



SATHYABAMA

**INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)**

Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by AICTE

www.sathyabama.ac.in

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

SYLLABUS – COMMUNICATION SKILLS – BP105T

BP105T	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	L	T	P	Credits	Total Marks
		2	0	0	2	50

Course Scope: This course will prepare the young pharmacy student to interact effectively with doctors, nurses, dentists, physiotherapists and other health workers. At the end of this course the student will get the soft skills set to work cohesively with the team as a team player and will add value to the pharmaceutical business.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course the student shall be able to

1. Understand the behavioral needs for a Pharmacist to function effectively in the areas of pharmaceutical operation
2. Communicate effectively (Verbal and Non Verbal)
3. Effectively manage the team as a team player
4. Develop interview skills
5. Develop Leadership qualities and essentials

Course content

UNIT – I

07 Hours

Communication Skills: Introduction, Definition, The Importance of Communication, The Communication Process – Source, Message, Encoding, Channel, Decoding, Receiver, Feedback, Context

Barriers to communication: Physiological Barriers, Physical Barriers, Cultural Barriers, Language Barriers, Gender Barriers, Interpersonal Barriers, Psychological Barriers, Emotional barriers

Perspectives in Communication: Introduction, Visual Perception, Language, Other factors affecting our perspective - Past Experiences, Prejudices, Feelings, Environment

UNIT – II

07 Hours

Elements of Communication: Introduction, Face to Face Communication – Tone of voice, Body Language (Non-Verbal Communication), Verbal Communication Physical Communication.

Communication Styles: Introduction, The Communication styles Matrix with example for each- Direct Communication style, Spirited Communication style, Systematic Communication style, Considerate Communication style.

UNIT – III

07 Hours

Basic Listening Skills: Introduction, Self-Awareness, Active Listening, Becoming an Active Listener, Listening in Difficult Situations.

Effective Written Communication: Introduction, When and When Not to Use Written Communication - Complexity of the Topic, Amount of Discussion' Required, Shades of Meaning, Formal Communication.

Writing Effectively: Subject Lines, Put the Main Point First, Know Your Audience, Organization of the Message

UNIT – IV

05 Hours

Interview Skills: Purpose of an interview, Do's and Dont's of an interview

Giving Presentations: Dealing with Fears, Planning your Presentation, Structuring Your Presentation, Delivering Your Presentation, Techniques of Delivery

UNIT – V

04 Hours

Group Discussion: Introduction, Communication skills in group discussion, Do's and Dont's of group discussion

Recommended Books: (Latest Edition)

1. Basic communication skills for Technology, Andreja. J. Ruther Ford, 2nd Edition, Pearson Education, 2011
2. Communication skills, Sanjay Kumar, Pushpalata, 1st Edition, Oxford Press, 2011
3. Organizational Behaviour, Stephen .P. Robbins, 1st Edition, Pearson, 2013
4. Brilliant- Communication skills, Gill Hasson, 1st Edition, Pearson Life, 2011
5. The Ace of Soft Skills: Attitude, Communication and Etiquette for success, GopalaSwamy Ramesh, 5th Edition, Pearson, 2013
6. Developing your influencing skills, Deborah Dalley, Lois Burton, Margaret, Greenhall, 1st Edition Universe of Learning LTD, 2010
7. Communication skills for professionals, Konar nira, 2nd Edition, New arrivals –PHI, 2011
8. Personality development and soft skills, Barun K Mitra, 1st Edition, Oxford Press, 2011
9. Soft skill for everyone, Butter Field, 1st Edition, Cengage Learning india pvt.ltd, 2011
10. Soft skills and professional communication, Francis Peters SJ, 1st Edition, McGraw Hill Education, 2011
11. Effective communication, John Adair, 4th Edition, Pan Mac Millan, 2009
12. Bringing out the best in people, Aubrey Daniels, 2nd Edition, Mc Graw Hill, 1999

**END SEMESTER EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER
PATTERN**

Max. Marks: 35

Exam Duration: 1.5 Hrs.

PART A : Long Answer question carry 10 marks answer any one out of two

10 Marks

PART B: Short Answer question each carry 5 marks answer any 5 out of seven

25 Marks



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COMMUNICATION SKILLS – BP105T
Course Materials

UNIT I

Communication (from Latin *communicare*, meaning "to share") is the act of conveying meanings from one entity or group to another through the use of mutually understood signs, symbols, and semiotic rules.

Everyone needs it and wants it, but what exactly is communication? Communication is the 'sharing' of information between two or more individuals or within the group to reach a common understanding. The word 'communication' comes from the Latin word *commūnicāre*, meaning 'to share'.

Communication Skills - The ability to convey information and ideas effectively. Communication skills allow you to understand and be understood by others. These can include but are not limited to effectively communicating ideas to others, actively listening in conversations, giving and receiving critical feedback and public speaking.

Communication skills are the abilities you use when giving and receiving different kinds of information. Some examples include communicating new ideas, feelings or even an update on your project. Communication skills involve listening, speaking, observing and empathizing. It is also helpful to understand the differences in how to communicate through face-to-face interactions, phone conversations and digital communications like email and social media.

Examples of communication skills

There are different types of communication skills you can learn and practice to help you become an effective communicator. Many of these skills work together making it important to practice communication skills in different contexts whenever possible.

Active listening

Active listening means paying close attention to the person who is speaking to you. People who are active listeners are well-regarded by their co-workers because of the attention and respect they offer others. While it seems simple, this is a skill that can be hard to develop and improve. You can be an active listener by focusing on the speaker, avoiding distractions like cell phones, laptops or other projects and by preparing questions, comments or ideas to thoughtfully respond.

Adapting your communication style to your audience

Different styles of communication are appropriate in different situations. To make the best use of your communication skills, it's important to consider your audience and the most effective format to communicate with them. For example, if you are communicating with a potential employer, it's better to send a formal email or call them on the phone. Depending on the situation, you may even need to send a formal, typed letter over other forms of communication. In the workplace, you may find it's easier to communicate complex information in person or via a video conference than in a long, dense email.

Friendliness

In friendships, characteristics such as honesty and kindness often foster trust and understanding. The same characteristics are important in workplace relationships. When you're working with others, approach your interactions with a positive attitude, keep an open mind and ask questions to help you understand where they're coming from. Small gestures such as asking someone how they're doing, smiling as they speak or offering praise for work well done can help you foster productive relationships with both colleagues and managers.

Confidence

In the workplace, people are more likely to respond to ideas that are presented with confidence. There are many ways to appear confident such as making eye contact when you're addressing someone, sitting up straight with your shoulders open and preparing ahead of time so your thoughts are polished. You'll find confident communication comes in handy not just on the job but during the job interview process as well.

Giving and receiving feedback

Strong communicators can accept critical feedback and provide constructive input to others. Feedback should answer questions, provide solutions or help strengthen the project or topic at hand.

Volume and clarity

When you're speaking, it's important to be clear and audible. Adjusting your speaking voice so you can be heard in a variety of settings is a skill and it's critical to communicating effectively. Speaking too loudly may be disrespectful or awkward in certain settings. If you're unsure, read the room to see how others are communicating.

There are four main types of communication we use on a daily basis: Verbal, nonverbal, written and visual. Let's take a look at each of these types of communication, why they are important and how you can improve them for success in your career.

Types of communication

There are several different ways we share information with one another. For example, you might use verbal communication when sharing a presentation with a group. You might use written communication when applying for a job or sending an email.

There are four main categories of communication styles including verbal, nonverbal, written and visual:

1. Verbal

Verbal communication is the use of language to transfer information through speaking or sign language. It is one of the most common types, often used during presentations, video conferences and phone calls, meetings and one-on-one conversations. Verbal communication is important because it is efficient. It can be helpful to support verbal communication with both nonverbal and written communication.

Here are a few steps you can take to develop your verbal communication skills:

- **Use a strong, confident speaking voice.** Especially when presenting information to a few or a group of people, be sure to use a strong voice so that everyone can easily hear you. Be confident when speaking so that your ideas are clear and easy for others to understand.
- **Use active listening.** The other side of using verbal communication is intently listening to and hearing others. Active listening skills are key when conducting a meeting, presentation or even when participating in a one-on-one conversation. Doing so will help you grow as a communicator.
- **Avoid filler words.** It can be tempting, especially during a presentation, to use filler words such as “um,” “like,” “so” or “yeah.” While it might feel natural after completing a sentence or pausing to collect your thoughts, it can also be distracting for your audience. Try presenting to a trusted friend or colleague who can call attention to the times you use filler words. Try to replace them by taking a breath when you are tempted to use them.

2. Nonverbal

Nonverbal communication is the use of body language, gestures and facial expressions to convey information to others. It can be used both intentionally and unintentionally. For example, you might smile unintentionally when you hear a pleasing or enjoyable idea or piece of information. Nonverbal communication is helpful when trying to understand others’ thoughts and feelings.

If they are displaying “closed” body language, such as crossed arms or hunched shoulders, they might be feeling anxious, angry or nervous. If they are displaying “open” body language with both feet on the floor and arms by their side or on the table, they are likely feeling positive and open to information.

Here are a few steps you can take to develop your nonverbal communication skills:

- **Notice how your emotions feel physically.** Throughout the day, as you experience a range of emotions (anything from energized, bored, happy or frustrated), try to identify where you feel that emotion within your body. For example, if you're feeling anxious, you might notice that your stomach feels tight. Developing self-awareness around how your emotions affect your body can give you greater mastery over your external presentation.
- **Be intentional about your nonverbal communications.** Make an effort to display positive body language when you feel alert, open and positive about your surroundings. You can also use body language to support your verbal communication if you feel confused or anxious about information, like using a furrowed brow. Use body language alongside verbal communication such as asking follow up questions or pulling the presenter aside to give feedback.
- **Mimic nonverbal communications you find effective.** If you find certain facial expressions or body language beneficial to a certain setting, use it as a guide when improving your own nonverbal communications. For example, if you see that when someone nods their head it communicates approval and positive feedback efficiently, use it in your next meeting when you have the same feelings.

3. Written

Written communication is the act of writing, typing or printing symbols like letters and numbers to convey information. It is helpful because it provides a record of information for reference. Writing is commonly used to share information through books, pamphlets, blogs, letters, memos and more. Emails and chats are a common form of written communication in the workplace.

Here are a few steps you can take to develop your written communication skills:

- **Strive for simplicity.** Written communications should be as simple and clear as possible. While it might be helpful to include lots of detail in instructional communications, for example, you should look for areas where you can write as clearly as possible for your audience to understand.
- **Don't rely on tone.** Because you do not have the nuance of verbal and nonverbal communications, be careful when you are trying to communicate a certain tone when writing. For example, attempting to communicate a joke, sarcasm or excitement might be translated differently depending on the audience. Instead, try to keep your writing as simple and plain as possible and follow up with verbal communications where you can add more personality.
- **Take time to review your written communications.** Setting time aside to re-read your emails, letters or memos can help you identify mistakes or opportunities to say something

differently. For important communications or those that will be sent to a large number of people, it might be helpful to have a trusted colleague review it as well.

- **Keep a file of writing you find effective or enjoyable.** If you receive a certain pamphlet, email or memo that you find particularly helpful or interesting, save it for reference when writing your own communications. Incorporating methods or styles you like can help you to improve over time.

4. Visual

Visual communication is the act of using photographs, art, drawings, sketches, charts and graphs to convey information. Visuals are often used as an aid during presentations to provide helpful context alongside written and/or verbal communication. Because people have different learning styles, visual communication might be more helpful for some to consume ideas and information.

Here are a few steps you can take to develop your visual communication skills:

- **Ask others before including visuals.** If you are considering sharing a visual aid in your presentation or email, consider asking others for feedback. Adding visuals can sometimes make concepts confusing or muddled. Getting a third-party perspective can help you decide whether the visual adds value to your communications.
- **Consider your audience.** Be sure to include visuals that are easily understood by your audience. For example, if you are displaying a chart with unfamiliar data, be sure to take time and explain what is happening in the visual and how it relates to what you are saying. You should never use sensitive, offensive, violent or graphic visuals in any form.

Here is a great overview of **why communication skills are important**.



Importance of communication:

We use communication every day in nearly every environment, including in the workplace. Whether you give a slight head nod in agreement or present information to a large group, communication is absolutely necessary when building relationships, sharing ideas, delegating responsibilities, managing a team and much more.

Learning and developing good communication skills can help you succeed in your career, make you a competitive job candidate and build your network. While it takes time and practice, communication and interpersonal skills are certainly able to be both increased and refined.

The majority of people communicate many times in a given day. This is especially apparent in the workplace. In order to effectively communicate with others, it's important to understand how the communication process works.

Communication Process :

The communication process refers to a series of actions or steps taken in order to successfully communicate. It involves several components such as the sender of the communication, the actual message being sent, the encoding of the message, the receiver and the decoding of the message. There are

also various channels of communication to consider within the communication process. This refers to the way a message is sent. This can be through various mediums such as voice, audio, video, writing email, fax or body language. The overall goal of the communication process is to present an individual or party with information and have them understand it. The sender must choose the most appropriate medium in order for the communication process to have worked successfully.

Here are the eight steps in the communication process:

1. The sender develops an idea to be sent
2. The sender encodes the message
3. The sender selects the channel of communication that will be used
4. The message travels over the channel of communication
5. The message is received by the receiver
6. The receiver decodes the message
7. The receiver provides feedback, if applicable

1. The sender develops an idea to be sent

The beginning of the communication process involves the sender creating an idea that they plan to send to another person or group of people. Essentially, they're planning the overall subject matter or information they want to transmit.

2. The sender encodes the message

Once the sender develops an idea, they translate it into a form that can be transmitted to someone else. This means they transform the thoughts of the information they want to send into a certain format. For example, if you are writing a letter, you'll translate your idea into words. The message can also be nonverbal, oral or symbolic.

3. The sender selects the channel of communication that will be used

Next, the sender decides how the message will be sent. This involves selecting the most suitable medium for the message they're relaying. Some communication mediums include speaking, writing, electronic transmission or nonverbal communication. If you're communicating at work, make sure to select the proper and most professional channel of communication.

4. The message travels over the channel of communication

After the medium is chosen, the message then begins the process of transmission. The exact process of this will depend on the selected medium. In order for the message to be properly sent, the sender should have selected the appropriate medium.

5. The message is received by the receiver

Next, the message is received by the recipient. This step in the communication process is done by hearing the message, seeing it, feeling it or another form of reception.

6. The receiver decodes the message

The receiver then decodes the sender's message. In other words, they interpret it and convert it into a thought. After they've done this, they analyze the message and attempt to understand it. The communication process is performed effectively when the sender and receiver have the same meaning for the transmitted message.

7. The receiver provides feedback, if applicable

Lastly, unless it's a one-way communication, the receiver will provide feedback in the form of a reply to the original sender of the message. Feedback provides the recipient with the ability to ensure the sender that their message was properly received and interpreted. Between two people, this is two-way communication.

8. Context:

This is the setting and situation in which communication takes place. Like noise, context can have an impact on the successful exchange of information. It may have a physical, social, or cultural aspect to it. In a private conversation with a trusted friend, you would share more personal information or details about your weekend or vacation, for example, than in a conversation with a work colleague or in a meeting.

Barriers to communication:

A barrier is any obstacle that prevents us from reaching our goal. Any hindrance to communication stops the intended meaning of our message from reaching our audience.

Physiological barriers :

Physiology is the state of human body and mind. Physiological barriers of communication occur due to the physical condition of sender or receiver which might even be physical disabilities. It includes sensory dysfunction and other physical dysfunctions.

Physiological barriers to communication are related with the limitations of the human body and the human mind (memory, attention, and perception). Physiological barriers may result from individuals' personal discomfort, caused by ill-health, poor eye sight, or hearing difficulties.

A receiver with hearing impairment or hearing loss cannot receive audio message. The person also cannot talk with people face to face easily. If the hearing problem is not very severe, he/she might only hear some words and is unable to get the intended meaning out of the message.

Physical barrier :

Physical barrier is the environmental and natural condition that act as a barrier in communication in sending message from sender to receiver. Organizational environment or interior workspace design problems, technological problems and noise are the parts of physical barriers.

When messages are sent by the sender, physical barriers like doors, walls, distance, etc. do not let the communication become effective. The barriers are less if the proximity of the sender and the receiver is high and less technologies are required.

Disturbance in hearing due to thunders, telephone call disconnection, problems in television reception, message not being sent in chat, etc. are some examples of physical barriers of communication.

Cultural Barrier :

People who live in various cultures and historical epochs communicate differently and have different patterns of thought. A Cultural barrier in communication occurs mainly when communication happens between two different cultural backgrounds. We encounter cultural barriers in everyday life.

Cultural differences causes behavior and personality differences like body language, thinking, communication, manners, norms, etc. which leads to miscommunication. For example, in some cultures eye contact is important whereas in some it is rude and disrespectful.

Language Barriers:

Language is needed for any kind of communication, even people with speech impairments communicate with sign language and brail. Communication becomes difficult in situations where people don't understand each other's language. The inability to communicate using a language is known as language barrier to communication.

Language barriers are the most common communication barriers which cause misunderstandings and misinterpretations between people. Most of the people in the world do not speak English or, even if they use, it is their second or third language.

Examples of language barriers that prevent individuals from effective communication include:

- Dialects - While two people may technically speak the same language, dialectal differences can make communication between them difficult.
- Language Disabilities - Language disabilities are physical impediments to language.

Gender Barriers :

Gender barriers to communication can incite problems at home and in the workplace. Societal stereotypes, assumed gender roles, and interpersonal differences can contribute to a communication gap. Style differences during decision making is a common gender barrier to communication.

- Women are more likely to talk to other women when a problem or conflict arises. Men are often known for dealing with problems or issues internally
- Women focus on feelings, senses and meaning. They rely on their intuition to find answers. Men focus on facts, reason and logic. They find answers by analyzing and figuring things out.

Psychological Barrier :

The psychological barrier of communication is the influence of psychological state of the communicators (sender and receiver) which creates an obstacle for effective communication.

Communication is highly influenced by the mental condition that the communicators are in and is disturbed by mental disturbance. If the people involved in communication are not emotionally well, they won't be able to communicate properly.

Every person's mind is unique and communication does not work like that in machines or in numbers. The people who are involved in the communication matter as much as the message e.g. If your boss doesn't trust you, he/she will only send selective information, which makes the communication ineffective.

Emotional barriers :

Emotional barriers are emotional factors that impede a speaker's ability to deliver a clear message or a receiver's ability to hear a message effectively.

Examples of emotional barriers that prevent individuals from effective communication include:

- Anger - Anger can affect the way your brain processes information given to you. For example, angry people have difficulty processing logical statements, limiting their ability to accept explanations and solutions offered by others.
- Pride - The need to be right all the time will not only annoy others, it can shut down effective communication. For example, you might focus only on your perspective, or you might come up with ways to shoot down other people before you even listen to their points.

- Anxiousness - Anxiety has a negative impact on the part of your brain that manages creativity and communication skills. For example, your constant worries can hinder your ability to concentrate on the information you are giving or receiving.

Perspectives in Communication:

A communication perspective focuses on the way in which our shared meanings and practices are constituted through language and symbol, the construction of messages, and their dissemination through media, organizations, and society.

The key to successful relationships lies solely in our ability to take the perspective of another. Perspective taking is that all important skill of being able to look at things from a point of view other than our own. Perspective taking brings in the mindfulness of compassion and empathy to our relationships.

7 Important Factors in perspective in communication

- 1) Be patient in your speaking.
- 2) Think before you speak.
- 3) The listener should be in good mood.
- 4) Equality should be there in your world.
- 5) Positive words should be used.
- 6) Talk in the perfect tune.
- 7) Be calm and in the prosperity.

Factors affecting our perspectives :

PERSPECTIVE IN COMMUNICATION

Visual perception is vital in cognitive processing. Visual perception is the process of absorbing what one sees, organizing it in the brain, and making sense of it. One of the most common examples of visual perception's importance in cognitive processes is reading.

Example, your eyes 'took in' the lines as well as the points on the ends of the lines. At the same time, your brain was organizing and making sense of the image.

Visual perception : Visual perception is the ability to see and interpret (analyze and give meaning to) the visual information that surrounds us. The process of “taking in” one’s environment is referred to as perception. If perception is inaccurate, incorrect or altered in any way – problems with reading, spelling, handwriting, math and comprehension occur.

Visual perceptual skills involve the ability to organize and interpret the information that is seen and give it meaning. The importance of visual perceptual skills in academic success is agreed upon by many, acknowledging reading would not be possible without adequate visual perception. Visual perceptual processing impacts the ability to learn. Without accurate visual perceptual processing, a student would have difficulty learning to read, give or follow directions, copy from the whiteboard, visualize objects or past experiences, have good eye-hand coordination, integrate visual information with other senses to do things like ride a bike, play catch, shoot baskets when playing basketball, or hear a sound and visualize where it is coming from (like the siren on a police car).

Forms of Visual Communication

Public Signs - A sign is a mark or shape that always has a particular meaning, for example, in mathematics or music. We can see many public signs that play an important role in our daily life. Their advantages lie in the cross-cultural communication which is not limited by language barrier.

Visual Symbols - Visual symbols are used from long ago. For example, pigeon, heart and gold are used as the symbol of peace, love and wealth respectively.

Visual Communication – Chart and Graph - This form is very perfect for data analysis. It includes many types such as bar, column, pie and doughnut chart. To analyze your figures more effectively, you can combine them together. See an example below.

Visual Communication – Table is suitable for classifying numbers. It is one primary form to structure and communicate quantitative data.

Visual Communication – A map can represent a place vividly. Paper maps are portable and can be carried around easily. Online maps are gaining increasing popularity. For example Google Map, a reliable mapping service, provides useful location information.

Language:

Language is important in every aspect of our lives because it allows people to communicate in a manner that enables the sharing of common ideas.

Language in perspective. Linguists vary in their definitions of language. However, all agree that language is a system of vocal signs with an internal structure and used for the purposes of human communication.

The different perspectives we experience can be with language as well. How many times have you received an email that seemed to have a certain ‘tone to it,’ and that perception of tone colored the way that you might have responded? The same words can have very different meanings depending on how we interpret them. Here’s another example. What is the meaning of the following sentence? A woman without her man is nothing. Sounds pretty bad at first glance, doesn’t it? Look again. If you add punctuation or change the word emphasis, how does the meaning change? A woman, without her man, is nothing. The words were the same in both cases. But the meaning has now changed completely. So although we think our meaning may be clear when we use specific

words in a certain order, we can't always be certain that the other person will read or hear them in that way.

Other Factors Affecting Our Perspective:

There are a multitude of other factors that can affect our perspective, thereby affecting how we communicate with another person. Some of these factors come from our past experiences, our prejudices, our feelings, and our environment.

Past experiences:

Past Experience are the things that have made up our life up until this point. They are positive and negative events. They are both one-offs and the things we do day in day out that become ingrained us. They are of vital importance to our happiness and wellbeing.

A person's past experience plays a big role in shaping their perception of communication. This is vital to understand in a business environment because it will affect whether or not your customers want to buy from you. Past experiences can include anything from someone's childhood to something they did last week.

The experience of previous communication strongly determines the effectiveness of further communication between the same sender and receiver. If either of the parties has a bitter experience, further communication between them is likely to be ineffective.

Imagine that you are in a meeting where you will be discussing changes in your personnel policies at work. What will you be bringing to that conversation? You might have examples of other company's personnel policies. You might have examples from your own time in the company that demonstrate why you feel that certain changes might need to be made. Or you might come to the table empty-handed, with just a pad of paper and a pen in order to take notes. What influences you to do any of these things? Your past experience. You would bring outside information because you have learned in the past that comparing situations can be helpful in decision making. You bring examples of your own experience because you have learned in the past that examples can be powerful ways to make your case. Or you come to the table empty-handed because in the past you have felt that your input wasn't valued or you have no past experience in this topic and so you are a 'clean slate' information wise. In every one of these situations, your communication is being affected by your past experience. You enter a situation, a meeting, or a conversation, with certain expectations of what will happen in that scenario, and you behave accordingly. Of course, sometimes you want your past experience to influence your future communications. For example, when your team responded positively to the sales tactics you put in place, those same or similar tactics can certainly be successful again. When our negative past experiences stifle our

communication or alter our full potential for communicating that we need to be aware. All of them are negative – our past experiences can reaffirm our communication as well.

Prejudice:

Prejudice is an affective feeling towards a person based on their perceived group membership.

The most common expressions of prejudice and stereotyping are manifested in verbal communication, including casual conversation and the mass media. But, until recent years, little empirical work has examined how stereotypic beliefs and prejudiced attitudes are manifested in everyday communication.

Some of the most well-known types of prejudice include:

- Racism.
- Sexism.
- Ageism.
- Classism.
- Homophobia.
- Nationalism.
- Religious prejudice

We all have prejudices. They occur when we take our past experiences with a person and assume that the same type of experience will happen with all people who are similar to the first. Prejudices are partly due to culture and partly due to personal preference or experience. Not all prejudices involve a negative characteristic either; for example, you could consider all of one group to be smart.

The problem with prejudices is when they start to influence how or to whom we communicate.

Prejudices occur when we take an isolated experience with one ‘type’ of person and then act as if all encounters in the future with people of the same ‘type’ or with the same characteristics will result in the same experience. When we categorize people like this, we eliminate their individuality. If you are communicating to a person through a perceived prejudice or stereotype, at the very least you are greatly limiting the chances of your communication being successful or producing the desired result. At the most, you are alienating or insulting someone with whom you are trying to build a working relationship. Your goal should be to see each person as an individual that is separate from any preconceived notions you might have about them.

Feelings:

For this area of influence, there are actually two ways in which your feelings can influence your communication with another person. The first simply refers to the way that you feel on a given

day; if you feel well, you'll communicate in one way and if you feel ill you'll communicate in another. Since your well being fluctuates, it makes sense that the way you communicate will change somewhat with how well you are feeling. If you find yourself experiencing difficulty in communicating due to an illness or other physical stressor, recognizing and acknowledging it, when appropriate, can be very helpful when others might interpret the change in your communication as having something to do with them.

The second aspect related to feelings refers to how you feel about a specific person. When you genuinely like someone, the way you communicate is going to show it. Unfortunately, the same can be said for when you don't like someone.

Environment:

The last area of influence on communication is environment. All of us communicate differently in different environments. This is simple enough to observe in everyday life. Do you speak to your colleagues the same way that you do to your friends? Do you talk to strangers with more or less formality than people you know well? Do you talk to your subordinates the same way when your own boss is there as you do when she is not there? As you go through your workday, notice how and where you are, what is going on and who else is present may be impacting the way that you communicate. Recognizing how the environment might be affecting others you communicate with is a skill that can come in handy for you, particularly when you perceive that the environment is having a negative impact on your ability to communicate effectively with someone. This skill will help you to perceive why someone might be communicating in the way that they are. It will also give you a factor that you can alter in order to make the person more comfortable or to establish a level of formality that you feel is important in a particular situation.

References:

- Basic communication skills for Technology, Andreja. J. Ruther Ford, 2nd Edition, Pearson Education, 2011
- Communication skills, Sanjay Kumar, Pushpalata, 1st Edition, Oxford Press, 2011
- Organizational Behaviour, Stephen .P. Robbins, 1st Edition, Pearson, 2013



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Course Materials

UNIT II

Simply, we can define communication as “sharing of ideas or feelings with others.” Communication takes place when one person transmits information and understanding to another person. There is a communication when you respond or listen to someone. Movements of lips, the wave of hands or the wink of an eye may convey more meaning than even written or spoken words. The basic elements of communication process include communicator, communicatee, message, channel and feedback.

- Communicator is the sender, speaker, issuer or writer, who intends to express or send out a message.

- Communicatee is the receiver of the message for whom the communication is meant. The communicatee receives the information, order or message.

- Message, which is also known as the subject matter of this process, i.e., the content of the letter, speech, order, information, idea, or suggestion.

- Communication channel or the media through which the sender passes the information and understanding to the receiver. It acts as a connection between the communicator and the communicatee, i.e., the levels of communication or relationships that exist between different individuals or departments of an organization.

- Feedback, which is essential to make communication, a successful one. It is the effect, reply or reaction of the information transmitted to the communicatee.

Firstly, the communicator develops an exact idea about concepts, beliefs or data that he wants to convey. Then he translates the idea into words, symbols or some other form of message which he expects the receiver to understand. The communicator picks out an appropriate medium for transmitting the message. The message is then received by the communicate. The communicate acts upon the message as he has understood it. Finally, the effectualness of communication is assessed through response or feedback. If the communication brings in the desired changes in the actions, it is said to be successful communication.

Five elements of effective communication:

1. APPROACH

Timing of communication; choice of medium; tone and point of view (perspective, attitude, and relationship regarding audience, purpose, and material); recognition of audience (reader vs. writer orientation); direct vs. indirect presentation (ordering of evidence and conclusions); persuasive strategies and rhetorical appeals (logos, pathos, ethos)

Checkpoints:

- Timing and choice of medium are appropriate to the purpose, audience, and material.
- Tone is appropriate to the purpose, audience, and material.
- Material is made relevant to the reader (reader's interests and concerns are recognized).
- Conclusions are presented directly (conclusion first, evidence last) to a sympathetic audience, indirectly (evidence first, conclusion last) to a unsympathetic or hostile audience.
- Persuasive strategy incorporates a mixture of rhetorical approaches (appeals to logic, feelings, and ethics or credibility).

2. DEVELOPMENT

Organization (logical arrangement and sequence); evidence and support (relevance, specificity, accuracy and sufficiency of detail); knowledge of subject and material; quality of perception, analysis, and insight

Checkpoints:

- Material is arranged in a logical and coherent sequence.
- Conclusion or closing restates the argument and identifies the action to be taken.
- Examples are relevant, specific, detailed, sufficient, and persuasive.
- Quotations support the argument.
- Handling of material demonstrates knowledge and insight.

3. CLARITY

Presentation of thesis or central argument (statement of purpose, delineation or narrowing of topic, relevance of subordinate or secondary arguments); word choice; technical language and jargon; structure (sentence, paragraph, document); coherence devices (organizational statement, repetition of words and phrases, progression from familiar to unfamiliar, topic and transitional sentences); textual markers (headings, highlighting, formatting features)

Checkpoints:

- Purpose or central idea is sufficiently limited for meaningful discussion.
- Purpose or central idea is stated clearly, usually in the opening.
- Organizational statement is offered, usually at the end of the opening.
- Subordinate ideas are effectively identified and related clearly to the main purpose or central idea.

- Language is clear, specific, accurate, and appropriate to the audience, purpose, and material.
- Word choice is clear, specific, accurate, unassuming, and free of clichés and misused jargon.
- Technical language and terms are defined and explained as needed (depending on knowledge of the audience).
- Sentences are free of ambiguity.
- Text is coherent, with new information linked to previously discussed information (ordered within sentences as “something old/something new”).
- Transitions between paragraphs are clear and helpful.
- Text is appropriately highlighted (bullets, paragraphing, boldface, italics, underlining, etc.) to engage the reader and reinforce the main points.

4. STYLE

Word choice (economy, precision, and specificity of language and detail; abstract vs. concrete language; action verbs vs. linking or weak verbs with nominalizations; figures of speech: schemes and tropes); tone (personality and humor); active vs. passive voice; sentence variety

Checkpoints:

- Word choice is economical, clear, specific, accurate, unassuming, and free of clichés and misused jargon.
- Action verbs are preferred over weak verbs with nominalizations (as in *recommend* over *make a recommendation*).
- Language is appropriately concrete or abstract (signifying or not signifying things that can be perceived by the senses).
- Figurative language (metaphors and similes, as well as other tropes and schemes) enrich and deepen the argument.

- Active voice is preferred over passive voice (active voice is used to emphasize the performer of the action; passive voice is used to emphasize the receiver of the action).
- Sentences are free of wordiness and unnecessarily complex constructions.
- Variety in sentence structure and sentence length creates emphasis.
- Author's values, personality and – when appropriate – humor are conveyed in a way that reinforces the message.

5. CORRECTNESS

Rules and conventions of spelling, grammar, punctuation, usage, and idiom; style (appropriateness of word choice and level of formality to audience, purpose, and material); social and cultural appropriateness; accuracy in proofreading

Checkpoints:

- Spelling (including technical terms and proper names) is correct.
- Correct words are used to convey the intended meaning.
- Rules of grammar and syntax are followed, including pronoun-noun agreement, subject-verb agreement, appropriate verb tense, pronoun case, possessive forms, parallel construction, etc.
- Punctuation (particularly comma placement) reflects standard usage.

Face-to-face communication:

In sociology, linguistics, media studies and communication studies, face-to-face interaction (less often, face-to-face communication or face-to-face discourse) is social interaction carried out without any mediating technology. Face-to-face interaction is defined as the mutual influence of individuals' direct physical presence with his/her body language. Face-to-face interaction is one of the basic elements of the social system, forming a significant part of individual socialization and

experience gaining throughout one's lifetime. Similarly it is also central to the development of various groups and organizations composed of those individuals

Face-to-face communication is the distinction of being able to see the other party or parties in a conversation. It allows for a better exchange of information since both speaker and listener are able to see and interpret body language and facial expressions. Face-to-face communication doesn't have to be done by people in the same physical space; the benefits can also be achieved over a video conference call or a more informal video chat.

Benefits of face-to-face communication through video conferencing

When meeting in person isn't an option, video conferencing provides a great alternative. The face-to-face connection allows you to be present and engaged in the meeting, regardless of your physical location.

1. Keep remote workers in the loop

It's easy to feel left out when you work remotely, especially if most of your team works together in the same office. Video conferencing brings remote workers face to face with in-office employees to collaborate globally and ensure the entire team is working together as one unit. Video conferencing also has the unique ability to bring a human connection to every interaction so remote workers feel connected to the rest of their team.

2. Boost overall productivity

Gather remote and in-office employees together in the same virtual meeting room, at the same time for regularly scheduled meetings and quick, impromptu meetings for better communication. The face-to-face interaction helps build a collaborative environment that inspires and energizes employees to participate in meetings and be more productive.

3. Reduce travel expenses

Sometimes gathering everyone in one location just isn't feasible. It can take a significant amount of time for attendees to get to a meeting, not to mention the cost of travel, food and hotel

accommodations. Video conferencing is an effective way to meet face to face while saving time and travel costs.

4. Improve communication reliability

Video conferencing provides a fast and secure way to communicate with your entire team face to face. Many companies are even transitioning into video-first organizations, meaning they use video conferencing as the first line of communication and fall back to audio or email only when needed. The improved reliability of video conferencing ensures that your entire message is communicated as intended and not left to misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

5. Improve value and reduce redundancy

When researching the total cost of ownership (TCO) of a collaboration suite, many companies are unaware of just how much is being spent on all of the different collaboration tools across an organization. Lifesize offers an all-in-one video conferencing solution that includes video and audio conferencing, screen sharing, chat, meeting recording, whiteboarding and event live streaming to support all of the ways your teams communicate and connect.

The Main Advantages of Face to Face Meetings:

- It Gives You the Chance to Understand their Body Language. ...
- It Helps Make Focusing Easier. ...
- It Is Appreciated By Clients. ...
- It Helps Develop **Trust** and **Transparency** Easily. ...
- It Proves to Be More Effective.

Disadvantages of Face to Face Communication

- Unsuitable for some people.
- Unsuitable for large audiences.
- Unsuitable for large organizations.
- Not accountable.
- Low legal and reference value.

- Poor retention by listener

Tone of voice:

Tone of voice is how the character of your business comes through in your words, both written and spoken. It's not about what you say, but rather the way you say it, and the impression it makes on everyone in your audience who reads or hears you.

Think about it. Everyone you meet has their own way of expressing themselves that's as unique as their face or fingerprint. Some are pleasant and polite. Others are pushy and in your face. Some say so much with just a few words. Others never seem to get to the point. Companies are no different.

Body language :

Body language refers to the nonverbal signals that you use to **communicate** your feelings and intentions. It includes your **posture**, your facial expressions, and your hand gestures. ... Tense facial expression. **Body** turned away from you.

The many different types of nonverbal communication or body language include:

- **Facial expressions.** The human face is extremely expressive, able to convey countless emotions without saying a word. ...
- Body movement and posture. ...
- Gestures. ...
- Eye contact. ...
- Touch. ...
- Space. ...
- Voice. ...
- Pay attention to inconsistencies.

All people express their **body language** in one of **four** ways: a light and bouncy movement, a soft and fluid movement, a dynamic and determined movement, or a precise and bold movement

An old adage says “Actions speak louder than words”. Our body posture, along with its movements and placement of different body parts, play an important role in letting out our feelings and emotions, even if we don’t display the emotions voluntarily.

Verbal communication is the use of sounds and words to express yourself, especially in contrast to using gestures or mannerisms (non-verbal communication).

Four Types of Verbal Communication

- **Intrapersonal Communication.** This form of communication is extremely private and restricted to ourselves. ...
- **Interpersonal Communication.** This form of communication takes place between two individuals and is thus a one-on-one conversation. ...
- **Small Group Communication.** ...
- **Public Communication.**

Examples of verbal communication: Speeches, presentations and announcements are all forms of verbal communication

There are **three** types of rules that govern or control your use of words. Syntactic Rules – govern the order of words in a sentence. Semantic Rules – govern the meaning of words and how to interpret them. Contextual Rules – govern meaning and word choice according to context and social custom.

Physical Communication:

C It is a form of communication where symbols, signs and gestures are used. Unlike verbal communication which involves the use of sound and the ear for hearing, physical communication involves the use of the eyes for seeing and other parts of the body for gesturing.

Everyone possesses some form of physical communication skills. These include our body posture when speaking, eye contact, facial expressions, touch etc. Even little children know that nodding the head means yes and shaking the head means no. Aside these and some very common gestures, there is more to physical communication skills.

Importance of Physical communication

Physical communication is as important as any other form of communication. Although it is often under-valued, it is equally as essential as being able to speak or hear. It compliments verbal communication and yields marvellous results when combined effectively with it. In certain professions and job positions, your ability to use physical communication is very important.

In sporting games, the ability to use and understand signs and gestures is a necessary skill. Coaches and players use them.

In security agencies, this is a very important skill to possess due to the nature of their operations. The police, navy, military etc. make great use of these skills to avoid being detected by their enemies. Detectives and investigators use some of these nonverbal signs to detect whether a person is lying or telling the truth.

In the mining and construction industries as well as other work places, where extremely loud sounds hinder verbal communication, physical communication is put to maximum use.

Counsellors, motivational speakers, and public relations officers etc. use physical communication skills when addressing audiences. Great orators do not only speak eloquently but they possess physical communication skills that help draw the attention of their audience.

Communication Styles :

Introduction

Each one of us has a style of communicating that is unique. Some of us are talkative and extroverted while others are quiet and reserved. Some of us are outspoken while others are less likely to share their opinions in public. Still others of us are formal and direct while others are informal and like to take our time getting to the main point. So how do these different styles of communication impact us in the workplace?

Communication style refers to the choices we tend to make when communicating to others. It involves two basic dimensions: the assertiveness level of our communication and the emotiveness level of our communication. We also use different styles depending on with whom we are communicating.

Differences in communication style can lead to barriers in communication success.

When you work with someone who has a decidedly different communication style from your own, that difference can act as one of the barriers to effective communication. You may feel that someone is being aloof and cold while they feel that they are being quick and business-like. Or you might feel that someone is being too analytical and detailed, while they feel that you aren't recognizing the importance of the small things that can make a big difference.

There is a way to overcome these differences, however. It involves learning the basic characteristics of the different communication styles and how they influence the context in which your communication is happening. If you can learn to understand the other person's communication style and how it is manifesting itself in the way they communicate, you are learning your audience and what they need in order to understand your message. You can then encode your message in a way that they will be more likely to be able to decode it, thereby increasing the chance that your message will be delivered successfully.

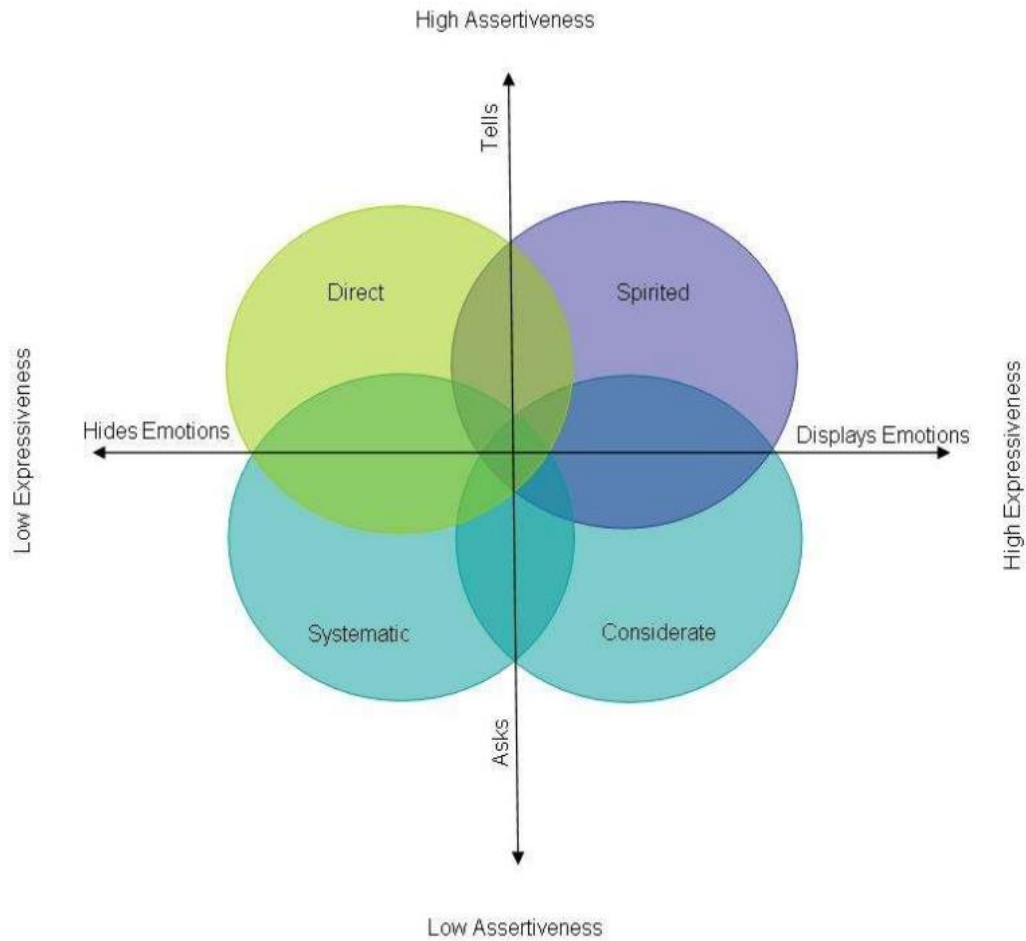
To put it another way, imagine that you are in a foreign country. You can stumble about, using your own words for things and trying to communicate, with the result being that one or both parties may become frustrated—and with very little chance that you will get the result that you want.

But if you can speak the language of the person you want to speak with, suddenly you can communicate. You can ask for what you need, give them the information they need, and hopefully achieve the result that is the original aim of your message. When you employ this communication tool, you simply make the choice to communicate to your audience in their 'native tongue.'

So how do you start? You begin by studying the four basic communication styles and how they relate to each other. You identify your own personal communication style and what particular barriers you might face when communicating with the other styles. Then you learn some simple tools you can use to enhance your communication with others, no matter what communication style they are.

The Communication Styles Matrix

There are many different models that describe the ways in which we communicate. But one very useful model is based on the work of Dr. Eileen Russo. Her matrix is displayed. It shows that there are two different dimensions in communication styles: the level of expressiveness and the level of assertiveness.



The Communication Styles Matrix

Each quadrant represents a different communication style. People can fall anywhere within each quadrant, becoming more uniformly one style over the others as they move further from the center.

The assertive communication styles tell others what to do while the less assertive styles ask others what should be done.

The more expressive styles show emotion while the less expressive styles refrain from showing it.

The more assertive communication styles tend to 'tell' others what to do. The less assertive communication styles tend to 'ask' others what should be done. The more expressive communication styles tend to show their emotions in their face, speech, and tone. The less expressive styles will either not express their emotions or will work to hide them. The resulting four basic communication styles are :

Low Expressiveness + Low Assertiveness = Systematic

Low Expressiveness + High Assertiveness = Direct

High Expressiveness + High Assertiveness=Spirited

High Expressiveness + Low Assertiveness=Considerate

1. Direct Communication Style

As indicated in the communication style matrix, people with the direct communication style are highly assertive and not expressive. They tend to tell others what to do instead of asking others what they think should be done, and they will not easily show emotions in their communications with others. Their communication style is meant to be expedient, though others may not always see it that way. They may appear terse and cold to others, who might take their style of communicating personally.

People with direct communication styles are the 'go-getters' in the group. They will work hard and fast and will brook few questions or distractions.

These people need to use caution to avoid appearing dictatorial or cold.

If you are a direct style, you could probably use some practice with listening skills.

Direct communicators will try to tell you as little as possible before moving on to the next topic—not because they are trying to be evasive, but because they are trying to save time. They won't always stop to listen to others, even if the others have something valuable to contribute. They may seem impatient and over bearing at times, but it's not meant to be personal. They are attempting to focus on results rather than emotions. They will speak their minds, even if it could be off-putting to others. Don't expect them to talk about their personal lives—they like to keep business and personal issues separate. They don't back down from conflict, and at times could be seen as being aggressive rather than assertive in the way that they express their opinions.

Tips for Communicating if You Have a Direct Communication Style

- Make an effort to listen fully to others and avoid interrupting
- Allow time for 'chatting' at the beginning of a meeting
- Recognize that others may feel the need to express their emotions about topics
- Recognize that brainstorming can be helpful and not just a 'time waster'
- Try to communicate your expectations for how a meeting will go—the length of time, the topics to be covered, and the expected results—before a meeting occurs
- Take the time to show your appreciation for others' contributions
- Don't use email for sensitive or complicated topics
- Allow time in your schedule for questions and feedback

Tips for Communicating with People with a Direct Communication Style

- Ask if they have time to talk before jumping in
- Get to the point quickly— don't bore them with lots of back ground information
- Limit 'chatting' or conversation that is off-topic
- Use short, direct sentences
- Ask for a specific call to action or make a specific request
- Do not speak in the abstract
- Only promise what you are certain you can deliver

- Don't give or ask for information about personal issues unless they initiate it
- Don't sugar coat things—speak plainly

Example for Direct Style :

When communicating with someone who has the direct communication style, the key is to get to the main point of your communication as soon as possible, and to do so in as efficient as manner as possible. The first example below shows the type of communication that will not work with someone who has a direct communication style. In this example, Reena is the one with the direct communication style.

Hi Reena,

I heard from Alex that you landed a new large business account yesterday. He said that you did an excellent job in explaining the company's benefits to the customer and that you were very professional.

Alex also said that the customer asked for a quote on a new phone system for his existing offices. Have you thought about how you will proceed? Let me know if I can help you get the quote together or if you need any ideas on the configuration. I'd like to get the quote to the later this week if you think you can manage it. That way we would have a good chance of getting the order in for this month's numbers.

Thanks again, and hope you are having a good Tuesday so far !

Anne

What is the main point of the communication? What is there requested action? How much of the communication is superfluous information?

A person with a direct communication style will not necessarily glean what you want them to do by when. They will appreciate the accolade, but they won't appreciate the personal references or information.

Reena,

Great job on the new account. I'd like to meet for 10-15 minutes tomorrow to discuss strategy and timing. Please let me know if you'd prefer to meet at 1:00, 1:30, or 2:00pm.

Thank you, Anne

See the difference? The first one does eventually get around to the point, but it is too personal-sounding and doesn't give a clear request for the direct person respond to. These condone still communicates approval and makes a request, but it does so in much clear way. If it seems curt to you, don't worry—the direct style person will appreciate it. It's a perfectly professional communication and there is much less chance form is understanding.

2. Spirited Communication Style :

People with the spirited communication style are very interested in the 'big picture'. They are the dreamers, the inventors, and the innovators in the group. Their communication may be full of grand ideas and hyperboles that tend to be very persuasive to others at first.

People with the spirited communication style love to flesh out ideas, brainstorm, and talk about the big picture—as long as they get to do a lot of the talking!

Spirited people can have a hard time nailing down the details in their wonderful ideas. They may also have a hard times ticking to an agenda or to one topic.

However, they are not always very good at discussing the details or the exact steps in the process. They will tend to go off on tangent sin their conversations, and like to interject anecdote sin to their dialogues in order to demonstrate or drive home a point.

Keeping to an agenda is sometimes a challenge for those with the spirited communication styles. Both time management and remaining focused are challenges for this group. Their written or verbal communication may tend towards the dramatic. While they can be very entertaining, getting them to communicate clearly on specific topics may take the assistance of someone else to guide them through a conversation and keep them on track by bringing them back to the subject at hand.

Tips for Communicating if You Have a Spirited Communication Style

- When considering new ideas to share, also consider whether or not you have suggestions on how to put those ideas in to action
- Respect agreed-upon agendas and time limits when in meetings
- Try to limit your sharing of personal anecdotes that take the group off-topic
- Make sure you are allowing others to contribute their ideas and suggestions—and that you are listening
- Be certain any requests you make are clear and that you convey there as on for asking
- Communicate your appreciation for others' work and in put

Tips for Communicating with People Who Have a Spirited Communication Style

- Use an agenda with time limits listed for each topic
- Praise them in front of other people
- Learn to gently redirect the conversation back to the topic at hand
- Understand that they may exaggerate
- Challenge them to break down their 'big ideas' into specific outcomes and steps
- Reaffirm with them what they have agreed to do
- Use check-lists or other written reminders as away to help communicate what needs to be done

Example of Spirited Style :

When communicating with someone who is spirited, it might be hard to even pin them down for communication in the first place. And once you have their attention, keeping it is another matter entirely. You will find that consistency is important in communicating with people who are spirited. If you can get them used to a particular format or method of communication, it will be easier to keep them communicating. This doesn't mean always choosing email oral ways choosing telephone. But it does mean always using follow-up questions or checking in on a regular basis to see if you are both still on the same page.

Also remember that a person with a spirited style may need more time to brainstorm and discuss ideas than the other communication styles. If you want them to come to the table with decisions

already made, be sure to get their buy-in beforehand. Otherwise they may still find the need to discuss something that you already felt was decided.

Finally, you can go a long way towards relationship-building with a spirited style person if you give them the opportunity to shine. Does your team need to make a presentation? Let the spirited person know that you think they would be a good choice to lead. Complimenting them in a public arena is a good choice as well. Here's an example of a good written communication to a spirited person.

Hi Sally!

I thought your presentation yesterday was fantastic! I enjoyed the way that you had the audience participate in the session.

I think you would be a great choice for the educational component at our next board meeting. The Board of Directors needs some information about local economic trends, but in a way that is not too boring or complicated.

Would you like to have lunch to discuss it? I'm free on Thursday or Friday this week. Let me know if either of those days will work for you.

Thanks so much! George

Why would this communication work for a spirited person? It is enthusiastic, complementary, and would be flattering to Sally. She will be pleased that you noticed her first presentation and more pleased that you would like her to repeat it.

Or course, you're sure to have a very excited person on your hands at lunch. So be prepared. You could bring an outline of the topics you want to cover at the presentation. Ask for her input and make sure you've planned enough time to let her give it. Then help her narrow the ideas down and note them down for her. Sending a follow-up email or note will help ensure that you are both on the same page as well. Remember, the spirited person is very valuable for all their talents and enthusiasm—so with a little structure around your communications you can be successful in communicating without stifling the very qualities they bring to the table.

3. Systematic Communication Style :

Those with a systematic communication style like to focus on facts and details rather than opinions and possibilities. Expect to use and appreciate logic when you communicate with a systematic. They will appreciate facts and analysis rather than the ‘big picture’ ideas that have not yet been proved useful.

People with a systematic communication style will focus on facts over opinions. Communication with tangible evidence is best for systematic. They will likely be uncomfortable expressing feelings and will tend to avoid confrontation.

They may be slower to respond to your communication, as they are probably analyzing the situation and constructing a logical, well thought-out response. Charts, graphs and trends are all useful tools for communicating with systematic as well.

Those with a systematic communication style are uncomfortable with expressing their feelings about things and do not like conflict. They may tend to shut down communication rather than dealing with emotional or confrontational situations. If you give them directions, you will need to be very thorough and precise in relaying them.

The more information you can give them, the happier they will be—as long as the information is relevant to the current discussion or is relevant background information.

Tips for Communicating if You Have a Systematic Communication Style

- Recognize that not everyone follows linear thought processes and decision-making
- Realize that for good working relationships, consideration for others’ feelings is important
- Learn to ask qualifying questions that will help you get the information you need
- Ask others questions about themselves if you want to build rapport
- Make sure you understand the scope of a project so that you don’t waste time collecting information that is not going to be needed
- If you need to ask for more time for analysis, be able to explain the benefit of the information you are working on

Tips for Communicating with People with a Systematic Communication Style

- Focus on the facts of the situation rather than individuals' opinions
- Speak with precision and accuracy rather than generalizations
- Be Organized, on time, and topic when you communicate with them
- Give logical reasons for your actions and for what you ask of them
- Allow Them Time For Research And Analysis Before Decision-making
- Avoid Personal Topics Unless They Open The Conversation

The example of how not to communicate with a direct communication style person is a good example of how not to communicate with someone systematic style as well. You could also avoid phrases like:

- It's my opinion that...
- I believe that...
- I Feel That...

Instead, try using phrases like

- The Data Shows That...
- The Trends Show That...
- The results of the tests show...

4. Considerate Communication Style

Those with the considerate communication style are very concerned about the feelings of others. They want to please other people and to be included in their peer group. They like to work with others, help others, and connect to the reason personal level. If there is conflicting your group, they will be the ones to attempt to mediate it. They want everyone to have the chance to speak their minds, have their turns, and receive recognition for their contribution. They are natural trainers and counselors, and enjoy helping others succeed. They will encourage group collaboration and communication, though they are not always inclined to speak their own minds.

People with a considerate communication style will be very interested in listening and in finding out how you and others are doing. They will want everyone to have a chance to speak, but might refrain from expressing their own opinions if they think it will displease others.

This is the major communication challenge for those with the considerate personality style– they may be reluctant to share an opposing opinion, even if it’s important information, because they are concerned about keeping the peace and being liked.

They are also inclined to take direct communication as a personal matter. It’s difficult for them to separate other people's’ opinions about a topic from their opinions about them, and so may feel that an opposing opinion is due to not liking them. There is also the possibility that they will be talked into something in order to preserve the peace rather than standing their ground.

Tips for Communicating if You Have a Considerate Communication Style:

- Recognize that other people’s opinions about a topic are separate from their opinions about you
- Realize that not everyone is comfortable discussing personal topics with work colleagues; allow others to open personal topics before asking questions
- Respect your own opinion as you respect others’ opinions
- Recognize that you don’t have to be friends with everyone, but you should treat others and be treated professionally

Tips for Communicating with People who have a Considerate Communication Style:

- When possible, reassure them that your opinions are not personal
- Express a sincere interest in their feelings, thoughts, and personal life
- Encourage them to ask questions and share their opinions
- Let them know that you appreciate their help
- Resolve any conflicts quickly
- Whenever possible, use requests instead of imperatives in discussing the needed changes

Example of Considerate Communication Style:

For considerate style people, the example used as how not to speak to a direct style person is actually a good one to use for a considerate style

- It builds to the point easily
- It shows care for the other person
- It makes a request in a friendly and personal manner

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS – BP105T
Course Materials

UNIT III

Listening:

It is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process.

Listening is the key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated.

If there is one communication skill you should aim to master, then listening is it.

The four types of listening are

- Appreciative
- Empathic
- Comprehensive
- Critical

Self-Awareness :

It allows for a listening that is free of assumptions and judgments that compromise a healthy communication. Before we are able to listen deeply to others, we need to learn how to listen deeply to ourselves. It is this self-awareness that helps us to understand the other's frame of reference.

Self-awareness is the ability to see yourself clearly and objectively through reflection and introspection.

While it may not be possible to attain total objectivity about oneself (that's a debate that continues to rage throughout the history of philosophy), there are certainly degrees of self-awareness. It exists on a spectrum.

Although everyone has a fundamental idea of what self-awareness is, we don't know exactly where it comes from, what its precursors are, or why some of us seem to have more or less than others.

4 Proven Benefits of Self-Awareness

As you might imagine, there are many benefits to practicing self-awareness:

- It can make us more proactive, boost our acceptance, and encourage positive self-development
- Self-awareness allows us to see things from the perspective of others, practice self-control, work creatively and productively, and experience pride in ourselves and our work as well as general self-esteem
- It leads to better decision-making
- It can make us better at our jobs, better communicators in the workplace, and enhance our self-confidence and job-related wellbeing

The benefits listed are reason enough to work on improving self-awareness, but this list is by no means exhaustive. Self-awareness has the potential to enhance virtually every experience you have, as it's a tool and a practice that can be used anywhere, anytime, to ground yourself in the moment, realistically evaluate yourself and the situation, and help you make good choices.

Examples of Self-Awareness Skills

So we know that self-awareness is good, but what does it look like? How does one practice self-awareness?

Below are two examples of someone practicing self-awareness skills:

Example 1: Bob at work

Bob struggles with creating a quarterly report at work, and he frequently produces subpar results. He notices the discrepancy between his standards and performance and engages in self-evaluation to determine where it comes from and how to improve.

He asks himself what makes the task so hard for him, and he realizes that he never seems to have trouble doing the work that goes into the report, but he struggles with writing it up cohesively and clearly.

Bob decides to fix the discrepancy by taking a course to improve his writing ability, having a colleague review his report before submitting it, and creating a reusable template for future reports, so he is sure to include all relevant information.

Example 2: Bridget on her own

Bridget struggles with low self-esteem, which causes depressive symptoms. She doesn't feel good enough, and she doesn't accept opportunities that come her way because of it. She begins working with a therapist to help her build self-awareness.

The next time an opportunity comes her way, she thinks she doesn't want to do it and initially decides to turn it down; but, with the help of some self-awareness techniques, Bridget realizes that she is only telling herself she doesn't want to do it because of her fear that she won't be good enough.

Bridget reminds herself that she is good enough and redirects her thoughts to "what if I succeed?" instead of "what if I fail?" She accepts the opportunity and continues to use self-awareness and self-love to improve her chances of success.

These two stories exemplify what self-awareness can look like, and what it can do for you when you tap into it. Without self-awareness, Bob would have kept turning in bad reports and Bridget would never have taken the opportunity that helped her grow.

Active listening:

It is a skill that can be acquired and developed with practice. However, active listening can be difficult to master and will, therefore, take time and patience to develop.

'Active listening' means, as its name suggests, actively listening. That is fully concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively 'hearing' the message of the speaker.

Active listening involves listening with all senses. As well as giving full attention to the speaker, it is important that the 'active listener' is also 'seen' to be listening - otherwise the speaker may conclude that what they are talking about is uninteresting to the listener.

Interest can be conveyed to the speaker by using both verbal and non-verbal messages such as maintaining eye contact, nodding your head and smiling, agreeing by saying 'Yes' or simply 'Mmm hmm' to encourage them to continue. By providing this 'feedback' the person speaking will usually feel more at ease and therefore communicate more easily, openly and honestly.

Non-Verbal Signs of Attentive or Active Listening :

This is a generic list of non-verbal signs of listening, in other words people who are listening are more likely to display at least some of these signs. However these signs may not be appropriate in all situations and across all cultures.

Smile

Small smiles can be used to show that the listener is paying attention to what is being said or as a way of agreeing or being happy about the messages being received. Combined with nods of the head, smiles can be powerful in affirming that messages are being listened to and understood.

Eye Contact

It is normal and usually encouraging for the listener to look at the speaker. Eye contact can however be intimidating, especially for more shy speakers – gauge how much eye contact is appropriate for any given situation. Combine eye contact with smiles and other non-verbal messages to encourage the speaker.

Posture

Posture can tell a lot about the sender and receiver in interpersonal interactions. The attentive listener tends to lean slightly forward or sideways whilst sitting. Other signs of active listening may include a slight slant of the head or resting the head on one hand.

Mirroring

Automatic reflection/mirroring of any facial expressions used by the speaker can be a sign of attentive listening. These reflective expressions can help to show sympathy and empathy in more emotional situations. Attempting to consciously mimic facial expressions (i.e. not automatic reflection of expressions) can be a sign of inattention.

Distraction

The active listener will not be distracted and therefore will refrain from fidgeting, looking at a clock or watch, doodling, playing with their hair or picking their fingernails.

Verbal Signs of Attentive or Active Listening

Positive Reinforcement

Although a strong signal of attentiveness, caution should be used when using positive verbal reinforcement.

Although some positive words of encouragement may be beneficial to the speaker the listener should use them sparingly so as not to distract from what is being said or place unnecessary emphasis on parts of the message.

Casual and frequent use of words and phrases, such as: ‘very good’, ‘yes’ or ‘indeed’ can become irritating to the speaker. It is usually better to elaborate and explain why you are agreeing with a certain point.

Remembering

The human mind is notoriously bad at remembering details, especially for any length of time.

However, remembering a few key points, or even the name of the speaker, can help to reinforce that the messages sent have been received and understood – i.e. listening has been successful. Remembering details, ideas and concepts from previous conversations proves that attention was kept and is likely to encourage the speaker to continue. During longer exchanges it may be appropriate to make very brief notes to act as a memory jog when questioning or clarifying later.

Questioning

The listener can demonstrate that they have been paying attention by asking relevant questions and/or making statements that build or help to clarify what the speaker has said. By asking relevant questions the listener also helps to reinforce that they have an interest in what the speaker has been saying.

Reflection

Reflecting is closely repeating or paraphrasing what the speaker has said in order to show comprehension. Reflection is a powerful skill that can reinforce the message of the speaker and demonstrate understanding.

Clarification

Clarifying involves asking questions of the speaker to ensure that the correct message has been received. Clarification usually involves the use of open questions which enables the speaker to expand on certain points as necessary.

Summarisation

Repeating a summary of what has been said back to the speaker is a technique used by the listener to repeat what has been said in their own words. Summarising involves taking the main points of the received message and reiterating them in a logical and clear way, giving the speaker chance to correct if necessary.

Becoming an Active Listener

- Pay Attention. Give the speaker your undivided attention, and acknowledge the message. ...
- Show That You're Listening. Use your own body language and gestures to show that you are engaged. ...
- Provide Feedback. ...
- Defer Judgment. ...
- Respond Appropriately.

Here are several benefits of being an active listener:

- It helps you build connections. ...
- It helps you build trust. ...
- It helps you identify and solve problems. ...
- It helps you increase your knowledge and understanding of various topics. ...
- It helps you avoid missing critical information. ...

Here are 8 steps to become an active listener:

1. Approach each dialogue with the goal to learn something.

Think of the person as someone who can teach you.

2. Stop talking and focus closely on the speaker.

Suppress the urge to think about what you're going to say next or to multitask.

3. Open and guide the conversation.

Open and guide the conversation with broad, open-ended questions such as "what other strategic alternatives did you consider" or "how do you envision..." Avoid close-ended questions that can be answered with just a "yes" or "no."

4. Drill down to the details.

Drill down to the details by asking directive, specific questions that focus the conversation, such as "Tell me more about..." "How did you come to this conclusion?" or "How would this work?"

5. Summarize what you hear and ask questions to check your understanding.

Questions such as "If I'm understanding you..." or "Tell me if this is what you're saying...."

6. Encourage with positive feedback.

If you can see that a speaker has some trouble expressing a point or lacks confidence, encourage him or her with a smile, a nod or a positive question to show your interest.

7. Listen for total meaning.

Understand that in addition to what is being said, the real message may be non-verbal or emotional. Checking body language is one way to seek true understanding.

8. Pay attention to your responses.

Remember that the way you respond to a question also is part of the dialogue. Keep an open mind and show respect for the other person's point of view even if you disagree with it.

Listening in difficult situations:

During your workday, you are going to encounter boring and uninteresting meetings or lectures which require attention that may be hard for you to give. We've all sat through a lengthy presentation in which it was hard to stay alert or a meeting that just seemed to go on and on without accomplishing anything. In these situations, it's key that you stay engaged. Use the tips and techniques below to help you stay focused so you can better listen and take in what's going on.

Listening During Boring Meetings

- In a boring meeting, try taking notes. By incorporating an activity into your listening, you can focus your attention.
- Mentally list or relate the points being made. How do they affect you? What do you know about them?
- Ask questions and stay engaged with the speaker.

Staying Alert During Lectures

- Sit near the front of the room and try to have a clear view of the speaker. Avoid sitting next to noisy people, and try to be as close to the speaker as possible.
- Do research about the lecturing topic beforehand. Bring notes or take notes while the speaker is talking. However, don't let taking notes distract you - write down only what's important.
- Give eye contact and attention to the speaker.

Staying Focused in an Interview

- If you are unclear about what the person has said, try repeating what he or she has just told you. This will tell you if you heard the person correctly.
- Try to have a normal conversation, rather than one person asking and the other answering.
- Give eye contact and appropriate body language.

Handling Problems through Effective Communication

- When a person approaches you with a problem, listen to what he or she tells you, and then rephrase the problem. This way, the person can correct you if needed, and you can also help him or her visualize a solution.
- Get to know your colleagues and how you or other colleagues can best help them.
- Don't sit behind your desk when someone comes to you for advice. Sit next to or across from the person with nothing in between.
- Try not to be judgmental. Be understanding, and truly listen to what the person is saying. Don't get caught up in mental or emotional filters; try your best to be an effective listener.
- Notice the body language of yourself and adjust it if necessary. Notice the body language of the other person; it'll give you insight into what he or she is really trying to say.
- After you and the person finish talking about the problem, summarize what's been said and agree on steps to move forward.

Listening to Your Boss

- Don't let attitudes interfere with listening. Drop judgments and sharp criticisms when speaking with him or her.

- Avoid mental and emotional filters when you talk to your boss. Talk and listen with a nonjudgmental attitude.
- Be aware of body language and tone.

Effective Written Communication:

Definition: The **Written Communication** refers to the process of conveying a message through the written symbols. In other words, any message exchanged between two or more persons that make use of written words is called as written communication.

The written communication is the most common and effective mode of business communication. In any organization, the electronic mails, memos, reports, documents, letters, journals, job descriptions, employee manuals, etc. are some of the commonly used forms of written communication.

Such communication is used when the information to be transmitted is lengthy and includes some complex terms that cannot be explained verbally. Also, the organizations maintain their documents in writings such that these can be used as a reference and evidence of any transaction anytime in the future. Thus, it is essential for every business organization to develop effective writing skills and inculcate this in all its employees.

The effectiveness of written content depends on the correct choice of words, their organization into correct sentence sequence and the cohesiveness in the sentences. The information in writing is considered more legal and valid than the spoken words. Also, people rely more on the written content than what has been said orally. But, however, unlike verbal communication the feedback of written communication is not immediate since it is not spontaneous and requires time to get into the understandable form.

The purpose of written communication is to capture your reader's attention and get your point across clearly. Ultimately, when you communicate in writing, you are helping the reader understand your perspective on a topic. There are certain qualities all effective written communication shares, and if you add these elements to your writing, your work will be more powerful.

In some ways, effective written communication is even more important than spoken communication. Unless it is being recorded, regular speech does not last. However, written communication is a record, and people may refer back to it later. This means that in addition to creating a connection with your audience, you need to consider the lasting impact of what you write. Think about how it will be perceived by your audience initially, as well as the impact it will leave.

Good written communication depends on the audience, the topic, your purpose in communicating, and other factors. However, all effective written communication has some characteristics in common:

Connection - Good written communication forms a connection between the reader and the writer.

Clarity - Effective written communication is clear and easy to understand.

Cause - The cause or reason for writing needs to be clear to both the writer and the reader, including any specific actions you need from your audience.

Conciseness - Good written communication sticks to the point and doesn't meander around or include lots of extraneous information.

Correctness - To be effective, the written communication should use the correct tone, inoffensive language, and appropriate grammar

When to use written communication:

- When you have time
- For official purposes – as a proof of making a request
- For summarizing discussions – minutes
- For reporting – dissertation, essays and project reports
- For mass communication – pamphlets
- Personal communication – greetings

When not to use written communication:

- In crises
- When a personal discussion is good enough
- To brainstorm, seek clarifications, generate ideas
- For conflict resolution – feelings are best expressed personally
- In cross-cultural settings as words have different meanings in different settings

Complexity of topic:

Written texts are lexically dense compared to spoken language - they have proportionately more lexical words than grammatical words. **Written** texts are shorter and have longer, more **complex** words and phrases

Requirements of Effective Written communication

In most business environments, there's a lot of reliance on written documents and hence the need to be clear and effective in written communication. Right from the notes, we scribble to the reports we draft, everything involves written communication.

Since we return back to our written notes, reports, etc. later. And also most of the written pieces are meant for an audience, small or large, it's important that it is kept simple, and easily understandable for all. Here are some simple factors that are essential to effective written communication:

- Appropriate Words
- Clarity in intent or idea
- Inoffensive Language
- The tone of your writing

Shades of meaning :

It is a phrase used to describe the small, subtle differences in meaning between similar words or phrases; 'kid' and 'youth' both refer to young people, but carry differing views and ideas about young people.

When words are used to communicate information, their meaning can be anything from very vague to very precise. In addition, words can be entirely descriptive, entirely abstract, or anywhere in between. If they are descriptive, they might evoke the imagery of any or all of the main inputs, and sometimes the subsidiary inputs as well. Alternatively, if the meaning is abstract, they will evoke no sensory imagery at all.

To make the meaning more vague, one can choose words with less specific meanings, or arrange words in a way that allows for more than one interpretation, or both. To make the meaning more precise, one must avoid doing either of those things, so that there is as little flexibility as regards meaning, as possible.

Descriptive communication with words provides information which allows the identification of something which is already known to one or more of the five senses. For example, the words "a large green tree stood there, bathed in brilliant sunlight, like a giant sentry guarding the newly ploughed field" are likely to evoke visual memories, making it easy for the receiver to imagine seeing such a sight.

Similarly, the words "the rain drumming loudly on the roof made a deafening roar, echoed by the rattling of the windows and accompanied by the moaning of the wind" are likely to evoke auditory memories, making it easy for the receiver to imagine hearing such a sound.

To evoke tactile memories, words like smooth, prickling, cold and sharp might be effective. To evoke olfactory memories, words like aroma, scent or smell might be employed. Finally, to evoke gustatory memories, words like flavour, tasty and spicy could be pressed into service.

It is also possible, when communicating using words, to include an element of *embedded* meaning. This is achieved by using ordinary words – but not in ordinary ways. It may involve unusual, perhaps surprising, word choices, unusual ways of putting the words together, or various specific poetic devices such as rhyme, rhythm, alliteration and onomatopoeia.

Although the methods mentioned in the previous paragraph may be employed with the intention of expressing a particular meaning, it must be remembered that the very fluidity of this art form allows for an extremely wide range of possible interpretations. Therefore, what can be a very powerful form of communication is usually also very imprecise!

The end result of the various ways of influencing meaning described above is that a group of words can provide far more meaning than might be expected from the usual meanings of the individual words. The extra meaning (which may be the main, or perhaps the only meaning) is often said to reside "between the lines". The commonest examples are found in poetry, philosophy and the lyrics of songs.

However, people may also resort to symbolic language during a conversation, either because they are attempting to express the inexpressible, or because they do not want to state the facts baldly. Terminally ill patients often refer to their uncertain future in this way. This can sometimes lead to a more direct discussion of the prognosis, but on other occasions an answer in the same symbolic vein may be more appropriate.

A rather different example of extra meaning embedded within a group of words is *sarcasm*, in which apparently innocent words are intended – and interpreted – as harsh criticism. The principle is the same, in that the words are used as raw materials to build a meaning which goes beyond the literal one.

Formal Communication:

Formal communication can be considered as communication efforts that are “dressed up” to fit customary rules and ceremony. For example, in a written letter, the formal communication style will demand that the layout of the piece of written communication follow a specific format that includes the date, header, salutation, body of the letter, close, signature lines and any indicators of enclosures all placed neatly upon company letterhead or personal stationery. By contrast, an informal piece of

written communication can be as simple as a jotted note to a friend on a torn slip of paper. Formal communications are mostly written, although they may now also include formal presentations that are on computer disk, video tape. Such formal communication is well established and planned. For example, reports and data from staff are organized and generally submitted in prescribed templates and according to a set schedule. Communication focused on a company's strategy and direction, which originates from company executives, is funnelled through the organizational chart and changed in such a way to be relevant to each department and manager. What starts out as "high-level" communication on corporate strategy needs to be thought out through planning sessions so that the communication provides direction and is actionable for the individuals who implement the tasks of the strategy. The better the communication the better employees and staff will understand what is expected and required of them.

Writing effectively:

How to Make Your Writing Communicate Effectively

- Know Your Goal and State It Clearly. ...
- Use the Correct Tone for Your Purpose. ...
- Keep Language Simple. ...
- Stay on Topic and Keep It Concise. ...
- Use Active Voice. ...
- Have Someone Proofread Your Writing

Steps to be followed while writing to communicate:

- Write the subject line first
- Keep it short
- Place the most important words at the beginning
- Eliminate filler words
- Be clear and specific about the topic
- Keep it simple and focused
- Use logical keywords for search and filtering

The Importance of Subject Lines:

There are several general guidelines that you can use to emphasize the importance of subject lines in your organization. The tactics for crafting impactful subject descriptions vary, but by making an effort to incorporate the following characteristics into your emails, you can dramatically improve the results you achieve from your email marketing efforts.

Keep It Brief. Subject lines need to quickly grab the recipient's attention. It's estimated that subject lines with 50 characters or less result in 12% higher open rates and 75% higher click-through rates than emails with longer subject lines. The takeaway? Keep it less than 50 words and focus on quickly putting your best foot forward.

Pique Their Interest. Subject lines have to be interesting and unique. Stay away from over-used words and clichés, and try to present your audience with a hook that captures their attention and incentivizes them to learn more by opening the email.

Offer Value. The best subject lines communicate the promise of value. In other words, your subject line has to convince the recipient that the email contains information or messaging that will improve their lives and/or their businesses.

Build Trust. Trustworthiness is a priority for brands that understand the importance of subject lines. The information contained in your email should be consistent with the promise you make in the subject line. Also, it's critical to make sure that your subject line is free of spelling or grammatical errors to preserve credibility with your audience.

Put the main point first:

Having a clear goal in mind keeps your writing focused and clear. This goal might be to get the reader to take action, respond to your email, or to know of important information. Whatever your goal may be, you want to get to it as quickly as possible at the beginning of the message. Lead with the key point and follow up with the details needed to understand it. Organizing your message in this way gets the point across in a way that even readers who might skim through it will understand

Identifying Your Primary, Secondary, and Hidden Audiences

Your audience is the person or people you want to communicate with. By knowing more about them (their wants, needs, values, etc.), you are able to better craft your message so that they will receive it the way you intended.

Your success as a communicator partly depends on how well you can tailor your message to your audience.

Your primary audience is your intended audience; it is the person or people you have in mind when you decide to communicate something. However, when analyzing your audience you must also beware of your secondary audience. These are other people you could reasonably expect to come in contact with your message. For example, you might send an email to a customer, who, in this case, is your primary audience, and copy (cc:) your boss, who would be your secondary audience. Beyond these two audiences, you also have to consider your hidden audience, which are people who you may not have intended to come in contact with your audience (or message) at all, such as a colleague who gets a forwarded copy of your email.

Organisation of the message:

Communication is about **building relationships by conveying messages**. Clear messages help build trust and integrity between the writer and the reader. Well-written communication helps define goals, identify problems and arrive at solutions. This is important in every aspect of business. Executives must clearly write memos so that staff understands the directives without confusion. Sales representatives must explain features and benefits in a way that excites the prospect. Human resource managers must objectively note any incidents and make reports.

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UNIT – IV – COMMUNICATION SKILLS – BP105T

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS – BP105T
Course Materials

UNIT IV

Interviewing is a skill in and of itself, one in which your ability to interact with the interviewer and to articulate your thoughts are factors that are just as important in getting the job as are the qualifications listed on your resume.

Definition:

Interview is the widely used election method. It is a face-to-face interaction between interviewee and interviewer. If handled carefully, it can be a powerful technique in having accurate information of the interviewee otherwise unavailable. At the same time, if the interview is not handled carefully, it can be a source of bias, restricting or distorting the flow of communication.

Different scholars have defined ‘interview’ differently. According to Scott and others, “an interview is a purposeful exchange of ideas, the answering of questions and communication between two or more persons”. Bingham and others define an interview as a ‘conversation with a purpose’.

Thus, interview can be defined as an attempt to secure maximum amount of information from the candidate concerning his/her suitability for the job under consideration.

It tries to achieve an accurate appraisal of the applicant in terms of his/her educational qualification, training, family background, previous work experience and judge the applicant’s certain qualities like manners, appearance, conversational ability, meet other people pleasantly, etc.

PURPOSE OF THE INTERVIEW

The interview is a conversation in which you and an employer exchange information. Your objective is to get an offer of a job, and the employer's objective is to find out the following:

- What you have to offer (your skills, abilities, basic knowledge).
- Who you are (your personality, character, interests).
- Why you should be hired (you have what they are seeking).

The interviewer will try to determine whether you will be an asset to the organization. Your goal is to present yourself as the best candidate for the position and also to learn more about the position and the interviewer's organization to determine whether both are well suited for you and your career goals. Thus, the interview is a two-way discussion rather than an interrogation, as it is often perceived to be. The interview is a vital step to obtaining a career position and often depends on your skills in marketing your potential. Do not miss out on a good position for which you are qualified due to a lack of preparation and practice. You need to be ready to answer questions about your career goals and background. You will also want to develop intelligent questions of your own to help you obtain the necessary information for making an informed decision. Furthermore, preparation helps build your self confidence in your interview skills and is the key to successful interviewing.

Do:

- Arrive in good time.
- The interview panel may be interviewing a lot of candidates so do not keep them waiting.
- Dress appropriately. Some organisations, especially technology companies, have a very casual dress code but, for most, a suit will be appropriate interview wear. Remember that you are being judged on the appearance that you present.
- Act appropriately, which usually means following the interviewer's lead.
- If you are offered a hand to shake, then shake it, but don't offer your own hand if nobody else seems interested.
- Engage with the interviewers.
- Smile, make eye contact, and build rapport.
- Answer the questions that are asked, using relevant examples where at all possible

Don't:

- Be afraid to blow your own trumpet a bit. After all, nobody else is going to blow it for you; however do not lie or exaggerate. If you want the job, be enthusiastic and positive.
- Be over-familiar or share too much information. For example, the interviewers don't want to know how you're going to manage your childcare.

Giving Presentations :**Dealing with fear:**

Many people suffer from so much stress while giving a presentation that their heart race, their hands sweat, their knees shake, and their mouths feel dry. What's more, they may speak too fast or even forget what they wanted to say. Yet these physical stress responses can be overcome by identifying the causes of the fear and developing ways to overcome them.

1. Calming your inner critic

Sometimes, in our desire to excel and give of our best, we end up becoming our own worst critic. Instead of taking strength from the many positive experiences of our lives, we remember and exaggerate the effect of our mistakes. We brood over them, worry, and avoid future situations in which we may make the same errors. We allow our inner critic to destroy our confidence, affect our performance, or prevent us from reaching our potential. The problem in thinking this way is that we start to shut down our personal and professional horizons, instead of expanding them.

2. Making realistic improvements

At best, our fears challenge us. At worst, they immobilize us. This is especially true for those who have a phobia of public speaking. So, take tiny steps and keep your expectations realistic. Understand that you may continue to feel nervous, but not overly scared. More important, you will slowly start to look calm and confident, even if you don't feel that way yet. As you prepare and plan, you will feel more in control of various elements of your presentation. At the beginning, you are unlikely to feel confident or to enjoy the experience. This happens only after you have accumulated many successful experiences. Nevertheless, you can learn how to give the impression that you are confident and happy to be there. Each positive performance will boost your self-

esteem and motivate you to improve further. Finally, do not aim for perfection; aim for improvement. That is the way all of us grow and expand.

3. Changing your focus

As you progress in your career, and give more presentations, you will find that your focus begins to change from yourself to your audience. This changed attitude is an indication that you are no longer limited by the fear. A variety of strategies can help you to calm yourself and reach this stage.

4. Conquering nervousness

Most people feel nervous when they give a presentation. The key is to control the negative manifestations of your nervousness and to channel the extra energy flow. Remember, many people feel nervous but not everyone shows their nervousness. And that's what matters.

Implementing useful strategies

Once you identify the ways you express your nervousness, you can use the following techniques to steady your wobbly knees and calm your racing heartbeat:

- Mental Strategies
- Psychological Controls
- Physical Techniques

The best approach is to experiment with a combination of techniques and see what works best for you. It doesn't matter what helps your friend or colleague. We are all different and require unique methods to make us feel calm, cool, and in control. Whatever happens, don't give up. Know that everyone has passed through the fear and everyone can come out of it. If the fear persists, it may be because you gave up too soon; delivering one or two more presentations might have been all that was required to break away from the fear for life.

1. Mental Strategies

Prepare Properly

One of the best ways to overcome fear is to be adequately prepared. Nervousness is often produced by fear of the unknown. If you are familiar with your presentation material, your anxiety about

speaking will be reduced. If you have ever given the same presentation more than once, you will have experienced this already.

Take the time to plan your presentation well. Use an organization template to make sure the information flows logically. Make sure you emphasize and repeat the key points you want people to remember. Don't give in to the temptation to include too much information. People can only absorb so much knowledge at one stretch in an auditory manner.

Study the guidelines about designing effective visuals. Most people include too much information on their slides. Write only the most basic information on the slide itself so you can play a meaningful role in fleshing out the information and argument. If there are additional details you want to share, include them in a handout.

Then, after you've chosen the information and created your visuals, rehearse as often as necessary to get a feel for the flow of events. Identify how you will move smoothly from one point or section to the next. Draw up a plan and rehearse till you feel like you could deliver the presentation in your sleep. The repetition will also help you identify any bugs in your talk before the real event. If you always get stuck on particular word, for example, drop that word or expression and choose another you're more comfortable with.

In short, the more you sweat while preparing the presentation, the less you will sweat while actually delivering it!

Conduct a Dialogue

Standing before a group of people to present your ideas often creates the feeling that you are delivering a monologue. However, any presentation, regardless of how formal, is a dialogue because you are constantly receiving visual feedback from the audience. You can reinforce the conversational aspect of presentations in your mind by using the following techniques:

- Interact with audience members before the presentation. Mingle with the crowd and introduce yourself. That way, they won't be strangers anymore.
- Maintain eye contact during the presentation. Begin by establishing eye contact with a friendly face. As you feel more comfortable, focus on each person in small groups.
- Ask questions, so as to involve the audience whenever possible.

2. Psychological Controls

Identify your fears

One helpful step toward conquering your fear is to identify what it is you are afraid of. Some commonly expressed fears are:

- I might make a fool of myself.
- I might forget what I am going to say.
- I might begin to stutter or say the wrong thing.
- People may laugh at me.

Once you've identified what it is you are afraid of, you can determine whether the fear is legitimate. To analyze your fears, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this a rational fear?
- If this is a rational fear, what is the worst that could happen?
- So what?

Send positive messages

In life, you generally get what you expect. Learn to handle your inner critic and tell him or her that you can and will change. Look into the mirror and give yourself positive affirmations to offset the negative self-talk and to make a breakthrough. Instead of telling yourself that you're terrible at giving presentations, for example, give yourself the positive message that you have the required skills to do a good job. Instead of saying you might forget what to say, tell yourself that you have reviewed and rehearsed so often that you could deliver the presentation well in your sleep!

Use visualization techniques

Visualization is kind of mental rehearsal. It is a psychological process in which you prepare yourself to produce a positive result by imagining a future event in your mind. It doesn't take much time, and enables you to practice mentally for your presentation. If you visualize yourself giving a successful, confident presentation, you are more likely to do so. Never visualize yourself making mistakes, or you may subconsciously program yourself to do so. Expect a positive outcome as most winning personalities do. Be confidently optimistic in your own abilities and expect a better tomorrow.

Meet your audience

If possible, walk around, introduce yourself and greet members of your audience before the presentation begins. In this way, you will be speaking to fewer strangers and are more likely to get a positive nod from the individuals you have already met.

Do your best

To minimize your fear, you also must accept that it is not your job to please every single person in the room. Do your best to get your message across, focus on the positive responses you are picking up and forget the others.

3. Physical Methods

Although nervousness is caused by a mental lack of confidence, the body responds as if it were being threatened physically. In both situations, the body is reacting to stress. The solution is to find a way to control your body's physical reaction. The following methods will help you relax.

Progressive relaxation is a method of systematic tightening and loosening various muscles of your body until your entire body is in a relaxed state. The action of tightening and loosening enables you to feel the difference between the two states in a more pronounced way.

Guided imagery is a relaxation method which transports you mentally to a place which you associate with peace and restfulness (the opposite of stress) and thus allows your body to feel more relaxed before a presentation.

Moving about before and during the presentation relaxes your muscles and processes excess adrenalin. So get up out of your chair and walk around a bit, in a relaxed way, where you can get away from the crowd for a short while.

Breathe deeply and slowly while others are speaking or before you are introduced and called upon to begin your presentation. Then, walk confidently to the podium and begin speaking with energy.

Planning your Presentation:

A good presentation requires careful planning. In general, you will need to follow these steps to plan a successful presentation:

1. Brainstorm and outline: What's your topic? What do you know about the topic? What do you want your audience to know?
2. Research: Use research to support your argument, find examples and statistics, or to learn more about your topic.
3. Write an outline.
4. Write a draft.

5. Plan any visual aids such as PowerPoint or any activities you want your audience to participate in
6. Practice, practice, practice! Make sure your presentation is not too long, and edit it down as needed.

Presentation Structure:

This is the usual flow of a presentation, which covers all the vital sections and is a good starting point for yours. It allows your audience to easily follow along and sets out a solid structure you can add your content to.

1. Greet the audience and introduce yourself:

Before you start delivering your talk, introduce yourself to the audience and clarify who you are and your relevant expertise. This does not need to be long or incredibly detailed, but will help build an immediate relationship between you and the audience. It gives you the chance to briefly clarify your expertise and why you are worth listening to. This will help establish your ethos so the audience will trust you more and think you're credible.

2. Introduction:

In the introduction you need to explain the subject and purpose of your presentation whilst gaining the audience's interest and confidence. It's sometimes helpful to think of your introduction as funnel-shaped to help filter down your topic:

1. Introduce your general topic
2. Explain your topic area
3. State the issues/challenges in this area you will be exploring
4. State your presentation's purpose - this is the basis of your presentation so ensure that you provide a statement explaining how the topic will be treated, for example, "I will argue that..." or maybe you will "compare", "analyse", "evaluate", "describe" etc.
5. Provide a statement of what you're hoping the outcome of the presentation will be, for example, "I'm hoping this will provide you with..."
6. Show a preview of the organisation of your presentation

In this section also explain:

- The length of the talk.
- Signal whether you want audience interaction - some presenters prefer the audience to ask questions throughout whereas others allocate a specific section for this.
- If it applies, inform the audience whether to take notes or whether you will be providing handouts.

The way you structure your introduction can depend on the amount of time you have been given to present: a sales pitch may consist of a quick presentation so you may begin with your conclusion and then provide the evidence. Conversely, a speaker presenting their idea for change in the world would be better suited to start with the evidence and then conclude what this means for the audience.

Keep in mind that the main aim of the introduction is to grab the audience's attention and connect with them.

3. The main body of your talk:

The main body of your talk needs to meet the promises you made in the introduction. Depending on the nature of your presentation, clearly segment the different topics you will be discussing, and then work your way through them one at a time - it's important for everything to be organised logically for the audience to fully understand. There are many different ways to organise your main points, such as, by priority, theme, chronologically etc.

- Main points should be addressed one by one with supporting evidence and examples.
- Before moving on to the next point you should provide a mini-summary.
- Links should be clearly stated between ideas and you must make it clear when you're moving onto the next point.
- Allow time for people to take relevant notes and stick to the topics you have prepared beforehand rather than straying too far off topic.

When planning your presentation write a list of main points you want to make and ask yourself "What I am telling the audience? What should they understand from this?" refining your answers this way will help you produce clear messages.

4. Conclusion:

In presentations the conclusion is frequently underdeveloped and lacks purpose which is a shame as it's the best place to reinforce your messages. Typically, your presentation has a specific goal - that could be to convert a number of the audience members into customers, lead to a certain number of enquiries to make people knowledgeable on specific key points, or to motivate them towards a shared goal.

Regardless of what that goal is, be sure to summarise your main points and their implications. This clarifies the overall purpose of your talk and reinforces your reason for being there.

Follow these steps:

- Signal that it's nearly the end of your presentation, for example, "As we wrap up/as we wind down the talk..."
- Restate the topic and purpose of your presentation - "In this speech I wanted to compare..."
- Summarise the main points, including their implications and conclusions
- Indicate what is next/a call to action/a thought-provoking takeaway
- Move on to the last section

5. Thank the audience and invite questions:

Conclude your talk by thanking the audience for their time and invite them to [ask any questions](#) they may have. As mentioned earlier, personal circumstances will affect the structure of your presentation.

Many presenters prefer to make the Q&A session the key part of their talk and try to speed through the main body of the presentation. This is totally fine, but it is still best to focus on delivering some sort of initial presentation to set the tone and topics for discussion in the Q&A.

Delivering the Presentation:

How you say things may often appear to be more important than what you say. Have you listened to charismatic speakers who gain and maintain the attention of the audience? Have you also encountered speakers who quickly put an audience to sleep? Experienced presenters learn to communicate effectively by using voice, gestures, and visual aids while trying to establishing a comfortable environment for the audience.

Voice:

Using your voice effectively can have a great impact on your delivery. The best speaking voice is conversational, natural, and enthusiastic. Use the following guidelines to develop an effective speaking voice:

- Alter the pitch (high and low) of your voice to prevent yourself from sounding monotone. Don't alter the pitch too much, however, because this may make you sound unnatural.
- Speak loudly enough to be heard by everyone in the room, but vary the volume of your voice to maintain interest and emphasize key points.
- Stress certain words as another way to add emphasis. Typically when you stress a word, the pitch and the volume increase.
- Alter the rate at which you speak to maintain interest and add emphasis. Speak faster to show excitement and/or build suspense. Speak slower to show the importance of an idea. Pause after important ideas to allow the audience time to grasp them.

Gestures:

Speakers often communicate with their audience either intentionally or unintentionally using gestures and other physical behaviors. Use the guidelines below to help use gestures to your benefit:

- Maintain eye contact with members of the audience to keep their attention level high. Eye contact signals that you care about the audience and you are attuned to their needs. Also use eye contact to detect confusion or boredom so that you can then modify your approach.
- Use positive facial expressions such as smiles, expressive eyes, and looks of empathy and encouragement to communicate feelings and emotions.
- Stand naturally with your feet spread slightly apart and arms relaxed at your sides.

- Minimize gestures like pacing back and forth, rocking back and forth, playing with coins in your pocket, wringing your hands, and other types of fidgeting. These gestures not only signal that you are nervous, but they are distracting to the listener as well.
- Use quick and energetic movements of your hands and arms to add expression to your talk. Maintain the attention of the audience by making your movements unpredictable.

Visual Aids in Presentation:

Visual aids can help you emphasize main ideas, illustrate a concept, or stimulate the interest of your listeners. Examples of visual aids include posters, overheads, flip charts, photographs, computer-generated slides, and three-dimensional effects.

- Use visual aids to emphasize important points and add interest to your presentation — don't put every word of your entire presentation on them.
- Select the appropriate visual aid for the environment. It may be possible to pass visuals around to a small audience but in large groups you'll need to project them.
- Give the visuals a consistent appearance including color and spacing. Start the text at the same place on each visual.
- Try to observe the seven by seven rule: on an overhead slide have no more than seven lines and seven words per line. Similar rules would also pertain to flip charts, PowerPoint and other computer generated slides, and posters.
- Use a simple typeface or font. Don't use more than two different typefaces, if possible.
- Make sure the text is large enough for people in the back of the room to read. Letters on a flipchart should be at least 3 inches in height. For a projected overhead or slide, fonts between 20 and 48 points are customary.
- Don't show visuals that conflict with what you're saying — this includes displaying them once you've moved beyond their content.

- Don't read the text that's on the visual, but do paraphrase and add to it.

Establishing a Comfortable Environment:

While you won't always have control over the environment when you do a presentation, there may be ways you can modify the environment so that it is both comfortable for you and the audience members. The guidelines that follow are intended to help you become aware of environmental factors that can affect the delivery of your presentation.

- Make sure the lighting is adequate.
- Locate the temperature controls and regulate the temperature if necessary. If it is too warm or too cold, audience members will focus on their discomfort rather than on your presentation.
- Conduct a test of any audiovisual equipment to ensure it's in working order. Have a backup plan in place just in case — whatever can go wrong, will go wrong at the worst possible time.
- Clean off any white boards or chalk boards that might distract the audience.
- Make adjustments to the setup of the room to ensure everyone in the audience will be able to see you. Make sure that everyone can see the visuals you plan to use.
- If possible, practice your talk in the setting where you are scheduled to speak. This will not only help you determine what other factors you might have to overcome, but also make you feel more comfortable. If practicing in the room isn't possible, try to visit it prior to your presentation so you know what to expect.
- When possible, greet members of the audience as they come into the room. Not only will this make them feel welcome and at ease, but it may also help reduce your nervousness.

- Try to eliminate barriers between you and the audience. These kinds of barriers include lecterns, tables, or audiovisual equipment. Physical barriers communicate that you're trying to maintain your distance from the audience.

10 effective presentation techniques:

- **Focus on your audience** – every presentation you do should be tailored to your listeners, this will keep them interested and engaged. What do you want your audience to think, feel and do? Plan how you will achieve this.
- **Keep your presentation slides simple** – be as clear and concise as possible. Your listeners cannot concentrate on what you are saying if you have lots of text on slides. Try to use imagery to supplement what you are saying instead of text.
- **Be passionate and emotive** – humans are more interested when emotion is involved. Think about how you can make your presentation personal and relatable.
- **Practice, practice, practice** – the saying is true, practice does make perfect and there is nothing worse than forgetting what you were going to say in your presentation. First practice aloud to yourself, then practice in front of your friends, family or colleagues. Then ask them for feedback, improve, and practice again.
- **Have an open and inviting body language** – having an open body language shows you are confident and believe in what you are saying. Great presenters always perform with their hands open and palms facing towards the audience. Try this yourself, it helps the audience to connect with you better.
- **Smile and make eye contact** – this shows you are friendly and builds rapport with the audience. It also helps keep you calm and concentrated as you will feel like you are talking to individuals rather than a room filled with people.
- **Dress for the occasion** – check what the dress code is; if in doubt we would always advise you to dress smartly as this will look much better than being under-dressed.
- **Prevent getting sweat marks** – there is nothing more embarrassing than getting sweat marks whilst presenting. Avoid this scenario
- **Don't rush, keep your speech at a slow and steady pace** – this is a common fault with presenters, it especially happens when people are nervous. Try to be aware of the pace you

are speaking at and speak slower than you think you need to; trust us this will be a perfect speed.

- **Banish the nerves** – if you struggle with confidence whilst presenting then adopting a persona can help. Acting helps your brain achieve things you wouldn't usually feel comfortable with, breaking down those usual barriers.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

UNIT – V – COMMUNICATION SKILLS – BP105T

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS – BP105T
Course Materials

UNIT V

A group discussion is a group of individuals, typically who share a similar interest, who gather either formally or informally to discuss ideas, solve problems, or make comments. Common methods of conversing including meeting in person, conducting conference calls, using text messaging, or using a website such as an Internet forum. People respond, add comments, and make posts on such forums, as well as on established mailing lists, in news groups, or in IRC channels. Other group members could choose to respond by posting text or image.

"Group" is a collection of individuals who have regular contact and frequent interaction and who work together to achieve a common set of goals. "Discussion" is the process whereby two or more people exchange information or ideas in a face-to-face situation to achieve a goal. The goal, or end product, maybe increased knowledge, agreement leading to action, disagreement leading to competition or resolution or perhaps only a clearing of the air or a continuation of the status-quo.

Who holds a Group Discussion?

"Group Discussion", popularly labeled as GD, is a popular methodology used by many organizations (company, institute, business school, etc.) these days to gauge whether the candidate has certain personality traits such as interpersonal communication skills, confidence in public speaking, team spirit, leadership abilities, social behaviour and problem-solving skills. GDs form an important part of the short-listing process for recruitment or admission in a company or institution.

Communication skills in a group discussion:

Communication skills are extremely essential in today's competitive environment. A good communicator should be able to receive information as sent.

Good communication skills in a group discussion can show you are an active listener.

- It helps to clearly express your ideas.
- Good communication skills help to exchange ideas.
- Good communication skills avoid professional glitches in a team discussion.
- Good communication skills help to avoid misunderstandings.
- It helps to negotiate on various issues in a group discussion.
- It adds a lot of value in a presentation in a group discussion.
- Good communication skills can grab attention of evaluators.
- It can show that you are stable, level headed, confident and quite well aware of the arguments.

Communication skill is not just about speaking fluently in English. It's about being confident and the right attitude.

Do's in a GD:

- Make sure your first entry is well planned. The first impression goes a long way in establishing your credentials. Enter the discussion with a strategy, rather than a random input.
- If you are the first speaker understand the difference between starting and initiating the discussion. Initiating is about imparting an overall direction to the discussion and panning out an agenda for the group. Starting is merely speaking for the sake of speaking.
- Establish eye contact with the key participants, but do not ignore the other participants. While the active participants need to be acknowledged more frequently, the passive ones should not be completely overlooked. You may follow Pareto's 80-20 rule here, with 80% of the attention being given to the key participants and the balance 20% being given to the other lot.

- Use a strong voice, clear diction and correct grammar. This gives you an operational advantage.
- Try getting as many likes as possible. Eventually the discussion boils down to group dynamics and collaboration. Creating likeability may help you to navigate more effectively through the course of the discussion. However this doesn't imply lack of constructive arguments wherever required.
- Do take counter arguments gracefully and display good listening skills, projecting you as a good learner.
- Do acknowledge the previous speaker before putting across your point of view. Discussion implies an action-reaction interface. Not reacting to the preceding input may show your inability to do so.
- Do support your viewpoint with examples and facts. These will add conviction to your point of view and corroborate your stand.
- Do demonstrate an ability to look at a topic from multiple dimensions. This reflects your ability to think laterally and treat the topic in a more mature and wholesome manner.
- Do try to understand the right exit points. Please appreciate that the challenge is not to hold the main-stage all through, but to add value at appropriate points of the discussion. Your exit strategy is as crucial as the entry strategy.
- Do recapitulate the main points of the discussion when required. This helps you to consolidate the flow of the discussion at critical points and also demonstrates your ability to assimilate the viewpoints of others.

- Do present yourself as a team player with an ability to balance individual excellence and group performance. The group discussion is not just about your perspective; you have to respond to the others' perspectives as well and enlarge the scope of the discussion.
- Address group members with respect and dignity. This shows professional courtesy and etiquettes.
- When asked to conclude, summarize the main points of discussion. The conclusion is not about what you feel about the topic; it is about what the group felt as a whole. This needs reference to the main points which emanated in that span and the overall stand of the group.
- Maintain a calm and balanced disposition throughout the discussion. This demonstrates your ability to manage stress effectively.

Don'ts in a GD:

Go through the list of things to avoid so as to crack a GD:

- Don't start for the sake of starting. This may project you as an impulsive person with lack of planning and organizing skills, which totally discounts your candidature for a management program.
- Don't speak randomly without a plan and structure. This may give an impression to the panel that you are speaking and not adding any value to the discussion.
- Don't be arrogant, overaggressive or vain. This may evince a negative attitude with poor interpersonal skills.
- Don't show a lack of attention or energy. This may show that you are indifferent to the task at hand. Kindly appreciate that energy is the capacity for doing work and any compromise on adequate energy levels will portray you as someone who is not task driven.

- Don't look at only the key speakers in the discussion. It is your responsibility to respect all members of the group. The key speakers should definitely be given more attention, but this should not imply that the passive speakers are totally neglected.
- Don't condemn or severely criticize anyone's view point. Everyone has a right to his/her opinion. It is possible that some members of the group get aggressive while expressing themselves but they need to be managed in a certain other way.
- Don't indulge in cross discussions when the main discussion is in progress. This amounts to transgression and does not conform with formal etiquettes.
- Don't form cartels to visibly monopolize the discussion. This is seen as an act of violating the essence of an open, natural discussion. This also projects you as a person vying for undue control/power.
- Don't get restless and jittery when someone counters your point. It is natural that in a discussion your point gets contradicted. You are supposed to respond with facts/examples/illustrations/logic.
- Don't get into unnecessary arguments or futile conflicts with other speakers. This will only add to the opportunity cost.
- Don't look at the panel while making a point. This may project you as an attention seeker and an insecure person.
- Don't fold your arms or cross your legs to slip into an over casual posture. It is a formal occasion and you cannot portray an informal/casual appearance/attitude.
- Don't enter your neighbour's private space while making a point. This is a violation of his/her intimate space and will be seen as a breach of a code of conduct.

- Don't over gesticulate. This may project you as an impulsive person.
- Don't scream and shout to prove your point as it negates the importance of poise and composure.

Do's & Don'ts of a Group Discussion:

Shiksha café experts highlight important points on the Do's & Don'ts of a Group Discussion.

1) Dress Formally

Dressing helps make the first impression and determines one's personality – so do not take it casually. Dress in smart formals for GD and PI round. It will add to your confidence and keep you comfortable while speaking in a group. Positive gestures and body language will make your work easier.

2) Don't Rush Into It

Initiating the GD is a big plus. But it works in your favour only when you understand the GD topic. If you are not sure about the topic, take your time, take a cue from others and then frame your argument. It will help you appear more measured when you speak and bring out your analytical skills.

3) Keep Eye Contact While Speaking

Stay relaxed and keep eye contact with every team member of the group discussion while speaking. Do not look at the evaluators only.

4) Allow Others to Speak

Do not interrupt others during the GD. Even if you don't agree with their thoughts do not snatch their chance to speak. Instead make a mental note and state your points when it's your turn. This will show that you are not desperate to blow your own trumpet and are mindful of other people's opinion.

5) Don't be Aggressive

Speak politely and clearly. Use simple language to convey your thoughts without being irritable. Don't be aggressive even if you need to disagree with someone. Express your feelings calmly and politely.

6) Maintain Positive Attitude

GD is a team activity. Be confident but do not try to dominate anyone. Remember it's a discussion and not a debate, so express your feelings calmly and politely. Ensure a positive body language. Show interest in the group discussion when others express their thoughts. This will make you appear as someone who is a team player.

7) Speak Sensibly

Do not speak just to increase your speaking time. Don't worry even if you speak less but do not try to beat around the bush. Your thoughts should be sensible and relevant. Wasting the group's time with your irrelevant speech or speaking without proper subject knowledge will only create a poor impression.

8) Listen Carefully to Others

Being a good listener is an important skill to succeed in group discussions. Pay attention when others speak. This will encourage coherent discussion and you will get involved in the group positively. That way, others are also more likely to be receptive to your points.

9) Avoid Time-Consuming Details

A basic subject analysis is sufficient. There's no need to mention exact figures and statistics while making a reference. You have limited time in a GD, so be precise and convey your thoughts in a smart and crisp manner.

10) Keep the Discussion on Track

If you find the group is digressing from the topic or goal then simply take the initiative to bring the discussion back on track. Uphold and emphasize the group's common objective to stick to the topic to arrive at some conclusion at the end of the group discussion. This will exhibit your leadership skills.

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