, teaching, and connections between people despite physical distancing requirements. Now, let us learn the relevance and benefits of webinars and live discussions in detail.

Keywords

Webinar, Video Conferencing, Online etiquette, Tips, Chats, Presenters, Attendees

Discussion

do so online.

1.4.1 Webinars: An Introduction

You might have heard of seminars. Many of you might have even attended a few seminars. A seminar may be defined as a gathering of people to discuss a particular topic. Such meetings are interactive, where participants are encouraged to discuss the delineated topic. In seminars, people meet each other or come together in a common place for discussions on various topics. A webinar is an online seminar. Here, too, people gather, talk and discuss just like in a normal seminar, but this time, they

The importance of webinars has become all the more crucial in the COVID era. Webinars are capable of accomplishing almost all the aims of a seminar. However, if there are certain hands-on activities that need to be done, it may not be possible in a webinar. But then again, a seminar is not a workshop. It is in a workshop that the participants often engage in hands-on activities. Seminars are usually restricted to discussions and deliberations on a particular topic.

Let us look at some of the characteristics of a seminar and a webinar:

	Seminar	Webinar
Definition	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.
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 strain 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.
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

Just like in a seminar, participants in a webinar should follow some etiquettes in a webinar. Webinar etiquette, like online etiquette, opens doors for better communication. Like in any other meeting, mutual respect and right conduct will boost the efficiency of the conduct of the webinars. Etiquettes to be followed in a webinar are same as the etiquettes that people follow in any video conferencing or online meeting. These are some etiquettes that can be followed so the presenters and attendees of a webinar can make the experience more enjoyable and productive.

1.4.2 Tips for presenters

Login well in time: Like in every other meeting or online meeting, it is imperative that the presenters log in on time. It would be extremely impolite not to be present while the webinar is going on and keep all the audience waiting.

Test the software much before logging in: There is nothing more annoying than a person logging into a video conferencing application and not knowing how to use it. Unlike a seminar, where the infrastructure is readily in front of the presenter, webinars need certain online skills on the part of the presenter. Therefore, if the presenter is new to the application used

for video conferencing, they should ensure that they know how to operate it. Some prior experience with the software will always be helpful. Make sure that one is not fiddling with the software once the webinar is on.

Do not read the slides: Just like in any seminar, the presenter should not be reading their slides. Also, the slides should be shown with bulleted points and neat graphics. Everything that a person does to make a proper site presentation in a seminar must be followed in a webinar as well.

Greet the attendees before starting: It is imperative to be polite to the audience of a webinar, even though most of them would not have turned their videos and audios on. Everyone has to be greeted and all the pleasantries exchanged just like in a normal seminar.

Be patient with technical difficulties: Unlike in a seminar, webinars can be disrupted by certain technical difficulties. The presenter might receive feedback that the attendees are unable to hear what the earlier says, or that the presentation is not clear enough. There can also be other technical problems that can emerge during a webinar. It is imperative to be patient and deal with the technical issues calmly rather than creating more confusion and chaos during the webinar.

Know one's audience: Although a webinar can include a large number of attendees, it is always better to understand who exactly the audience are, if time permits. The presenter can ask the audience to interact with him, which can be done without disturbing the course of the webinar. For instance, the audience can interact with the speaker in the chat boxes instead of using voice. With the permission of the presenter, the attendees can interact with the earlier so that they have a better understanding of who exactly are listening to him and know their reactions. It can better cater to the audience's needs.

Avoid unnecessary controversies: Webinars are conducted for sharing ideas and information. Usually, the organisers are not looking at stirring up controversies or creating problems. It is imperative to keep in mind that although the online platform gives one more freedom to talk and air one's ideas, the aim of the speaker should not be to purposely stir up a controversy, but to impart knowledge and novel ideas to the listeners.

Be polite and have a pleasant demeanor: During a presentation, the presenter may not be able to see who exactly are watching him through the online platform. Also, they are physically removed from the presence of the attendees. However, it is important to keep in mind that the presenter has to be polite and should have a pleasant demeanor just as they would if they were in front of a large audience in a conference hall.

1.4.3 Tips for attendees

Show up on time: The attendees of a webinar should show up on time. Arriving late and trying to login much after the webinar starts create unnecessary burden on the administrator who lets the attendees in one by

one. Also, being present at the beginning of a webinar can give the attendees a better perspective of what the seminar is about and also help in having a better understanding of the requirements of the webinar and the expectations as well.

Turn off one's audio and video: Unless it is asked of the attendees, it is always better to keep the video as well as audio off. Although some webinars do not mind the videos being off, the audio being off is a must for all webinars unless the person is talking.

Don't use chat rooms unnecessarily: There may be professional provision to use chat rooms while the webinar is going on. Do not use it for any other purpose other than the accepted ones. Use the chat room with permission and avoid irrelevant discussions in the chat room.

Have a clear agenda while asking questions: Do not ask confused questions that might consume too much time. Have a clear agenda in mind while asking a question.

Remove distractions: While attending a webinar, it is good to remove all distractions and spend one's time productively attending to the webinar with dedicated attention. In that way, one can contribute to the webinar as well as benefit by gaining new information and gathering knowledge.

1.4.4 Webinar Platforms

There are many webinar platforms like Demio, WebEx, Google Meet, Zoom, Webinar Jam, EverWebinar, ClickMeeting and Livestream that provide excellent platforms for video conferencing. Each of these has a different interface and it is necessary to have hands on experience with each of these applications to

perform effortlessly when using these applications for attending webinars.

1.4.5 Live Discussions

A group of friends who are all big fans of a popular TV show that airs new episodes each week. Every Thursday at 9 pm when the new episode is aired, the friends gather in an on-line chat room to discuss and react to the show in real-time as they watch. In the chat, they exchange comments and opinions on the plot, characters, and developments as they unfold episode by episode. They laugh together at funny moments, speculate potential theories, and express shock at surprise twists. The host of the chat room also posts polls and questions to further spark conversation. Some friends have to miss the live airing due to other commitments, but jump into the chat afterwards to join in the ongoing lively discussion.

There might be 50 active participants in the chat room on a typical episode night, with different people coming and going. However, a core group of superfans makes it to the live discussion every week without fail - it's their dedicated hangout to immerse themselves in analysis of a show they love. The real-time aspect makes them feel like they are watching the show together, even if physically apart. After the episode concludes, the chat usually continues for a while longer so they can process it and continue exploring reactions. By providing a space for this shared live viewing experience, the chat room fosters meaning-

ful connection and community. This example clearly portrays a live discussion.

Thus, live discussions are real-time conversations that happen in online communities. They allow people to have conversations in real-time by exchanging messages, reacting, and interacting with each other. This creates a more dynamic and engaging experience than traditional threaded forums or comment sections. Live discussions are facilitated through chat interfaces and live chat software. This allows people to send messages quickly back and forth to have a flowing conversation. They often focus around specific topics, events, or interests like a TV show episode, a sports game, a conference, or any other shared experience.

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. The rapid pace also leads to quick exchanges of ideas and perspectives. Overall, live discussions facilitate stimulating and meaningful conversations in real-time between people across the internet. They create a sense of community and allow people to interact in new ways online.

Recap

- ▶ Webinars are online seminars done through video conferencing
- ▶ Webinars are more convenient but lack in-person interaction
- ▶ Webinar presenters should log in early, greet attendees, avoid reading slides
- ▶ Webinar attendees should arrive on time, minimize distractions
- ▶ Popular webinar platforms are Demio, WebEx, Zoom, Google Meet
- ▶ Live discussions are real-time conversations in online communities
- ▶ Live discussions allow engaging, flowing conversations in real-time
- ▶ Moderation keeps live discussions productive
- ▶ A core group actively participates in live discussions

Objective Questions

1. What are webinars?
2. How are webinars conducted?
3. What platforms are used for webinars?
4. What should webinar presenters avoid?
5. What should webinar attendees minimize?
6. Name two popular webinar platforms.
7. What are live discussions?
8. Where do live discussions happen?
9. Who actively participates in live discussions?
10. What keeps live discussions productive?

Answers

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Online seminars | 6. Zoom, WebEx |
| 2. Remotely | 7. Real-time conversations |
| 3. Video conferencing | 8. Online communities |
| 4. Reading slides | 9. Core group |
| 5. Distractions | 10. Moderation |

Assignments

1. What is a webinar? How is it different from a traditional seminar? Discuss the pros and cons of webinars.
2. Discuss webinar etiquette for presenters. Provide tips for effective presenting.
3. What webinar etiquette should attendees follow? Explain with examples.
4. Compare popular webinar platforms like Zoom, Webex, GoToWebinar. Which would you recommend and why?
5. What are live discussions in online communities? How do they allow real-time engagement and community? What is the role of moderation?

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Unit 5

Telephone Conversation – Language and Propriety

Learning Outcomes

This unit is aligned to the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ Make effective communication via telephone.
- ▶ Use appropriate language in a telephone conversation to achieve the desired aim in communication.
- ▶ Understand etiquette in telephone conversations.

Prerequisites

The phone rings just as you sit down for an evening of relaxation after a long day. You debate letting voicemail pick up, but decide to answer politely. "Hello, this is Priya," you say calmly over the blare of the television. Your aunt is calling to catch up, but you struggle to focus on her words over the background noise. Trying not to sound impatient, you ask her to hold while you mute the TV and move to a quieter spot. With just voices and no visual cues, telephone calls require extra attention to etiquette and language. From properly introducing yourself to minimizing disruptions, small courtesies make a difference in pleasant communication. Minding your tone, pacing, grammar, and vocabulary also smooths telephone interactions tailored to the formality of the call. Chatting with close friends allows for casual language, while professional calls demand greater clarity and etiquette.

Mastering good phone conduct, whether taking an important business call or catching up with family, enables effective voice-only connection. This everyday scene exemplifies how basic propriety and language considerations can elevate a simple phone call. With some thoughtfulness, you can master the art of pleasant phone conversation no matter the circumstance or caller.

Keywords

Telephone, Telephone etiquette , Formal, Informal, Manners

Discussion

1.5.1 Telephone Conversation: An Introduction

Who has not made a conversation through the telephone? We communicate through the telephone from our latest mobile devices almost every day. Most of these calls might have been to our friends and family members, and some to our teachers or people at our workplaces. We make calls to certain institutions or shops to make some enquiries. We also contact authorities to register complaints.

During all these situations, we might have noted certain differences. Was it not much easier when we chatted with our near and dear ones? Was it not an entirely different situation and experience when we made an official call or to somebody we did not know? It might have turned even more difficult and troublesome had it been a telephonic interview or had we felt that the call was purely for an official and important purpose. It is important in today's world, where communication devices have become widespread, to master the art of conversing through the telephone. Look at the conversations below:

Dialogue 1

Halsey: Carnival insurance. May I help you?

Mark: Yes, this is Mark Spencer from Ace Appliances. I'd like to speak to Ms. Wilson if she's available, please.

Halsey: Would that be Ms. Agatha Wilson, the Claims Examiner or Ms. Martha Wilson, the Insurance Sales Agent?

Mark: Ms. Martha Wilson, the Insurance Sales Agent.

Halsey: Could you please hold the line? I will just see if she is available. (Slight pause) I'm sorry Ms Wilson is not present in the office. Can I take a message please?

Mark: Yes. Could you ask Ms Wilson to phone me please? My number is 11224 546.

Halsey: I am sorry, I didn't get your name.

Mark: I am sorry, Mark Spencer from Ace Appliances.

Halsey: Okay. Let me just check the number. 11224 546. Is that right?

Mark: That's right.

Halsey: I'll pass the message on. Thank you for calling Carnival Insurance.

Mark: Thank you. Bye.

Dialogue 2

Mark: Ace Appliances, Mark Spencer speaking.

Wilson: This is Martha Wilson returning your call.

Mark: Thank you for calling back. I want to meet with you to discuss our previous conversation about the insurance products you introduced to me.

Wilson: Yes, certainly. I will be glad to. How about Friday at 3:30?

Mark: That would be great.

Wilson: I look forward to seeing you then.

Mark: Friday, 3:30. See you then, goodbye.

Wilson: Goodbye.

When we have a telephone conversation, we cannot see the other person, so we have to be very careful when speaking. Our body language, facial expressions, posture, etc., will not impact a telephone conversation. The only thing that we have to communicate with is our voice. Therefore, verbal cues are of crucial importance in a telephone conversation.

Let us analyse the telephone conversations above and look at some useful phrases that can be used during a telephone conversation similar to the ones given above:

When we call an office or an institution, a receptionist often greets us. How can we ask them if we can talk to someone?

Let's look at some examples:

Could I speak to Ms. Wilson?

Could you put me through to Ms. Wilson?

I'd like to talk to Ms. Wilson, please.

Is Ms. Wilson available, please?

I would like to speak to Ms. Wilson.

Remember to add 'please' whenever you can. Another way of asking is: *Could you put me through please?*

The receptionist might answer: *I'll see if she is available. Hold the line please.*

If Ms Wilson is unavailable to the receptionist, they might say something like: *I am sorry Ms Wilson is in the meeting. Can I take a message?*

'In a meeting' is a hint that the person is not free to talk at the moment. The person may be in the meeting, or it is also possible that the person could be out or busy with something else. The point to be understood here is that the person is not free at that moment.

Here are some other phrases the receptionist could have used to respond to the enquiry:

I am sorry, Ms. Wilson is busy now.

I am sorry, Ms. Wilson is not available at

present.

I am sorry, Ms. Wilson is in a meeting at the moment.

Now, Mark wishes to leave a message for Ms. Wilson. Here are a few lines that can be used to communicate this:

Could you ask Ms. Wilson to return my call, please?

Could you ask Ms. Wilson to phone me, please?

If Ms. Wilson could call me back, that would be great.

Look at some phrases that can be used to check details:

I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name.

Could I have your number again, please?

Would you please repeat that?

Would you mind repeating that?

When Ms. Wilson returns Mark's call, Mark answers by introducing himself and his institution. It can also be noted that they were polite to each other and repeated certain information when necessary so that it would be emphasised. The main point is to speak clearly and politely and give essential information without ambiguity.

Now let us look at a conversation between Jessy, a Sales Executive at a showroom with audio systems, and customer Anu, who calls to enquire.

Look at some sentences below and guess how they could be altered appropriately for a telephone conversation.

Jessy: Good morning, Audio City. This is Jessy. How can I help you?

Anu: Hello, this is Anu Vasant calling from Avenue Event Management. I would like to enquire about Bluetooth speakers for outdoor and indoor use. Would you give me some suggestions?

Jessy: Certainly. Do you have a particular company in mind, and what exactly are your requirements?

Anu: Yes. I am interested in knowing about JBL and also Sony. I require to use it in a medium-sized party, both indoors and outdoors.

Jessy: We have a few models of JBL readily available. We have JBL cinema SB 230, JBL Bar 9.1 and JBL PartyBox 310 and PartyBox 300. I have a feeling that JBL PartyBox 310 would be ideal for your requirements.

Anu: Party Box 310, is it?

Jessy: Yes, you heard it right. It's PartyBox 310. Would you like me to tell you its specs?

Anu: Yes, please.

Jessy: JBL PartyBox 310 has 240 watts of JBL Pro Sound, and it has a synced light show that grooves to the beat.

Anu: Wow! That sounds interesting.

Jessy: Yes. It comes with Bluetooth, a charging cable, and a karaoke function and has 18 hours of battery life.

Anu: That's impressive. Does Sony have a product of the same range?

Jessy: Yes, of course. The Sony XP700 X-Series has similar specifications.

Anu: How do you rate the speakers of Marshall?

Jessy: I'm afraid I cannot help you with that. We do not deal in Marshall speakers.

Anu: Okay. Could you send me a quote for JBL and Sony products, please?

Jessy: Certainly. Would you prefer to receive the quotation by email or in WhatsApp?

Anu: Email, please. My email is anuvass@avenueevents.co.in.

Jessy: Could you repeat the email, please?

Anu: anuvass@avenueevents.co.in.

Jessy: Okay. Meanwhile, please feel free to come to our showroom and check out both of these models yourself. Probably that would help you decide on choosing a product more clearly.

Anu: Thank you. That is a good suggestion. Will tomorrow 2:00 be okay?

Jessy: That would be perfect. We will be expecting you at 2 P.M. tomorrow. Thank you for contacting us, and I hope I was of help.

Anu: Thank you very much, and I shall see you tomorrow.

Jessy: You are most welcome, and have a nice day.

Look at some sentences below and guess how they could be altered appropriately for a telephone conversation.

Sentence	Appropriate for telephone conversation
What is your name?	Could you tell me your name, please?
Your account has been suspended.	I'm very sorry. Your account has been suspended.
I cannot help you as I do not know about it.	I'm afraid I cannot help you with that, as I am unaware of it.
I cannot confirm the status of your complaint as our system is down.	I'm very sorry, but I can't confirm the status of your complaint as our system is down.
Tell me your password.	Could I have your password, please?
Can I call you back next month to complete your request?	Would you like me to call you back next month to complete your request?
I shall call you tomorrow and help you.	I'd be glad to call you tomorrow and help you with your request.
When did you notice the problem?	Could you tell me when you first noticed the problem?
What was the problem?	May I ask what the problem was?
Should I send the letter to you?	Would you like me to send you the letter?
Do you want to get a hard copy of the certificate?	Would you like to receive a hard copy of the certificate?
Why did you call?	May I ask what you are calling about?
Is it possible for me to contact your Sales Department?	I was wondering if you could put me through to your Sales Department.
Is there a service station near here?	Do you know if there is a service station near here?
Are you hiring anyone at the moment?	Could I ask if you're hiring any staff at the moment?

You might have noticed that while making a telephone conversation, we stick to polite usage and avoid being blunt and abrupt.

When talking to friends and family, the rules of telephone etiquette can be slightly relaxed, as we might have noticed in our telephone interactions with our dear and near ones. Let us look at a telephone conversation between two friends.

Alex: Hello, how are you? Is Alice there?

Alice: Hi! Is this Alex? Where have you been? I called you a hundred times yesterday.

Alex: Sorry about that. I was busy with something. Why did you call?

Alice: Oh, I just wanted to see if you wanted to hang out. What about to have coffee or go for a movie? I guess it's too late for that today!

Alex: Well, there is always tomorrow. Let's do that.

Alice: Okay. I'll call you tomorrow then.

Alex: See you then. Goodbye.

As you can see, the conversation is informal and casual. Informal telephone conversations need not have strict rules, although it is best to maintain conventional decorum and unfailingly give importance to clarity.

are talking to, a good impression can be created through telephone communication. Proper telephone etiquette can make the caller feel respected. Such impressions often have a lasting effect.

1.5.2 Telephone Etiquette

Telephone etiquette implies the manners of using telephone communication. It includes how one greets the person on the other side, the tone of one's voice, the choice of words, the way one pays attention to the call, the closure of the call, etc. Understanding telephone etiquette is very important when we communicate via telephone. Especially in business settings, it can be of crucial importance and can be an indicator of one's professionalism. A business call that is well answered makes the customers believe that their work is in safe hands.

Even when we do not see the person we

Following is a list of telephone etiquette.

Friendly greeting: Greet the caller with warmth and respect. Do not start the conversation abruptly. Proper greetings will help the caller relax and allow them to communicate properly. For instance, one can wish the speaker 'good morning' and then politely introduce oneself. It will create a positive atmosphere, and the caller will feel welcomed and create a setting for good conversation.

Answer immediately: In a business setting, answer the calls in the first two or three rings. It gives the feeling that the call is valued and creates the impression that the receiver is enthusiastic and dedicated to the job.

Have a pleasant voice: Voice in a telephone conversation is like body language or facial expressions when two people are talking face-to-face. It is important to have a pleasant voice while speaking on the telephone. A pleasant voice gives the feeling to the receiver that you are relaxed, which helps to put the caller at ease and aids in better communication.

Articulation: Talk clearly when engaged in a telephone conversation. The person who is listening to us cannot read our lips. Telephone conversations are completely dependent on one's voice. Therefore, we must talk slowly and clearly. Do not be too fast or too slow. Use simple and clear vocabulary, and do not use ambiguous words. Make sure that the pronunciation of words is reasonably good. If one's accent is very bad, the other person cannot understand what is being said, and the whole telephone conversation will become pointless.

Tact: It is possible that during a telephone conversation, something unpleasant or upsetting might come up. Sometimes even a very pleasant conversation might inadvertently turn unpleasant and challenging. In such situations, it is important to be tactful and not end

up saying something offensive and make the call unpleasant.

Active listening: It is important to engage in active listening during the telephone conversation. Do not be entirely silent when the other person is speaking. Give some responses like 'ok', 'right', etc., so that the person who is calling understands that we are listening. Proper responses make a telephone conversation effective and more pleasant.

Ask before putting someone on hold or transferring a call: Do not abruptly put someone on hold or transfer a call without asking permission, so the communication is clear and without confusion. This will look not only polite but also professional.

Be mindful of one's volume: Make sure that one speaks in a way that is neither too loud nor too feeble. Asking for the listener's response if the caller's voice is loud enough is a good idea. Sometimes we might be too loud, which can be an unpleasant experience for the listener. Equally annoying is a very feeble voice where communication not only breaks down but also causes misunderstanding and confusion.

Recap

- ▶ Introduction to telephone conversations and how they differ from face-to-face conversations
- ▶ Useful phrases for telephone conversations like greeting, asking to speak to someone, leaving messages, clarifying details
- ▶ Example dialogues of telephone conversations in professional and informal settings
- ▶ Importance of telephone etiquette including friendly greeting, answering promptly, pleasant voice, clear articulation, tact, active listening, asking before holding/transferring, mindful volume

- ▶ Telephone conversations rely completely on voice so verbal cues are crucial
- ▶ Business calls require more formal telephone etiquette than personal calls
- ▶ Polite language, clear communication, and following etiquette rules make telephone conversations effective

Objective Questions

1. What aspect is most important in telephone conversations?
2. What should you avoid being on business calls?
3. What helps create a positive atmosphere on calls?
4. What makes the customer feel the work is in safe hands?
5. What helps the caller relax and communicate properly?
6. What gives the impression that the call is valued?
7. What helps put the caller at ease?
8. What makes a telephone conversation completely dependent?
9. What are some useful phrases for telephone conversations?
10. What is crucial in business telephone conversations?

Answers

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Voice | 6. Promptness |
| 2. Blunt | 7. Tone |
| 3. Greeting | 8. Hearing |
| 4. Answering | 9. Asking, clarifying |
| 5. Etiquette | 10. Formality |

Assignments

1. Why is it important to follow proper telephone etiquette, especially in professional settings? Discuss with suitable examples.
2. Compare and contrast the differences in telephone conversations when speaking with friends versus business contacts.
3. Explain some of the key phrases that can be used when leaving messages or clarifying details over the phone. Provide examples.
4. Discuss the importance of voice modulation, tone, volume, articulation and active listening in telephone conversations.
5. You are training new customer service representatives on telephone etiquette. What are some of the key rules you would highlight to them? Discuss with reasons.

Suggested Reading

1. McNaughton, D., Hamlin, L., McCarthy, J., Head-Reeves, D., & Schreiner, M. (2008). *Learning to listen: Teaching an active listening strategy to preservice education professionals*. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 27(4), 223-231. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0271121407311241>
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BLOCK - 02

Transactional / Technical Writing and Jobs and Careers

Unit 1

Internal Business Correspondences: Memo - Circular - Notice - Agenda

Learning Outcomes

The components in this unit are aligned to the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ Differentiate between informal and business communication
- ▶ Identify the business situations for official communication
- ▶ Differentiate official communication tools: Memo, Circular, Notice, Agenda
- ▶ Use Communication strategies to business problems and contexts
- ▶ Practice communication within Business environment

Prerequisites

Pradeep joined a new firm. The first he noticed in his office was a **Notice** on the Notice Board announcing his appointment. Maya, his colleague, introduced Pradeep's new assignments and shared a **circular** regarding the recent updates on company policy. Soon after, they received a notice regarding an official meeting and the **agenda** of the meeting scheduled. They had an internal meeting, and Pradeep was asked to prepare a **memo** about the discussions in the meeting.

Have you noticed the words in bold letters? **Notice, Circular, Agenda** and **Memo**. These are brief pieces of communication. They are used in less formal situations. If all these forms are meant to communicate, how do they differ from each other? Do fewer formal situations demand definite patterns? Is it a must to craft these types of communication effectively? What are the standard practices for composing Notices, Circulars, Agendas and Memos? This unit will introduce and provide the basic instructions to draft these short communication types.

Keywords

Business Correspondences, Memo, Circular, Notice, Agenda.

Discussion

2.1.1 Memo

The simple word ‘Memo’ is a significant 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 drafted and published 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 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 structure for the Memo format. 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 will clearly state the purpose and reason for the memo. It sets the tone. So, explain 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, Memos can be long or short. No matter the size, 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.

Some common workplace purposes of memos are:

- To confirm a meeting or event
- To provide official instructions
- To summarise action required after a meeting
- To make amendments to organisational policies
- To notify others about a problem or to inform others that a problem was solved.
- To provide a short report of a meeting or decision.

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.

2.1.2 Circular

A circular is a written communication tool to inform or intimate a group of people, most probably employees. It is a common form which is used for interdepartmental communication. It is officially shared among employees through notice boards or among members. Usually, it carries information such as an invitation to official meetings, an invitation to luncheons, etc. Hence, it can be formal and informal according to the situation. At

times, the Circular format was also used as an advertising tool.

It is an inexpensive and effective way of communication. It targets many people, so a well-drafted circular saves time. Most widely, circulars are used in inter-office situations. Circulars are also used as advertising tools. It has a larger distribution range and can be used to share marketing information. There is no strict pattern to be followed for a circular. Just glance through the sample Circular given below:

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 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

2.1.3 Notice

Notices are written tools for sudden formal announcements. They are aimed at internal members. In an organisation, the benefit and use of notice is to have smooth communication between the authorities of the organisation and the employees. Situations like resignation and relieving of duties are all communicated priorly via notice to other members. A term like 'notice period' showcases the importance of official communication through notice.

Notices are brief and short, with concise and necessary information. For official purposes, notices should be printed or framed

with official letterhead, institution stamp and signature of the authority. While looking at the format, features and structure, one may be confused with the purpose of a notice and a memo. In its purpose, Notice is different from Memo. A Memo targets a smaller group, and the Notice goes to a much wider group. It is usually displayed publicly and is accessible to all. Regarding the structure of a Notice, be sure the top of the notice mentions the issuing Authority's name. The title should catch the attention of the reader. The body of the notice can include the relevance, occasion, date, time and reason of the notice. It ends with the issuer's details. Here is one sample.

A& A Proprietors

East Mumbai

Notice

Date: November 24, 2021

An urgent meeting is planned on December 1, 2021 at 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

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

2.1.4 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.

The simple format of a meeting follows these steps:

- 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 of an **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 relevant matter.

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
- Open discussion on the completed project
- Discuss and finalise the date of the product launch
- Any other relevant matter

Recap

- ▶ Memos are written communication
- ▶ They are short in structure
- ▶ They are published for immediate purpose
- ▶ The language in a memo should be short, precise and simple
- ▶ Used for interdepartmental communication
- ▶ Cost-effective
- ▶ It can be used as an advertising tool
- ▶ Sudden formal announcement
- ▶ Aiming internal members
- ▶ The purpose of memo and notice depends on the audience
- ▶ It is part of the formal procedure
- ▶ It goes with the minutes
- ▶ Essential document in the official platform

Objective Questions

1. What is the clipped form of the word 'memorandum'?
2. What are the two sections of a memo?
3. Name the type of memo used to suggest a specific action to solve a situation.
4. Mention a common inter-office communication tool?
5. What is the purpose of a notice?
6. What is displayed publicly and accessible to all in an organisation?
7. Name the list of items to be discussed in a meeting?
8. What document needs to be shared in advance before a meeting?

Answers

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. memo | 5. announcement |
| 2. heading, body | 6. notice |
| 3. problem-solving | 7. agenda |
| 4. circular | 8. agenda |

Assignments

1. Imagine you are the HR Manager of a Multinational firm. There is an urgent renovation planned on the first floor of your office. Inform the employees about the same and request an action to shift immediately to the second floor.
2. You are assigned to organise a vaccine drive at your office. Inform the employees that urgent action is required to collect data on employees needing vaccination.
3. Imagine yourself as the CEO of a firm. Prepare a Circular informing the need for punctuality, as you have noticed some employees attend their work very late.
4. Prepare a circular to inform that all employees should wear their identity cards during office hours.
5. Prepare a circular to motivate employees to contribute to the Flood Relief Fund.
6. Imagine you are a secretary of an A & A company. Prepare an agenda for the meeting which targets the introduction of a new employee presentation of the annual report.
7. You are about to resign from the position you are employed at. Write a one-month notice to your manager intimating your decision.

Suggested Reading

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Unit 2

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

Learning Outcomes

The components in this unit are aligned to the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ identify the key components of effective business letters and correspondence.
- ▶ draft professional sales, problem, and goodwill letters using appropriate tone and language.
- ▶ compose press releases that effectively announce news and events.
- ▶ evaluate advertisements for brevity, clarity, and impact on the intended audience.

Prerequisites

Effective communication is the cornerstone of any successful business. While verbal communication plays a major role, the written word remains vital for clearly conveying information and building relationships. From sales pitches to apologies, well-crafted business letters make a powerful impression.

This unit will explore four common types of business correspondence. Sales letters aim to persuade potential customers to purchase a product or service. Problem letters address customer complaints and seek solutions. Goodwill messages build rapport by thanking patrons or offering congratulations. Advertisements promote goods or services by highlighting their benefits. While diverse in purpose, these letters all rely on strong writing techniques. Applying principles like clarity, brevity, and accuracy results in compelling content. Mastering professional business communication through these diverse examples will prove invaluable. Whether corresponding with a vendor, customer or partner, the ability to craft targeted and engaging written messages gives businesses an edge.

Key Themes

Sales strategy, Sales letters, Problem letters, Rejection letters, Goodwill messages, Advertisements, Press releases

2.2.1 Sales Letter

“How to boost one’s sales?” This question remains the prime concern for all industries. The first choice to promote any product will be advertisement. The second choice definitely will be a sales letter. A sales letter is a kind of external business correspondence that plays a salesman's role. Drafting and sharing a sales letter is similar to advertising or selling goods. The main intention of a sales letter is to grab the attention of the second party. It should try to convert the reader into a customer. Before writing a sales letter, one should thoroughly know the customers’ or second parties’ interests and needs. The product that is ‘advertised’ or ‘campaigned’ through a sales letter is introduced in the form of its ‘benefits’ rather than a mere description of the product. The language and the details should attract the reader; hence, care must be taken while drafting a sales letter.

The expensive and time-consuming component of an advertisement can be, in a way, replaced by an effective sales letter because a good sales letter is similar to a popular advertisement. An effective letter can arouse curi-

osity and grab attention. The ultimate aim of a sales letter is to convert the reader to a customer; hence, language should be clear and attractive and should arouse curiosity. How to grab the reader's attention? Interesting quotes, striking phrases or questions can be good attention markers. Convincing testimonials can also be part of sales letters. The content should motivate quick action, too. A few guidelines to remember to draft a sales letter are

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 can be the explanation of the opening. One can explain the qualities and special features of the product concerned. Body paragraphs include offers, guarantees, test results and statistical data.
3. **Conclusion:** The final paragraph can motivate quick action. It is the final chance to recapitulate your claims.

Here is a sample sales letter:

Dear Sir/Ma'am

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 five whole 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 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 custom 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 happening now, and we're thrilled to connect with so many familiar faces again. Over 90% of our regulars have seized 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 score big. 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.

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.

2.2.2 Problem Letter

A problem letter is a type of external business correspondence that is utilised to bring attention to mistakes made by a person, group, or organisation. It is also referred to as a complaint letter. A problem letter is also used to point out defects, deficiencies, or delays related to a product or service provided by an organisation. The manner in which one

addresses a problem letter or complaint letter demonstrates efficient customer service skills. When drafting a problem letter, one must be very thoughtful and conscious of how they address the letter. The tone of the letter must be carefully considered. 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. 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. Care should be taken in the words used. 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 also fall under the category of problem letters.

Problem letters can serve two functions. One is to communicate a complaint to the other party involved. The second is to address any claims or complaints made by a customer. We will discuss each function in turn.

2.2.2.1 Sample 1: Communicating a Complaint

Purchase Manager

Q& Q Industries

Dear Sir/Madam

15 January 2020

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.

confidence that the recipient will grant your request.

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

2.2.2.2 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 after stringent testing, we regret to inform you that your complaint is not justifiable based on the results.

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 clarification on the matter. 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.

2.2.3 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.

- Goodwill messages include:
- Positive feedback
- Congratulatory notes,
- Words of appreciation

These can motivate employees and develop business relationships.

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.

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

Here are samples:

Goodwill messages convey feeling over

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

2.2.4 Advertisements

Advertisements generate popularity for products. An advertisement is a type of announcement that informs the public about a product. It serves as a medium to present products to the public in an appealing way, promoting them in the market. Advertisement features highlight a product's specifications to the market. Advertisements can be published through print media like newspapers, magazines, and other printed sources, as well as electronic media like social media, television, and other digital sources. A catchy advertisement leaves a lasting impression on the public. 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.

When drafting an advertisement, one must keep in mind:

- It should have an attractive opening line.
- The rest of the content should link to the opening sentence.
- Give complete details about the product.

Structure of a printed advertisement:

- Catchy headline
- Brief informative body
- Subheads, if applicable
- Company details

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

Look at these two samples:



Fig. 2.2.1 A sample advertisement



Fig. 2.2.2 A sample advertisement

2.2.5 Press Release

A press release is an official communication channel organisations use to speak to the public. It is a formal announcement. Press releases are widely used to communicate globally, nationwide or regionally. In business, press releases convey an organisation's public relations strategy. Situations warranting a press release include new product launches, company mergers, product updates, official

events, rebranding, awards, etc.

When drafting a press release, have a clear topic in mind. Maintain clarity starting with the headline. The first paragraph should highlight key information, covering the 5Ws (who, what, when, where, why) and how. Include a summary statement. Quotes from reputable individuals draw attention. Adding data 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: XXXXXXXXX

December 16, 2021



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 246-105-030](#) 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](https://www.facebook.com/ChelanDouglasHD) | [@ChelanDouglasHD](https://twitter.com/ChelanDouglasHD)

Always working for a safer and healthier Community

Fig. 2.2.3 A sample press release

Recap

- ▶ Effective tool for advertising
- ▶ No cost tool
- ▶ All depends on the language used
- ▶ Type of external correspond
- ▶ Demands a solution
- ▶ It addresses the issue and communicates the solution at the same time
- ▶ Different from usual business documents
- ▶ Communicate feeling rather than information.
- ▶ It is short and specific.
- ▶ Provide popularity to the products
- ▶ Catchy advertisement leaves lasting impression
- ▶ It is the direct address to the public
- ▶ Official medium to link the public and the organisation
- ▶ It communicates the organisation's public relations strategy
- ▶ It's a formal document to be documented

Objective Questions

1. What is the prime concern for all industries related to sales?
2. What is the intention of a sales letter?
3. What should be the tone of a problem letter?
4. What should be avoided in a problem letter?
5. What is a rejection letter useful for?
6. What do goodwill messages express?
7. What makes an advertisement effective?
8. What does a press release communicate?
9. What information should the first paragraph of a press release highlight?
10. What adds authenticity to a press release?

Answers

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Boost | 6. Sentiment |
| 2. Convert | 7. Brevity |
| 3. Thoughtful | 8. Announcement |
| 4. Offense | 9. Key |
| 5. False complaint | 10. Data |

Assignments

1. You belong to a trip advisor agency. Prepare a sales letter to invite people to tour packages which follow strict COVID protocol.
2. You own a learning app. Prepare a sales letter to inform the latest offers on the app.
3. Draft a sales letter introducing a new 'mobile phone' which is economical, smooth and has a long life.
4. You bought a new T-shirt. The colour faded on the first wash. Write a problem/complaint letter to the shopkeeper asking for an exchange or refund.
5. Draft a letter as a reply to the situation mentioned above.
6. You found the above situation as fake. Draft a letter in response to the fake complaint that you have received.
7. Write a congratulatory message to a recently joined employee who has reached a monthly target.
8. Write a thank you note for the timely payment credit of the customer.
9. Draft a catchy advertisement for the following: (No need for an illustration)
a) Learning app, b) Interior garden items, c) Online store for kid's dress

Suggested Reading

1. Kerbey, Elizabeth and Marilyn L. Satterwhite, *Professional Business Writing*. Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2002.
2. Wilkinson, Clyde Winfield, et al. *Communicating Through Letters and Reports*. United States, R. D. Irwin, 1980.
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Unit 3

Preparing a Resume and Cover Letter

Learning Outcomes

The content of the Unit is aligned with the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ learn the importance and purpose of resumes and cover letters
- ▶ analyse key sections to include in resumes
- ▶ obtain tips and examples for strong content
- ▶ know how to write effective cover letters

Prerequisites

Landing an exciting job or getting into a top college program is a thrilling next step after graduation. To open these doors of opportunity, a powerful resume and cover letter are your keys. These essential documents make that critical first impression on recruiters and admission officers flooded with applicants. In a sea of resumes, yours must stand out.

This unit will illuminate the art of crafting resumes and cover letters that showcase your fit. We will explore optimal formats, winning content strategies, and examples. Whether you are eyeing jobs at leading companies or higher education at premier institutes, sharpen these essential tools to get noticed. The tips outlined will help you summarise your background persuasively and land interviews for coveted roles. With dedication and creativity, your personalised resume and cover letter will open doors to a bright future.

Keywords

Resume, Cover letters, Impression, Qualifications, Skills, Experiences, Examples

2.3.1 Introduction

A resume and cover letter are essential documents for applying to jobs and higher education programs. They summarise your qualifications, skills, and experiences to potential employers and admissions committees. A formal resume lists your educational qualifications, work experiences, skills, achievements, and other relevant information. 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. A cover letter is a 1-page document that accompanies your resume. It expands on your resume by highlighting your key qualifications and explaining why you are interested in the specific role or program. The cover letter is your chance to make a strong first impression.

2.3.2 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 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 this initial screening, your resume and cover letter must showcase your fit for the role or program convincingly. Invest time to refine 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.

2.3.3 Resume Sections

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

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.

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.

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.

Experience - List your work and internship experiences in reverse chronological order. Include organisation, position title, employment dates, and achievements/responsibilities.

focused on quantifiable contributions.

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.

Certifications - Highlight professional certifications and additional credentials like first aid certificates to exhibit your commitment to growth.

Activities - Optionally include notable co-curricular activities, volunteer work or hobbies to present well-rounded interests.

Opening - Begin with a personable introduction and state the position/program you are applying for and where you learned about it.

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.

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.

2.3.4 Cover Letter Guidelines

A compelling cover letter follows these key guidelines:

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.

2.3.5 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 full-stack 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.

2.3.7 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.

Recap

- ▶ Resumes and cover letters make a vital first impression
- ▶ They summarise qualifications, skills, and experiences
- ▶ Must highlight strengths and fit persuasively
- ▶ Examples and tips tailored for learners
- ▶ Optimal formatting is essential
- ▶ Content strategies to get noticed
- ▶ Craft focused documents to open doors

Objective Questions

1. What documents summarise your qualifications and skills to potential employers and colleges?
2. What do powerful resumes and cover letters help open?
3. What must resumes and cover letters highlight to showcase your strengths?
4. What is essential for resume formatting?
5. What types of content strategies are discussed?
6. What do tailored resumes and cover letters help maximise?
7. What must the documents make to get noticed?
8. What do resumes and cover letters provide a summary of?

Answers

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. Resumes, cover letters | 5. Winning, focused |
| 2. Doors, opportunities | 6. Chances, opportunities |
| 3. Fit, qualifications | 7. Impression |
| 4. Optimisation | 8. Qualifications, skills, experiences |

Assignments

1. Explain in your own words why resumes and cover letters are essential documents when applying for jobs or higher education programs. Use examples to support your explanation.
2. Discuss three key sections that should be included in an effective resume. Explain why each section is important.
3. Write a sample profile section and education section for a hypothetical resume. Tailor the content with relevant details.
4. Outline the formatting and content strategies for crafting a compelling cover letter. Provide examples to illustrate your outline.
5. Analyse a sample resume and cover letter against the tips provided in this unit.

Suggested Reading

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Unit 4

Facing an Interview

Learning Outcomes

The components in this unit is aligned with the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ preparing for an interview through research, practice, and planning ensures confidence and strong performance.
- ▶ utilising the STAR method to provide compelling and skill-focused responses enables clear communication of value.
- ▶ projecting professionalism, asking thoughtful questions, expressing confidence, and following up make a strong impression throughout the process.

Prerequisites

The blaring alarm jolted Priyanka awake. Today was her big interview at Dream Co. She dragged herself out of bed and into the shower, letting the warm water wake her up. She had tossed and turned all night, playing out how today could go. After drying her hair, Priyanka put on her best interview outfit - a black suit with a crisp white blouse and modest heels. She carefully applied her makeup and styled her hair. Looking in the mirror, she practised her smile. "You've got this! You're going to wow them," she told herself. The drive to the office was uneventful.

Priyanka arrived early, checked in at reception, and sat down. She chatted with another woman waiting, trying to ignore her nerves. After waiting anxiously, Priyanka was finally called back. The hiring manager led her to a conference room and asked about her experience. Priyanka spoke confidently, highlighting her proven results. So far, so good! Then came the curveball technical question she was completely unprepared for. Priyanka hesitated, caught completely off guard. She tried to recover but knew it was too late. The rest of the interview was a blur until he ended it. Priyanka drove home deflated, angry with herself for not anticipating technical questions. But rather than dwell on it, she decided to learn from the experience. She researched common technical interview questions and practised smooth responses. A few weeks later, Jane applied for another great role. This time, she nailed the technical questions and got the job. With preparation and experience, Priyanka gained confidence and success in interviews. She was ready to tackle any tough question next time!

Key Themes

Preparation for Interview, STAR method, During the interview, After the interview

Discussion

The interview is one of the most critical moments in the job search process. The interview is your opportunity to showcase your qualifications face-to-face and convince the employer that you are the right candidate for the role. How you perform in job interviews throughout your career can significantly impact your 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. The competition is fierce, and employers look for any reason to disqualify candidates. 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.

2.4.1 Preparations Before Facing the Interview

2.4.1.1 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 me-

dia. 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.

2.4.1.2 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 off 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 time-frame."

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."

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.

2.4.1.3 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.

2.4.1.4 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.

2.4.1.5 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.

2.4.1.6 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.

2.4.1.7 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.

2.4.2 Day Before the Interview:

2.4.2.1 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.

2.4.2.2 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.

2.4.3 Tips for Interview Day

2.4.3.1 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.

2.4.3.2 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 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!

2.4.3.3 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.

2.4.3.4 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.

2.4.3.5 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.

2.4.3.6 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.

2.4.3.7 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.

2.4.3.8 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.

2.4.4 After the Interview

2.4.4.1 Thank you Note

Email thank you notes to each person who interviewed you within 24 hours. Customise each one. Express your appreciation for their time and consideration. Reiterate your interest and qualifications. Include any helpful information you forgot to mention that reinforces why you're an excellent candidate.

2.4.4.2 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.

2.4.4.3 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.

Recap

- ▶ Thoroughly research the company and job description ahead of time to prepare. Look for areas of alignment between your skills/experience and their needs.
- ▶ Practice and prepare responses to common interview questions using the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to structure compelling stories.
- ▶ Make a strong first impression with professional attire, confident body language, good manners, and thoughtful questions.
- ▶ Listen attentively during the interview. Provide confident, concise yet detailed responses using examples and quantifiable achievements.
- ▶ Follow up promptly with thank you notes reiterating your interest and qualifications. Continuously improve your interview skills through practice and learning from each experience.

Objective Questions

1. What should you research before an interview?
2. What method can you use to structure your responses?
3. What documents should you bring to an interview?
4. How early should you arrive for an interview?
5. How should you dress for an interview?
6. What should you do the day before an interview?
7. How should you greet the interviewers?
8. What should you avoid talking about in an interview?
9. What should you send after an interview?
10. What should you do if you don't hear back after an interview?

Answers

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. Company | 6. Prepare |
| 2. STAR | 7. Warmly |
| 3. Materials | 8. Controversies |
| 4. Early | 9. Thank you |
| 5. Professionally | 10. Follow up |

Assignments

1. Using the STAR method, develop responses to the following three common interview questions:
 - ▶ Tell me about a time you showed strong leadership skills.
 - ▶ Describe a situation where you had to solve a difficult problem.
 - ▶ Discuss a time you failed and what you learned from it.
2. You have an interview coming up with Company X next week. Create an interview preparation plan covering the following areas:

- ▶ Research on the company
- ▶ Anticipated interview questions to practice
- ▶ Outfit and items to bring
- ▶ Travel logistics and timing
- ▶ Plans for the day before
- ▶ Following up after the interview

Suggested Reading

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Unit 5

Participating in Group Discussions - Etiquette and Language

Learning Outcomes

The components in this unit are aligned with the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ to identify best practices for preparation, participation, and follow-up of group discussions.
- ▶ to apply strategies for effectively initiating, communicating during, debating ideas in, and concluding group discussions.
- ▶ to avoid common mistakes that negatively impact group discussion performance through awareness and practice of constructive techniques.

Prerequisites

Sonia was thrilled to make it to the final round of interviews for her dream consulting job. However, this round involved a group discussion with other candidates, and Sonia felt nervous. In the past group discussions, she had received feedback that her casual language undermined her credibility. As the discussion began, Sonia struggled to convert her thoughts from an informal to a professional style. She used filler words like "like", "um", and "you know". Her voice sounded more conversational than authoritative. After the first topic, the moderator cued a transition. Sonia jumped in, saying, "Okay, moving on to the next thing..."

She noticed other candidates speaking confidently and using precise business vocabulary. Their clear arguments were built logically, and they cited data to support their claims. While in disagreement, they politely stated, "While I see the merit in that view, I would like to offer an alternative perspective...". In comparison, Sonia felt her informal phrasing weakened her presence. She made a mental note to work on this. After the discussion, Sonia asked for candidate feedback from observers. They confirmed she needed improvement in language and etiquette to sound polished and professional.

Sonia found a speech coach to practice discussions. She focused on avoiding slang and using more articulate language. When rehearsing, she dressed professionally to get in the right mindset. Gradually, this felt more natural. She also read industry journals to

expand her business vocabulary. In Sonia's next group discussion, she consciously applied her refined verbal skills. She modulated her tone to sound authoritative yet warm. Her arguments flowed logically, and she cited facts to support her opinions. She noticed others nodding as she made points. Afterwards, the speech coach and Sonia both noted a clear improvement. With this experience boosting her confidence, Sonia felt ready to excel in any future group discussion using proper etiquette and language.

Key Themes

Group Discussion, Preparation for GD, Strategies for effective GD, Constructive techniques of GD

Discussion

2.5.1 Group Discussions (GD)

Group discussions are a common part of the recruitment process for jobs and higher education programs. They allow evaluators to assess a candidate's communication skills, critical thinking, and ability to work in a team. Strong group discussion skills are essential for emerging professionals. This comprehensive guide covers proven strategies to prepare for and excel in group discussions. 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:** Group discussions may have 6-12 participants and last 15-30 minutes. There are often evaluators observing.
2. **Set Up:** Participants may be given a topic/situation and some preparation time before the discussion starts.
3. **Flow:** The tone is conversational. Participants express their views and opinions backed by logic. There is an ex-

change of ideas between participants.

4. **Assessment:** Participants are evaluated on communication, content, analytical thinking, problem-solving, cooperation, leadership, listenership, group behaviour and more.

2.5.2 Preparing for Group Discussions

Thorough preparation is key to being confident during group discussions:

5. **Build Knowledge:** Keep up to date with current affairs, issues in your field, and broad themes like economics, society, ethics, technology, etc.
6. **Organise your thoughts:** For common topics, outline 2-3 key ideas you can discuss and relevant examples or data points to cite.
7. **Practice aloud:** Choose a topic and vocalise your ideas and speech out loud. Get feedback on content and delivery.
8. **Brush up soft skills:** Review com-

munication techniques, teamwork, time management, persuasive speech and active listening.

9. **Know evaluation criteria:** Understand exactly how reviewers assess group discussion performance.
10. **Visualise success:** Envision yourself engaging thoughtfully and maintain a positive attitude. This instils confidence.

2.5.3 Participating Group Discussion

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

2.5.3.1 Initiating the Discussion

When beginning a group discussion, first listen carefully to the exact topic or situation presented and any instructions from the coordinators. 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.

2.5.3.2 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 before making a point, for instance, "Linking with the point on conservation, another perspective is..." Express your ideas concisely and stay on topic, avoiding rambling tangents. 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.

2.5.3.3 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.

2.5.3.4 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 didn't quite finish my thought." Should the discussion go 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.

2.5.3.5 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. 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.

2.5.3.6 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.

2.5.3.7 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.

2.5.3.8 Some Frequent Errors That Hurt Performance

Group discussions can easily go awry 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 sidetracked 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.

2.5.3.9 Field-Specific Preparation

Certain fields focus on specific areas in group discussions. Tailor preparation accordingly:

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

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.

2.5.4 Language Etiquette for Group Discussions

Use professional, 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.

2.5.5 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. 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.

Recap

- ▶ Thorough preparation is critical - build knowledge of current affairs, organise thoughts beforehand, practice out loud, review soft skills, and know evaluation criteria
- ▶ Actively listen, initiate discussion if needed, communicate ideas clearly, engage in thoughtful debate, use proper etiquette, cooperate with the team, and synthesise discussion
- ▶ Objectively evaluate yourself after and get observer feedback to improve. Refine approaches over time with practice
- ▶ Adopt helpful mindsets - intelligent debate, demonstrating abilities, flexibility, preparation, curiosity, respectful assertiveness
- ▶ Avoid mistakes like failing to listen, lacking preparation, poor delivery, arrogance, tangents, and unsupported arguments. Master language etiquette

Objective Questions

1. What do group discussions assess in candidates?
2. How should you start a group discussion if no one else initiates it?
3. What should you do to prepare for group discussions?
4. How should you communicate your ideas in a group discussion?
5. How can you contribute positively to the debate?
6. How should you handle interruptions during a discussion?
7. What is important for concluding a discussion effectively?
8. What should you do after a group discussion?
9. What is an example of field-specific preparation?
10. How can you improve group discussion skills over time?

Answers

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Abilities | 6. Politely interject |
| 2. Initiate yourself. | 7. Summary |
| 3. Practice | 8. Self-evaluate |
| 4. Clearly | 9. Tailor to field |
| 5. Build on others' points | 10. Continued practice |

Assignments

1. What are some key features of group discussions?
2. How can you prepare effectively for a group discussion?
3. What communication techniques should you use when presenting your perspective in a group discussion?
4. How can you demonstrate good teamwork and conduct during a group discussion?
5. What mindsets are important to cultivate for productive group discussions?

Suggested Reading

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Unit 6

Public Speaking

Learning Outcomes

The components in this unit are aligned with the following learning outcomes:

- ▶ analyse the audience and the tailor speech content accordingly.
- ▶ organise ideas and research into a structured, cohesive speech.
- ▶ implement rhetorical techniques and vivid examples to engage listeners.
- ▶ practice and refine verbal and nonverbal delivery to present confidently.

Prerequisites

Public speaking is an invaluable skill for learners to develop. Being able to convey information and ideas to an audience clearly has countless benefits. It allows learners to inform their peers by explaining concepts or processes. Persuasive public speaking enables learners to influence others' perspectives or motivate action. Developing strong presentation abilities also builds confidence to find one's voice and actively participate in class. Moreover, public speaking is highly advantageous in many careers, as effective communication and presentation skills are prized across industries.

However, public speaking is a craft requiring practice and dedication to master. Many experience anxiety or stage fright at first. But this guide provides tips to become a poised, engaging speaker. It outlines the key steps in developing a speech, from analysing your audience to extensive preparation and practice to skilful delivery. Examples demonstrate how to craft an organised speech with an impactful introduction and conclusion. Techniques for connecting with listeners, using rhetorical devices, vivid descriptions, and inclusive language are suggested. By following proven methods to develop speech content and confident delivery, learners can overcome nerves and succeed at public speaking.

Key Themes

Audience, Research, Organisation, Rhetoric, Delivery, Gestures, Practice.

2.6.1 Introduction

Public speaking is the process of speaking to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence, or entertain the listeners. It is one of the most useful and important skills for students to develop, as it allows you to clearly share ideas, persuade others, and make a positive impression. In this unit, we will cover the basics of public speaking and provide tips, examples, and practice activities to help you become a confident, engaging speaker.

2.6.2 The Importance of Public Speaking

Being an effective public speaker provides many valuable benefits that can serve you well throughout school, your career, and life in general. Firstly, it allows you to clearly inform others by explaining concepts, ideas, processes or other information you want to convey. For example, an instructor telling students about the requirements and expectations of an assignment enables clear communication of the goals, structure, resources available, and assessment criteria. The students comprehend what is expected of them and can complete the work successfully. Other situations where informative public speaking is useful include employee orientations, training seminars, educational lectures, and community meetings. Any time you need to ensure an audience understands something fully, public speaking is an impactful way to achieve that goal.

Additionally, public speaking enables you to influence others persuasively. It is a powerful tool for convincing an audience to agree with your position on a topic or issue or mo-

tivating them to take a particular course of action that you recommend. For instance, a charity organisation could deliver a persuasive speech to prompt the audience to donate or volunteer. A political candidate uses public speaking to sway voters to support them in an upcoming election. Attempting to convince peers to get vaccinated against a virus or making a sales pitch to potential customers also involves using public speaking skills to change minds and behaviour. The ability to compose logical, evidence-based arguments and appeal to emotions allows public speakers to gain buy-in to their agenda. Through eloquent, persuasive oratory, audiences have been moved to take up causes, change policies, or buy products throughout history.

Furthermore, public speaking serves to inspire and motivate those listening. Uplifting speeches about achieving one's potential, following dreams, or overcoming adversity can galvanise people to take action. Public speakers like Martin Luther King Jr. and Winston Churchill have delivered iconic motivational speeches. Today, commencement speakers encourage graduates to change the world as they embark on a new phase of life. Coaches inspire sports teams before big games. Business leaders rally employees around a vision. There are endless examples of how public speaking can passionately motivate others to pursue success, meaning, or causes bigger than self-interest. The choice of inspiring stories, visionary language, and confident delivery lifts audience members' sights to what is possible.

In addition, developing public speaking skills builds confidence to speak up in groups and share your thoughts. Those new to public speaking often fear judgment or embarrass-

ment if they make mistakes. However, with practice, you gain poise and assurance that allows you to contribute confidently in class, meetings, and discussions. You learn tools to translate nervous energy into excitement to present. Your ideas will be heard and respected when you speak clearly and authoritatively. The initial discomfort of public speaking quickly transforms into increased comfort in engaging groups.

Moreover, public speaking is invaluable in many careers. Fields like business, politics, education, law, and communications regularly require presenting to groups as part of the job. Executives explain company direction to employees. Politicians address constituencies. Professors lecture students. Lawyers argue before juries. Marketers pitch to customers. Clear, confident public communication skills are highly valued across industries. Those able to inform, persuade, motivate and connect through public speaking have a distinct advantage in reaching leadership roles. The in-demand soft skills open doors throughout school and professional life.

Thus, mastering public speaking is invaluable. It enables you to convey information clearly, convince others to see your perspective or take action, inspire people to pursue ambitious goals, build confidence to find your voice in groups, and advance career aspirations. Public speaking powers some of the greatest influential moments in human history, from Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech to Steve Jobs' product launches. While public speaking may seem intimidating at first, dedication to the craft allows you to use this mighty skill to share ideas, lead change, and accomplish goals. Public speaking benefits you in school, work, and life by enabling you to engage audiences and make an impact. It is an essential skill for expression, leadership, and success.

2.6.3 The Speech Process

Delivering a strong speech requires careful preparation and execution. Let's examine the key steps:

1. Analyse your audience - Consider demographics, knowledge level, and interest in the topic to tailor your speech accordingly. For example, if giving a talk about financial planning to college students, recognise they likely have limited budgets and knowledge about investing. Focus on budgeting tips and the basics of compound interest rather than complex investment strategies.

2. Research your topic - Investigate thoroughly to understand key information and perspectives. Cite sources. If speaking about the benefits of exercise, research studies about physical health, mental health, longevity, and quality of life benefits. Quote statistics and doctors to establish expertise. For a speech on a historical event, study reputable sources about causes and outcomes from both sides.

3. Organise your ideas - Decide on a purpose and structure. Outline main points and supporting information. Determine if the speech is to inform, persuade, motivate or pay tribute. Then, group related ideas in structured sections. For a motivational speech, have sections on adversity you've overcome, your vision, and how the audience can achieve their potential. Signal transitions between sections.

4. Craft an introduction - Open with an engaging hook to interest the audience. Share a shocking fact or story. Ask a thought-provoking question. Overview of your topic and main ideas: "Today, I will inform you about three learning strategies to retain course information and perform better on exams."

5. Develop the body - Elaborate on main

points. Provide relevant information, examples, and statistics. Use transitions between points. "The first strategy is spaced repetition. Research shows studying info over time in spaced intervals boosts retention. For example, I re-review math formulas every few days up until the test."

6. Construct a conclusion - Summarise key ideas and reinforce your purpose. End memorably. "In closing, applying spaced repetition, active recall testing, and teaching others are proven study strategies that will help you retain and apply knowledge. Use these methods to maximise learning and ace your next exam!"

7. Prepare delivery - Practice extensively to smooth transitions and polish your verbal and nonverbal delivery. Time yourself. Enunciate clearly. Repeat challenging phrases. Add notes to pause for emphasis. Rehearse gestures and movement. Videotape a practice run to refine areas needing improvement.

Following this speech preparation process will result in an organised, impactful speech tailored to your audience and purpose. Analysing the audience and conducting thorough research inform speech construction. Carefully organising ideas in sections makes complex topics understandable. An engaging intro draws interest. Transitions connect the main points clearly covered in the body. Finally, a memorable conclusion reiterates the core message. Extensive practice polishes verbal and nonverbal delivery. Applying this systematic preparation approach allows you to develop and present powerful speeches.

2.6.4 Public Speaking Tips and Techniques

Making a strong connection with your

audience is critical for an impactful speech. As you speak, maintain frequent eye contact. Scan the room, looking directly at audience members for a few seconds at a time. This helps convey confidence and authority while also making each person feel engaged and included. But be sure to distribute your gaze - staring too long at any one person can feel uncomfortable and awkward.

Use natural, purposeful gestures and movement to highlight important points. Open gestures with your palms facing the audience can draw them in. Lean forward slightly when making a key argument. Walking around the presentation space can add energy and dynamics. But limit fidgeting, pacing, repetitive motions or ticks, which can be distracting. Keep your movements smooth and thoughtful.

Vary your vocal delivery to keep the audience tuned in. Avoid a flat, monotonous tone by changing your speech speed, volume, and pitch. Slow down and lower your volume to emphasise critical information. Raise your volume and pick up the pace when sharing exciting examples. Pause briefly after making an important point, allowing the audience to reflect on what you've said before continuing. Vocal variety adds articulation and emotion that keep your speech compelling.

Limit your use of detailed note cards. It's useful to have reminders of key points or data to reference. But rely more on an outline, using notes sparingly as prompts, not full sentences to read word-for-word. Too much time checking notes can disconnect you from the audience. Glancing down frequently can also undermine your confidence and enthusiasm. Use notes as reminders, but maintain a conversational, engaging tone.

Make the speech relatable and inclusive using "you" and "we" language. Referring to

“you” helps the audience feel you’re speaking directly to them. Using “we” unites you with the listeners, building a sense of solidarity and community. This inclusive language draws the audience in as active participants, not just passive listeners. They’ll be more receptive when they feel part of the conversation.

Humour can humanise you and connect with the audience - but use it judiciously. Lighthearted jokes or anecdotes can warm up a crowd and make you seem approachable. But avoid overdoing it with too much humour or jokes unrelated to your point, which can undermine your professionalism and seriousness. Keep humour brief, infrequent, and tied to your content.

Address audience objections preemptively in your content. If you anticipate concerns, questions or counterarguments, tackle them upfront. This shows you’re thoughtful, self-aware, and have solid reasoning. Audiences will tune out if left thinking you’re ignoring obvious holes in your argument. Bringing up objections on your terms also prevents derailing Q&A later.

Use rhetorical techniques like alliteration, repetition, and inclusive language to boost engagement. Techniques like rhyme and alliteration make speech memorable through sound devices. Repeating key phrases firmly implants them in the audience’s mind. Inclusive language with words like “we” and “our” makes listeners feel included in your message. These tactics grab attention, helping the audience retain and buy into your content.

Share vivid examples and stories to illustrate your points and make them more relatable and memorable. Use descriptive language to paint a detailed scene for the audience. Share concrete names, places and emotions. Plot out a short story structure when illustrat-

ing an event, with characters, setting, conflict and resolution. Vivid examples with sensory details and a narrative arc make your speech tangible, personable and unforgettable.

Summarise your key points at the conclusion, tying back to your introduction. Brief the audience on your main takeaways and arguments at the end. Link these concepts back to what you initially promised in your introduction. Reminding the audience of central themes provides cohesion. End with a call to action or compelling statement, motivating the audience to apply what you’ve shared.

With practice and diligent preparation, you can master public speaking. Implement techniques like maintaining audience eye contact, effective use of gestures and vocal variety, weaving in rhetorical devices and vivid examples, and cohesive structuring. Keep refining your speech content and delivery through consistent practice and feedback. With these strategies, you can engage any audience and make your speech memorable.

2.6.6 Sample Outline of Speech

Below is an outline and example speech demonstrating good public speaking practices:

Introduction

Provocative question: How many of you have felt nervous before giving a speech? I know I have many times.

Overview: Today, I’ll discuss common public speaking fears, how to manage them, and strategies to become a confident presenter.

Reason to listen: You’ll learn helpful tips to succeed in public speaking, useful throughout school and your career.

Body

I. Common public speaking fears

- Reasons some find speaking frightening: stage fright, judgment from the audience, embarrassment if mistakes are made.
- Share a story illustrating nervousness before the first big speech.
- Explain how these fears are normal and how to reframe anxiety as excitement.

II. How to manage public speaking nervousness

- Thorough preparation and practice are key to minimising anxiety.
- Focus on your message, not trying to be perfect. Pauses and slip-ups are okay!
- Imagine the audience is supportive. They want you to do well.
- The anecdote about calming nerves before a recent class presentation.

III. Strategies to become a confident speaker.

- Know your material very well. Internalise key points.

- Visualise giving a smooth, successful speech. Positive thinking builds confidence.
- Gain experience. Volunteer to speak up in class and at other opportunities.
- Request feedback to improve. Audience insights help identify strengths/weaknesses.

Conclusion

- **Summary:** It is normal to feel anxious about public speaking, but techniques exist to manage it. With preparation and practice, you can become an effective speaker.
- **Closing remark:** You can engage audiences and share your ideas. These pointers will empower you as a public speaker moving forward.

This example outlines a clear structure with an engaging intro, a well-supported body, and a memorable conclusion. Personal stories and examples help connect with the audience. The sample speech features vocal variety, rhetoric, and solid delivery practices. Follow a similar model in your public speaking preparation and presentation.

Let us look at a sample speech in the following:

How many of you have felt a little nervous before having to give a big speech? I know I certainly have many times. Public speaking can be intimidating. Today, I want to talk about some of the common fears people have about public speaking, strategies for managing those fears, and tips to become a more confident presenter. My goal is that you'll learn some helpful advice to succeed at public speaking throughout your education and career.

First, let's talk about some of the reasons public speaking makes people nervous. Stage fright is very real - being up in front of an audience can be scary at first. There may

also be fear of judgment or embarrassment if you make mistakes. I still remember how anxious I felt before giving my first big speech in high school. My hands were shaking, and I kept stumbling over my words during the practice sessions. But I've learned those feelings are very normal, and you can reframe that nervous energy as excitement and motivation to connect with your audience.

Managing anxiety around public speaking is possible with the right techniques. Thorough preparation and practice are key to minimising nerves. Focus on sharing your message rather than trying to be perfect. Pauses and small slip-ups are okay! Picture your audience as supportive - they want to see you succeed up there. I gave a recent presentation in class where I felt much calmer visualising friendly, smiling faces eager to hear my speech.

Finally, let's discuss some strategies to become a truly confident public speaker. Know your material backwards and forwards, with key points thoroughly internalised. Visualise giving a smooth, successful speech to build up your confidence. Seek out opportunities to gain experience speaking, whether by volunteering in class or at other events. Ask for feedback after presentations to learn where your strengths and weaknesses lie.

Thus, it's perfectly normal to feel some fear around public speaking, but there are effective techniques to manage anxiety. With ample preparation and practice, you can grow into a skilled, confident presenter. Next time you have to give a speech, try implementing some of the tips we went over today. I'm willing to bet you'll notice a real improvement in your comfort level. Remember, you have so much to share with audiences - these pointers can empower you as a public speaker both now and moving forward in your life.

Thank you.

Recap

- ▶ Analyse audience demographics, knowledge, and interests.
- ▶ Research the topic thoroughly using reputable sources.
- ▶ Organise speech purposefully with a clear structure.
- ▶ Craft an engaging introduction and conclusion.
- ▶ Develop main points with examples and statistics.
- ▶ Use rhetoric, varied tone, and inclusive language.
- ▶ Make eye contact and purposeful gestures.
- ▶ Limit reliance on notes.
- ▶ Rehearse extensively; refine and polish.
- ▶ Call to action motivates the application.

Objective Questions

1. What should you research thoroughly before giving a speech?
2. What are two purposes of an effective introduction?
3. What helps make your speech relatable?
4. How can you connect with your audience?
5. How should you mostly use note cards?
6. What makes a speech memorable?
7. What builds confidence as a speaker?
8. What should you focus on rather than perfection?
9. How can you motivate listeners to act?
10. What helps minimize speech anxiety?

Answers

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Topic | 6. Rhetoric |
| 2. Engage, overview | 7. Practice |
| 3. Examples | 8. Message |
| 4. Eye contact | 9. Call to action |
| 5. Prompts | 10. Preparation |

Assignments

1. Give three tips for minimising nervousness when giving a speech.
2. What are two ways to craft an impactful conclusion to your speech?
3. How would you organise a motivational speech encouraging people to pursue their dreams? Give at least three main points.
4. What research would you conduct if giving an informative speech about renewable energy? List 2-3 sources.
5. What three strategies can you use to ensure your speech content is engaging and relatable for the audience?

Suggested Reading

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2. Niedermeyer, Fred C., and Linda Oliver. “*The Development of Young Children’s Dramatic and Public Speaking Skills.*” *The Elementary School Journal*, vol. 73, no. 2, 1972, pp. 95–100. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1001067>.
3. Carnegie, Dale. *The Art of Public Speaking*. Diamond Pocket, 2018.
4. Carnegie, Dale. *How to Develop Self-Confidence and Improve Public Speaking*. Jaico Publishing, 2019.

MODEL QUESTION PAPER SETS

B21EG03DC Introduction to Literary Genres II: Prose and Fiction

B21EG02LC Literature and the Contemporary World

B21EG01SE English For Business and Professional Communication



MODEL QUESTION PAPER- SET- A

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

THIRD SEMESTER - BA ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

B21EG03DC

**INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY GENRES II: PROSE AND FICTION
(CBCS - UG)**

2022-23 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

Section A

Answer any ten questions in a word or sentence each. Each question carries 1 mark.

10X1 = 10 Marks)

1. Mention any primary characteristic of a personal essay?
2. How long does the banker agree to keep the young lawyer imprisoned in Anton Chekov's "The Bet"?
3. What is the main theme of Francis Bacon's essay "Of Studies"?
4. Which literary device is prominently used in Camus's speech?
5. What literary term describes the narrator's position and attitude toward the story being told?
6. Where does the story in "Misguided Guide" primarily take place?
7. Who is the young boy who used to fish with the old man in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*?
8. Name the eldest Bennet sister who initially appears to be the most sensible and reserved in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.
9. Which character in *Pride and Prejudice*, famously declares, "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife"?
10. Which baseball player's poster does the old man in *The Old Man and the Sea* have in his shack?



11. How does the narrator kill the old man in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart"?
12. During which historical event is the story "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" set?
13. How does the story "The Unicorn in the Garden" end?
14. How does the Parson make money from his hobby in Roald Dahl's "The Parson's Pleasure"?
15. What is the name of the wealthy bachelor who arrives in Meryton and catches the attention of the Bennet sisters in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*?

Section B

Answer any five questions in one or two sentences each. Each question carries 2 marks.

(5X2 =10 Marks)

16. What is the primary purpose of an expository essay.
17. How does setting contribute to the mood of a story?
18. How does Lamb describe the discovery of the roast pig?
19. What is the main argument presented by Judy Brady in her essay, "Why I Want a Wife"?
20. What is the significance of Jim's pocket watch and Della's hair in the story, "The Gift of the Magi"?
21. How does Ngugi wa Thiong'o view the role of language in literature and society?
22. How does the story "The Bet" comment on the value of material wealth?
23. What is the central conflict in the story "The Tell-Tale Heart"?
24. What is the primary concern of Mrs. Bennet in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*?
25. What is the significance of the old man's struggle with the fish in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* ?

Section C

Answer any six questions in half a page each. Each question carries 5 marks.

(6X5 = 30 Marks)

26. Describe the character of Santiago, the old man, in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*.
27. What is an essay? What are the different types of essays?
28. What is the message in Albert Camus' Nobel Prize acceptance speech?
29. What is the role of gossip and reputation in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*?

30. Describe any two kinds of prose writing.
31. Describe the narrator's motivation for committing the murder in the story. What drives them to kill the old man in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart"?
32. Analyse the character of Cyril Boggis in Roald Dahl's story, "The Parson's Pleasure."
33. How does Narayan use humor and satire to explore the flaws of the protagonist's character in "Misguided Guide"?
34. Discuss the symbolism of the sea in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*.
35. Analyse the theme in O. Henry's story, "The Gift of the Magi."
36. How does Bacon's essay, "Of Studies", resonate with modern views on education and self-improvement?
37. How does Lamb explore the idea of accidental discoveries and pleasures in his essay, "A Dissertation upon Roast Pig"?

Section D

Answer any two questions in three pages each. Each question carries 10 marks.

(2X10 =20 Marks)

38. Evaluate Gardiner's observations on the act of shaking hands as a social custom in his essay, "On Shaking Hands". How does he use this seemingly simple gesture to comment on human nature and society?
39. Explore the character development of Elizabeth Bennet throughout the novel *Pride and Prejudice*.
40. Reflect on the importance of interview as a means of understanding an author's intentions and the cultural context of the work. How does the interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o shed light on his literary legacy?
41. Discuss the use of irony in O. Henry's story, "The Gift of the Magi". How does situational irony contribute to the story's impact and message?



MODEL QUESTION PAPER- SET- B

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

THIRD SEMESTER - BA ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

B21EG03DC

INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY GENRES II: PROSE AND FICTION

(CBCS - UG)

2022-23 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

Section A

Answer any ten questions in a word or sentence each. Each question carries 1 mark.

(10X1 = 10 Marks)

1. Name an essayist known for humorous essays.
2. What does the parson collect and sell in the story “The Parson's Pleasure”?
3. Why did the Chinese boy burn down the house in the essay “A Dissertation upon Roast Pig”?
4. How does Judy Brady use humor to highlight “Why I Want a Wife”?
5. Which literary prize did Ernest Hemingway win for *The Old Man and the Sea*?
6. What is the wife's response to her husband's encounter with the unicorn in James Thurber's “The Unicorn in the Garden”?
7. In which time period is *Pride and Prejudice* set?
8. Ngugi wa Thiong'o is known for his contributions to which literary movement?
9. What social class does Mr. Darcy belong to in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*?
10. How many days does the old man spend at sea during his epic battle with the fish in *The Old Man and the Sea*?
11. What sound drives the narrator to confess the murder in Edgar Allan Poe's “The Tell-Tale Heart”?



12. What does the lawyer request in Anton Chekov's "The Bet"?
13. What is the consequence of the Parson's actions at the end of Roald Dahl's "The Parson's Pleasure"?
14. Who is Lady Catherine de Bourgh in *Pride and Prejudice*?
15. What does Santiago call the marlin he catches in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*?

Section B

Answer any five questions in one or two sentences each. Each question carries 2 marks.

(5X2 = 10 Marks)

16. What is the underlying message in "On Shaking Hands" by A.G. Gardiner?
17. List two benefits of reading books according to Bacon.
18. What is a descriptive essay? What are its main features?
19. What is the central theme or message of R.K. Narayan's essay, "Misguided Guide"?
20. What motivates the husband's actions in the story "The Unicorn in the Garden"?
21. Discuss the role of deception in Roald Dahl's story, "The Parson's Pleasure".
22. Describe Farquhar's escape attempt in Ambrose Bierce's story, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"?
23. What is the significance of the title of Ruskin Bond's story, "The Eyes Are Not Here"?
24. What is the main social event in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*?
25. What is the central theme of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*?

Section C

Answer any six questions in half a page each. Each question carries 5 marks.

(6X5 = 30 Marks)

26. Discuss the significance of social class in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and how it influences the characters' decisions and relationships.
27. What is the main theme of A.G. Gardiner's essay "On Shaking Hands"?
28. How does Santiago's struggle with the marlin reflect the theme of determination in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*?
29. In what ways does an expository essay aim to inform or explain?
30. How does Narayan depict the clash between tradition and modernity in "Misguided Guide"?

31. Compare and contrast first-person and third-person points of view in short fiction.
32. What are the different types of love depicted in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*?
33. What is Ngugi wa Thiong'o's view of the influence of colonialism on African literature.
34. How does Bierce create a sense of impending doom and tension in the opening of the story "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"?
35. How is gossip and reputation presented in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*?
36. Discuss the theme of sacrifice as portrayed in O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi".
37. Compare and contrast the lawyer's perspective on life before and after his self-imposed isolation in Anton Chekov's "The Bet".

Section D

Answer any two questions in three pages each. Each question carries 10 marks.

(2X10 =20 Marks)

38. Explore the role of character development in short fiction. How do well-developed characters contribute to the reader's engagement with the story?
39. Consider Santiago's journey in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* as a heroic quest.
40. Analyse the role of irony in Anton Chekov's "The Bet".
41. Explore the use of satire and irony in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.



MODEL QUESTION PAPER- SET- A

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

THIRD SEMESTER - LANGUAGE CORE (ENGLISH)

FOR ALL UG PROGRAMMES

B21EG02LC

LITERATURE AND THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

(CBCS - UG)

2022-23 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

Section A

Answer any ten questions in a word or sentence each. Each question carries 1 mark.

(10X1 = 10 Marks)

1. What is the watchword of the 21st century, according to Shashi Tharoor?
2. What is the central theme of Maya Angelou's poem "Still I Rise"?
3. What is the significance of the title of Vijayarajamallika's poem "Injuries"?
4. What is the literal meaning of "Ginni"?
5. What type of creature is Moxon's creation in Ambrose Bierce's "Moxon's Master"?
6. Whose birth is mentioned in Malala Yousafzai's "A Daughter is Born"?
7. Which instrument is predominantly used in John Lennon's poem "Imagine"?
8. What is "strong AI", according to Gareth Southwell?
9. What does Sarah Joseph question through her short story, "The Masculine of Virgin"?
10. What was the age of Greta Thunberg when she delivered the speech?
11. What is the source of tension between characters in "Blackout"?
12. Who is given the nickname "Ginni" in Rabindranath Tagore's "Housewife"?
13. In her speech, Thunberg mentions the phrase "Our house is on fire." What does this phrase symbolise?



14. What are colonies?
15. What was the occasion for Nehru's speech, "A Tryst with Destiny" ?

Section B

Answer any five questions in one or two sentences each. Each question carries 2 marks.

(5X2 =10 Marks)

16. What is the central theme of Margaret Atwood's "The Moment"?
17. What is the significance of the recurring phrase "Still I Rise" in the Maya Angelou's poem?
18. What does the term "Blackout" refer to in Roger Mais' story?
19. What does Lennon describe as a "brotherhood of man"?
20. How does Southwell describe the concept of "the Singularity" in AI?
21. How does Malala Yousafzai's narrative explore the birth of a daughter in a patriarchal society?
22. What is the significance of the term "tryst with destiny" in Nehru's speech?
23. How does Greta Thunberg describe the consequences of climate change in her speech?
24. How does Moxon's attitude towards his invention change over time in Ambrose Bierce's "Moxon's Master"?
25. How do multinational corporations affect the livelihoods of the working class, according to Pablo Neruda?

Section C

Answer any six questions in half a page each. Each question carries 5 marks.

(6X5 = 30 Marks)

26. What is the role of youth activism, according to Greta Thunberg?
27. What are some real-world examples of narrow AI that Southwell discusses in his work?
28. Comment on the central theme of Vijayarajamallika's poem "Injuries"?
29. How does John Lennon's "Imagine" reflect his vision of a utopian world?
30. How does "The Moment" comment on human existence or the human condition?
31. Examine the theme of authority and oppression within the poem "The United Fruit Company."
32. What literary technique does Ambrose Bierce employ to create suspense and tension in the story "Moxon's Master"?

33. How does Sarah Joseph explore issues of identity and gender in her story "The Masculine of Virgin"?
34. How is the theme of technological hubris portrayed in Ambrose Bierce's story "Moxon's Master,"?
35. How does Atwood use symbolism in her poem "The Moment"?
36. In what way does Shashi Tharoor underscore the significance of education and accurate information in addressing and mitigating conflicts?
37. Analyse the role of hope and resilience in Malala Yousafzai's "A Daughter is Born".

Section D

Answer any two questions in three pages each. Each question carries 10 marks.

(2X10 =20 Marks)

38. Discuss the ethical concerns raised by Gareth Southwell regarding Artificial Intelligence.
39. Examine "Imagine" as an anthem for peace and its enduring popularity.
40. Consider the relevance of "The Moment" in today's society. Can the themes and insights from the poem be applied to contemporary issues or experiences?
41. Discuss the global relevance of Malala Yousafzai's message in "A Daughter is Born" and her influence on advocacy for women's rights.



MODEL QUESTION PAPER- SET- B

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

THIRD SEMESTER - LANGUAGE CORE (ENGLISH)

FOR ALL UG PROGRAMMES

B21EG02LC

LITERATURE AND THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

(CBCS - UG)

2022-23 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

Section A

Answer any ten of the following questions in one word or sentence.

(10×1=10)

1. Who wrote the poem "The Moment"?
2. What realisation did man have, in the poet's own words, while writing "The Moment"?
3. Who coined the phrase "American Century" for the 20th century?
4. In which language does the poet Vijayarajamallika mostly write?
5. Before being a part of Pakistan, what was Swat?
6. What occurs to the mother in the short story "The Masculine of Virgin" after she peeps through the daughter's room's keyhole?
7. Who created the supercomputer Deep Blue?
8. What is the name of the book Greta Thunberg co-authored?
9. What aspect of Malala's culture is seen as important by their tribe?
10. How does Greta Thunberg characterise her style of thinking?
11. What is the main theme of Maya Angelou's poem "Still I Rise"?
12. What does the postmortem report in the short story "The Masculine of Virgin" reveal?
13. According to Thunberg, what is the black and white approach to tackling climate change?



14. What is the tone of the poem "Still I Rise"?
15. Which tribe did Malala's ancestors belong to?

Section B

Answer any five of the following questions in one or two sentences. (5×2=10)

16. What does Moxon mean by "life" in "Moxon's Master"?
17. What occurred when the trumpet was blown in the poem "The United Fruit Company"?
18. What is the setting of the short story "The Masculine of Virgin"?
19. Who was Alan Turing?
20. What does the line "Does my sassiness upset you" signify in the poem "Still I Rise"?
21. What is the clash that Tharoor highlights in the global context?
22. What are the three things that the lyricist of the poem "Imagine" wants people to imagine?
23. What happened to Moxon at the conclusion of "Moxon's Master"?
24. What is the best way to combat terrorism, according to Shashi Tharoor?
25. What does the line "I am the dream and the hope of the slave" signify in the poem "Still I Rise"?

Section C

Answer any six of the following questions in one paragraph. (6×5 = 30)

26. Write a short note on people's view of their control over the natural world as presented in the poem "The Moment."
27. What does the speech, "Almost Everything is Black and White" by Greta Thunberg highlight?
28. What is the theme of Vijayarajamallika's poem "Injuries"?
29. Briefly describe the narrative style used in Roger Mais' short story "Blackout".
30. Explain the relevance and impact of the speech "A Tryst with Destiny" by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.
31. What are the positive aspects of globalisation discussed in the speech "Globalisation and the Human Imagination" by Shashi Tharoor.
32. Write a short analysis of Malala Yousafzai's "A Daughter is Born".
33. Explain the Turing test.

34. Explain how Sarah Joseph discusses the themes of gender and family dynamics in the short story “The Masculine of Virgin.”
35. Explain the three main issues discussed in the poem “Imagine” by John Lennon.
36. Briefly explain the central themes in “Blackout” by Roger Mais.
37. Write a short note on the historical context in which “A Tryst with Destiny” by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru is delivered.

Section D

Answer any two of the following questions in 300 words. (2×10 = 20)

38. Explain how Tagore discusses the idea that negative reinforcement by the teacher creates a negative feeling and an adverse attitude towards teachers in the short story “Housewife.”
39. Discuss the irony in the title "Moxon's Master." What is the dual meaning of this title, and how does it relate to the story's themes and plot?
40. Analyse the poem “Still I Rise” as a poem of resilience against tyranny.
41. In “United Fruit Company,” Pablo Neruda criticises the actions and influence of multinational corporations in Latin America. Discuss how the poem serves as a powerful political and social commentary on the exploitation of these countries.



MODEL QUESTION PAPER- SET- A

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

THIRD SEMESTER - BA ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

B21EG01SE

ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

(CBCS - UG)

2022-23 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

Section A

Answer any ten of the following questions in one word or sentence. (10×1= 10)

1. What is communication called when it uses gestures and body language?
2. What are obstacles that disrupt communication called?
3. What has email largely replaced due to its speed and cost benefits?
4. What goes in the subject line of an email?
5. What element of body language shows approval or agreement?
6. What vocal technique involves speaking at an appropriate pace to engage listeners?
7. How are webinars conducted?
8. What should you avoid being on business calls?
9. What should the tone of a problem letter be?
10. What do goodwill messages express?
11. What is the intention of a sales letter?
12. What makes an advertisement effective?
13. What should you research before an interview?
14. What do group discussions assess in candidates?
15. What mindsets are important to cultivate for productive group discussions?



Section B

Answer any five of the following questions in one or two sentences. (5×2=10)

16. Why is inclusive language important in both personal and professional communication?
17. Give an example of information you should avoid including in a work email.
18. Why is too much text on presentation slides ineffective?
19. What is an advantage of webinars over in-person seminars?
20. How does rushing negatively impact telephone conversations?
21. How can one grab the reader's attention through a sales letter? Give two ways.
22. What are two ways to craft an impactful conclusion to a speech?
23. What makes a cover letter opening effective?
24. How can you make a first impression at a job interview?
25. What are two common errors that negatively impact group discussion performance?

Section C

Answer any six of the following questions in one paragraph. (6×5 = 30)

26. Discuss how understanding your audience is important before giving a presentation, and provide an example of how you would analyse an audience.
27. Explain what communication barriers are, and provide example of different types of barriers.
28. Compare formal and informal emails and explain when each is appropriate. Provide examples of situations suited to each.
29. Explain three tips for creating effective presentation slides using visuals.
30. Explain webinar etiquette and best practices for presenters and attendees. Give tips for each.
31. Explain telephone etiquette rules that are important for business calls. Give tips and explain why they matter.
32. Discuss the role circulars play in business communication. When are they used and why? Explain with an example.
33. Explain how to handle a customer complaint in a letter response appropriately. Provide an example.
34. Outline optimal formatting and content strategies for crafting an impressive cover letter. Provide an example.
35. Discuss strategies you can use during an interview to engage effectively. Give examples.
36. Analyse how proper language etiquette and tone can impact group discussion performance. Illustrate your explanation.

37. How can you make your speech relatable and memorable for the audience?

Section D

Answer any two of the following questions in 300 words.

(2×10 = 20)

38. Analyse the communication process, including encoding, transmitting, and decoding messages between a sender and receiver.
39. Explain how to write effective emails for different audiences and purposes like friends, colleagues, or strangers. Include best practices, etiquette, and examples.
40. Discuss the purpose, importance, and effective techniques for composing four common types of business correspondence: memos, circulars, notices, and agendas. Support with examples.
41. Analyse the key components, structure, and writing strategies for crafting professional sales letters, problem letters, goodwill messages, and advertisements. Illustrate with examples.



MODEL QUESTION PAPER- SET- B

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

THIRD SEMESTER - BA ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

B21EG01SE

ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

(CBCS - UG)

2022-23 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

Section A

Answer any ten of the following questions in one word or sentence.

(10×1= 10)

1. What is the process of interpreting a message called?
2. What is the medium used to convey a message called?
3. What kind of email has a fixed format?
4. What type of slide content quickly allows audiences to digest information?
5. What preparation technique ensures smooth and polished delivery?
6. What are webinars?
7. What should webinar attendees minimise?
8. What makes the customer feel that the work is in safe hands?
9. What helps the caller relax and communicate properly?
10. What is the clipped form of the word 'memorandum'?
11. What should be avoided in a problem letter?
12. What is a rejection letter useful for?
13. What does a press release communicate?
14. What should you do the day before an interview?
15. What mindsets are important to cultivate for productive group discussions?



Section B

Answer any five of the following questions in one or two sentences.

(5×2=10)

16. What is an example of non-verbal communication that could be used intentionally to enhance audience engagement during a classroom presentation?
17. Who should you refrain from sending very informal or humorous emails at the workplace?
18. How does body language impact communication during presentations?
19. What is a disadvantage of webinars compared to traditional seminars?
20. Why is voice tone important on telephone calls?
21. What are the two functions of a problem letter?
22. What research would you conduct if you are to give an informative speech about renewable energy?
23. What are the key sections to include in a resume?
24. What can you do during an interview to express interest and confidence?
25. Give two examples of field-specific preparation for group discussions.

Section C

Answer any six of the following questions in one paragraph.

(6×5 = 30)

26. Compare verbal and nonverbal communication, including one benefit of each.
27. Explain email etiquette tips you would give a new colleague when sending work emails. Give 2-3 examples.
28. Discuss how body language, gestures, and eye contact can be used effectively during presentations. Give specific examples.
29. Explain what live online discussions are, and their benefits for building community. Give examples.
30. Discuss useful phrases and techniques for effective telephone communication. Give examples.
31. Explain the purpose and importance of memos for internal business communication. Give an example scenario.
32. Analyse the key components and structure of an effective sales letter. Illustrate with an example component.
33. Discuss three key sections that should be included in an effective resume. Explain why each section is important.
34. Explain three ways you can minimise nervousness when giving a speech. Illustrate with examples.

35. Explain best practices for preparation and participation in group discussions. Provide examples.
36. How can public speaking skills benefit students?
37. How should you practice effectively to refine your public speaking skills?

Section D

Answer any two of the following questions in 300 words.

(2×10 = 20)

38. Discuss techniques for delivering engaging presentations, including preparation, visual aids, vocal delivery, and connecting with audiences. Give tips and examples.
39. Explain what webinars and live discussions are, including their formats, benefits, and effective practices. Contrast them with in-person interactions.
40. Discuss best practices for preparation, participation, and follow-up across the interview process to make a strong impression. Provide examples.
41. Analyse strategies for effective initiation, communication, teamwork, conclusion and follow-up in group discussions. Explain how to avoid common errors and demonstrate constructive techniques.

SGOU

സർവ്വകലാശാലാഗീതം

വിദ്യായാൽ സ്വതന്ത്രരാകണം
വിശ്വപൗരരായി മാറണം
ഗ്രഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം
ഗുരുപ്രകാശമേ നയിക്കണേ

കുതിരുട്ടിൽ നിന്നു ഞങ്ങളെ
സൂര്യവീഥിയിൽ തെളിക്കണം
സ്നേഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം
നീതിവൈജയന്തി പറണം

ശാസ്ത്രവ്യാപ്തിയെന്നുമേകണം
ജാതിഭേദമാകെ മാറണം
ബോധരശ്മിയിൽ തിളങ്ങുവാൻ
ജ്ഞാനകേന്ദ്രമേ ജ്വലിക്കണേ

കുറിപ്പ് ശ്രീകുമാർ

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English for Business and Professional Communication

COURSE CODE: B21EG01SE



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