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BACHELOR OF COMMERCE

BCOM 203

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar – 125001

CONTENTS

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BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: FORMS & IMPORTANCE

STRUCTURE

1.0   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you should be able to-

- Define communication

- Define business communication

- Objectives of business communication

- Different forms of Communication

- Understand the process of communication

- Importance of business communication

1.1   INTRODUCTION

The emergence of quick technology has made the globe a small, interconnected community. At both the national and international levels, the exchange of information across different social groups has gotten much more organized, effective, and efficient. You may simply access whatever information you need or want by clicking a single button on a computer. You cannot simply imagine a situation or a world in which there is no communication of thoughts, sentiments, feelings, reactions, propositions, facts, or numbers. Communication has always been one of the most crucial aspects of human life. Strong and effective communication channels have enabled the global economic integration. The way we communicate has changed.

Communication is important in this world because it enables individuals and groups to exchange ideas, thoughts, and information. Effective communication helps people to understand each other, build relationships, and work together to achieve common goals. Communication is essential in all aspects of life, including personal relationships, education, healthcare, politics, and business. Overall, communication is important in this world because it enables people to build relationships, enhance personal and professional development, improve productivity, enable innovation, and ensure safety and security.

The concept of communication refers to the exchange of information, ideas, and feelings between individuals or groups. It is a process that involves the transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver through various channels and media. Effective communication involves the use of clear and concise language, active listening, and the consideration of the audience's needs and preferences. It also requires an understanding of the context and the ability to adapt to different situations and audiences.

There are several key elements of the communication process, including the sender, the message, the channel, the receiver, and feedback. The sender is the person or group initiating the message, the message is the information being transmitted, the channel is the medium used to transmit the message, the receiver is the person or group receiving the message, and feedback is the response or reaction to the message.

Communication can take many forms, including verbal communication (e.g., spoken words), nonverbal communication (e.g., body language), written communication (e.g., emails, memos), and visual communication (e.g., images, graphs). Effective communication is essential in personal relationships, business, education, healthcare, and many other areas of life.

1.2   MEANING OF COMMUNICATION

Communication refers to the exchange of information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings between individuals, groups, or organizations through various channels and media. It is a two-way process that involves both sending and receiving messages. The primary purpose of communication is to convey information and ideas to others, to persuade, to influence, and to establish and maintain relationships. Effective communication is essential for building and maintaining relationships, promoting understanding, resolving conflicts, and achieving common goals. Communication can take many forms, including verbal communication (e.g., speaking, listening), nonverbal communication (e.g., body language, tone of voice), written communication (e.g., emails, letters), and visual communication (e.g., charts, diagrams).

The success of any communication depends on the clarity of the message, the medium used to transmit it, the understanding of the receiver, and the feedback received. Good communication involves active listening, empathy, respect, and the ability to adapt to different contexts and audiences. Good communication is characterized by the effective exchange of information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings between individuals, groups, or organizations. It involves sending and receiving messages in a way that is clear, concise, and easily understood.

Here are some key attributes of good communication:

1. Clarity: Good communication is clear and easy to understand. It involves using simple and straightforward language, avoiding jargon and technical terms, and being specific and concise.

2. Active Listening: Good communication requires active listening. This involves paying attention to the speaker, asking questions to clarify information, and demonstrating empathy and understanding.

3. Respect: Good communication involves showing respect for the other person's thoughts, feelings, and ideas. It involves avoiding judgment and criticism and being open to different perspectives.

4. Feedback: Good communication involves providing feedback to the speaker. This can include summarizing the main points, providing constructive criticism, and offering suggestions for improvement.

5. Adaptability: Good communication requires adaptability. It involves being able to adjust your communication style to suit different audiences, situations, and contexts.

Good communication is essential in building and maintaining relationships, promoting understanding, resolving conflicts, and achieving common goals. It enables individuals and organizations to work together effectively and achieve success.

There are various definitions and meaning interpreted by different scholars. For example, T.S. Matthews says that Communication is something so difficult that we can never put it in simple words. But we do need a definition to understand the concept. In his book *Communication in Business,* Peter Little defines communication as the process by which information is transmitted between individuals and/ or organizations so that an understandable response results. W.H. Newman and C.F. Summer Jr. defines communication as, "Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions, or emotions by two or more persons".

Clearly, the important phrase in the first definition is "information." However, this term does not specify the subjects of the transmission of information. This is precisely what the second definition says. Information is communicated through communication, including information about feelings as well as quantifiable ideas and views. A communicator may unintentionally or purposely convey his or

her mood or mental state when passing along or transmitting information. Additionally, the latter may occasionally be more accurate in conveying the facts at hand.

The definition offered by William Scott in his book '*Organisation Theory*' should appear comprehensive and especially satisfying to the students of 'business communication' since it touches all aspects of the communication process:

"Administrative communication is a process which involves the transmission and accurate replication of ideas ensured by feedback for the purpose of eliciting actions which will accomplish organizational goals."

The definition is quite comprehensive. Further, it covers almost all aspects of communication.

Business communication refers to the exchange of information within an organization or between an organization and external parties such as customers, suppliers, and partners. Effective communication is essential for the success of any business as it enables stakeholders to understand the company's objectives, share ideas, and make informed decisions.

There are different types of business communication, including:

➢ Verbal communication: This involves the use of spoken words, such as face-to-face meetings, teleconferences, or phone calls.

➢ Written communication: This involves the use of written words, such as emails, memos, reports, and letters.

➢ Nonverbal communication: This refers to the use of body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions to convey a message.

➢ Visual communication: This involves the use of images, graphs, and charts to convey information.

Effective business communication requires careful planning, clear and concise messages, and appropriate language and tone. It is also important to consider the audience and their needs when communicating, and to ensure that the message is understood and acted upon.

1.2.1 OBJECTIVES OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

The objectives of communication can vary depending on the context and the audience. However, some of the most common objectives of communication are:

1. Sharing Information: One of the primary objectives of communication is to share information with others. This could include sharing news, updates, or data about a particular topic, product, or service.

2. Persuasion: Another important objective of communication is to persuade others to take a particular action, support an idea, or make a decision. This could involve using various techniques such as logic, emotion, and credibility to influence the audience.

3. Building Relationships: Communication can also be used to build and maintain relationships between individuals, groups, or organizations. This could involve developing rapport, trust, and mutual understanding through regular communication.

4. Educating: Communication can be used to educate others about a particular topic or issue. This could involve providing training, workshops, or seminars to improve knowledge and skills.

5. Entertainment: Communication can also be used for entertainment purposes, such as in the case of films, television, music, or other forms of media.

6. Resolving Conflicts: Communication can also be used to resolve conflicts between individuals or groups. This could involve using mediation or negotiation skills to find a mutually acceptable solution.

Overall, the objectives of communication are to convey information, influence attitudes and behavior, build relationships, educate, entertain, and resolve conflicts. Effective communication helps individuals and organizations achieve their goals and improve their overall performance. The main objective of all communications in an organization is the general welfare of the organization. Effective communication is needed at all stages in order to ensure this welfare. At the planning stage, information is needed on the various aspects of the enterprise, the feasibility of the project being undertaken, finances involved, manpower required, marketing conditions, publicity campaigns, etc. At the execution stage, orders are

issued to the employees to start work, the workers associated with the project are constantly motivated and kept involved, a sense of discipline is cultivated among them and their morale is kept high. All this requires constant two-way communication between the managers and the employees. Then at the assessment stage, the manager is again required to communicate with various sources, both internal and external, to assess the success of the project, and if a need is felt, to envisage modifications in the future plans.

Business communication is a specific type of communication that is used within an organization or between organizations to achieve specific business goals. The objectives of business communication include:

- Transmitting Information
- Building Relationships
- Facilitating Decision-making
- Promoting Efficiency
- Enhancing Customer Relations
- Supporting Marketing Activities
- Education
- Warning
- Raising morale
- Motivation
- Advice
- Counselling
- Order
- Suggestion
- Persuasion

1.2.1.1   Transmitting Information:

One of the main objectives of business communication is to transmit information within an organization or between organizations. This could include sharing information about products, services, policies, procedures, or any other aspect of the business.

Passing or receiving information about a particular fact or circumstance is one of the most important objectives of communication. It can be done either through spoken or written language or by using any other system of signs or signals. Managers need complete, accurate and precise information to plan and organize; employees need it to translate planning into reality. Information on the following aspects is very essential for the existence and welfare of any organization:

- Consumer response to its products in comparison with competing products with reference to quality as well as price.

- Whether they are being produced in conformity with the latest trends?

- The nature of the various financial institutions and the terms and conditions on which credit is offered by them.

- How better quality raw materials can be procured on easier terms, or if there are any cheaper substitutes available?

- What kind of effect, the rules and regulations of the government and the changing political scene can have on the product policy of the organization?

- Information about the efficiency, suitability, relative merits and the expenses involved on the advertising media.

- Information about the latest developments in the fields of science and technology.

Information about the precise nature of every employee's job, its scope, and the procedures governing it should be readily available with every employee as well as in the files of the organization.

Managers whose primary job is planning need detailed information of the following kinds:

- Information about the political, social and economic conditions.

- Information about the cultural milieu; geographical and climatic information.

- Information about the production and sale capacity of the organization; detailed information about the members of the staff, their academic and professional qualifications, their efficiency and reliability, their limitations, etc.

- Information about the rival companies and their products, their strong and weak points, their past and present performance.

A great deal of internal information is readily available in the old files of the organization. Past performance of the organization as well as its employees can be easily known from the old files. Valuable information about the efficiency and reliability of the employees can be gained from personal observation. Large business houses often sponsor national and international seminars and conferences. Participation in such seminars and conferences proves to be a very educative experience. Information can also be gathered through personal interviews with prominent people in the political field, experts in professional fields and the members of general public. Current electronic communication media, in particular, internet computer network now offers access to latest information on all subjects under the sun almost at the flick of your finger. Information can come from a variety of sources. Here are some common sources of information:

1. Primary Sources: Primary sources are original sources of information that come directly from the subject or event being studied. Examples of primary sources include interviews, surveys, experiments, and firsthand observations.

2. Secondary Sources: Secondary sources are sources of information that are based on primary sources or other secondary sources. Examples of secondary sources include books, articles, reports, and academic papers.

3. Tertiary Sources: Tertiary sources are sources of information that provide overviews or summaries of primary and secondary sources. Examples of tertiary sources include encyclopedias, dictionaries, and textbooks.

4. Media: Media sources such as newspapers, television, radio, and online news sources can provide up-to-date information on current events and trends.

5. Internet: The internet is a vast source of information that can be accessed through search engines, databases, and online sources such as blogs, forums, and social media.

6. Personal Experience: Personal experience can also be a valuable source of information, especially in areas such as customer service, product development, and marketing.

When using sources of information, it is important to consider the reliability and credibility of the source. Evaluating sources for accuracy, bias, and relevance can help ensure that the information being used is trustworthy and appropriate for the intended purpose.

1.2.1.2 Building Relationships:

Business communication is also used to build and maintain relationships between individuals, groups, or organizations. This could involve developing rapport, trust, and mutual understanding through regular communication.

Building relationships is an important objective of business communication. Strong relationships can help businesses build customer loyalty, increase sales, and improve overall brand reputation. Here are some ways in which businesses can use communication to build relationships:

1. Personalized Communication: Personalizing communication with customers or clients can help build strong relationships. Addressing individuals by name and using their preferences can make them feel valued and appreciated.

2. Listening: Active listening is essential to building relationships. Listening to customer or client feedback and responding to their concerns can help businesses build trust and demonstrate their commitment to customer satisfaction.

3. Consistent Communication: Consistent communication is important to maintain relationships. Regularly updating customers or clients on new products, services, and promotions can keep them engaged and interested.

4. Open Communication: Open communication is essential for building strong relationships. Encouraging customers or clients to share their thoughts, opinions, and feedback can help businesses better understand their needs and preferences.

5. Networking: Networking with other businesses and professionals in the industry can help build relationships and establish partnerships.

Overall, building relationships through business communication requires a focus on personalization, listening, consistency, openness, and networking. By building strong relationships with customers, clients, and partners, businesses can improve their reputation and increase their chances of long-term success.

1.2.1.3 Facilitating Decision-making:

Business communication is used to facilitate decision-making within an organization. This could involve providing information or feedback to help individuals or teams make informed decisions. Effective business communication can facilitate decision-making by providing stakeholders with the

information and context necessary to make informed decisions. Here are some ways in which communication can facilitate decision-making:

1. Clear and Concise Communication: Clear and concise communication is essential to ensure that stakeholders understand the information being presented. Providing relevant and easily understandable information can help stakeholders make informed decisions.

2. Timely Communication: Timely communication can help stakeholders make decisions based on up-to-date and relevant information. Providing information in a timely manner can help avoid delays and ensure that stakeholders have enough time to make decisions.

3. Comprehensive Communication: Comprehensive communication provides stakeholders with all the information they need to make informed decisions. Providing a complete picture of the situation, including potential risks and benefits, can help stakeholders make more accurate decisions.

4. Interactive Communication: Interactive communication, such as group discussions, brainstorming sessions, and feedback loops, can help stakeholders explore options, identify potential issues, and reach a consensus on decisions.

5. Use of Visual Aids: The use of visual aids, such as charts, graphs, and diagrams, can help stakeholders understand complex information and make informed decisions.

By using these communication strategies, businesses can facilitate decision-making and ensure that stakeholders are well-informed and involved in the decision-making process. Effective communication can help businesses make better decisions, avoid costly mistakes, and achieve their goals.

1.2.1.4 Promoting Efficiency:

Business communication is used to promote efficiency within an organization. This could involve streamlining communication channels, using clear and concise language, and ensuring that messages are delivered in a timely manner. Promoting efficiency in business communication means ensuring that communication is effective, streamlined, and timely. Here are some ways in which businesses can promote efficiency in communication:

1. Use of Technology: Utilizing modern communication technology can help businesses streamline communication processes and improve efficiency. Examples include email, instant messaging, video conferencing, and project management tools.

2. Clear Communication Channels: Clearly defining communication channels and processes can help ensure that messages are received and responded to in a timely manner. This can help avoid delays and miscommunication.

3. Standardized Communication: Standardizing communication formats and templates can help save time and ensure that information is presented in a clear and consistent manner. This can also help to ensure that communication is relevant to its intended audience.

4. Training: Providing training to employees on effective communication practices can help improve efficiency and minimize errors. This can also help ensure that everyone is on the same page regarding communication protocols.

5. Feedback and Follow-up: Providing feedback and follow-up on communication can help ensure that messages are received and understood. This can also help to identify areas where communication can be improved.

By promoting efficiency in business communication, businesses can save time and resources, minimize errors, and improve overall productivity. Effective communication is key to the success of any business, and promoting efficiency is an important aspect of effective communication.

1.2.1.5 Enhancing Customer Relations:

Business communication is also used to enhance customer relations. This could involve providing timely and accurate information to customers, responding to their inquiries and complaints, and building long-term relationships with them. Effective business communication is essential for building and enhancing customer relations. Here are some ways in which businesses can enhance customer relations through communication:

1. Active Listening: Listening actively to customers can help businesses understand their needs and concerns. This can help businesses tailor their products and services to meet customer needs, resulting in increased customer satisfaction.

2. Timely Responses: Providing timely responses to customer inquiries, complaints, and feedback can help businesses show their customers that they value their input and are committed to providing excellent service.

3. Personalized Communication: Personalizing communication with customers can help businesses build stronger relationships. This can include using the customer's name, referring to previous interactions, and tailoring messages to the customer's specific needs.

4. Consistent Communication: Consistent communication with customers can help build trust and establish a long-term relationship. This can include regular updates on products and services, newsletters, and follow-up communications.

5. Professionalism: Professionalism in communication is essential for building customer trust and confidence. This includes using appropriate language, responding to customers in a timely manner, and addressing customer concerns with empathy and respect.

By enhancing customer relations through effective communication, businesses can improve customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention. This can lead to increased revenue, as satisfied customers are more likely to refer others and make repeat purchases.

1.2.1.6 Supporting Marketing Activities:

Business communication is used to support marketing activities such as advertising, promotions, and public relations. This could involve developing marketing messages, creating promotional materials, and engaging with the target audience through various channels. Effective communication is essential for supporting marketing activities in a business. Here are some ways in which communication can support marketing activities:

1. Branding: Effective communication can help to create a strong brand image that is consistent across all communication channels. This can help to build brand recognition and increase customer loyalty.

2. Advertising: Communication is key to creating effective advertising campaigns. Clear and concise messaging, compelling visuals, and effective calls-to-action can all be achieved through effective communication.

3. Sales: Communication is essential for sales, whether it is through face-to-face interactions or online sales. Providing customers with the information they need to make informed decisions is key to closing a sale.

4. Market Research: Communication can also be used to conduct market research and gather feedback on products and services. This can help businesses better understand customer needs and preferences, allowing them to tailor their products and services accordingly.

5. Public Relations: Effective communication is essential for managing public relations, whether it is responding to negative feedback or promoting positive news. Professional and timely communication can help to mitigate negative impacts and promote positive outcomes.

By supporting marketing activities through effective communication, businesses can improve brand recognition, increase sales, and build strong relationships with their customers. Effective communication is essential for all aspects of marketing and can be a powerful tool for businesses to achieve their marketing goals.

1.2.1.7 Education

Education is an import ingredient of the process of communication. It involves both teaching and learning and extends over considerably long periods. The main purpose of education is to widen knowledge as well as to improve skills. It is carried on at three levels: (a) at the management level; (b) at the level of the employees; and (c) at the level of the outside public.

- *Education for the management:* Knowledge is multiplying fast. Each new day brings with it innovations, which if suitably applied can revolutionise the working of an organization. Managers are required to keep abreast of the latest innovations. In other words, they have to be educated. Their education can take place through books, lectures, seminars, case studies, study tours, etc. Junior managers have to be educated to assume responsibility when they succeed to higher positions.

- *Education for the employees:* Just as the managers are required to keep abreast of the latest innovations in the field of commerce and technology, when these innovations are introduced in the office or the factory, the employees have to be educated to use them. Such a programme of education is called re-orientation. Employees can be educated through talks, demonstrations, bulletins and house organs.

- *Education for the outside public:* The outside public needs knowledge on the new products being introduced into the market, the relative merits of the various brands already existing, the availability of the substitutes, complementary and supplementary products, comparative prices, concessions and discounts, if any. This useful knowledge is offered through advertisements, specially sponsored features in the newspapers, information talks and articles.

1.2.1.8 Warning

If employees do not abide by the norms of the organization, or violate the rules and regulations, it may become necessary to warn them. Tardiness, negligence, tempering with the records, mishandling equipment, lack of regularity and punctuality, gossiping, pilfering office stationery and material, spreading rumours, misleading new employees are some of the actions that call for a reprimand or a warning. Warning is a forceful means of communication, for it demands immediate action. But in order to retain its effectiveness, it should be used sparingly and discreetly. While issuing warnings, the following points should be kept in mind:

Some warnings are general. 'No smoking', 'No talking', 'Beware of the dog' are general warnings. They are not aimed at any particular person, nor are they likely to hurt anybody's feelings. Such warnings are usually given in the form of notices. They are almost akin to information.

More often, warnings are given to particular persons. They involve disciplinary action in the form of reprimand. Reprimands are very demoralizing; they may also evoke resentment. Before reprimanding an employee, it is very important to ascertain the truth of the charges leveled against him. Reprimand should never spring from personal prejudices.

Reprimand should not be administered to a person in the presence of others. It will make him fell humiliated and nobody likes to be humiliated. The worker should be summoned in the privacy of the supervisor's room and dispassionately talked to.

It is also useful to investigate the causes of the worker's undesirable behaviour. He may be burdened by some domestic or personal problems. Or he may be nursing some personal grudge against the supervisor or the organization. If the supervisor can succeed in taking him out of his problems, the warning given to him will become constructive.

The aim of giving a warning should be the betterment of the organization. It should not be used to cause disruption. It is very important to be judicious in the choice of words used in administering warnings and reprimands.

1.2.1.9 Raising morale

Morale is the sum of several qualities like courage, fortitude, resolution and confidence. High morale and efficient performance go hand in hand. It acts as a kind of lubricant among people, binds them with a sense of togetherness and impels them to work in cooperation with one another in the best interest of their organization.

Factors conducive to the creation of a high morale

- Every worker gets work suited to his physical and intellectual caliber. He feels his work is important and it is appreciated by the authorities. He is free to do his work as he likes. He is encouraged to give suggestions.
- The atmosphere in the premises is congenial. The superiors are efficient and their attitude is constructive. They enjoy the workers' respect.
- Promotional avenues are available to the workers.
- Genuine grievances of the workers are promptly removed.

1.2.1.10   Motivation

Motivation energises and activates a person and channelises his behaviour towards the attainment of desired goals. Motivation and behaviour are intimately related to each other. In order and persuasion, the communicator enjoys an upper hand. But in motivation he keeps himself in the background. He does not order his employees to work; he motivates them so that they work willingly and eagerly. A motivated worker does not need much supervision. He does his work as if it were his own, as if his own interests were closely tied up with the successful performance and completion of the work entrusted to him. An office or factory that enjoys the support of motivated workers shows much better results than another office or factory in which workers are commanded to work.

Monetary incentives are perhaps the most effective form of motivation. People working on contract basis are always motivated to work, for their earnings increase in proportion to their work. People work reluctantly during the office hours but willingly stay back to work overtime. However, it may not be

always possible, or even desirable, to offer monetary incentives. Such a practice is likely to set unhealthy precedents with the implication that whenever such, motives are absent, the workers will just refuse to work.

Though earning money may be the most important motive for working harder, it is not the only motive. Other factors like job satisfaction, prestige, a sense of belonging to a great organization can also induce or motivate workers to work sincerely and efficiently. Motivation as a form of communication deals with these factors.

1.2.1.11   Advice

Giving advice is another important objective of communication. Information is always factual and objective. But advice, since it involves personal opinions, is likely to be subjective. Information is neutral in itself. When it is offered to a person, he may use it as he likes. But advice is given to him either to influence his opinion or his behaviour. It may prove helpful, but it may also lead to disaster.

Commercial activities in the modem world have become extremely complex. Each individual activity needs specialized handling, which cannot be expected from people working single-handed. However competent a businessman may be, he cannot have specialized knowledge of all branches like finance, taxation, publicity, engineering, public relations, etc. If he wants to run his business successfully, he will have to seek expert advice quite frequently.

Within the organization, the supervisory staff is required to advise the junior employees. Supervisors being in close contact with their superiors (usually the board of directors) are well familiar with the policies and functioning of the organizations. They are, therefore, in an excellent position to guide, counsel or advise their subordinate staff.

Advice, by its very nature, flows horizontally or downwards. Expert advice from outside flows horizontally. The board of directors advising one another on some policy matter are also engaged in a kind of horizontal communication. But advice soon starts flowing down to the management personnel, the supervisory staff and the subordinate staff or the operatives.

While offering advice, the adviser should keep the following points in mind:

1. Advice should be both man-oriented and work-oriented, i.e., it should be related to a specific piece of work, and should be given in such away that it suits the individual needs of the recipient. It means that while explaining the complexities of a job, the adviser ought to keep in mind the understanding power of the person he is advising.

2. Advice should not be given to a person to make him feel conscious of his inferior knowledge or skill. If the adviser assumes a patronizing tone, the other person is bound to recent it. So the adviser ought to be very friendly in his attitude.

3. The only justified motive of giving advice is the betterment of the worker. The adviser should genuinely feel this motive. And he should give this very feeling to the worker. He should so mould his tone and phrase his language that he makes the other person feel absolutely at ease.

4. If the subordinate staffs are given freedom to react, advice can become a two-way channel of communication. It may perhaps bring about some excellent suggestions for the improvement of the organisation's functioning.

1.2.1.12   Counselling

Counselling is very similar to giving advice. Only, counsel is objective and impersonal. The counsellor is a man of greater skill or knowledge on some specific subject and he offers his counsel without any personal interest or involvement. Advice has a personal touch about it; counsel is almost professional. Advice is often unsought and is unwelcome; counsel is eagerly sought.

A number of large business houses now have their counselling departments, which offer the employees advice on domestic or personal problems. Even an efficient employee may become tardy and indifferent if he is facing some personal problems at home. This may adversely affect the working of the organization. It may also affect other employees and lower their morale. Such employees are encouraged to consult the counselling department, which has on its staff a panel of doctors, psychologists and social workers. These experts hold a series of sittings with the employees and thrash out their problems. The employees are restored to their mental and physical health and the conditions in the organization are brought back to the normal.

1.2.1.13   Order

Order is an authoritative communication. It is a directive to somebody, always a subordinate, to do something, to modify or alter the course of something he is already doing, or not to do something. Whatever be the nature and size of an organization, orders are absolutely necessary for it. *The downward flow of information* is *dominated by orders.* We can classify orders in various ways:

(a)   Written and oral orders

Written orders are usually given when:

1.   the order is of a highly responsible nature;

2.   the task is repetitive in nature, and it is cumbersome and inconvenient to issue oral orders every time the task is to be done;

3.   the person being ordered is remotely situated and it is not possible to give him oral orders.

Oral orders are given when:

1.   the job is required to be done immediately;

2.   it is an ordinary job and there is no need of maintaining any written record;

3.   there is a kind of permanent superior-subordinate relationship between the giver and the receiver of the order and the order-giver does not feel the need of entering into the cumbersome process of issuing written orders.

(b)   General and specific orders

If orders are related to one particular activity, they are specific. If there are a number of activities having operational similarities, general orders may be issued to cover all of them.

(c)   Procedural and operational orders

Procedural orders specify procedures to be adopted. They are general by nature. Operational orders are more closely related to the job in hand. They specify how a particular job is to be done.

(d)   Mandatory and discretionary orders

Mandatory orders have to be obeyed. Discretionary orders are usually in the nature of recommendations. They suggest what is desirable, what should be done. But it is up to the receive; to see their feasibility and to decide whether he ought to carry them out or not. The Head Office may issue discretionary orders to the branch manager, for the branch manager, being present on the spot, knows better whether the orders are to be carried out or not.

An effective order possesses the following characteristics:

- It must be clear and complete.

- Its execution should be possible.

- It should be given in a friendly way.

Steps in the order-giving operation

Paul Pigors has outlined the following seven steps in a complete order-giving operation:

- *Planning:* Before an order is given, the order-giver should be sure about the following points:

  (i)   Exactly what action is required?

  (ii)   Is it feasible?

  (iii)   Who is to perform it?

  (iv)   In how much time is it to be performed?

- *Preparing the order-receiver:* This should, in fact, be considered a part of planning. Preparing the order-receiver is necessary for the satisfactory accomplishment of any specific order. But it also requires continuous education of the receiver so that he receives the order in the right spirit and correctly interprets the intention and motives behind issuing it.

- *Presenting the order:* This is the stage at which the order is to be written (if it is a written order) and issued. At this stage it is ensured that the order is clear and complete.

- *Verification of reception:* After the order has been issued, the order-giver should watch out for the reaction of the receiver, whether the order has been properly understood and the receiver is going in the right direction.

- *Action:* If planning and presentation of the order have been done correctly, the order-receiver is likely to execute it in the correct spirit.

- *Follow-up:* But the order-giver should not remain content with the information that the order is being executed. He should confirm whether it is being executed correctly. Sometimes, during the process of execution, the person entrusted with it may run into some unforeseen difficulties. If proper follow-up is being conducted, the order-giver will take steps to remove those difficulties or issue fresh orders on adopting a different course of action.

- *Appraisal:* When the order has been executed and the work is over, it is time to appraise or assess it to see whether it has been done satisfactorily or there has been something wrong with its execution.

- Order is a directive to a subordinate to do something in a particular way.

- Orders may be– written or oral, general or specific, procedural or operational, mandatory or discretionary.

1.2.1.14 Suggestion

Suggestion enjoys one great advantage over other means of communication like advice or order. Advice comes from an expert; order comes from a higher authority. In either case, the recipient of the communication is slightly conscious of his inferiority and may resent it. Accepting a suggestion is at his discretion, so a suggestion is usually welcome.

Suggestion is supposed to be a very mild arid subtle form of communication. Still, since it flows horizontally or vertically upwards, it may hurt someone's ego to recognize its utility and readily accept it. But enlightened executives should set aside the ridiculous notions of false self-importance and welcome positive, constructive suggestions with an open mind.

Some business houses make a provision for suggestion boxes, which are placed at some convenient place in the office or the factory. Workers are encouraged to drop their suggestions into these boxes.

Sometimes these suggestions have to be written on specially prepared cards. If an employee does not want to reveal his name, there is a provision for it. These suggestion boxes are opened at regular intervals, the suggestions received are scrutinized and the employees offering the best suggestions are awarded prizes.

- Suggestions can be voluntary and anonymous; submitted through suggestion boxes.
- Employees should be encouraged to give suggestions.

1.2.1.15　　Persuasion

Persuasion is an important objective of communication. It may be defined as an effort 'to influence the attitudes, feelings, or beliefs of others, or to influence actions based on those attitudes, feelings, or beliefs'. Buyers have often to be persuaded to buy a particular article available with the seller in place of the one they actually wanted to buy. In the office or the factory, the lazy, the incompetent and the disgruntled workers have to be persuaded to do their work.

It is better to use persuasion than compulsion. But even persuasion seeks to change beliefs and attitudes, which people do not like at all. So in order to be successful, persuasion has to be indirect and suggestive. The buyers and the workers should be so manipulated that they change their mind without getting conscious of the change, or if they are conscious, they believe that the change is to their advantage. Persuasion is an art, which has to be learnt with great care.

Persuasion needs conviction on your part. You should be genuinely convinced that the alternative course of action being suggested by you is in the interest of the organization as well as in the receiver's interest. You must not try to persuade others from a purely selfish motive. Do not impose yourself on the receiver of your communication. Give indirect hints and subtle suggestions. Bring yourself to the level of the other person. Try to look at the issue from his point of view and mould your arguments accordingly. The art of persuasion consists of four important steps:

1. *Analyzing the situation:* This is the preparatory step. The communicator analyses the situation to find out why the need of persuasion has arisen and what will be the advantages and disadvantages of the new course of action being suggested. He also studies the psychology of the man to be persuaded in order to plan a suitable strategy.

2. *Preparing the receiver:* It is but natural that people resent being persuaded to change their views or behaviour. The receiver has to be prepared for it. This can be done by putting him in a pleasant frame of mind. He may be complimented on some of his outstanding qualities and achievements. An appeal may be made to his adaptability and open-mindedness.

3. *Delivering the message:* The third step is to deliver the message. The message should be delivered stage by stage, with the help of forceful arguments, beginning with those parts of the message, which are easier to accept and delaying the unpleasant parts as much as possible.

4. *Prompting action:* If the first steps have been taken carefully, the receiver of the message will be easily persuaded to adopt a different course of action (or hold a different view).

1.2.2 PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

The process of communication involves the exchange of information or messages between a sender and a receiver through a medium or channel. The basic steps involved in the communication process are as follows:

1. Sender: The sender initiates the communication by encoding a message that needs to be conveyed. The sender can be an individual, a group, or an organization.

2. Message: The message is the information or content that the sender wishes to convey to the receiver. The message can be verbal, written, visual, or nonverbal.

3. Medium/Channel: The medium or channel is the means by which the message is transmitted from the sender to the receiver. The medium can be face-to-face conversation, telephone, email, text message, social media, or any other form of communication.

4. Encoding: Encoding is the process of converting the message into a form that can be transmitted through the medium. The sender chooses the appropriate words, symbols, or images to convey the message.

5. Decoding: Decoding is the process of interpreting the message by the receiver. The receiver must understand the meaning of the message in the same way that the sender intended.

6. Feedback: Feedback is the response of the receiver to the message. Feedback can be verbal or nonverbal and can indicate whether the message was understood or not.

7. Noise: Noise is any interference or distortion that affects the communication process. Noise can be external, such as background noise, or internal, such as personal biases or assumptions.

Effective communication requires that all of these elements work together in a coordinated and clear manner. Understanding the communication process can help individuals and organizations to communicate more effectively and avoid misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

"The transmission of the sender's ideas to the receiver and the receiver's feedback or reaction to the sender constitute the communication process". The main steps of this cycle from input and output point of view are as follows:

1. Input : the information or ideas the sender wants to give the receiver.
2. Channel : letter, fax, phone call, electronic mail, etc.
3. Message : the actual message that is sent.
4. Output : the information the receiver gets
5. Feedback : the receiver's response (or non-response) to the message
6. Brain drain : the possibility of misunderstanding at any step (or Breakdown)

We can illustrate this process with the help of the following illustrations:

```
┌──────────────────┐      ┌────────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────────┐
│ SENDER Input     │◄────►│ Channel: message   │◄────►│ RECEIVER Output     │
└──────────────────┘      └────────────────────┘      └─────────────────────┘


┌──────┐          ┌───────────────────────────────────┐          ┌──────┐
│ Idea │          │ Letter, fax, phone call, E-mail, etc. │       │ Idea │
└──────┘          └───────────────────────────────────┘          └──────┘
   │                            Feedback                              │
   ▼                               ▼                                  ▼
Brain drain                   Brain drain                        Brain drain
```
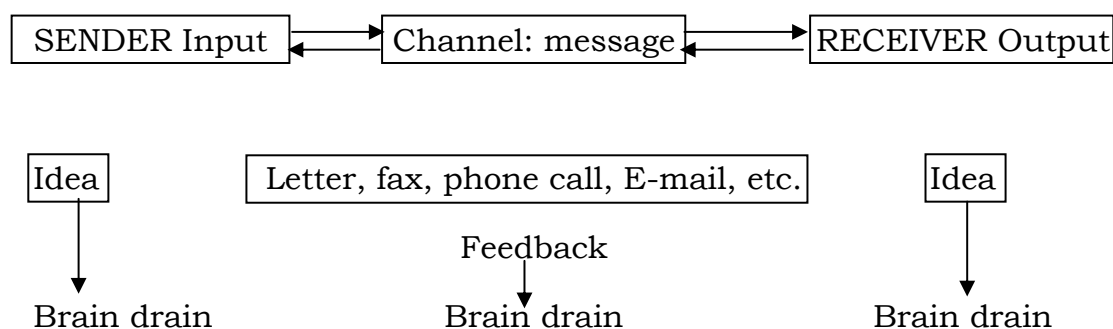
FIG. 1.1: COMMUNICATION PROCESS

There are several barriers to the understanding of a message, and, as the figure suggests, misunderstanding can occur at any stage.

Let us take the following illustration 1.1:

Input: I want to know the balance in my current account at the end of October.

Message: Kindly send me a statement of my transactions in current account No. .... during October.

Output: He needs a statement of his transactions in current account No. .... during October.

Feedback*:* A statement of the transactions is issued.

If the action desired in the message is satisfactorily performed or the information is faithfully received (ensured by the feedback), we say the *communication loop* has been closed. But breakdowns in the communication cycle are quite frequent. The breakdown may be due to one or more of the following:

- Improper formulation of the message in the mind of the sender;
- Improper statement of the information in the message; and
- Improper statement of the message by the receiver.

Process of communication would be similar but it depends on different situations sometimes. The communication situation can exist in any of the following four components:

1. There is a person (sender or transmitter) desirous of passing on some information;

2. There is another person (receiver) to whom the information is to be passed on;

3. The receiver partly or wholly understands the message passed on to him; and

4. The receiver responds to the message, i.e., there is some kind of feedback.

1.2.3 FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

There are several forms of communication that individuals and organizations use to exchange information and ideas. These include:

1. Verbal Communication: Verbal communication involves the use of words to convey a message. It can be face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, video conferencing, or any other form of communication where spoken language is used.

2. Nonverbal Communication: Nonverbal communication involves the use of gestures, facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice to convey a message. It can often convey more meaning than verbal communication.

3. Written Communication: Written communication involves the use of written words to convey a message. It can be in the form of emails, letters, reports, memos, or any other form of written communication.

4. Visual Communication: Visual communication involves the use of images, graphics, charts, and videos to convey a message. It can be used in presentations, advertisements, or any other form of communication where visual aids are necessary.

5. Electronic Communication: Electronic communication involves the use of electronic devices to convey a message. It can be in the form of emails, text messages, social media posts, or any other form of communication that uses electronic devices.

6. Interpersonal Communication: Interpersonal communication involves the exchange of information between two or more individuals. It can be formal or informal and can take place in various settings, such as at work, home, or social events.

7. Group Communication: Group communication involves the exchange of information between three or more individuals. It can be in the form of group discussions, meetings, or conferences.

Each form of communication has its own strengths and weaknesses, and the choice of form depends on the context and purpose of the communication. Effective communication involves selecting the appropriate form of communication and ensuring that the message is conveyed clearly and accurately.

1.3   ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN BUSINESS

Communication skills are essential for success in business, as they help individuals and organizations to interact effectively with clients, customers, employees, and other stakeholders. The role of communication skills in business includes:

1. Building Relationships: Communication skills are essential for building relationships with clients, customers, and other stakeholders. Good communication skills help to establish trust, credibility, and rapport, which are critical for maintaining long-term relationships.

2. Effective Collaboration: Collaboration is essential for achieving business goals, and communication skills are essential for effective collaboration. Effective communication helps team members to work together, share ideas, and make informed decisions.

3. Increased Productivity: Communication skills help to increase productivity by ensuring that employees have a clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and goals. Effective communication also reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings and errors, which can slow down productivity.

4. Better Customer Service: Communication skills are essential for providing excellent customer service. Good communication skills help employees to listen actively, understand customer needs, and provide solutions to their problems.

5. Conflict Resolution: Conflict is inevitable in any business, and communication skills are essential for resolving conflicts effectively. Good communication skills help to reduce tension, clarify misunderstandings, and find mutually beneficial solutions.

6. Effective Leadership: Communication skills are essential for effective leadership. Good leaders are skilled communicators who can inspire, motivate, and guide their teams to achieve business goals.

Overall, communication skills play a vital role in business by enabling individuals and organizations to build relationships, collaborate effectively, increase productivity, provide excellent customer service, resolve conflicts, and provide effective leadership.

1.4   CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. The process of communication involves the communication of.................

2. When the objectives of the organization are made clear to the employees, the workers are ....to work in that direction.

3. Education is an import ingredient of the process of...............................

4. ....may be defined as an effort 'to influence the attitudes, feelings, or beliefs of others, or to influence actions based on those attitudes, feelings, or beliefs'.

5. "The .... of the sender's ideas to the receiver and the receiver's feedback or reaction to the sender constitute the communication process".

1.5   SUMMARY

The process of communication involves exchanging facts, ideas, opinions or emotions between two or more persons. Feedback is an essential aspect of communication. The main purpose of communications is to inform, or to bring round to a certain point of view, or to elicit action.

Communication can be used for any or more of the following objectives: information, advice, order, suggestion, persuasion, education, warning, raising morale and motivation. The executives need information to plan and organize; employees need it to execute their job satisfactorily.

Information must be from a reliable source. Giving advice is very important objective of communication. Advice is given to the subordinate to influence his opinion or behaviour. Effective advice is both man oriented and work-oriented.

Counselling is another objective of communication. The councelor is a man of greater skill or knowledge, on some specific subject and he offers his counsel without any personal interest or involvement.

Order is a directive to a subordinate to do something in a particular way. Orders may be written or oral, general or specific, procedural or operational, mandatory or discretionary. Suggestions can be voluntary and anonymous; submitted through suggestion boxes. Employees should be encouraged to give suggestions.

If employees do not abide by the norms of the organization, or violate the rules and regulations, it may become necessary to warn them. Warning is a forceful means of communication, for it demands immediate action. But in order to retain its effectiveness, it should be used sparingly and discreetly.

Communication is the life blood of business. No business can develop in the absence of effective internal and external communication. Besides, communication skills of employees are given high weightage at the time of their appointment as well as promotion.

1.6   KEYWORDS

Sender/Transmitter is the person desirous of passing the information.

Receiver is the person to whom the information is to be passed on.

Feedback is the response from the receiver.

Communication is a process by which information is transmitted between individuals/organisations.

Braindrain is the possibility of misunderstanding at any step. It is also called breakdown.

1.7   SELF ASSESSMENT TEST

1.   Give a suitable definition of the term 'communication' and elaborate your definition.

2.   "Communication is the sum of all things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding". Discuss.

3.   Write a note on the need and importance of business communication.

4.   What are the various steps in the communication cycle? What is brain drain? Why does brain drain occur?

5.   What do you think can be the major objectives of communication? Briefly explain any two of them.

6.   Write short notes on the following:

(a)   information   for   planning;   (b)   internal   information;   and (c) environmental information.

7.   What is the importance of advice as an objective of communication? What precautions should be taken by a communicator to make his advice effective?

8. What are the relative merits and demerits of written and oral orders? How can an order be made effective?

9. Discuss the importance of suggestion as an objective of communication.

10. What precautions should be taken by a manager while warning an erring employee?

11. What factors are responsible for the low morale of the workers in an organization? How can their morale be kept high?

12. Discuss the importance of motivating the workers in a factory. How can they be motivated effectively?

13. What is meant by morale? How can the morale of the workers be kept high?

14. Do you agree that the basic objective of all human communication is to obtain an understanding response? How can this be applied to the objectives of business communication?

15. What is 'communication cycle'? What are the essential elements of this cycle?

16. What is meant by 'business communication'? Write a note on the significance of business communication.

17. What is the role of language in human communication? How are the language symbols useful in communication?

18. Write the explanatory notes on 'encoding' and 'decoding'.

19. What is the significance of feedback in communication? What role does it play in the cycle of communication?

20. 'Communication is a two-way process'. Explain.

1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Ideas

2. Motivated

3. Communication

4. Persuasion

5. Transmission

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Subject: **Business Communication**	
Course Code: **BCOM 203**	Author: **Dr. Yogesh Verma**
Lesson: 2	Vetter: **Associate Prof. M.R. Patra**

COMMUNICATION NETWORKS AND BARRIERS

STRUCTURE

2.0   Learning Objectives

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2.2   Communication Networks

    2.2.1   Formal Networks

    2.2.2   Informal Networks

    2.2.3   Vertical Networks

    2.2.4   Horizontal Networks

    2.2.5   External Networks

2.3   Types of Barriers

    2.3.1   Language and semantic barriers

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    2.3.3   Physical barriers

    2.3.4   Socio-psychological barriers

    2.3.5   Cultural Barriers

    2.3.6   Technological Barriers

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2.6   Keywords

2.7   Self-assessment Test

2.8   Answers to check your progress

2.9   References/Suggested readings

2.0   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you should be able to-

- Understand the role of corporate communication for a business organization.

- Identify various communication networks used in organizations

- Understand the Types of Barriers

- Understand barriers to communication.

- Differentiate between language and semantic barriers.

- Differentiate between organisational and physical barriers.

- Understand socio-psychological barriers.

- Know the ways to overcome these barriers.

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Communication networks are systems of interconnected devices that allow people and machines to communicate and share information. These networks can be divided into two categories: wired and wireless.

Wired networks use physical cables or wires to connect devices, such as Ethernet cables, fiber-optic cables, or coaxial cables. These networks can provide reliable and fast connections, but they can also be expensive to install and maintain.

Wireless networks, on the other hand, use radio waves or other wireless technologies to connect devices. Wi-Fi is a common type of wireless network that allows devices to connect to the internet or to other devices without physical cables. Wireless networks can be more convenient and cost-effective than wired networks, but they can also be less reliable and slower.

Communication networks can be further classified based on their geographic range. Local area networks (LANs) connect devices within a small area, such as a home, office, or campus. Wide area

networks (WANs) connect devices over a larger geographic area, such as between different cities or countries.

The internet is the largest and most well-known communication network, connecting billions of devices and people around the world. Other types of communication networks include cellular networks, satellite networks, and industrial networks used for machine-to-machine communication.

Communication is a complex process involving shared assumptions and unspoken agreements between individuals. Understandably, there are frequent errors and misunderstandings in communication. Several types of barriers prevent us from transmitting our ideas meaningfully. It is hard to identify these barriers. The reason is obvious it is difficult to realize fully whether the message we get is complete and correct, or distorted. The feedback gives only a partial clue for determining whether the communication has succeeded or failed. Another problem is the identification of the criteria on the basis of which one should assess the effectiveness of communication.

However, despite these problems, one must identify the barriers that hinder the process of effective communication in order to be able to keep in check their negative effect. Studies have revealed certain common barriers and suggested ways to remove them. In the present lesson we shall try to understand some of the major barriers and ways to overcome them.

2.2   COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

Communication networks are regular patterns of interpersonal connections that allow information to move throughout an organization, in Adler's terms. This comprehension of communication networks explains how it is possible to control, supervise, and organise the information flow. With the use of communication networks information is transferred among employees. "Channels" refers to the routes or paths by which communication occurs, while "communication network" refers to the collection of channels. It refers to the pattern of channels of communication between the participants. So, study of communication networks is done to understand how communication happens in organization. Such an understanding enables managers to control the flow of information in terms of content and timing.

On a daily basis numerous communications happen through various stakeholders. Further these communication flows could be one to one, one to many, many to many, and many to one.

Communication is sometimes compared to arteries of human body and their essential for existence. Formal and informal communication networks are the two categories into which communication networks fall.

Communication networks are essential for businesses to operate effectively and efficiently. In the business world, communication networks can take many forms, including:

1. Email: Email is one of the most common forms of communication in the business world. It allows for quick and easy communication between colleagues, clients, and customers.

2. Instant Messaging: Instant messaging applications such as Slack, Microsoft Teams, or Zoom are increasingly popular in the business world, allowing for real-time communication between team members.

3. Video Conferencing: Video conferencing tools such as Zoom or Skype allow for face-to-face communication and collaboration, even when team members are working remotely.

4. Intranets: An intranet is a private network that can only be accessed by employees within a company. Intranets can provide a centralized location for sharing information, documents, and resources.

5. Social Media: Social media platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook can be used by businesses to communicate with customers, market their products or services, and build their brand.

6. VoIP: Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology allows for voice communication over the internet, which can be a cost-effective solution for businesses with remote employees or international clients.

Effective communication networks are critical to the success of any business, enabling teams to collaborate and coordinate their efforts towards achieving their goals. In the business world, communication networks are essential for ensuring effective communication between employees, departments, and external stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and partners. A communication network can be defined as a system or platform that allows individuals or groups within an organization to exchange information, ideas, and feedback.

There are various types of communication networks that are commonly used in the business world, including:

1. Formal Networks: These are structured and well-defined communication channels that follow the organizational hierarchy. Examples include email, company intranet, and official meetings.

2. Informal Networks: These are non-structured communication channels that operate outside the formal structure of an organization. Examples include social media platforms, online forums, and informal conversations.

3. Vertical Networks: These communication networks are used to facilitate communication between employees at different levels of the organizational hierarchy, such as managers and subordinates.

4. Horizontal Networks: These communication networks are used to facilitate communication between employees at the same level of the organizational hierarchy, such as colleagues in the same department.

5. External Networks: These communication networks are used to facilitate communication with external stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and partners. Examples include email, social media, and online chat platforms.

Effective communication networks in business can lead to improved collaboration, increased productivity, enhanced decision-making, and better relationships with stakeholders. It is important for businesses to choose the right communication network based on their needs and goals.

2.2.1 FORMAL NETWORKS

A formal network in business communication refers to a structured and well-defined system or platform that follows the organizational hierarchy. This type of network is usually used for official communication and is governed by the organization's policies, rules, and procedures. Some examples of formal networks in business communication include:

1. Email: Email is a formal network that allows employees to send and receive messages, documents, and files. It is widely used in the business world for official communication.

2. Company Intranet: An intranet is a private network that is accessible only to employees of an organization. It is used for sharing information, documents, and news within the organization.

3. Official Meetings: Meetings are formal communication networks that are used for discussing important matters, making decisions, and sharing updates.

4. Memos: Memos are formal documents that are used for internal communication within an organization. They are usually used for conveying important information, such as policy changes or new procedures.

5. Reports: Reports are formal documents that are used for conveying information about a specific topic or project. They are usually written in a structured format and follow a specific template.

Formal networks in business communication are important for ensuring that communication within an organization is efficient, effective, and consistent. They help to establish clear lines of communication and ensure that all employees are aware of their roles and responsibilities. They are also useful for record-keeping and tracking communication for future reference.

A formal communication network is depicted through organizational chart. An organizational chart tells about different hierarchical levels of the organization and which level is having more authority over others. Ina formal setting directions and instructions flow from top to bottom level in the organization while suggestions, requests and complaints flow from bottom to top. The cross departmental information generally flows at the same level of hierarchy. The organizational chart implies that information can flow in any of three directions – vertically, i.e., upward or downward, and horizontally. The formal communication network fixes accountability and provides authority to control the communication. Formal communication networks can further be classified as:

- **Chain: When an employee passes on official information to the other employee who further communicates it to a third employee creates a chain pattern.**
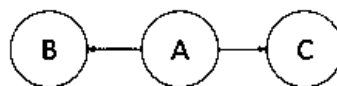

- **Wheel**: **When a single employee communicates about any organizational information to a group of co-workers, a wheel pattern is formed.**
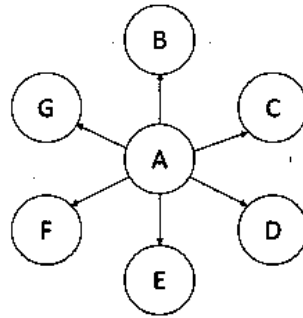
- **Circular**: An employee communicates information to his colleague, who passes it on to another co-worker and so on. The message passes from one employee to another and finally reaches to the person who initiates the process.
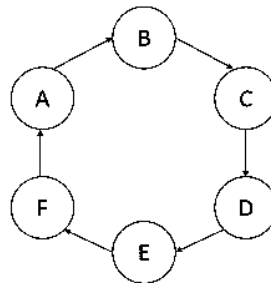
- **Free Flow**: In this type of network, no particular pattern is followed. Information is spread in a non-systematic manner by anyone. For example; in an emergency condition in the organization the information is randomly spread among the employees.
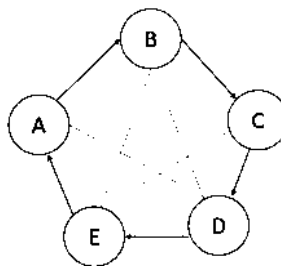
- **Inverted V**: Under this network, the subordinates can communicate directly with their immediate senior as well as their senior or top management too.

Inverted V
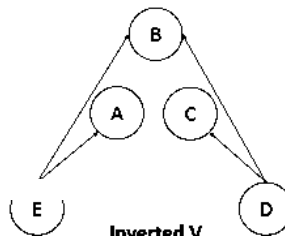
2.2.2 INFORMAL NETWORKS

As opposite formal communication networks, informal networks follow no fixed pattern. Although not specifically defined in the organization but informal network coexists with formal networks. An informal network in business communication refers to a non-structured communication channel that operates outside the formal structure of an organization. This type of network is usually used for social communication and is not governed by the organization's policies, rules, and procedures. Some examples of informal networks in business communication include:

1. Social Media: Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, are informal networks that are used for social communication between employees or with external stakeholders.

2. Online Forums: Online forums are informal networks that are used for discussing specific topics, exchanging ideas, and sharing information.

3. Informal Conversations: Informal conversations are non-structured communication channels that are used for social communication between employees. They may occur in the office, during breaks, or outside of work.

4. Water Cooler Chat: Water cooler chat is a term used to describe informal conversations that occur around a water cooler or coffee machine in the office. These conversations may be used for socializing, exchanging information, or discussing work-related topics.

5. Employee Networks: Employee networks are informal networks that are created by employees with a shared interest or goal. For example, an employee network may be created to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Informal networks in business communication are important for building relationships, fostering collaboration, and promoting innovation. They allow employees to connect with each other on a personal level and create a sense of community within the organization. However, informal networks may also pose a risk if they are used for spreading rumors or sharing confidential information. Therefore, it is important for organizations to establish clear guidelines and policies for informal communication to ensure that it is used appropriately.

In such kind of networks, information flow does not follow a fixed path but move in any direction. It happens because no official channel is used for the flow of communication and hence no control over the flow exists. Generally, information flowing through informal channels does not use any printed format like letters, emails, memos etc. Thus, informal networks are based more on friendship, shared personal or career interests. For example, co-workers meeting in cafeteria, parking lot or in the market are engaged in informal communication with no authentic and legal record of the communication. Any communication happening outside organization in a social setting is the part of informal communication. Informal network is unorganized and complex in nature. An informal communication is also called 'grapevine' as it may swiftly spread in any direction like grapevine.

Formal communication networks can further be classified as:

- **Single Strand**: Similar to the chain pattern, in single strand too, the information goes on passing from one person to another; then to the next; and so on.
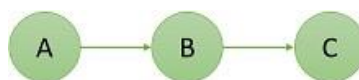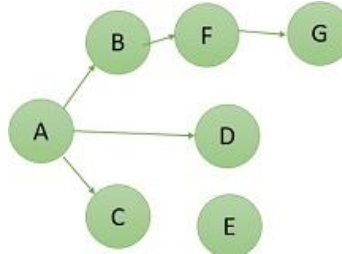

- **Gossip / Grapevine:** A single person spreads information within an informal group where the message may or may not be valid. This pattern is also called as grapevine.
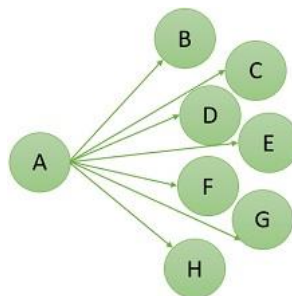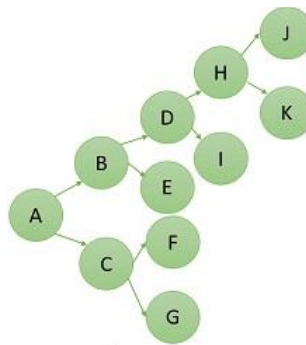
- **Probability:** It has similarity to the gossip pattern but there is no necessity that everyone is involved in the communication.

- **Cluster:** When information is passed only among trustworthy group of people with a belief that they will not pass it further, but reverse happens making clusters of such people.

2.2.3 VERTICAL NETWORKS

A vertical network in business communication refers to a communication channel that facilitates communication between individuals or groups at different levels of the organizational hierarchy. This type of network is often used for official communication and follows a top-down approach, where communication flows from higher levels to lower levels. Some examples of vertical networks in business communication include:

1. Management to Employees: This is a vertical network that facilitates communication from management to employees. It is used for conveying information such as company policies, updates, and changes in organizational structure.

2. Employees to Management: This is a vertical network that facilitates communication from employees to management. It is used for conveying information such as feedback, suggestions, and concerns.

3. Supervisors to Subordinates: This is a vertical network that facilitates communication between supervisors and their subordinates. It is used for conveying information such as task assignments, performance feedback, and work-related issues.

4. Subordinates to Supervisors: This is a vertical network that facilitates communication from subordinates to supervisors. It is used for conveying information such as progress reports, task updates, and work-related issues.

Vertical networks in business communication are important for ensuring that communication flows smoothly between different levels of the organizational hierarchy. They help to establish clear lines of communication and ensure that all employees are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Vertical networks are also useful for providing feedback, making decisions, and setting goals. However, they can also create communication barriers if communication is limited to only one direction. Therefore, it is important for organizations to establish two-way communication channels to ensure that communication flows in both directions.

2.2.4 HORIZONTAL NETWORKS

A horizontal network in business communication refers to a communication channel that facilitates communication between individuals or groups at the same level of the organizational hierarchy. This type of network is often used for informal communication and follows a peer-to-peer approach, where communication flows between colleagues or team members. Some examples of horizontal networks in business communication include:

1. Team Meetings: Team meetings are a horizontal network that facilitates communication between team members. They are used for discussing project updates, sharing ideas, and solving problems.

2. Peer-to-Peer Communication: Peer-to-peer communication is a horizontal network that facilitates communication between colleagues. It is used for sharing information, asking for feedback, and discussing work-related issues.

3. Communities of Practice: Communities of practice are horizontal networks that bring together individuals with similar interests or expertise. They are used for sharing knowledge, best practices, and learning from each other.

4. Social Events: Social events are a horizontal network that facilitates informal communication between colleagues. They are used for team building, relationship building, and promoting a positive work culture.

Horizontal networks in business communication are important for building relationships, promoting collaboration, and sharing knowledge. They allow employees to connect with each other on a personal level and create a sense of community within the organization. Horizontal networks also help to promote innovation by encouraging the sharing of ideas and best practices. However, they can also create communication barriers if they are used for spreading rumors or sharing confidential information. Therefore, it is important for organizations to establish clear guidelines and policies for informal communication to ensure that it is used appropriately.

2.2.5   EXTERNAL NETWORKS

An external network in business communication refers to communication channels that facilitate communication between an organization and external stakeholders. These stakeholders may include customers, suppliers, partners, shareholders, regulatory agencies, and other organizations. Some examples of external networks in business communication include:

1. Social Media: Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, are external networks that are used for communication between an organization and its customers, partners, and other external stakeholders.

2. Email: Email is an external network that is used for communication between an organization and its external stakeholders. It is often used for sending newsletters, updates, and other marketing communications.

3. Press Releases: Press releases are an external network that is used for communication between an organization and the media. They are used for announcing news and events related to the organization.

4. Advertising: Advertising is an external network that is used for communication between an organization and its customers. It is used for promoting products or services and building brand awareness.

5. Business Networks: Business networks, such as LinkedIn and Xing, are external networks that are used for communication between an organization and other businesses. They are used for networking, business development, and sharing industry-specific knowledge.

External networks in business communication are important for building relationships, promoting the organization's brand, and creating opportunities for growth. They allow organizations to connect with their customers, partners, and other external stakeholders and understand their needs and expectations. However, they also pose a risk if they are not used appropriately. Therefore, it is important for organizations to establish clear guidelines and policies for external communication to ensure that it is used in a way that is ethical, legal, and aligned with the organization's goals and values.

2.3   TYPES OF BARRIERS

Barriers in business communication refer to obstacles that can impede the effectiveness of communication in the workplace. Some common barriers in business communication include:

- Language Barriers: Language barriers can occur when individuals speak different languages or have different levels of proficiency in a shared language. This can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and confusion.

- Cultural Barriers: Cultural barriers can occur when individuals have different cultural backgrounds or ways of communicating. This can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and conflicts.

- Physical Barriers: Physical barriers can occur when individuals are located in different places, such as different offices, cities, or countries. This can make it difficult to communicate in real-time and can lead to delays in communication.

- Technological Barriers: Technological barriers can occur when individuals do not have access to the same communication tools or when there are technical difficulties with communication tools. This can make it difficult to communicate effectively and can lead to frustration.

- Psychological Barriers: Psychological barriers can occur when individuals have different attitudes, perceptions, or biases that impact their communication. This can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and conflicts.

- Organizational Barriers: Organizational barriers can occur when there are issues with the organizational structure, policies, or procedures that impact communication. This can make it difficult to communicate effectively and can lead to frustration.

Overcoming barriers in business communication requires effort from all parties involved. Some strategies that can help to overcome barriers in business communication include:

1. Simplifying language and avoiding jargon.

2. Being aware of cultural differences and adapting communication style accordingly.

3. Using communication tools that allow for real-time communication, such as video conferencing and instant messaging.

4. Providing training and support for using communication tools.

5. Being aware of psychological biases and perceptions that can impact communication.

6. Identifying and addressing organizational issues that impact communication, such as communication policies and procedures.

There are 4 different types of barriers in business communication. These can be discussed as follows:

2.3.1   LANGUAGE AND SEMANTIC BARRIERS

Language and semantic barriers are common types of communication barriers that can impact effective communication in the workplace.

Language barriers occur when individuals speak different languages or have different levels of proficiency in a shared language. This can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and confusion. Language barriers can arise when individuals come from different countries or regions and have different native languages or dialects. Additionally, language barriers can occur when individuals have different levels of proficiency in a shared language, such as English, which is often used as a common language in international business communication.

Semantic barriers, on the other hand, occur when individuals use the same language but have different interpretations of words, phrases, or concepts. This can happen when individuals have different cultural

backgrounds, experiences, or knowledge bases. For example, the same word may have a different meaning in different contexts or cultures.

Overcoming language and semantic barriers requires effort from all parties involved. Some strategies that can help to overcome these barriers include:

1. Simplifying language and avoiding jargon.

2. Using clear and concise language.

3. Providing definitions or explanations for complex concepts.

4. Being aware of cultural differences and adapting communication style accordingly.

5. Encouraging feedback and clarifying understanding.

6. Using visual aids, such as diagrams or images, to help convey information.

7. Providing training and support for language and cultural proficiency.

By overcoming language and semantic barriers, individuals and organizations can improve the effectiveness of communication and build stronger relationships with colleagues, partners, and customers.

2.3.2   ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS

Organizational barriers are barriers that can impede effective communication within an organization. These barriers can arise from structural, cultural, or procedural issues within the organization. Some common organizational barriers include:

1. Hierarchy: A hierarchical organizational structure can create barriers to communication between different levels of the organization. Communication may become limited or delayed as information must pass through multiple levels of management.

2. Silos: Silos occur when departments or teams within an organization become isolated from one another. This can lead to a lack of collaboration and communication between departments.

3. Lack of Communication Channels: A lack of communication channels can make it difficult for individuals to communicate with one another. For example, if an organization only uses email for communication, it may be difficult for employees to have real-time conversations.

4. Communication Policies: Communication policies can be overly restrictive or confusing, which can limit communication within an organization. This can include policies that limit the use of certain communication channels or that require approval for all communication.

5. Organizational Culture: Organizational culture can impact communication by shaping the way that individuals communicate with one another. For example, a culture that values competition may create barriers to collaboration and communication.

To overcome organizational barriers, organizations can take several steps, such as:

1. Implementing an open-door policy: This can help to encourage communication between different levels of the organization.

2. Establishing cross-functional teams: This can help to break down silos and encourage collaboration and communication between departments.

3. Providing multiple communication channels: Organizations can provide employees with different channels for communication, such as email, instant messaging, and video conferencing.

4. Streamlining communication policies: Communication policies can be streamlined to remove overly restrictive policies and clarify expectations for communication.

5. Creating a positive organizational culture: Organizations can create a culture that values communication, collaboration, and feedback. This can help to encourage effective communication and overcome barriers within the organization.

2.3.3   PHYSICAL BARRIERS

Physical barriers refer to any obstacle or interference that prevents or disrupts effective communication. These barriers can be external or internal to the communication process and can impact the ability of individuals to send, receive, or interpret messages accurately.

Some common examples of physical barriers include:

1. Distance: Physical distance between communicators can make it difficult to communicate effectively, particularly in large spaces or across long distances.

2. Noise: Loud or distracting noises can interfere with effective communication by making it difficult for individuals to hear or concentrate on the message.

3. Technology: Technology-related physical barriers can include equipment failure, poor connectivity, or lack of access to communication tools.

4. Visual Impairment: Individuals with visual impairments may struggle to interpret nonverbal cues or visual aids, such as graphs or charts.

5. Personal Comfort: Physical discomfort, such as hunger, thirst, or fatigue, can impact an individual's ability to communicate effectively.

To overcome physical barriers, individuals and organizations can take several steps, such as:

1. Improving Communication Technology: Organizations can invest in high-quality communication technology, such as video conferencing software, to improve the quality and reliability of communication.

2. Creating a Suitable Environment: Organizations can create a suitable environment for effective communication, such as a quiet meeting room, to minimize distractions and noise.

3. Providing Accessibility: Organizations can provide accessibility options for individuals with physical impairments, such as braille or audio versions of materials.

4. Being Clear and Concise: Communicators can make an effort to be clear and concise in their messages to minimize the risk of misinterpretation.

5. Active Listening: Individuals can practice active listening by focusing on the speaker and seeking clarification when necessary to ensure that they understand the message correctly, particularly in noisy or distracting environments.

By overcoming physical barriers, individuals and organizations can improve the effectiveness of communication and ensure that messages are delivered accurately and interpreted correctly.

2.3.4 SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS

Socio-psychological barriers are communication barriers that arise from the personal attitudes, values, and perceptions of individuals. These barriers can impact the ability of individuals to communicate effectively and can result in misunderstandings, conflict, and reduced productivity.

Some common examples of socio-psychological barriers include:

1. Stereotyping: Stereotyping occurs when individuals make assumptions about others based on their age, gender, race, or other characteristics. Stereotyping can lead to prejudice and discrimination, which can impact the effectiveness of communication.

2. Prejudice: Prejudice occurs when individuals hold negative attitudes or beliefs about others based on their characteristics, such as their race or gender. Prejudice can impact communication by creating a hostile or unfriendly environment.

3. Emotions: Strong emotions, such as anger, frustration, or anxiety, can impact an individual's ability to communicate effectively, leading to misinterpretations and misunderstandings.

4. Ego: An individual's ego can impact communication by creating a defensive or competitive environment, which can make it difficult to work collaboratively and communicate effectively.

5. Perception: Perception refers to the way individuals interpret and understand information. Different individuals may interpret the same information in different ways, which can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

To overcome socio-psychological barriers, individuals and organizations can take several steps, such as:

1. Training: Individuals can receive training on diversity, inclusion, and cultural competence to increase their awareness and understanding of different perspectives.

2. Building Trust: Individuals can build trust and rapport with others by being open, honest, and respectful in their communication.

3. Managing Emotions: Individuals can learn to manage their emotions by practicing mindfulness or relaxation techniques, which can help them remain calm and focused during communication.

4. Active Listening: Individuals can practice active listening by focusing on the speaker and seeking clarification when necessary to ensure that they understand the message correctly.

5. Empathy: Individuals can demonstrate empathy by putting themselves in the shoes of others and considering their perspective when communicating.

By overcoming socio-psychological barriers, individuals and organizations can improve the effectiveness of communication, build stronger relationships with colleagues and partners, and create a more positive and inclusive work environment.

2.3.5   CULTURAL BARRIERS

Cultural barriers are a common type of communication barrier that can arise when individuals from different cultures or backgrounds communicate with one another. These barriers can occur due to differences in language, values, beliefs, customs, and communication styles. Cultural barriers can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and communication breakdowns.

Some common examples of cultural barriers include:

1. Language Differences: Individuals who speak different languages may struggle to communicate effectively, leading to misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

2. Nonverbal Communication: Different cultures may have different interpretations of nonverbal communication, such as gestures, facial expressions, and body language.

3. Etiquette: Different cultures may have different expectations around etiquette and social norms, such as appropriate greetings, forms of address, and communication styles.

4. Time Orientation: Different cultures may have different perceptions of time and punctuality, which can lead to misunderstandings if individuals have different expectations around meeting times and deadlines.

5. Power Distance: Different cultures may have different expectations around hierarchy and power distance, which can impact communication between individuals at different levels of an organization.

To overcome cultural barriers, individuals and organizations can take several steps, such as:

1. Cultural Awareness Training: Individuals can receive training to increase their awareness and understanding of different cultures and communication styles.

2. Translation and Interpretation Services: Organizations can provide translation and interpretation services to help individuals who speak different languages communicate effectively.

3. Building Relationships: Individuals can build relationships with individuals from different cultures to increase their understanding and appreciation of different perspectives.

4. Cultural Sensitivity: Individuals can demonstrate cultural sensitivity by respecting different customs and norms and adapting their communication style accordingly.

5. Active Listening: Individuals can practice active listening by focusing on the speaker and seeking clarification when necessary to ensure that they understand the message correctly.

By overcoming cultural barriers, individuals and organizations can improve the effectiveness of communication and build stronger relationships with colleagues, partners, and customers from diverse backgrounds.

2.3.6   TECHNOLOGICAL BARRIERS

Technological barriers refer to any obstacle or interference that arises from the use of technology in communication. As technology plays an increasingly important role in communication in today's digital age, technological barriers can have a significant impact on the ability of individuals to communicate effectively.

Some common examples of technological barriers include:

1. Equipment failure: Equipment failure, such as a computer crash or a loss of internet connectivity, can disrupt communication and make it difficult to send or receive messages.

2. Complexity: Some communication technology, such as complex software programs or video conferencing tools, can be difficult to use or require a high level of technical knowledge, which can be a barrier to effective communication.

3. Compatibility: Different communication technologies may not be compatible with each other, which can make it difficult for individuals to communicate across different platforms.

4. Security: Security concerns, such as hacking or data breaches, can impact the use of technology in communication, particularly when sensitive information is being shared.

5. Dependence: Overreliance on technology can create a barrier to effective communication, particularly if individuals become too reliant on technology to communicate and do not develop strong interpersonal communication skills.

To overcome technological barriers, individuals and organizations can take several steps, such as:

1. Investing in Reliable Technology: Organizations can invest in high-quality communication technology, such as reliable video conferencing software, to minimize the risk of equipment failure.

2. Providing Training: Individuals can receive training on how to use communication technology effectively and efficiently, including how to troubleshoot common technical issues.

3. Ensuring Compatibility: Organizations can ensure that communication technology used across the organization is compatible with each other, minimizing the risk of compatibility issues.

4. Ensuring Security: Organizations can implement robust security measures, such as firewalls and encryption, to protect sensitive information and minimize the risk of data breaches.

5. Balancing Technology and Interpersonal Communication: Individuals can strike a balance between using technology and developing strong interpersonal communication skills, such as active listening and empathy, to ensure effective communication.

By overcoming technological barriers, individuals and organizations can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication, reduce the risk of miscommunication and errors, and enhance collaboration and productivity.

2.4   CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

a) Corporate communication includes both _____ and _____ communication.

b) Age and gender are the _____ factors of the audience.

c) ....is a complex process involving shared assumptions and unspoken agreements between individuals.

d) Language uses oral or written arbitrary symbols to .... meanings from one person to another.

e) ....caused by noise, time, distance, age and educational background and sex.

2.5 SUMMARY

In the current scenario, when the world is highly digitally connected, the role of corporate communication can be explained as a maker or breaker. It not only affects the employee productivity but having a strong influence on brands awareness level and innovation. To provide a precise meaning to the field of corporate communication is a challenging task and virtually impossible. The reason for this situation can be attributed to the fact that the measures are too different and partly cover many other areas of a company. At the broadest level, corporate communication encompasses all communication that a company conducts. Corporate communication is the sum of an organization's internal as well as external communication.

The whole communication process revolves around the audience. So for creating effectiveness in our communication we have to make it audience centric. Keeping in view the importance of audience for the achievement of communication goals it becomes important to do an audience analysis. The concept of audience analysis involves identification of the audience and designing communication as per their suitability. Suitability doesn't mean changing the meaning of the message that suits audience but changing the way it is delivered so that the audience understands it.

Communication networks explain that there is a possibility to manage, regulate, and structure the flow of information. With the help of communication networks information is exchanged among employees. The routes or paths through which communication takes place are called 'channels' and the sum total of the channels is known as 'communication network'. It refers to the pattern of channels of communication between the participants. So, study of communication networks is done to understand how communication happens in organization. Such an understanding enables managers to control the flow of information in terms of content and timing. Communication networks are classified into two parts namely formal and informal communication networks.

Communication, as explained earlier, is the process of transmitting information. If the information, as it is present in the mind of the transmitter, is transferred unchanged into the mind of the receiver, we say that a perfect act of communication has taken place. If we recall how many times we have had an experience of miscommunication (sometimes causing embarrassing misunderstanding), we shall realize that there does not exist any such thing as may be described as perfect communication.

Communication barriers can originate at three levels at the level of the transmitter, of the medium, or of the receiver. In technical parlance, any-thing that obstructs free flow of communication is called 'noise'. Or we may refer to it simply as a 'barrier' to communication. In the present chapter we have described some of the major barriers to communication and ways to overcome them.

2.6 KEYWORDS

Corporate communication is a set of activities involved in managing and orchestrating all internal and external communications aimed at creating favourable point of view among stakeholders on which the company depends.

Audience: For whom communication is meant for.

Audience Analysis: Identification of the audience and designing communication as per their suitability.

Chain Pattern: When an employee passes on official information to the other employee who further communicates it to a third employee creates a chain pattern.

Gossip / Grapevine: A single person spreads information within an informal group where the message may or may not be valid.

Semantic Barriers arise from the different meanings of the same word.

Round about verbiage is the usage of overworked, troublesome and exhausted words and phrases causing misunderstanding and confusion.

Abstracting is the process of focussing attention on some details and omitting others.

Distortion is the reproduction of the message with some different meaning and the original message goes somewhere else.

Filtering is the lost of some contents of the original message.

Grapewine is an informal communication which receives fresh additions with every repetition until it gets worst.

Halo effect is the communication which is affected by the trust between the persons. It is the sensitivity towards mixed tunes and tones.

2.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

1. Outline the major objectives and functions of corporate communication?

2. What is a communication network? What are various types of communication networks?

3. How formal communication networks are different from informal communication networks?

4. "In reality there is no such things as perfect communication". Discuss.

5. Describe the factors responsible for miscommunication in business organisations.

6. What are barriers to effective internal communication in business organisation?

2.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

a) Internal and External

b) Demographic

c) Communication

d) Transmit

e) Physical Barriers

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

STRUCTURE

3.9   References/Suggested readings

3.0   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, students will be able to:

- ➢ Understand the role and types of listening
- ➢ Understand the impact of poor listening
- ➢ Know various principles of listening
- ➢ Understand Speaking Skills
- ➢ Public Speaking
- ➢ Handle Body Language

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Communication skills refer to the ability to effectively convey and exchange information, ideas, and feelings with others. Good communication skills are essential in both personal and professional contexts, as they help to build strong relationships, resolve conflicts, and achieve common goals.

Effective communication skills include both verbal and nonverbal communication, such as active listening, asking questions, clarifying information, providing feedback, and expressing oneself clearly and respectfully. They also involve being aware of cultural differences and adapting communication style accordingly, as well as being able to use various communication channels, such as written communication, face-to-face interactions, and virtual communication.

Improving communication skills can be achieved through practice, feedback, and continuous learning. Some strategies for enhancing communication skills include being mindful and present in conversations, practicing active listening, using open-ended questions, avoiding assumptions, and being respectful and empathetic towards others.

Communication is an integral part of everyone's daily life. To make communication effective it is important that no barrier to communication exist during the whole process. Listening is one such component of communication that is the responsibility of the receiver. Any kind of error during listening reduces the effectiveness of communication and eventually may cause miscommunication. So,

it is pertinent for everyone to understand the concept of listening and ways to enhance the listening skills. Learn this skill is beneficial for attaining growth in one's professional and personal life.

Some essential communication skills include active listening, clear and concise speaking, empathy, feedback giving and receiving, and nonverbal communication. It is also important to consider cultural differences and tailor communication accordingly. Improving communication skills can be done through practice and self-awareness. One can seek feedback from others, read books, attend workshops or courses, and engage in role-playing exercises. Good communication skills can enhance personal and professional success and can positively impact one's overall quality of life.

3.2   COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication skills refer to the abilities that individuals possess in order to effectively exchange information with others. These skills can include verbal, nonverbal, and written communication, and are essential in both personal and professional contexts.

Effective communication involves not only transmitting a message, but also receiving and understanding the message that is being sent by others. Good communication skills require active listening, clear and concise speaking, and the ability to empathize with others.

Some key communication skills include:

1. Listening actively: Paying attention to what the other person is saying, asking questions to clarify, and providing feedback to show understanding.

2. Speaking clearly: Using language that is easy to understand, avoiding jargon or technical terms that may be unfamiliar to the listener.

3. Being empathetic: Understanding and acknowledging the feelings of others, and responding in a way that shows you care.

4. Using nonverbal communication: Using body language and facial expressions to convey your message and show your level of engagement.

5. Being open-minded: Being willing to consider different perspectives and opinions, and engaging in respectful dialogue.

Developing strong communication skills can help individuals build better relationships, solve problems more effectively, and achieve greater success in their personal and professional lives. Speaking and listening skills are essential components of effective communication. Here are some reasons why they are important:

1. Establishing Connections: Speaking and listening skills help individuals to establish connections with others. They enable individuals to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and ideas effectively and to listen actively to others.

2. Building Relationships: Effective speaking and listening skills are important for building and maintaining positive relationships. Good communication skills help individuals to understand each other's needs and perspectives, and to build trust and respect.

3. Resolving Conflicts: Speaking and listening skills are important for resolving conflicts. Effective communication enables individuals to express their concerns and to listen to the concerns of others. It helps to identify common ground and find mutually acceptable solutions.

4. Improving Productivity: Effective communication is important for improving productivity in the workplace. Good speaking and listening skills help individuals to communicate their ideas and goals clearly, to collaborate effectively with others, and to achieve common objectives.

5. Enhancing Learning: Speaking and listening skills are essential for learning. Good communication skills enable individuals to ask questions, to seek clarification, and to understand complex ideas. They also facilitate learning from others and can lead to a deeper understanding of a topic.

6. Career Advancement: Effective communication skills are important for career advancement. They enable individuals to express their ideas and opinions clearly, to work effectively with others, and to build positive relationships with colleagues and clients.

In summary, speaking and listening skills are essential for effective communication and can have a significant impact on personal and professional success.

3.2.1   LISTENING SKILLS

In any organization role of communication is imperative. The people involved in the communication process have to communicate effectively in order to achieve their goals. An effective communication is possible only when the sender and receiver of the communication play their role properly i.e. remove all the hurdles that can cause disturbance in the communication process. Presence of any bottleneck during communication can cause breakdown in the communication process. This rule applies for verbal as well as non verbal communication. In a verbal communication scenario, an individual has to develop four competencies to be effective. These competencies are related to knowledge of language, strong vocabulary, good general awareness, and strong knowledge about your core area. Once such competencies are developed, an individual can do well in the area of verbal communication. An important skill that is the support for above mentioned four skills is listening skill. Before moving further let's have a look at various definitions of listening

- To listen is to give attention to sound or action. (Oxford Living Dictionary)
- Listening is the ability of a person to correctly accept and infer messages in the communication process.
- *Listening* is the active process of receiving and responding to spoken (and sometimes unspoken) messages.

The terms hearing and listening are generally confused. Hearing is an automatic physical process in which the sound enters our ear. Hearing is considered as a passive process that requires minimal effort of a person. For listening to happen, four stages need to be crossed. It starts with the person paying attention to external stimuli (visual or verbal) then involving in the physiological act of allowing ears to hear. A meaning is provided to whatever is heard followed by retaining the meaningful information. Listening requires active involvement during the process. So it is very clear that listening and hearing are not interchangeable concepts and hearing is a part of whole listening activity.

Listening skills are a crucial aspect of effective communication. Here are some key points to keep in mind when it comes to listening skills:

1. Active Listening: Active listening involves paying full attention to the speaker and showing interest in what they are saying. It means focusing on the speaker's words, tone, and body language, and avoiding distractions.

2. Empathy: Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. Effective listening involves being empathetic towards the speaker and acknowledging their emotions.

3. Open-Mindedness: Open-mindedness is important in effective listening. It involves being receptive to new ideas and perspectives, and being willing to consider different viewpoints.

4. Asking Questions: Asking questions is an important aspect of effective listening. It demonstrates interest in the speaker's message and helps to clarify any confusion or misunderstandings.

5. Avoiding Interruptions: Interrupting the speaker can be perceived as disrespectful and can hinder effective communication. It is important to let the speaker finish their thought before responding.

6. Providing Feedback: Providing feedback is an important aspect of effective listening. It involves summarizing the speaker's message and acknowledging their feelings. It can help to show the speaker that they have been heard and understood.

Effective listening can lead to better relationships, improved communication, and increased understanding. Listening skills are an essential aspect of effective communication and have many important benefits. Here are some reasons why listening skills are important:

1. Building Relationships: Effective listening skills are critical for building and maintaining positive relationships. By actively listening to others, individuals can better understand their needs and perspectives, which can help to establish trust and respect.

2. Resolving Conflicts: Effective listening is also important for resolving conflicts. By listening to the concerns of others, individuals can better understand the issues at hand and work towards finding mutually acceptable solutions.

3. Improving Learning: Listening skills are crucial for learning. By actively listening to others, individuals can learn new ideas and perspectives, and gain a deeper understanding of complex topics.

4. Enhancing Productivity: Effective listening can also enhance productivity in the workplace. By listening to the ideas and concerns of others, individuals can better collaborate with their colleagues and work towards achieving common objectives.

5. Demonstrating Respect: By actively listening to others, individuals demonstrate that they value and respect their opinions and perspectives. This can help to build positive relationships and create a more supportive and inclusive environment.

6. Career Advancement: Listening skills are also important for career advancement. Effective listening enables individuals to better understand the needs of their clients and colleagues, which can lead to better outcomes and increased opportunities for professional growth.

In summary, listening skills are essential for effective communication and can have a significant impact on personal and professional success. By actively listening to others, individuals can build positive relationships, resolve conflicts, enhance learning, improve productivity, demonstrate respect, and advance their careers. Improving listening skills requires practice and self-awareness. Further, it requires practice and intentional effort. It is important to be present in the moment, to avoid distractions, and to show interest in the speaker's message. Here are some strategies that can help individuals improve their listening skills:

1. Practice Active Listening: Active listening involves fully engaging with the speaker, paying attention to their message, and showing interest through nonverbal cues such as nodding or maintaining eye contact. Active listening also involves using verbal cues such as paraphrasing, summarizing, and asking clarifying questions.

2. Minimize Distractions: To improve listening skills, individuals should try to minimize distractions such as background noise, phone notifications, or interruptions. Finding a quiet and calm place to listen can help reduce distractions and improve focus.

3. Focus on the Speaker: To improve listening skills, individuals should focus on the speaker and avoid multitasking or mentally preparing a response while the speaker is talking. By being fully present and attentive, individuals can better understand the speaker's message.

4. Practice Empathy: Empathy involves understanding the speaker's perspective and showing interest in their message. To improve listening skills, individuals should try to put themselves in the speaker's shoes and consider their perspective.

5. Take Notes: Taking notes can help individuals retain information and remember key points from the speaker's message. This can also demonstrate interest and engagement in the conversation.

6. Seek Feedback: Seeking feedback from others can help individuals identify areas for improvement in their listening skills. Asking others for feedback and actively listening to their suggestions can help individuals develop better listening habits.

Overall, improving listening skills requires practice, patience, and a willingness to engage with others. By implementing these strategies and being intentional about listening, individuals can become better communicators and build stronger relationships.

3.2.2 TYPES OF LISTENING

We can understand listening skill in a way that good listeners hear better, those who hear better can understand better, and finally those who understand better can learn better. So it is not exaggerating to say that listening is vital for learning. Listening generally involves:

- Receiving information from the speaker without being critical and insensitive
- Showing interest in the speaker to further the communication
- Providing timely but small inputs to contribute to the speaker's idea

Above explanation shows the importance of listener in the total communication process. To be an effective communicator you have to be a good listener first. Otherwise there will be too many speakers and too few listeners. A good listener is highly appreciated and rewarded. It has been observed that people retain only quarter of what they hear after two days creating a vital barrier. To elaborate more on listening, we have to go through the various types of listening.

- Selective listening: When the listener pays attention to only that communication that suits his or her existing views and majorly missing the views of speaker.
- Sensitive listening: When listener giving total weightage to the speaker's views and totally ignoring his or her views that creates imbalance for effective listening.
- Comprehension listening: When listener listens to understand or figure out the speaker's message.
- Assessment listening: When the listener tries to evaluate the value of the message and generate positive or negative viewpoint about it.
- Decisive listening: When listener not only listens to understand but tends to generate an opinion on it.

- Mock listening: When the listener pretends to listen but in fact he or she is not. The aim is just to please the speaker.

Understanding of above types of listening could help both speaker and listener in improving effectiveness of communication. Lucy Smith (www.aconciousrethink.com) presented an altogether new way to explain the types of listening. Listening requires paying attention and the way we do that conveys our feeling towards the speaker. We have to be very careful about the way we respond while speaker is communicating. Following are the listening types from different perspective:

- Biased listening: In this type of listening we hear things that are in conformance with our preexisting thoughts, believes and apprehensions. Basically, we hear what we think we should be hearing. All this happens subconsciously and without the realization of the listener.

- Sympathetic listening: It displays the listener's caring attitude towards the speaker. Here the listener specifically expresses that how he or she understands the speaker and the way it is affecting. Generally this kind of listening is displayed with very close friends and family members.

- Empathetic listening: It is quite similar to sympathetic listening in many ways but the only difference is that in this the listener puts himself or herself in the shoes of the speaker and then feel the impact of the communication on him or her. So the listener takes the journey alongwith the speaker.

- Critical listening: It involves critically analyzing what is being said by the speaker and then taking a decision on how to respond to it. It looks for finding out the most relevant information from the total communication. Be aware that critical listening doesn't mean negative listening.

- Informational listening: This type of listening is done to educate ourselves. Just like while attending a class or a training program we listen, try to understand the communication, and learn from it. This type of listening often involves practical or technical content.

- Appreciative listening: This type of listening can be done on your own or with others who have a mutual appreciation for whatever it is you enjoy. The appreciative listening has a strong impact on your mood. This listening is generally done outside the professional life and in more informal and relaxed environment.

- Rapport listening: This kind of listening is done build a rapport with the speaker. Here the listener shows keen interest in the communication of the speaker and provides the inputs wherever he or she deems fit.

Although listening seems a simple a straightforward process but its impact on the effectiveness of the communication is phenomenal.

3.2.3 COGNITIVE PROCESS OF LISTENING

Listening is a complex cognitive process that involves various stages and cognitive activities. Here are the stages involved in the cognitive process of listening skills:

1. Hearing: Hearing is the first stage in the listening process. It involves the physical act of receiving sound waves and converting them into electrical signals that are transmitted to the brain.

2. Attention: Attention is the second stage in the listening process. It involves focusing on the incoming sound and paying attention to the speaker's message while filtering out distractions.

3. Comprehension: Comprehension is the third stage in the listening process. It involves understanding the speaker's message, including the meaning of the words, phrases, and sentences being used.

4. Retention: Retention is the fourth stage in the listening process. It involves remembering the speaker's message and retaining the information in memory for later use.

5. Evaluation: Evaluation is the fifth stage in the listening process. It involves critically analyzing the speaker's message, considering its validity, and determining its relevance and usefulness.

In addition to these stages, there are various cognitive activities involved in the listening process, including:

1. Prediction: Predicting what the speaker will say next based on previous statements and contextual cues.

2. Inference: Inferring the meaning of the speaker's message based on the context and other cues.

3. Analysis: Analyzing the speaker's message for its content, structure, and logical coherence.

4. Empathy: Understanding the speaker's emotions and perspective and responding with appropriate emotional reactions.

Overall, effective listening requires the active engagement of various cognitive processes and activities. By understanding these processes and activities, individuals can develop their listening skills and become better communicators.

3.2.4 BARRIERS TO LISTENING

There are several barriers that can hinder effective listening skills. Here are some common barriers to listening:

1. Environmental Distractions: Environmental distractions such as background noise, loud music, or interruptions can hinder listening skills.

2. Personal Biases: Personal biases such as stereotypes, prejudices, and assumptions can also act as barriers to effective listening. These biases can lead to a selective perception of information and prevent individuals from fully understanding the speaker's message.

3. Emotional State: Emotional state can also impact listening skills. Strong emotions such as anxiety, stress, or anger can distract individuals and prevent them from fully focusing on the speaker's message.

4. Lack of Interest: A lack of interest or relevance in the speaker's message can also act as a barrier to effective listening. When individuals do not find a message interesting or relevant, they may become distracted or disengaged.

5. Cultural Differences: Cultural differences can also impact listening skills. Differences in language, nonverbal communication, and cultural norms can make it challenging for individuals to understand the message being conveyed.

6. Physical Barriers: Physical barriers such as hearing loss or speech impediments can also act as a barrier to effective listening.

Overcoming these barriers requires active effort and attention. Individuals can improve their listening skills by practicing active listening, being aware of personal biases, managing emotions, showing interest, being open to cultural differences, and seeking support for physical barriers. By addressing

these barriers, individuals can become better listeners and improve their overall communication skills. Reducing barriers to listening skills requires a conscious effort to be present, engaged, and attentive. Here are some strategies that can help individuals overcome barriers to listening:

1. Remove Distractions: To reduce environmental distractions, individuals can find a quiet and calm place to listen or use noise-cancelling headphones to block out background noise.

2. Practice Empathy: To overcome personal biases, individuals can practice empathy by trying to understand the speaker's perspective and listening without judgment. By putting themselves in the speaker's shoes, they can better relate to the message being conveyed.

3. Manage Emotions: To manage emotions that can impact listening, individuals can take deep breaths, take a short break, or engage in other relaxation techniques before listening.

4. Show Interest: To overcome a lack of interest, individuals can actively engage with the speaker by asking questions, taking notes, and showing enthusiasm for the topic being discussed.

5. Be Open to Differences: To overcome cultural differences, individuals can learn more about other cultures and their communication styles. This can help them better understand the message being conveyed and be more open to different perspectives.

6. Seek Support: To overcome physical barriers, individuals can seek support from hearing aids, speech therapy, or other resources that can help improve their ability to listen.

In addition to these strategies, individuals can also practice active listening techniques, such as paraphrasing, summarizing, and asking clarifying questions. These techniques help individuals confirm their understanding of the message being conveyed and demonstrate their interest and engagement in the conversation. Overall, by being mindful, empathetic, and engaged, individuals can reduce barriers to listening and become better communicators.

3.3 SPEAKING SKILLS

Speaking skills refer to the ability to convey information, ideas, thoughts, or feelings effectively through spoken language. This includes skills such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, tone, volume, and non-verbal communication. Good speaking skills are important in a variety of settings, including social, academic, and professional contexts.

Effective speaking skills involve not only the ability to articulate words clearly and correctly but also to engage the listener through a compelling delivery. This can include using appropriate gestures and facial expressions, varying the tone and pace of speech, and maintaining eye contact.

To improve your speaking skills, it is important to practice regularly, both in formal and informal settings. This can involve participating in public speaking events, joining a conversation group, recording and analyzing your own speeches, and seeking feedback from others.

Additionally, it is important to prepare well before speaking, by researching the topic, organizing your thoughts, and practicing your delivery. By developing strong speaking skills, you can enhance your ability to communicate effectively, build relationships, and achieve success in both personal and professional settings.

Speaking skills are crucial in the business world as effective communication is essential for building relationships with clients, negotiating deals, presenting ideas, and leading teams. Business professionals with strong speaking skills are often able to achieve better outcomes and gain a competitive edge in their industry.

In a business setting, speaking skills are not only about what you say, but how you say it. It's important to speak clearly and confidently, use appropriate language for your audience, and convey your message effectively. Nonverbal cues such as body language, tone of voice, and eye contact are also important to consider as they can impact how your message is received.

Some key areas to focus on when developing speaking skills in a business context include:

1. Preparation: Before speaking in a business setting, it is important to prepare well. This can involve researching the topic, organizing your thoughts, and anticipating questions or objections.

2. Audience awareness: Understanding your audience and their needs is crucial for effective communication in a business setting. Tailor your message to your audience and use language that resonates with them.

3. Delivery: When delivering your message, be confident and speak clearly. Use appropriate tone and pace to maintain engagement and emphasize key points.

4. Listening: Listening is an essential component of effective communication. Pay attention to the feedback from your audience and be open to their perspectives.

By developing strong speaking skills in a business context, you can enhance your ability to build relationships, lead teams, and achieve success in your career.

3.3.1 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public speaking is the act of addressing a large audience, typically in a formal setting, with the aim of informing, persuading, or entertaining them. Public speaking can take many forms, from formal speeches to presentations, lectures, debates, and panel discussions. Here are some examples of public speaking:

1. TED Talks: TED Talks are a popular example of public speaking. They feature speakers from a wide range of fields who share their ideas and experiences with the audience in short, powerful talks.

2. Commencement speeches: Commencement speeches are given at graduation ceremonies and are intended to inspire and motivate the graduates as they move on to the next stage of their lives.

3. Political speeches: Political speeches are delivered by politicians to their constituents and the public at large. They can be used to articulate policies, promote candidates, and sway public opinion.

4. Business presentations: Business presentations are used in corporate settings to communicate information, proposals, and ideas to colleagues, clients, and investors.

5. Keynote speeches: Keynote speeches are given at conferences and events to set the tone for the event and inspire the audience. They are often delivered by experts in the field or industry being discussed.

6. Sermons: Sermons are speeches given by religious leaders to their congregations to teach, inspire, and motivate.

7. Lectures: Lectures are a common form of public speaking used in academic settings. They are given by professors and experts to educate students and the public about specific topics.

Public speaking is an important skill that can be developed through practice and training. Effective public speakers are able to connect with their audience, convey their message clearly and convincingly, and leave a lasting impression on their listeners.

3.3.2   BODY LANGUAGE

Body language refers to the non-verbal cues that we use to communicate our thoughts, feelings, and attitudes. It includes our gestures, facial expressions, posture, and eye contact. Here are some examples of body language:

1. Smiling: A smile is a universal sign of happiness, friendliness, and warmth. It can also convey confidence and ease.

2. Eye contact: Making eye contact with someone indicates that you are engaged and interested in what they are saying. It can also convey trust and sincerity.

3. Posture: Standing up straight with your shoulders back can convey confidence, while slouching can convey a lack of interest or confidence.

4. Hand gestures: Hand gestures can be used to emphasize a point or convey enthusiasm. For example, raising your hand to emphasize a point, or using your hands to illustrate a story.

5. Nodding: Nodding can indicate agreement or understanding. It can also encourage the speaker to continue speaking.

6. Crossed arms: Crossing your arms can convey defensiveness, skepticism, or a lack of openness.

7. Fidgeting: Fidgeting, such as tapping your foot or twirling your hair, can convey nervousness or impatience.

8. Touch: Touch can convey intimacy, comfort, or aggression. For example, a pat on the back can convey support or congratulations, while a shove can convey anger or frustration.

Body language can be powerful in conveying our thoughts and feelings, often more so than words. Understanding how to read and use body language effectively can improve communication, build relationships, and enhance our overall presence.

3.3.3   PARA LANGUAGE

Paralanguage refers to the non-verbal aspects of speech, such as tone, pitch, volume, and pace. It can convey meaning and emotion in communication, and can greatly affect how a message is perceived by the listener. Here are some examples of paralanguage:

1. Tone of voice: The tone of voice used can convey a range of emotions, from anger to excitement to sadness. For example, a sarcastic tone may convey irony or humor, while a calm and reassuring tone may convey empathy.

2. Pitch: The pitch of one's voice can convey enthusiasm, interest, or even aggression. For example, a high-pitched voice may convey excitement, while a low-pitched voice may convey confidence or seriousness.

3. Volume: The volume of one's voice can convey authority, urgency, or enthusiasm. For example, raising one's voice can convey urgency or authority, while lowering one's voice can convey intimacy or confidentiality.

4. Pace: The pace of one's speech can convey a range of emotions and attitudes, such as excitement, nervousness, or boredom. For example, speaking quickly may convey enthusiasm or urgency, while speaking slowly may convey thoughtfulness or seriousness.

5. Inflection: The inflection of one's voice can convey emphasis or meaning. For example, emphasizing a particular word or phrase can convey its importance, while using a rising or falling inflection can convey a question or statement.

Paralanguage is an important aspect of communication, and understanding how to use it effectively can greatly enhance one's ability to communicate effectively and build strong relationships with others.

3.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

a) Attention is important for effective listening. True or false

b) _____ listening happens when the listener tries to evaluate the value of the message.

c) _____ listening happens when the listener pretends to listen but in fact he or she is not.

d) Trust between speaker and listener is not important for effective listening. True or False

e) Sympathetic and empathetic listening are same. True or False.

3.5 SUMMARY

To make communication effective it is important that no barrier to communication exist during the whole process. Listening is one such component of communication that is the responsibility of the

receiver. Any kind of error during listening reduces the effectiveness of communication and can cause miscommunication. So, it is pertinent for everyone to understand the concept of listening and ways to enhance the listening skills. Listening is the ability of a person to correctly accept and infer messages in the communication process. In professional life listening is considered as an important skill and many companies provide training to their employees to enhance their listening skills. From the company's point of view an employee as a good listener ensures better customer satisfaction, greater productivity with fewer mistakes, and valuable information based inputs.

3.6 KEYWORDS

Listening: *Listening* is the active process of receiving and responding to spoken (and sometimes unspoken) messages.

Hearing: Hearing is an automatic physical process in which the sound enters our ear. Hearing is considered as a passive process that requires minimal effort of a person.

Selective Listening: When the listener pays attention to only that communication that suits his or her existing views and majorly missing the views of speaker.

3.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

1. Define listening and its purpose for an organization.
2. Mention various types of listening.
3. How listening is different from hearing?
4. What are the basic principles for effective listening?
5. What are the bottlenecks for effective listening?

3.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

a) True
b) Assessment
c) Mock
d) False
e) False

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

STRUCTURE

4.0   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, students will be able to:

➢ Understand how to write letters

➢ Understand structure and layout of business letters

➢ Understand different type of letters

➢ Know how to prepare Circular, Memo, and Notices

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Written communication refers to the exchange of information, ideas, or messages through written language. It can take various forms such as letters, memos, emails, reports, notices, circulars, and more. Effective written communication is essential in business, academia, and many other professional settings. Here are some tips for effective written communication:

1. Know your audience: Understanding your audience's needs, interests, and expectations will help you tailor your message and tone to communicate more effectively.

2. Be clear and concise: Use simple and clear language to express your ideas and avoid using complex words or jargon that may confuse your reader.

3. Use proper grammar and punctuation: Proper grammar and punctuation help to convey your message clearly and effectively, and also show professionalism and attention to detail.

4. Be organized: Organize your message in a logical and easy-to-follow structure, with clear headings and subheadings, and use bullet points or numbered lists where appropriate.

5. Use appropriate tone and style: The tone and style of your written communication should be professional and appropriate for the context and audience.

6. Edit and proofread: Always review and edit your written communication before sending it out to ensure it is error-free and communicates your intended message.

7. Use visual aids: Use visuals such as graphs, charts, or images to support your message and make it more engaging and easier to understand.

Remember that written communication is a permanent record and can have a significant impact on your professional image. Therefore, taking the time to craft effective written communication can help you achieve your professional goals and build positive relationships with others.

4.2   WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Written communication refers to the exchange of information or messages through written text, such as emails, letters, memos, reports, and various types of documents. It is a fundamental means of communication in many organizations, businesses, and academic settings.

Effective written communication involves the ability to convey information clearly and concisely, with proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling. It also requires an understanding of the intended audience and the purpose of the message.

Some key elements of effective written communication include:

1. Clarity: The message should be clear and easily understandable.

2. Conciseness: The message should be brief and to the point, avoiding unnecessary or redundant information.

3. Correctness: The message should be free of errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

4. Completeness: The message should provide all necessary information, answering any questions or concerns the reader may have.

5. Courtesy: The message should be polite, respectful, and considerate of the reader's feelings.

6. Coherence: The message should have a logical and organized structure, with clear connections between ideas.

7. Consistency: The message should be consistent in tone, style, and formatting throughout.

Effective written communication can help build relationships, convey important information, and achieve organizational goals. For example,

Dear Mr. Smith,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to provide you with an update on the status of our project. As you may recall, we had identified some key deliverables that needed to be completed by the end of this week.

I am pleased to inform you that we have completed all of the necessary deliverables on time and within budget. Our team worked diligently to ensure that the project remained on track, and we are confident that we have met all of the requirements.

As we move forward, we will be focusing on the next phase of the project, which will involve further testing and refinement of our deliverables. I will be sure to keep you updated on our progress and any other important developments.

Thank you for your continued support and please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Best regards,

Jane Doe

Project Manager

4.2.1 BUSINESS LETTERS

Business letters are formal written communications that are used to convey information between businesses, organizations, or individuals in a professional setting. They are typically written in a specific format and follow certain conventions to ensure that they are clear, concise, and effective.

The basic components of a business letter include:

1. Letterhead: The letterhead contains the name, address, and contact information of the sender, as well as the date of the letter.

2. Recipient's address: The recipient's address is typically located below the letterhead and contains the name, title, company, and address of the person or organization receiving the letter.

3. Salutation: The salutation is the greeting that begins the letter, such as "Dear Mr. Smith" or "To Whom It May Concern."

4. Body: The body of the letter contains the message that the sender wishes to convey. This may include information, requests, or proposals.

5. Closing: The closing is the final part of the letter, which typically includes a polite phrase such as "Sincerely" or "Yours truly," followed by the sender's name and signature.

6. Enclosures: If there are any additional documents enclosed with the letter, they should be listed at the bottom of the page.

7. Copy notation: If the letter is being sent to other individuals or organizations, a copy notation may be included at the bottom of the page to indicate who else will be receiving a copy of the letter.

It is important to follow proper formatting and conventions when writing a business letter to ensure that it is professional and effective. This includes using appropriate language, addressing the recipient correctly, and proofreading the letter for errors before sending it.

4.2.2 STRUCTURE OF BUSINESS LETTERS

The structure of a business letter typically follows a standard format, which includes the following elements:

1. Letterhead: The letterhead should include the name, address, phone number, and email address of the sender.

2. Date: The date should be included below the letterhead.

3. Recipient's address: The recipient's address should be included below the date, including the recipient's name, title, company name, and address.

4. Salutation: The salutation should be included below the recipient's address, and should begin with the word "Dear" followed by the recipient's name and a colon.

5. Introduction: The introduction should be brief and should provide an explanation of why the letter is being sent. It may also include a reference to any previous correspondence or communication.

6. Body: The body of the letter should be organized into paragraphs and should contain the details of the message being conveyed. It should be clear, concise, and well-organized.

7. Closing: The closing should be brief and should include a polite phrase such as "Sincerely" or "Regards," followed by the sender's name and title.

8. Enclosures: If there are any documents or other materials enclosed with the letter, they should be listed at the bottom of the letter.

9. CC: If copies of the letter are being sent to other individuals or organizations, they should be listed at the bottom of the letter under the heading "CC" (carbon copy).

It is important to use appropriate language, tone, and formatting when writing a business letter, and to proofread the letter carefully before sending it to ensure that it is free from errors and is effective in conveying the intended message.

4.2.3 LAYOUT OF BUSINESS LETTERS

The layout of a business letter follows a standard format that is easy to read and professional in appearance. Here are the common layout features of a business letter:

1. Letterhead: The letterhead includes the name, address, phone number, email address, and other contact details of the sender. It is usually positioned at the top of the letter.

2. Date: The date is placed below the letterhead, aligned to the right.

3. Recipient's address: The recipient's address should be aligned to the left, and should include the recipient's name, title, company name, and address.

4. Salutation: The salutation is the greeting that begins the letter and should be placed below the recipient's address, followed by a colon. The salutation should use the appropriate title and name of the recipient, such as "Dear Mr. Smith:" or "To Whom It May Concern:"

5. Body: The body of the letter should be single-spaced with double spaces between paragraphs. The first line of each paragraph should be indented.

6. Closing: The closing should be placed below the body of the letter, aligned with the left margin, and should include a polite phrase such as "Sincerely" or "Yours truly." The closing should be followed by a comma, and then the sender's name and title.

7. Signature: The sender's signature should be handwritten in blue or black ink below the closing.

8. Enclosures: If there are any documents or other materials enclosed with the letter, they should be listed at the bottom of the letter, below the sender's signature.

9. CC: If copies of the letter are being sent to other individuals or organizations, they should be listed at the bottom of the letter under the heading "CC" (carbon copy).

It is important to maintain consistent formatting throughout the letter, using the same font, size, and style. A clear and professional layout will help to ensure that the letter is well-received and effective in achieving its intended purpose.

Sample Business Letter:

[Your Company Letterhead or Personal Contact Information] [Date]

[Recipient's Name] [Recipient's Address] [City, State ZIP Code]

Dear [Recipient's Name],

I am writing to inquire about your company's services and products. As a growing business, we are always seeking to expand our network and explore new opportunities. Based on the information I have gathered, your company appears to have the expertise and resources that could benefit our operations.

I would appreciate it if you could provide us with more information about your products and services, including pricing, availability, and any relevant specifications. Additionally, I would like to inquire about any promotional offers or discounts that may be available.

Please find attached a brief overview of our company and the services we offer. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

[Your Name] [Your Title] [Your Company]

4.3 TYPES OF LETTERS

There are many different types of letters, some of which include:

1. Personal letters: Letters written between friends, family members or acquaintances.

2. Business letters: Letters written in a professional setting, such as between companies, clients, or employees.

3. Cover letters: Letters that accompany resumes or job applications.

4. Recommendation letters: Letters written on behalf of someone else, to support their application for a job, school, or other opportunity.

5. Thank-you letters: Letters written to express gratitude or appreciation for something someone has done for you.

6. Complaint letters: Letters written to express dissatisfaction or to request a resolution to a problem.

7. Inquiry letters: Letters written to ask for information or to request clarification on a topic.

8. Resignation letters: Letters written to formally resign from a job or position.

9. Apology letters: Letters written to express regret for something that has been done wrong or to ask for forgiveness.

10. Condolence letters: Letters written to express sympathy or condolences for the loss of a loved one or in response to a tragedy.

4.3.1 SALES LETTERS

Sales letters, also known as marketing letters or direct mail letters, are a type of promotional letter designed to persuade potential customers to purchase a product or service. These letters are typically sent to a targeted list of recipients and are often used as part of a direct mail marketing campaign.

Sales letters can take many different forms, but they generally include elements such as:

1. Attention-grabbing headlines or subject lines to entice the reader to open the letter.

2. Personalized opening statements that address the reader by name and establish a connection with them.

3. A description of the product or service being offered, highlighting its features and benefits.

4. Testimonials or case studies from satisfied customers to build credibility.

5. A call to action that encourages the reader to make a purchase or take some other desired action.

6. Contact information or a response mechanism, such as a phone number or website, to make it easy for the reader to respond.

Sales letters are often designed to be persuasive and may use techniques such as scarcity, urgency, or emotional appeals to encourage the reader to take action. However, it is important for sales letters to be truthful and not misleading, and to provide accurate information about the product or service being offered. Sales letters are a type of business letter that is used to promote a product, service, or idea to potential customers. There are several types of sales letters, including:

1. Direct mail sales letters: These letters are sent directly to a target audience through the mail. They are typically designed to generate immediate response, such as requesting more information or making a purchase.

2. Email sales letters: Email sales letters are sent electronically and are designed to promote a product or service to a specific audience. They can be personalized and targeted to specific groups of recipients.

3. Web sales letters: Web sales letters are posted on a company's website and are designed to attract visitors and convert them into customers. They typically include a call to action and provide information about the product or service being promoted.

4. Print ads: Print ads are a type of sales letter that are published in magazines, newspapers, or other print media. They are designed to attract the attention of potential customers and promote a product or service.

5. Telemarketing sales letters: Telemarketing sales letters are scripts used by telemarketers to promote a product or service over the phone. They are designed to generate immediate response and provide information about the product or service being promoted.

Regardless of the type of sales letter, the goal is to persuade potential customers to take action, such as making a purchase or requesting more information. Effective sales letters use persuasive language, clear and concise messaging, and a strong call to action to motivate readers to take action.

Sample Sale Letter:

[Your Company Letterhead or Personal Contact Information] [Date]

[Recipient's Name] [Recipient's Address] [City, State ZIP Code]

Dear [Recipient's Name],

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to introduce our company and offer you a special promotion on our products.

We are a leading provider of [product/service], with over [number] years of experience in the industry. Our team of experts is committed to delivering high-quality products that meet the needs and expectations of our customers.

To celebrate our success and show our appreciation to new customers, we are offering a [percentage]% discount on all orders placed within the next [number] days. This is an excellent opportunity for you to try our products and experience the quality and value we offer.

Our [product/service] has been designed to meet the unique needs of businesses like yours. We understand that every company is different, and that's why we offer customizable solutions that can be tailored to your specific requirements.

To take advantage of this special promotion, simply use the code [promo code] when placing your order online or by phone. If you have any questions or need assistance with your order, please do not hesitate to contact our customer service team.

Thank you for considering our products, and we look forward to serving your needs in the future.

Sincerely,

[Your Name] [Your Title] [Your Company]

4.3.2   ORDER AND SUPPLY LETTERS

Order and supply letters are types of business letters used to communicate orders for goods or services and to confirm the details of those orders. These letters are essential in facilitating the transaction process between businesses.

Order letters are typically written by buyers or customers to suppliers or vendors, requesting a certain quantity of goods or services. The letter should include details such as the product or service being ordered, the quantity needed, delivery dates, and any other relevant information such as shipping instructions or payment terms.

Supply letters, also known as order confirmation letters, are written by suppliers or vendors to confirm the details of an order received from a buyer. The letter should include details such as the product or service being supplied, the quantity, delivery dates, and any other relevant information such as shipping instructions or payment terms. The letter should also express gratitude for the order and provide contact information in case there are any issues or concerns.

Both order and supply letters are important in maintaining good business relationships and avoiding misunderstandings or disputes. They help ensure that all parties are clear on the terms of the transaction and can take any necessary actions to fulfill their obligations.

Here are two sample letters - one for placing an order and the other for supplying goods:

Sample Order Letter:

[Your Company Letterhead or Personal Contact Information] [Date]

[Supplier's Name and Address]

Dear [Supplier's Name],

I am writing to place an order for [product] that I saw on your website/catalogue. We are in need of [quantity] of this product to be delivered to our business location at [address].

Please provide us with the following information:

- Pricing per unit

- Availability of the product

- Estimated delivery date

- Shipping charges

We would like to confirm the order as soon as possible so please provide us with a formal quotation at your earliest convenience. Payment will be made via [payment method].

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to doing business with you.

Sincerely,

[Your Name] [Your Title] [Your Company]

Sample Supply Letter:

[Your Company Letterhead or Personal Contact Information] [Date]

[Customer's Name and Address]

Dear [Customer's Name],

We are pleased to inform you that we have received your order for [product] and will be supplying the goods as requested. The products will be delivered to your business location at [address] on [delivery date].

Please find attached a copy of the invoice for your reference. The total amount due is [amount]. Payment can be made via [payment method] within [payment terms].

We take pride in our products and services and are confident that you will be satisfied with your purchase. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your business, and we look forward to serving your needs in the future.

Sincerely,

[Your Name] [Your Title] [Your Company]

4.3.3 CLAIM LETTERS

Claim letters are written by individuals or businesses to request compensation or reimbursement for a product, service, or action that did not meet their expectations or caused them harm. These letters are a formal way to communicate dissatisfaction and to seek resolution.

Claim letters typically include the following elements:

1. A clear description of the problem or issue, including the product or service in question and the date and location of the incident.

2. Supporting evidence, such as photographs or receipts, to document the claim.

3. A request for specific action or compensation, such as a refund, replacement, or repair.

4. A deadline for response or resolution.

5. Contact information, such as a phone number or email address, for the claimant.

Claim letters should be written in a professional and courteous tone, avoiding any accusations or personal attacks. The letter should also be specific and detailed, providing enough information for the recipient to understand the issue and take appropriate action.

If the claim is not resolved through the initial letter, further steps may be necessary, such as filing a complaint with a regulatory agency or seeking legal assistance.

SAMPLE CLAIM LETTER:

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, State ZIP Code]

[Phone number]

[Email address]

[Date]

[Recipient's Name]

[Recipient's Address]

[City, State ZIP Code]

Dear [Recipient's Name],

I am writing to bring to your attention a problem that I experienced with [product/service] that I purchased from your company on [date]. The [product/service] did not meet my expectations and caused me [describe the issue or harm caused].

Enclosed are copies of my purchase receipt and [any other supporting evidence, such as photographs or documentation of the issue].

I am requesting that [specific action or compensation you are seeking, such as a refund, replacement, or repair]. I hope that this matter can be resolved quickly and to my satisfaction.

Please respond to this letter within [reasonable timeframe for response] and let me know what steps will be taken to address my concerns. If I do not receive a response within this timeframe, I will be forced to pursue other options to seek resolution.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

4.3.4 EMPLOYMENT LETTERS

Employment letters are a category of business letters that are exchanged between employers and employees or prospective employees. These letters serve as a written record of the terms and conditions of employment and are used to confirm job offers, extend offers of employment, and provide other important information related to employment.

Here are some types of employment letters:

1. Offer Letters - These letters are used to extend a job offer to a candidate and typically include details such as job title, salary, benefits, and start date.

2. Appointment Letters - These letters are issued to confirm the appointment of an employee, and typically include details such as job title, date of appointment, salary, and benefits.

3. Promotion Letters - These letters are used to inform employees of their promotion to a higher position within the company, along with details of their new responsibilities, salary, and benefits.

4. Resignation Acceptance Letters - These letters are issued to formally acknowledge and accept an employee's resignation and typically include information about the employee's final day of work, any outstanding payments, and other relevant details.

5. Termination Letters - These letters are used to inform employees that their employment is being terminated, and typically include details such as the reason for termination, the last date of employment, any severance payments, and information about benefits.

Employment letters should be written in a clear, concise, and professional manner, and should include all relevant information related to the terms and conditions of employment.

Sample Employment Offer Letter:

[Your Company Letterhead]

[Date]

[Applicant Name] [Address] [City, State ZIP Code]

Dear [Applicant Name],

We are pleased to offer you the position of [Job Title] at [Company Name], subject to the terms and conditions outlined in this letter.

Your employment will commence on [Start Date], and you will report directly to [Supervisor Name]. Your salary will be [Salary Amount], payable [frequency], and will be subject to regular review and adjustment. You will be entitled to [list any benefits such as health insurance, retirement plans, etc.].

As a condition of your employment, you will be required to sign and adhere to our company policies, which include [list any specific policies or code of conduct].

Your employment is subject to a [probationary period if applicable] and will be subject to review at the end of this period. Your employment may be terminated by either party with [notice period] notice.

To accept this offer, please sign and return a copy of this letter by [Date] to indicate your acceptance of the terms and conditions of employment. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly.

We look forward to welcoming you to our team.

Sincerely,

[Your Name] [Title] [Company Name]

4.3.4 WRITING MEMO

A memo (short for memorandum) is an internal business communication that is typically used to convey important information, make announcements, or request action within a company or organization. Memos are typically brief, to-the-point, and written in a formal style.

Here are some tips on how to write a memo:

1. Start with a clear and concise heading: The heading should indicate the purpose of the memo and include the date, the sender's name, and the recipient's name.

2. Begin with an opening paragraph: The opening paragraph should introduce the topic and provide some context for the reader. It should also indicate the reason for the memo and what action is required.

3. Use headings and subheadings: Use headings and subheadings to organize your thoughts and make it easier for the reader to follow your argument.

4. Use short sentences and paragraphs: Memos should be concise and easy to read, so use short sentences and paragraphs to get your point across.

5. Use bullet points: Use bullet points to list important information or to break up long paragraphs.

6. Use a professional tone: Memos should be written in a professional and respectful tone, and avoid using slang or colloquial language.

7. Include a closing paragraph: The closing paragraph should summarize the main points of the memo and indicate what action is required.

8. Use a clear and professional closing: Close the memo with a clear and professional closing, such as "Sincerely" or "Best regards."

9. Include any necessary attachments: If there are any attachments, such as reports or data, include them at the end of the memo.

10. Proofread carefully: Before sending the memo, proofread it carefully to ensure that there are no spelling or grammatical errors.

Here's a sample memo:

[Company Letterhead]

Date: [Date]

To: [Recipient Name]

From: [Sender Name]

Subject: [Memo Subject]

I am writing to inform you that [state the reason for the memo].

[Provide any necessary details, including supporting data or information.]

[If necessary, use bullet points to list important information.]

[Include any necessary attachments.]

Please [state what action is required].

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

4.3.4   NOTICE

Notices are formal written communications that are used to inform people about important information, events, or changes. Notices are often posted in public places or distributed through mail or email. They should be clear, concise, and easy to understand. Here are some tips on how to write an effective notice:

1. Use a clear and concise heading: The heading should clearly indicate the purpose of the notice and include the date and location of the event or change.

2. Use a formal tone: Notices should be written in a formal tone and avoid using slang or colloquial language.

3. Provide all relevant information: Make sure to include all relevant information such as dates, times, locations, and any other details that people need to know.

4. Use bullet points: Use bullet points to list important information or to break up long paragraphs.

5. Use a clear and easy-to-read font: Use a clear and easy-to-read font such as Times New Roman or Arial.

6. Include contact information: Provide contact information such as a phone number or email address in case people have questions or need more information.

7. Proofread carefully: Before posting or distributing the notice, proofread it carefully to ensure that there are no spelling or grammatical errors.

Here's a sample Notice:

[Heading] NOTICE

[Date]

[Location]

[Subject]

[Body of the Notice]

[Include all relevant information such as dates, times, locations, and any other details that people need to know.]

[If necessary, use bullet points to list important information.]

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact [contact information].

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

4.3.4   CIRCULAR

A circular is a type of document used in business and government to circulate information to a large number of people. It is often used to inform employees or customers about new policies, products, or services. Here are some tips on how to write a circular:

1. Start with a clear and concise heading: The heading should indicate the purpose of the circular and include the date, the sender's name, and the recipient's name.

2. Use a formal tone: Circulars should be written in a formal tone and avoid using slang or colloquial language.

3. Provide all relevant information: Make sure to include all relevant information such as the reason for the circular, any new policies, products or services, and how they will affect the recipient.

4. Use bullet points: Use bullet points to list important information or to break up long paragraphs.

5. Use a clear and easy-to-read font: Use a clear and easy-to-read font such as Times New Roman or Arial.

6. Include contact information: Provide contact information such as a phone number or email address in case people have questions or need more information.

7. Proofread carefully: Before sending the circular, proofread it carefully to ensure that there are no spelling or grammatical errors.

Here's a sample circular:

[Company Letterhead]

Date: [Date]

To: [Recipient Name]

From: [Sender Name]

Subject: [Circular Subject]

I am writing to inform you about [state the reason for the circular].

[Provide any necessary details, including supporting data or information.]

[If necessary, use bullet points to list important information.]

[Include any necessary attachments.]

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact [contact information].

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

4.4   CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Which of the following is a basic component of a business letter?

   A. Company slogan

   B. Email address

   C. Heading

   D. Social media handle

2. What is the purpose of the closing in a business letter?

   A. To introduce the writer

   B. To summarize the main points of the letter

   C. To provide contact information

   D. To signal the end of the letter

3. What is the standard margin size for a business letter?

   A. 1 inch

   B. 1.5 inches

   C. 2 inches

   D. 2.5 inches

4. Claim Letters: What is the main purpose of a claim letter?

   A. To place an order

   B. To request information

   C. To make a complaint

   D. To express gratitude

5. What type of information might be included in a job offer letter?

   A. Reasons for not getting the job

B. Salary and benefits information

C. Personal medical history

D. Political affiliation

4.5   SUMMARY

Written communication is a vital aspect of business communication that involves the use of written words to convey information, ideas, or messages between parties. This type of communication includes various forms of written correspondence such as letters, memos, notices, circulars, and reports.

Sales letters are a type of written communication that businesses use to promote their products or services to potential customers. These letters aim to persuade the reader to make a purchase or take a specific action by highlighting the benefits and unique features of the product or service. Sales letters typically include a call to action and may offer incentives such as discounts or free samples to entice the reader to take action.

4.6   KEYWORDS

Business Letters - Formal written messages sent by one business or organization to another.

Structure of Business Letters - The basic components of a business letter, including the heading, date, inside address, salutation, body, closing, and signature.

Layout of Business Letters - The way the components of a business letter are arranged on the page, including margins, spacing, and indentation.

Sales Letters - Written communication used to promote a product or service to potential customers, with the goal of making a sale.

Order and Supply Letters - Written communication used to place an order or supply goods, including information on pricing, availability, delivery, and payment terms.

Claim Letters - Written communication used to make a claim or complaint about a product or service, with the goal of obtaining a resolution or compensation.

Employment Letters - Written communication used in the hiring or termination process, including job offers, employment contracts, and termination notices.

Writing Memo - Written communication used for internal communication within a company or organization, often used to convey information, request action, or provide updates.

Notice - Written communication used to inform people about something important, such as changes in policy, upcoming events, or safety information.

Circular - Written communication used to provide information to a large group of people, often in a specific industry or organization, and may include news, announcements, or updates.

4.7   SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

1.   What is the difference between a block style and modified block style business letter?

2.   What is the purpose of the subject line in a business letter?

3.   What is the purpose of double spacing in a business letter?

4.   What are some strategies that can be used to make a sales letter more effective?

5.   What is the difference between a purchase order and a supply order?

6.   What are some common mistakes to avoid when writing a claim letter?

7.   What is the difference between a cover letter and a job application letter?

8.   What is the difference between a memo and a report?

9.   What are some guidelines for writing an effective notice?

10.   What are some advantages and disadvantages of using circulars for communication within an organization?

4.8   ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1) C. Heading

2) D. To signal the end of the letter

3) A. 1 inch

4) C. To make a complaint

5) B. Salary and benefits information

4.9   REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READINGS

1. "Business Communication: In Person, In Print, Online" by Amy Newman and Scot Ober. This book covers various forms of written communication in a business setting, including business letters, memos, emails, and more.

2. "The Handbook of Business Correspondence" by Michael Muckian. This book provides guidance on writing effective business letters and other forms of written communication, with sample letters and templates.

3. "Writing That Works: How to Communicate Effectively in Business" by Kenneth Roman and Joel Raphaelson. This book covers various forms of business communication, including letters, memos, reports, and more, with practical tips and examples.

4. "The Elements of Style" by William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White. This classic reference book provides guidance on clear and concise writing, including grammar, punctuation, and word usage.

5. "The AMA Handbook of Business Writing" by Kevin Wilson and Jennifer Wauson. This comprehensive guide covers various forms of business writing, including letters, reports, proposals, and more, with practical advice and examples.

6. "The Gregg Reference Manual: A Manual of Style, Grammar, Usage, and Formatting" by William A. Sabin. This book is a comprehensive reference guide to writing and communication in the workplace, covering various forms of business communication and providing guidance on grammar, style, and formatting.

7. "Effective Business Writing: The Essential Guide to Writing Clear, Concise Letters, Memos, Reports, Proposals, and Other Business Documents" by Maryann V. Piotrowski

8. "The AMA Handbook of Business Writing: The Ultimate Guide to Style, Grammar, Punctuation, Usage, Construction, and Formatting" by Kevin Wilson and Jennifer Wauson

9. "Business Communication: Building Critical Skills" by Kitty O. Locker and Stephen Kyo Kaczmarek

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Lesson: 5	Vetter: **Associate Prof. M.R. Patra**

REPORT WRITING

STRUCTURE

5.0   Learning Objectives

5.1   Introduction

5.2   Meaning and importance of reports

      5.2.1   Types of business reports

      5.2.2   Characteristics of a good report

5.3   Framework of Business Report

5.4   Check Your Progress

5.5   Summary

5.6   Keywords

5.7   Self-Assessment Test

5.8   Answers to Check Your Progress

5.9   References/Suggested Readings

5.0   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson you will be able to-

- Understand the meaning and purpose of reports.

- Know various types of business reports.

- Explain the features of a good business reports.

- Understand framework of business reports.

- Know the essentials of a report.

5.1   INTRODUCTION

A business report is a document that presents information about a company, organization, or specific business-related topic. Its purpose is to provide stakeholders with relevant information, analysis, and recommendations that will help them make informed decisionsAn introduction to a business report typically includes an overview of the purpose and scope of the report, as well as any background information that is necessary to understand the context of the report. It may also provide a brief summary of the key findings and recommendations of the report. In general, the introduction of a business report should be concise and clear, and should set the tone for the rest of the document. It should provide the reader with a clear understanding of what the report is about, why it is important, and what they can expect to learn from it. Additionally, it may include any necessary definitions, explanations, or assumptions that are important to understanding the information presented in the report.

5.2   MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF REPORTS

Business reports play an essential role in the operation of a business organization. These reports are critical tools for communication, information sharing, and decision-making. The following are some of the detailed importance of business reports:

Communication: One of the primary purposes of a business report is to facilitate communication between different stakeholders. Reports provide a common language and format for communicating complex information to a diverse audience.

Decision-making: Business reports help managers make informed decisions based on accurate and relevant information. By analyzing data and presenting it in a clear and concise manner, business reports help managers identify problems, opportunities, and trends, which can help them make informed decisions.

Planning: Business reports help organizations plan for the future by providing insight into past performance, current trends, and future projections. This information is used to develop strategic plans and set goals that align with the overall vision of the organization.

Accountability: Business reports provide a record of organizational activities and performance over time, making it easier to track progress and identify areas for improvement. This accountability helps to maintain trust and credibility with stakeholders.

Transparency: Business reports provide stakeholders with an accurate and complete view of the organization's activities, performance, and financial position. This transparency builds trust and confidence among stakeholders, including investors, customers, and employees.

Compliance: Business reports are often required by regulatory agencies and other external stakeholders to ensure compliance with legal and financial requirements. Failing to provide accurate and timely reports can lead to legal and financial penalties.

Competitive Advantage: Business reports can provide organizations with a competitive advantage by helping them identify and capitalize on emerging trends, customer needs, and market opportunities. This information can be used to develop new products and services, improve existing ones, and gain a competitive edge in the marketplace.

In conclusion, business reports are essential tools for communication, information sharing, decision-making, planning, accountability, transparency, compliance, and competitive advantage. By providing accurate and relevant information, these reports help organizations make informed decisions and achieve their strategic goals.

5.2.1   TYPES OF BUSINESS REPORT

A report may be either oral or written. An oral report is simple and easy to present. It may consist in the communication of an impression or an observation.

An oral report is a presentation in which an individual or a group of individuals communicates information on a specific topic to an audience. Oral reports can take different forms, including speeches, presentations, lectures, or discussions, and can be delivered in a variety of settings, such as classrooms, meetings, conferences, or public events. The purpose of an oral report is to convey information in a

clear and concise manner and to engage the audience by using appropriate communication techniques. To create an effective oral report, the presenter needs to prepare in advance by researching the topic, organizing the information, and practicing the delivery.

The structure of an oral report usually includes an introduction that grabs the audience's attention and provides an overview of the topic, a body that presents the main points of the report, and a conclusion that summarizes the key takeaways and provides a call to action or a recommendation. To deliver an effective oral report, the presenter should use a clear and confident speaking style, maintain eye contact with the audience, use visual aids such as slides or handouts, and engage the audience by asking questions or inviting feedback.

Overall, an oral report is an important tool for communicating information in a dynamic and interactive way. By delivering a well-organized and engaging presentation, the presenter can effectively convey information and leave a lasting impression on the audience.

A written report is a document that presents information on a particular topic or issue in a written format. Written reports can be formal or informal and can take various forms, including research papers, academic reports, business reports, project reports, or technical reports. The purpose of a written report is to convey information in a clear, concise, and organized manner, with the aim of informing, persuading, or providing recommendations to the intended audience. Written reports often follow a structured format that includes an introduction, main body, and conclusion. The introduction of a written report usually provides an overview of the topic and outlines the purpose and scope of the report. The main body of the report presents the findings, analysis, or discussion on the topic, using headings and subheadings to organize the information in a logical and easy-to-follow manner. The conclusion summarizes the key findings, provides recommendations or a call to action, and may include limitations and implications of the report. To create an effective written report, the writer should start by researching and gathering information on the topic, using credible sources and data. The information should then be organized, analyzed, and presented in a clear and concise manner, with appropriate headings, subheadings, and visual aids such as graphs, charts, or tables.

Overall, a well-written report is an essential tool for communicating information in a formal and professional manner. By using a clear and organized writing style, the writer can effectively convey the message to the intended audience and achieve the desired outcome.

A written report is always preferred. It enjoys several advantages over the oral one:

1.   An oral report can be denied at any time. But a written report is a permanent record. The reporter cannot deny what he has reported once.

2.   An oral report tends to be vague. It may be encumbered by the presence of irrelevant facts while some significant ones may have been overlooked. In a written report, the writer tries to be accurate and precise.

3.   A written report can change hands without any danger of distortion during transmission.

4.   A written report can be referred to again and again.

We can classify business reports in Informal and Formal reports as well.

1. Informal reports: An informal report is a document that presents information on a particular topic in a less formal and structured manner. Unlike formal reports, which follow a specific format and are usually prepared for a specific purpose, informal reports are often written for internal use and are intended to provide quick and easy-to-understand information to the reader. The purpose of an informal report is to convey information in a clear and concise manner, using a writing style that is appropriate for the intended audience. Informal reports can take various forms, including memos, email messages, progress reports, and meeting minutes. The structure of an informal report may vary depending on the purpose and scope of the report. However, it typically includes an introduction that provides background information on the topic, a main body that presents the findings or discussion, and a conclusion that summarizes the key points and provides recommendations or a call to action. To create an effective informal report, the writer should use a writing style that is clear, concise, and appropriate for the intended audience. The report should be well-organized and easy-to-follow, using headings, subheadings, and bullet points to highlight key information.

2. Formal reports: A formal report is a document that presents information on a specific topic in a structured and formal manner. Formal reports are usually prepared for external use, such as presenting findings to a client or stakeholders, or submitting research to a regulatory body or a funding agency. The purpose of a formal report is to convey information in a clear, concise, and organized manner, with the aim of informing, persuading, or providing recommendations to the intended audience. Formal

reports follow a specific format, which includes a title page, table of contents, executive summary, introduction, main body, conclusion, and recommendations. The introduction of a formal report provides an overview of the topic and outlines the purpose and scope of the report. The main body presents the findings, analysis, or discussion on the topic, using headings and subheadings to organize the information in a logical and easy-to-follow manner. The conclusion summarizes the key findings, provides recommendations or a call to action, and may include limitations and implications of the report. To create an effective formal report, the writer should start by researching and gathering information on the topic, using credible sources and data. The information should then be organized, analyzed, and presented in a clear and concise manner, with appropriate headings, subheadings, and visual aids such as graphs, charts, or tables.

We can classify business reports as periodic and special reports:

1.Periodic reports: A periodic report is a document that provides regular updates on a specific topic, project, or activity. It is usually prepared on a weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual basis, depending on the frequency of the updates required. The purpose of a periodic report is to provide an overview of the progress, achievements, and challenges of the topic, project, or activity during the reporting period. Periodic reports are often used in business, government, and other organizations to monitor and evaluate performance, make decisions, and plan for the future. The structure of a periodic report may vary depending on the purpose and scope of the report. However, it typically includes an introduction that provides background information on the topic, project, or activity, a main body that presents the updates or achievements, and a conclusion that summarizes the key points and provides recommendations or a call to action. To create an effective periodic report, the writer should use a clear and concise writing style that is appropriate for the intended audience. The report should be well-organized, using headings, subheadings, and bullet points to highlight key information. Visual aids such as graphs, charts, or tables can also be used to help communicate the information effectively.

2. Special reports A special report is a document that presents detailed information on a specific topic or issue. Unlike regular reports that provide updates or ongoing information, special reports focus on a particular event, problem, or opportunity that requires in-depth analysis and attention. Special reports can take various forms, including investigative reports, research reports, feasibility reports, and white papers. They are usually prepared for external use and are intended to provide information to clients,

stakeholders, or the general public. The purpose of a special report is to provide a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the topic or issue, including background information, data, analysis, and recommendations. The report should be well-researched and provide a balanced and objective view of the topic or issue. The structure of a special report may vary depending on the purpose and scope of the report. However, it typically includes an executive summary that provides an overview of the report, an introduction that provides background information on the topic or issue, a main body that presents the analysis and findings, and a conclusion that summarizes the key points and provides recommendations.

Sometimes reports are needed on subjects that concern more than one department, or they are so important that it is thought advisable to associate more than one person with them. In such cases, committees or sub-committees are formed to prepare reports. These reports are formal in style and impersonal in tone and are prepared after a careful and cautious deliberation of the members.

5.2.2   CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD REPORT

A good report should have the following characteristics:

Clarity: A good report should be clear and concise, using simple language and avoiding jargon or technical terms that may be difficult to understand.

Accuracy: A good report should be based on accurate and reliable information. The data used in the report should be verified and from credible sources.

Objectivity: A good report should be objective and unbiased. The writer should avoid personal opinions or biases and present the information in a balanced and neutral manner.

Relevance: A good report should be relevant to the topic or issue being addressed. The information presented in the report should be useful and relevant to the intended audience.

Organization: A good report should be well-organized, using headings, subheadings, and visual aids to help the reader navigate and understand the information presented.

Timeliness: A good report should be prepared in a timely manner, providing up-to-date information and insights that are relevant to the current situation.

Action-oriented: A good report should be action-oriented, providing recommendations or a call to action that can help to address the issues or challenges identified in the report.

Conciseness: A good report should be concise, using only the necessary information and avoiding unnecessary details that may confuse or distract the reader.

Professionalism: A good report should be written in a professional tone and style, using proper grammar, punctuation, and formatting.

Overall, a good report should effectively communicate the information and insights that are relevant to the intended audience, using a clear, concise, and objective approach.

5.3   FRAMEWORK OF BUSINESS REPORTS

A framework of a business report typically consists of the following components:

Title page: The title page includes the title of the report, the name of the author or authors, and the date of the report.

Table of contents: The table of contents lists the main sections and subsections of the report, with page numbers.

Executive summary: The executive summary provides an overview of the report, summarizing the key findings, recommendations, and conclusions. It should be brief and concise, typically no more than one page.

Introduction: The introduction provides background information on the topic or issue being addressed in the report. It should provide context for the reader and explain why the topic is important.

Methodology: The methodology section describes the methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data for the report. This section should provide sufficient detail to allow the reader to understand how the data was collected and analyzed.

Findings: The findings section presents the main results of the analysis, using graphs, charts, and tables where appropriate. The findings should be presented in a clear and concise manner, with the most important results presented first.

Analysis: The analysis section provides an interpretation of the findings, explaining what they mean and how they relate to the topic or issue being addressed in the report.

Recommendations: The recommendations section provides specific recommendations for action based on the findings and analysis. The recommendations should be actionable, realistic, and supported by the analysis presented in the report.

Conclusion: The conclusion summarizes the key points of the report and reinforces the main message or takeaway for the reader.

References: The references section lists the sources used in the report, following a specific

citation style such as APA or MLA.

Appendices: The appendices include any additional material that is relevant to the report but not included in the main body, such as raw data, survey instruments, or detailed calculations.

Overall, a well-structured framework for a business report ensures that the report is well-organized and easy to follow, allowing the reader to quickly understand the main findings, analysis, and recommendations presented in the report.

Here's an example of a business report:

Title: Increasing Customer Satisfaction for XYZ Company

Table of Contents:

I. Executive Summary

II. Introduction

III. Methodology

IV. Findings

V. Analysis

VI. Recommendations

VII. Conclusion

VIII. References

Executive Summary:

This report provides an analysis of customer satisfaction levels for XYZ Company based on a survey of 500 customers conducted in March 2022. The findings indicate that overall customer satisfaction is lower than desired, with only 65% of customers reporting being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their experience. The report provides recommendations for improving customer satisfaction, including improving customer service training, enhancing the website user experience, and introducing a loyalty program.

Introduction:

XYZ Company is a leading provider of online retail services with a customer base of over 1 million users. The compay has been experiencing a decline in customer satisfaction levels, which has resulted in a decrease in sales and revenue. This report aims to identify the key factors contributing to low customer satisfaction levels and provide recommendations to improve customer satisfaction.

Methodology:

The survey was conducted using a random sample of 500 customers who had made a purchase in the last six months. The survey consisted of 15 questions related to the customer experience, including satisfaction with product quality, customer service, website usability, and delivery times.

Findings:

The findings indicate that 65% of customers reported being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their experience, while 20% reported being "neutral" and 15% reported being "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied." Key factors contributing to low satisfaction levels included poor customer service, website usability issues, and slow delivery times.

Analysis:

The analysis of the findings revealed that improving customer service training and introducing a customer loyalty program could significantly improve customer satisfaction levels. Enhancing the

website user experience, particularly by simplifying the checkout process, could also lead to higher satisfaction levels.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings and analysis, the report recommends the following actions to improve customer satisfaction:

Introduce a customer service training program to improve the quality of customer service.

Launch a customer loyalty program to incentivize repeat purchases.

Simplify the website checkout process to improve website usability and increase conversion rates.

Conclusion:

The report concludes that improving customer satisfaction levels is critical for XYZ Company's success, as it can lead to increased sales and revenue. By implementing the recommended actions, the company can address the key issues identified in the survey and improve customer satisfaction levels.

References:

Jones, P. (2020). The Psychology of Customer Satisfaction. Wiley

Appendices:

Appendix A: Survey questions and results

Appendix B: Customer service training program outline

Appendix C: Customer loyalty program proposal.

5.4   CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What is the purpose of a business report?

A) To entertain the reader

B) To inform the reader about a specific topic

C) To persuade the reader to take a certain action

D) To summarize a novel

2. Which of the following is not a characteristic of a good business report?

A) Clear and concise language

B) Proper use of grammar and spelling

C) Use of jargon and technical terms

D) Organized structure

3. Which of the following is not a type of business report?

A) Formal report

B) Informal report

C) Oral report

D) Entertainment report

4. What should the introduction of a business report include?

A) Background information on the topic

B) A summary of the report's findings

C) An analysis of the data

D) Recommendations for action

5. What is the difference between a periodic report and a special report?

A) Periodic reports are shorter than special reports

B) Special reports are written more frequently than periodic reports

C) Periodic reports are routine while special reports are written to address a specific issue

D) Special reports are always written by outside consultants

5.5   SUMMARY

A business report presents an account of something, finds solution to some problem and submits information in organised form to the authorized person. The business reports are written by the individuals or by the committees as a part of their regular duties. The reports may be long or short, special or ordinary, formal or informal or informal, technical or non-technical and oral or written. The reports help the management in numerous ways. A written report is always preferred over the oval one.

5.6   KEYWORDS

Report is a communication from someone who has the information and wants to share some other.

Business Reports are prepared and written by individuals/committee as a part of regular duty in business organisation.

Informal Reports are usually written in form of a person-to-person communication.

Formal Reports are prepared and written in prescribed format according to established procedure.

Periodic Reports are prepared and presented as regular intervals. These are also known as routine reports.

Special Reports are prepared and written specification on occasions or on situation demanded by the organisation on issue of specific attention.

5.7   SELF ASSESSMENT TEST

1.   What is a 'report'? What are the essential elements of a business report?

2.   What is the importance of writing a business report?

3.   What are the key components of a business report?

4.   How should one organize a business report?

5.   What are some tips for writing an effective business report?

5.8   ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. B

2. C

3. D

4. A

5. C

5.9   REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

1. "The Handbook of Business Discourse" by Francesca Bargiela-Chiappini and Catherine Nickerson

2. "Effective Business Report Writing" by Kogan Page

3. "The Business Writer's Handbook" by Gerald J. Alred, Charles T. Brusaw, and Walter E. Oliu

4. "Writing Business Reports: A Comprehensive Guide for Business Students" by John Bowden

5. "The Elements of Business Writing: A Guide to Writing Clear, Concise Letters, Memos, Reports, Proposals, and Other Business Documents" by Gary Blake and Robert W. Bly

Subject: **Business Communication**	
Course Code: **BCM-203**	Author: **Dr. Yogesh Verma**
Lesson: 6	Vetter: **Associate Prof. M.R. Patra**

MEETING AND MINUTES

STRUCTURE

6.0   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson you will be able to-

- Understand the meaning and purpose of meeting.

- Know various types of meeting.

- Explain the features of a good meeting.

- Understand about minutes of meeting

6.1 Introduction

A meeting is a gathering of people who come together to discuss a specific topic or issue. Meetings can be formal or informal and can take place in-person or virtually. They can be used in a variety of settings, including businesses, organizations, schools, and governments, among others. Meetings are typically led by a chairperson or facilitator who manages the agenda and ensures that the discussion stays on track. The purpose of a meeting is to share information, exchange ideas, make decisions, and take action on a specific issue or problem. Meetings can range in size from a few people to hundreds or even thousands, depending on the scope and purpose of the meeting.

6.1.1 Importance of Meeting

Meetings are important for several reasons. Some of the key importance of meetings are:

Communication: meetings provide a platform for communication where ideas, opinions, and information can be shared among participants.

Collaboration: meetings help to promote collaboration and teamwork by bringing people together to work towards a common goal.

Decision making: meetings provide an opportunity to make decisions based on the information and ideas presented.

Accountability: meetings help to ensure accountability as participants can be assigned tasks and responsibilities and progress can be tracked.

Problem solving: meetings can be an effective way to identify and address problems and find solutions.

Building relationships: meetings can help to build relationships and foster a sense of community among participants.

Overall, meetings are an important tool for effective communication, collaboration, and decision making in organizations and other settings.

6.1.2 Types of meeting

There are many different types of meetings, each with its own specific purpose and format. Here are some of the most common types of meetings:

Informational meetings: These meetings are used to share information with participants, such as updates on projects, new policies, or upcoming events.

Brainstorming meetings: These meetings are used to generate new ideas and creative solutions to problems. Participants are encouraged to share their ideas freely and build upon the ideas of others.

Decision-making meetings: These meetings are used to make decisions on specific issues or problems. Participants review the available information and discuss the options before coming to a final decision.

Team-building meetings: These meetings are used to build relationships and promote teamwork among participants. Activities and exercises may be used to help participants learn to work together effectively.

Problem-solving meetings: These meetings are used to identify and solve specific problems or challenges. Participants work together to define the problem, identify potential solutions, and select the best course of action.

Status update meetings: These meetings are used to provide updates on the status of ongoing projects or initiatives. Participants share progress reports and discuss any issues or challenges that have arisen.

Feedback meetings: These meetings are used to provide feedback to individuals or teams. Feedback may be given on performance, projects, or other aspects of work.

Board meetings: These meetings are typically held by organizations or companies with a board of directors. Board meetings are used to discuss and make decisions on matters related to the organization's governance.

Annual general meetings: These meetings are held once a year by organizations to report on the previous year's performance and make decisions on future initiatives.

One-on-one meetings: These meetings are held between two individuals and are typically used for performance reviews, coaching, or mentorship.

These are just some examples of the many different types of meetings that can be used in various settings. The specific format and purpose of a meeting will depend on the needs and goals of the participants.

6.2   ISSUING NOTICE FOR MEETING

Issuing a notice of a meeting is an important part of the meeting process as it informs the attendees about the purpose, time, date, and venue of the meeting. Here are some steps you can follow to issue a notice of a meeting in detail:

Determine the purpose of the meeting: Before issuing the notice, determine the purpose of the meeting. This will help you to draft the notice with the appropriate information.

Select the attendees: Identify the attendees who need to be present for the meeting. Make sure to include all relevant stakeholders and ensure that they are available on the scheduled date and time.

Choose the date, time, and venue: Select a date and time that is convenient for all attendees and reserve a venue that is easily accessible and appropriate for the meeting. Consider the duration of the meeting and any necessary breaks.

Draft the notice: Write a draft of the notice that includes the purpose of the meeting, date, time, venue, and agenda. Clearly state the objective of the meeting and provide a brief description of what will be discussed. Also, mention any pre-reading materials that attendees need to prepare before the meeting.

Proofread and finalize the notice: Review the draft notice for any errors or inconsistencies. Ensure that the notice is clear, concise, and free of jargon. Once you are satisfied with the notice, finalize it.

Distribute the notice: Distribute the notice to all attendees via email, or other appropriate communication channels. Make sure to send the notice well in advance of the meeting date to give attendees enough time to prepare.

Remember, a well-written notice of meeting will help ensure that all attendees are aware of the purpose and objectives of the meeting, and that they come prepared with the necessary information and materials.

Here's an example of a notice of a meeting: Subject: Notice of Meeting - Quarterly Review

Dear All,

This is to inform you that a quarterly review meeting has been scheduled for Friday, April 15th, 2023 at 2:00 PM. The venue of the meeting will be in the conference room on the 5th floor of our office building.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the progress of our ongoing projects and discuss any updates or changes that need to be made. The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

Review of project progress

Discussion of any issues or challenges

Review of upcoming project timelines

Any other business

Please note that it is mandatory for all project managers and department heads to attend this meeting. In addition, please come prepared with any necessary reports, updates or other relevant materials.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or our office manager.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

6.3   AGENDA OF MEETING

An agenda is a plan or outline of the items to be discussed or addressed during a meeting. It helps to keep the meeting organized and focused, and ensures that all important topics are covered. Here are some steps to create an agenda for a meeting in detail:

Identify the purpose of the meeting: Determine the main objective of the meeting. This could be a brainstorming session, decision-making, project status update, etc.

Make a list of topics: Based on the meeting objective, create a list of topics that need to be discussed or addressed. Make sure that the topics are relevant to the meeting objective.

Prioritize the topics: Arrange the topics in order of priority. The most important topics should be discussed first.

Allocate time for each topic: Estimate the amount of time needed to discuss each topic. This will help you to plan the duration of the meeting.

6.3.1 CREATE AN AGENDA

Based on the above steps, create an agenda for the meeting. The agenda should include the following details:

Date, time and location of the meeting

List of attendees

Meeting objective

List of topics to be discussed, in order of priority

Estimated time for each topic

Any relevant notes or instructions

Here's an example of an agenda for a project status update meeting:

Meeting Agenda - Project Status Update

Date: March 30th, 2023

Time: 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Location: Conference Room A

Attendees: Project Manager, Department Heads, Key Stakeholders

Agenda:

Welcome and introductions (10 minutes)

Review of progress on ongoing projects (30 minutes)

Discussion of any issues or challenges (20 minutes)

Review of upcoming project timelines (20 minutes)

Presentation on the new project proposal (20 minutes)

Any other business (10 minutes)

Notes:

Please bring any necessary reports or updates related to the ongoing projects.

The presentation on the new project proposal will be given by John Doe.

Please come prepared to discuss any challenges or issues related to the ongoing projects.

Remember to circulate the agenda to all attendees well in advance of the meeting. This will give them time to prepare and ensure that the meeting runs smoothly.

6.4   MINUTES OF MEETING

Minutes of Meeting (MoM) refer to the written record of the discussions, decisions, and action points that occur during a meeting. They are important as they serve as a reference point for all attendees and ensure that everyone is on the same page. Below is a detailed guide on how to write minutes of meeting:

Pre-meeting preparations: Before the meeting, the person assigned to take minutes should prepare by understanding the agenda and gathering necessary materials such as previous meeting minutes, reports, and presentations.

Attendees and apologies: The first section of the MoM should include the names of all attendees and those who sent apologies for not being able to attend.

Agenda items and discussions: The MoM should then provide an overview of each agenda item and the discussions that took place. This should include any decisions or actions agreed upon by the group.

Decisions and actions: A clear and concise record of decisions and actions should be recorded. It is important to note who is responsible for each action and the expected completion date.

Any other business (AOB): The MoM should include any items that were discussed under AOB, including any decisions or actions taken.

Next steps: The MoM should conclude with a summary of the next steps, including when the next meeting is scheduled and what needs to be prepared for the meeting.

Review and distribution: The person who took the minutes should review them for accuracy and distribute them to all attendees and stakeholders.

In summary, minutes of meeting should provide a clear and concise record of discussions, decisions, and actions taken during a meeting. They are important for keeping all attendees informed and ensuring that everyone is on the same page moving forward

IMPORTANCE OF MINUTES OF MEETING

Minutes of meeting are important for several reasons:

Record of decisions: Minutes of meeting provide a written record of the decisions made during a meeting. This is important because it ensures that everyone is clear on what was decided and what actions need to be taken.

Reference point: Minutes of meeting serve as a reference point for all attendees. They can refer back to the minutes to refresh their memory on what was discussed and what actions were agreed upon.

Accountability: Minutes of meeting provide a record of who is responsible for what action items and when they are expected to be completed. This helps to ensure that everyone is held accountable for their responsibilities.

Communication: Minutes of meeting help to ensure that everyone is on the same page. They can be distributed to all attendees and stakeholders to ensure that everyone has the same understanding of what was discussed and what needs to be done.

Legal purposes: Minutes of meeting can be used as evidence in legal proceedings. They provide a written record of what was discussed and what decisions were made, which can be useful in disputes or lawsuits.

In summary, minutes of meeting are important because they provide a record of decisions, serve as a reference point, help with accountability, facilitate communication, and can be used for legal purposes.

RECORDING MINUTES OF MEETING

When recording minutes of a meeting, it is important to take care of the following points:

Be prepared: Familiarize yourself with the agenda and any relevant documents before the meeting to ensure you can accurately capture the discussions and decisions.

Be objective: Record the discussions and decisions in an objective and impartial manner, without personal bias or opinions.

Be concise: Record the discussions and decisions in a clear and concise manner, using bullet points and avoiding unnecessary detail.

Use clear language: Use clear and understandable language when recording the discussions and decisions, avoiding technical jargon or acronyms that may not be understood by all attendees.

Record all decisions and action items: Make sure to record all decisions and action items, including who is responsible for each action item and the expected completion date.

Be accurate: Ensure that the minutes accurately reflect what was discussed and decided during the meeting.

Record any dissents: If there were any disagreements or dissents during the meeting, make sure to accurately record them.

Review and distribute: Review the minutes for accuracy and distribute them to all attendees and stakeholders in a timely manner.

In summary, when recording minutes of a meeting, it is important to be prepared, objective, concise, use clear language, record all decisions and action items, be accurate, record any dissents, and review and distribute the minutes in a timely manner.

6.5 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What is the purpose of minutes of meeting?

A) To provide a record of decisions

B) To summarize the discussions

C) To distribute to attendees as a souvenir

D) To provide a platform for personal opinion

2. Who is responsible for taking minutes of meeting?

A) The meeting organizer

B) A designated note-taker

C) A volunteer from the attendees

D) Anyone who wants to take minutes

3. What should be included in minutes of meeting?

A) Date, time, and location of the meeting

B) Agenda items

C) Decisions and action items

D) All of the above

4. Why is it important to be accurate when recording minutes of meeting?

A) To ensure that everyone is clear on what was decided

B) To avoid any legal disputes

C) To impress the attendees with your note-taking skills

D) To make the minutes more interesting to read

5. What should be done with minutes of meeting after they are taken?

A) Keep them confidential

B) Distribute them to all attendees and stakeholders

C) Delete them immediately

D) Burn them

6.6   SUMMARY

Minutes of a meeting are a written record of the discussions, decisions, and action items from a business or organizational meeting. They serve as an official document that captures what was discussed and decided during the meeting and can be used as a reference for future meetings. Minutes of a meeting typically include the date, time, and location of the meeting, a list of attendees, the agenda items, decisions made, action items assigned, and any other relevant information discussed during the meeting.

6.7   KEYWORDS

Meeting: A meeting is a gathering of people who come together to discuss a specific topic or issue.

Issuing a notice of a meeting: It is an important part of the meeting process as it informs the attendees about the purpose, time, date, and venue of the meeting.

Agenda: An agenda is a plan or outline of the items to be discussed or addressed during a meeting.

Minutes of Meeting: Minute of meeting refer to the written record of the discussions, decisions, and action points that occur during a meeting. They are important as they serve as a reference point for all attendees and ensure that everyone is on the same page.

6.8   SELF ASSESSMENT TEST

1.What is a meeting, and why is it important?

2. What are some common types of meetings in a business setting?

3. What is the purpose of minutes of meeting?

4. Who is responsible for taking minutes of meeting, and what are their duties?

5. What should be included in minutes of meeting?

6. How should minutes of meeting be organized and structured?

7. Why is it essential to review and distribute minutes of meeting promptly?

8. How can minutes of meeting be used in future meetings or as a reference for decision-making?

9. What are some best practices for conducting effective meetings and taking accurate minutes?

6.9   ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. A

2. B

3. D

4. A

5. B

6.10   REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

1. "Meetings that Work: A Guide to Effective Problem Solving" by Michael Doyle and David Straus

2. "The Skilled Facilitator: A Comprehensive Resource for Consultants, Facilitators, Managers, Trainers, and Coaches" by Roger Schwarz

3. "Effective Meetings: Improving Group Decision-Making" by John E. Tropman

4. "The Art of Gathering: How We Meet and Why It Matters" by Priya Parker

5. "Perfect Meetings: How to Facilitate Effective Meetings, Improving Group Decision Making and Solving Problems" by Kasia Wezowski and Patryk Wezowski

6. "The Meeting Book: Meetings That Achieve Results" by Alan Barker

7. "Leading Effective Meetings, Teams, and Work Groups in Districts and Schools" by Matthew Jennings and Gretchen E. Schultek Bridgers

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