

ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILL

Objectives:

- To develop the communication skills and soft skills of the students
- To enhance the ability of the students to participate in group discussions and personal interviews

Module	Contents	Class Hours
1	The elements of communication (8 hours) 1.1 the importance of communication through English at the present time 1.2 the process of communication and factors that influence communication : sender, receiver, channel, code, topic, message, context, feedback, 'noise', filters and barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the importance of audience and purpose ➤ the information gap principle : given and new information ; information overload ➤ verbal and non-verbal communication : body language ➤ comparing general communication and business communication 	8
2	The sounds of English(12 hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ vowels, diphthongs, consonants, consonant clusters ➤ the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) ; phonemic transcription ➤ problem sounds ➤ syllable division and word stress ➤ sentence rhythm and weak forms ➤ contrastive stress in sentences to highlight different words ➤ intonation : falling, rising and falling-rising tunes ➤ varieties of Spoken English : Standard Indian, American and British (Note This unit should be taught in a simple, non-technical manner, avoiding technical terms as far as possible.) 	12
3	Introduction to Managerial Communication (12 hours) 1.1. Communication challenges in today's work place: Advances in technology; Culturally diverse workforce; Team-based organizational Settings. 1.2 Effective Business Presentations: Importance in managerial communication; Planning, Preparing, Organizing, Rehearsing, and Delivering Oral presentations, Handling Questions; Power Point Presentation Introduction to Managerial writing	12

	2.1. Business letters: routine and persuasive letters, bad news letters, sales letters, job application letters. 2.2. Writing CVs. 2.3. Memos, notices, circulars, emails. 2.4 Business reports and proposals.	
4	Soft Skills (8 hours) 4.1. Communication skills and Soft Skills. 4.2. Mastering the art of giving interviews, Types of interviews, Planning and Preparing for a Job Interview; Frequently Asked Questions in a Job Interview; Stages of an Interview; Important Non-verbal Aspects; Strategies for success in Job Interviews. 4.3. Business and social etiquettes. Case analysis and self study assignments are compulsory	8

Recommended Books:

1. Communication skill by Sanjay Kumar & PuspLata, Oxford University Press
2. An Introduction to Professional English and Soft Skills by B.K.Das et al., Cambridge University
3. A Textbook of English Phonetics for Indian Students by T.Balasubramanian, MACMILLAN
4. A Course in English phonetics by T.R.KANSAKAR , ORIENT LONGMEN Press.

Reference Books:

1. Technical Communication , Principle and Practice by Meenakshi Raman & Sangeeta Sharma, Oxford University Press
2. Basic Communication Skills by P.KiranmaiDutt, Geetha Rajeevan, Cambridge University Press Books
3. Business Communication- concepts, cases &applications, Chaturvedi & Chaturvedi, Pearson,
4. Business Communication, Meenakshi Raman &Prakash Singh, Oxford
5. Communication for Management, UrmilaRai and S M Rai, HPH
6. Business and Managerial Communication, Sengupta, PHI
7. Business Communication for Managers, P. Mehra, Pearson
8. BCOM 2nd Edition, Lehman and Sinha, Cengage
9. Soft Skills K Alex, S Chand
10. Business Communication, Kalia and Agarwal, Wile

Elements of Communication

Communication is the modus operandi of social and commercial intercourse. It is communication which gets the world going. It is the lifeblood of any group or organization. Communication is the cause and consequence of a powerful world order. Development of varied and sophisticated means of communication has brought human beings across the globe closer and has facilitated speedy and effective transmission of thoughts and ideas. The expanse and reach of communication, therefore, is worldwide and truly encompasses human life in all its facets and endeavor. It galvanizes action among individuals, organizations, societies and world community at large.

Factors that influence communication

Communication is a process that involves certain distinct steps. In its simpler form, it relates to stimulus and response. The complete communication involves elements –Sender, receiver and message. The initiator of communication is sender. He/she encodes the message. He is the encoder. The receiver is the listener or reader of the message conveyed by the sender. He/she may be called the decoder. The function of the receiver is to decode, interpret and respond. The message is the core idea communicated or transmitted from the sender. The clarity is an important element of communication. It is free from ambiguity.

The process of communication in an organization is explained below with the help of Exhibit 1:1. It brings the following steps involved in the communication process:

Step 1: Message is initiated.

Step 2: Sender picks up the ideas and encodes it for proper understanding

Step 3: The encoded message is then transmitted through the chosen medium or channel

Step 4: Receiver receives the message and decodes it

Step 5: The decoded message is used or acted upon

Step 6: As a final step, feedback on use or action is sent back to the sender

Exhibit 1:1 The Process of Communication

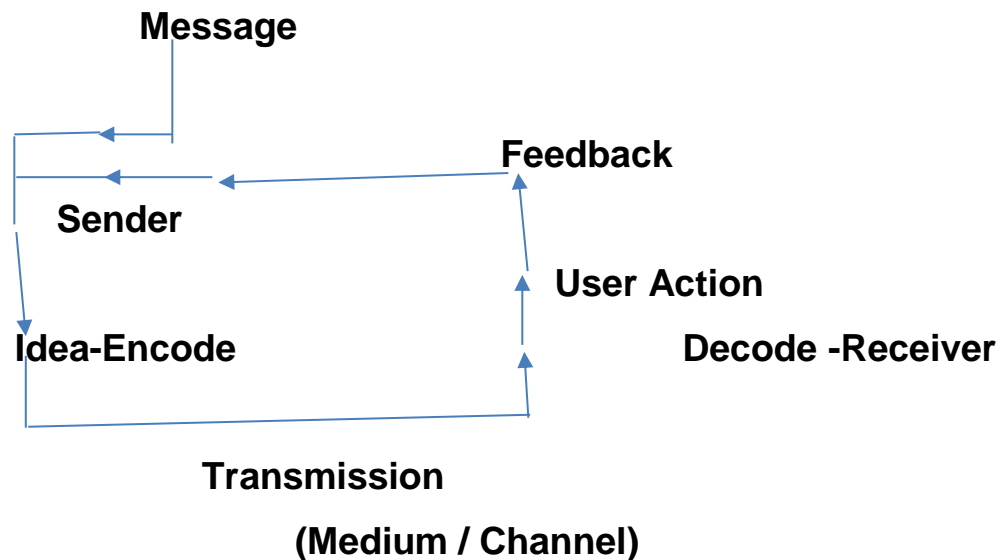


Illustration of the Exhibit

The process of the communication starts with a purpose. There is an underlying idea that has to be put across. The idea is developed into message. The sender gives shape to the idea he communicates. The next step, as evident from the chart, is the encoding of the idea. Encoding ensures that the idea or the message assumes a communicable form. Encoding involves the selection of appropriate words, expressions, phrases, charts and pictures in order to facilitate complete and clear expression of idea.

The encoded message is ready to travel. The journey or transmission is undertaken through the medium or channel. The communicator has to select the medium or communication channel – oral, written, visual, audio-visual or electronic. Each of these offers various options. The choice of the medium would be influenced by factors like availability, cost, urgency and reliability.

The transmission is complete when the receiver receives the message. Having received, the message is up to the receiver to respond. If the receiver does not open the mailbox, ignores the letter, declines to express, and ignores the e-mail, the message gets lost. The idea fails to reach its destination. Communication is effective only when the receiver correctly comprehends the purpose of the message, uses it and acts upon it as envisaged by the communicator. In the organizational context, the communication process moves a step further resulting in relevant feedback to the sender. The quality of the feedback received from the target indicates the effectiveness of the communication.

When the information from the sender gets distorted, then that becomes barrier. The barrier could be sender's end, in the channel, or at receiver's end. In the communication environment, so many signals are released but individual's mind grasps only select signals. An individual mind can be in stupor sometimes and can be alert at other times. If the signs are strong enough, they will be able to reach the mind. When any stimuli reaches the individual's mind and causes reverberation effect, it can be gathered that signs have gone through filter's mind. To be exact, filter means what all exists in the mind of an individual that will influence the interpretation signs received.

As we have seen earlier, communication is a process that covers different steps involving encoding, decoding and transmission. For ensuring effective communication, all the parties and instruments will have to play their part as envisaged. At every stage of communication process, there are barriers, which hinder or dilute the flow of communication. The barriers to communication in an organizational context may arise out of authority structure, status differences, and differences of opinions and animosity in organizational sectors. The barriers to communication may arise out of behavioural differences, differences in skills and understanding. Some

barriers, which are specific to written communication, are handwriting, spellings and legibility. Barriers to oral communication include poor expression, speed of delivery, and felicity of accent and lack of conceptual clarity and appropriateness of language.

Poor Expression

The power of expression of the communicator determines the quality of communication. To be effective, the message has to properly develop from idea. Barriers relating to expression result in poorly expressed messages. Lack of conceptual skills results in inadequate or incomplete shaping of the idea. Lack of clarity or ambiguity results from limited word power, improper organization of ideas and lack of coherence. If words and thoughts are not organized properly, the communication would suffer for want of structural balance or a sense of proportion. Such poor expression of thoughts and ideas leads to incorrect, incomplete or incoherent messages.

Indifference or lack of interest

This is indeed a very strong barrier in communication process. Organisations have to make considerable efforts to ensure that indifference to organizational communication is brought down to the minimum. Communication presupposes that the receiver of the message is attentive or receptive. Attentive listening in oral communication, careful reading in written communication, and keen observation in non-verbal communication are a must. Indifference or lack of interest on the part of recipient adversely impacts the enthusiasm of the communicator. When the students are not attentive, the teacher is likely to lose interest. On the other hand, when the speaker lacks expertise or credibility, the receptivity of the audience wanes. Indifference or lack of interest creates barriers to communication, as a result the quality of communication suffers.

The process of the communication is a progressive movement. The sender and receiver are integral parts for the success of the communication.

The internal background, social status, hierarchical relationship, organizational climate, knowledge, skills and attitudes, are among a host of factors that determine the effectiveness of communication.

The Importance of Audience and Purpose in Communication

Before you start communicating, you should ask yourself: Why am I communicating? For all forms of communication such as meetings, presentations, speeches, conversations, letters, reports and proposals etc, it is important you this question. Understand you need to inform, persuade, to entertain or to sell. Your objective should be clear in your mind. If it is not clear in your mind, it cannot possibly clear to your audience. A statement of purpose not only describes, what you want to accomplish, but also helps you know at the end of the communication you have achieved the same. We can classify your purpose into two broad categories, general and specific.

The general purpose can further be divided into three subcategories: to inform, to persuade or to entertain. Your presentation at the new employee orientation programme or your explanation of your project status are typical communication forms that have an informative purpose. Sales presentations, speeches by political leaders during election come under the sub-category –to persuade. Your goal may be help the audience have a good time. When you welcome the gathering at a conference, you are cheering and gearing them for coming session. When you speak in an entertaining way, your purpose is to leave the group in a jovial mood.

The listeners or readers of your communication play a very important role in the communication process because they influence the message and the medium of your communication. Whatever the occasion, your communication must always be targeted at your audience. Audiences know what they want to listen, or to read, speakers/writers know what they need to convey. As a communicator, knowledge on preferences, positions,

significant demographic features, size of the group, aim, knowledge and attitude of your audience would greatly help you tailor your speech in a better way.

If you are familiar with the audience you are addressing, then your speech should acknowledge and build upon your existing familiarity with them. The use of names and personal details of the members of your audience can help to engage the listener. If your speech is to an unfamiliar audience, then an early goal of your speech must be built a degree of trust with them.

Non –verbal Communication

Oral communication thrives on listening, written communication thrives on reading and the non-verbal communication thrives on observation. Non –verbal communication has the significant elements like body language, gestures, postures, appearance, personal space, codes, signs and signals, facial expressions, timings, examples and personal behavior. The greatest merit of this communication is its universality. Unlike oral and written communication which depends on language, it reaches the people across the region irrespective their language. It may substitute verbal communication and supplement it. Mother Teresa's language of love and compassion is a supreme example of non-verbal communication.

Non-verbal communication may be conscious or unconscious, deliberate or unintended. It is ancient and the earliest type of communication. It is developed much before oral communication and languages came into being. Gestures, postures, signs and facial expressions were among the earliest means of communication used by the preliterate man. The language of the hearing impaired which uses signs and gestures evolved from these ancient method of communication. Unlike verbal communication, which has limitations in terms of reach, the non-verbal communication is universal in appeal. Words have boundaries,

whereas non-verbal communication, which does not use words, transcends linguistic and cultural barriers and boundaries.

Non-verbal communication relies on observation and interpretation. The receiver of the communication should be in a position to see, hear, and even feel the communicator. Since it is through observation, it may be intended and unintended. It is intended when the communicator tries to convey certain messages through target group through conscious gestures, postures, attire and other forms of body language. Non-verbal communication is unintended when the body language, posture or the appearance of the communicator is interpreted by the receiver. A sloppy posture or a casual attire may be interpreted as lack of seriousness.

Non-verbal communication can have overwhelming impact. There are myriad ways in which the body and its associated actions communicate. Non-verbal communication takes place at various levels when the parts of body, actions, mannerisms, behavior, attire and demeanour tend to communicate. In other words, non-verbal communication takes place through the following objects, actions and expressions:

1. Body language—facial expression, eye contact and voice modulation
2. Postures/Gestures—Carriage, leaning, shrugging and nodding
3. Attire
4. Appearance
5. Handshake
6. Space
7. Timing
8. Example
9. Behaviour
10. Smile

Body language is a prominent field of study of non-verbal

communication. It creates an enduring effects of communication when human body expresses effectively and strategically. The human body created by Almighty does not lie. It is truthful in perfection and expression. Body language conveys the correct truth. If you are tired, you cannot sit erect. If you are sleepless, your eyes tend to shut. If you are bored, you tend to yawn. Skilful communication can express themselves in many ways as long as they are conscious of the fact various parts of the body may intentionally or otherwise carry a message. A keen listener or an observer carries and makes sense from the body expressions as well .Facial expressions, eye movements, the state of the eyes , the variety and intensity of human voice do carry different meanings. Innocence, anger, wonder, shock, grief, terror, indifference, seriousness, friendliness, approval, disapproval and exasperation are the expressions of body languages. In artistic and dramatic performances, the body expressions are consciously and artistically cultivated in order to gain spontaneity of appeal from the audiences. The success of their performance depends on their ability to cultivate and display a wide range of expressions with the demand of situation and circumstance. The head, the gait, the walk, the carriage are the various facets of body language. Ramrod straight, bolt straight, hunchback, stoop, and slouch are the expressions related to the body and its movements. Nodding of the head conveys consent or approval and vigorous shaking of the head implies disapproval or dissent.

Face

Facial expression is a powerful form of body language. Face is the index of the mind. The thoughts of the mind and feelings of the heart often find expressions on the face. There are people who are good at reading facial expressions. Good communicators learn to read and interpret facial expressions. Some of the idiomatic phrases used in connection with facial expression are:

1. The face that launched a thousand ships
2. The smile of acknowledgement and recognition
3. To carry a wooden expression
4. To carry a mask on one's face

Eyes

The eyes are the most expressive part of the human face. The eyes of a person are often said to tell a tale. The eyes are the most commonly described part of the body. The feelings of the heart quite often find expression through the eyes. The expression of love, sincerity and affection are reflected on eyes. Some of the words and expressions used in common parlance while reading eyes are mentioned below:

1. Twinkling eyes
2. Furtive glance
3. Eyes emitting fire
4. Worried look
5. Sad look
6. Wary look
7. Unsettling stare
8. Hurried glance
9. Cold stare

Since eyes are considered to be highly expressive, there is considerable significance attached to the presence or absence of eye contact. In legal cross examination, in counselling session, in negotiations and other such business situation, the quality of eye contact comes in for particular scrutiny. Facing interviews for recruitment and promotion, in making presentations and sales talk, eye contact assumes considerable significance.

Voice

Human voice express different meanings. Speech or oral delivery reaches the audience better through voice modulation. Voice modulation

implies the variations of tone and pitch while speaking. The voice have the distinctive features:

1. Tone-harse, soft
2. Pitch-high, low
3. Quality-controlled, uncontrolled
4. pace-rapid, slow
5. Force-intensity

Gestures and Postures

Another component of non-verbal communication is postures and gestures. Posture refers to the carriage, state and attitude of body or mind. Gesture refers to any significant movement of limb or body. Gesture includes gesticulation. Like other aspects of body language, posture and gesture should also be read along with verbal and other messages. The posture of a person may be erect or upright or reclining. Posture may be physical or mental. Nodding , shaking of head, smiling, patting the back, clasping hand, shrugging, touching, frowning, scowling, blinking, yawning, crossing and uncrossing of legs are among the various types of physical actions and gestures that convey meaning.

Comparing General and Business Communication

There are differences and distinctions between General and Business communication. General communication has no seriousness. It is expressed formally and generally. The communication prevalent in families, friends and relatives without any definite and distinct purpose are the instances of this communication .Business communication operates the business organization. The business organization have acquired cross-cultural dimension. Businesses not only establish country wide operations,

but grow beyond multi-national corporations with global operations. Multi-national companies employ people from different regions and place them anywhere in the world. These developments have resulted in adding cross-cultural dimensions to the subject of business communication.

The Sounds of English

All the words are collection of different sounds. Broadly speaking, phonetics is the study of sounds of human speech. The term 'Phonetics' originated from the Greek word Phone meaning sound or voice. Phonetics is concerned with the actual properties of speech sounds and their production, audition and perception. Phonology is the study of sound systems and abstract units, such as phoneme and their distinctive features.

Phonetics is the branch of linguistics that deals with the sounds of speech and their production, combination, description and representation by written symbols. Phonetics has three main branches: Articulatory phonetics, Auditory and acoustic phonetics. Articulatory phonetics deals with the position and movement of lips, tongue, vocal tracts and folds, and other speech organs producing speech. Acoustic phonetics deals with the properties of sound waves and how they are received by the inner ear. Auditory phonetics concerns with speech perception-how brain forms perceptual representation of the inputs it receives.

There are several models English pronunciation. We have chosen 'received pronunciation' (RP), popularly known BBC English, the Queen's English, or Standard English. There are number of reasons for this choice. English came to India because of historical accident and we have been in contact with the British educated class for a long time. We therefore understand RP better than any other accent. Our best educated speakers of intellectual activity use this accent. The speakers of English on radio and television model their pronunciation on RP. This model command social prestige at the national level in India.

We use air that is moving out of lungs (pulmonic egressive air/energizer) to speak. We may pause while breathing in or try to use the ingressive air, but this is likely to produce quiet speech, which is unclear to our listeners. In the larynx, the vocal folds (vibrators) set up vibrations in the

eggressive air. The vibrating air passes through further cavities, which modify the sound, and finally is articulated by the passive (immobile) articulators-the hard palate, the alveolar ridge, and upper teeth –and the active articulators (resonators).

The tongue is so important and so flexible an organ that language scientists identify different regions of tongue by name

The Back: opposite the soft palate

The Centre: opposite the meeting point of hard and soft palate

The front: opposite the hard palate

The blade: the tapering area facing the ridge of teeth

The tip: extreme end of teeth

A phoneme is a basic sound, or range of similar sounds, that can distinguish words in a given language. Changing one phoneme in a word can produce another word or make the word unintelligible. Sounds are classified according to their manner and place of articulation.

During the production of vowel sounds, the air from the lungs comes out in an unrestricted manner in rather continuous stream. There is no closure of air passage or friction between any speech organs. There are 20 distinct vowel sounds in English. The 20 vowel vowels are further classified as pure vowels and diphthongs pure vowel is the single sound marked by its steady quality. In the production of diphthong, there is a glide from one sound position to another, as a result of which the quality of the vowel changes./i:/is a pure vowel as in ‘feet’ whereas /ai/ is a diphthong as in ‘faight’ Consonants are distinguished from vowels by their manner of production. While pronouncing the consonants, the air passage is either completely or partially closed and the air passes through the speech organs with an audible friction. There are twenty-four distinct consonants in English.

Vowels in English:

i: she <u>ep</u>	ɪ sh <u>ip</u>	ʊ g <u>oo</u> d	u: sh <u>oo</u> t
e b <u>e</u> d	ə teach <u>e</u> r	ɜ: b <u>ir</u> d	ɔ: d <u>oo</u> r
æ c <u>a</u> t	ʌ u <u>p</u>	ɑ: f <u>a</u> r	ɒ o <u>n</u>

Consonants in English:

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)												
	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal	
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ	
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ			
Trill	ʙ			r					ʀ			
Tap or Flap				ɾ		ɽ						
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ	
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ								
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ				
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ				

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

Phonemic transcription

In order to understand phonemic transcription, we have to learn the letters representing sounds. The letters representing the sounds give a clear picture regarding the phonemic transcription. Apart from it, the consultation and observation of a standard dictionary will sharpen the

sound system. The proper articulation is possible with the keen understanding of phonemic transcription.

Define problem sounds in English

Some of the sounds in English are similar to the sounds in the Indian languages. The sounds /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /m/, /n/, and /r/ may not pose much of a problem for Indian speakers of English. But when they need to utter sounds that they don't use in their language, they face problems. Among the English consonant sounds, fricatives (while articulating these sounds, the air passage is narrowed at some place in the mouth so that the air, while escaping, causes audible friction) pose problem for Indian speakers. Some of the fricatives that pose problems are /f/, /v/, /s/, /z/

Word	English Usage	Indian Usage
Chief	/f/	/p/
Very	/v/	/b/
Thin	/th/	/t/

Syllable

A syllable is a unit of spoken language, next higher to speech sound. It consists of one vowel sound either alone or with or more consonants sounds proceeding or following it. The structure of syllable may be described in the following formula:

$$(C_n) + V = (C_n)$$

While C_n stands for an indefinite number of consonants, V stands for vowel sound. The brackets indicate that the consonants are not obligatory. There can be one or more syllables in a word depending upon the number of vowel sounds it has. A word like 'street' having six letters is a monosyllabic, whereas a word like 'ago' having three letters has two syllables. This structure may be described as follows:

Street=CCVC

Ago=VCV

The criterion for determining the number of syllables in a word is the number of vowel sounds it has, rather than the letters that constitute it. It should be borne in mind that a diphthong which is constituted of two vowel sounds should be treated as one vowel sound. For example, the word 'stay' consists of two consonant sounds and one diphthong which has two vowel elements, but the word is monosyllabic. The division of syllables in a dictionary is generally shown either by a centered dot or a hyphen. The two syllables of a word 'tailor' would be divided into tai-lor and the five syllables of 'gentlemanliness' as gen-tle-man-li-ness.

Consonant Cluster

We have already known that a syllable consists of either one vowel sound alone or with one or more consonant sounds proceeding or following it. We can observe the following words and their syllabic structure wherein V and C stand for vowel and consonant respectively.

Eye	V
My	CV
Spare	CCV
Street	CCVC
Amount	VCVCC

In the syllabic structure of the words *Spare*, *street*, and *amount* you might have observed that two or three consonant sounds occur together without any vowel sound between them. These kinds of syllables are supposed to be consonant cluster. The term 'consonant cluster' can be defined as a group of consonants occurring together in a syllable without any vowel sound intervening them. In identifying consonant clusters in a word, you need to consider the consonant sounds not letters or spellings.

Word stress /Accent

When we speak, the air from the lungs does not come out in a continuous stream but in small puffs. Each puff of air produces a syllable.

In an *accented or stressed* syllable, such a puff is produced by greater muscular strength. Thus, accent is the prominence or the relatively greater emphasis given to a particular syllable in the word. In a multisyllabic word, generally one syllable has greater stress than the other.

Strong/Weak forms

The weak form of the word is a form that may be used when the word has no stress and which is phonemically distinct from the strong /full form used when the word is stressed. A weak form is an unstressed syllable. A word may have multiple weak forms or none.

There are about 45 words in English which have two or more pronunciation –one strong pronunciation and one weak pronunciation or weak form. Words of this kind may be called weak form words. It is necessary to know about and practice these weak forms. Since almost all native speakers of RP find it very difficult to understand what they hear unless they learn these weak forms themselves.

Intonation

The intonation of a language refers to the pattern of pitch variation or tones it uses in utterances. In normal speech, the pitch of our voice goes on changing constantly: going up, going down and sometimes remaining steady. Different pitches of our voice combine to form patterns of pitch variations or tone.

A segment of speech carrying one intonation pattern is called tone. Sequences of English fall into well-defined tones or intonation pattern

1. Falling tone (tone-1)
2. Rising tone (tone-2)

Managerial Communication

Communication Challenges in today's workplace

India is increasingly integrated with the global economy. People from other countries are coming to work in India. People from India are being called upon to work abroad. Working and communicating in an inter-cultural environment is a necessary and reality. India has grown into an international hub for outsourcing. Business process outsourcing and call centre business are mushrooming and thriving. People working in these organizations have to necessarily speak and communicate with people in other countries regularly. Intra-cultural business environment have given way a cross-cultural business environment. Mastering of business communication skill is not complete until cross-cultural communication skills are acquired.

The contours of managerial communication are changing in a rapid pace. The methods and channels of communication used yesterday are making way for speedier and more efficient ones today. Telecommunications and computers are driving this change across the world. Numerous technology –induced developments towards the end of the last century have brought new dimensions to the range, speed, methods, and modalities of personal and business communication.

Advances in Technology

Managerial sectors are metamorphosing. Old methods of communication are making the way for new and more sophisticated ones. Telecommunications have seen an enormous growth. Internet, laptop, mobiles, modems and computer-based messaging systems have started impacting every sphere of activity, including business communication. Thanks to globalization and cross-border flow of ideas and resources, developments in one place are rapidly increasing other parts of the world. The technology revolution has vigorous impacts in rural areas as well.

A growing number of companies all over the world have started investing in networks and e-mails for communications. For managerial communicators, all these developments bring new opportunities and responsibilities. Messages have to be brief, swift and focused. There is now a much greater choice of channels and instruments. It has become necessary to keep abreast with such developments, appreciate their advantages and use them for improving the effectiveness of managerial communication.

Team based Organizational Setting

Every business has its stakeholders-employees, customers, stakeholders and community. The stakeholders contribute to the growth and progress of any organization. Their continued support is very essential for the organization to survive and thrive. Communication skills are put to real test in crisis situations. The organizational setting comprising the employees with proficiency in communication skill will overcome any critical and unwanted situation for organization. The managerial communication in team based organizational setting are put to real test in these situations. Any business has its share of leaders, executives, managers and supervisors. Their job is to guide people, build and nurture team, motivate and persuade people, solve problem and negotiate deals. As the people move up the organizational hierarchy, soft skills assume greater significance. Leaders have to necessarily learn to read, motivate, persuade, organize, interact, negotiate, and listen. The team is prosperous with the sound and effective communication skill of the employees in a result oriented manner. The members of the team have to necessarily their abilities and skills in the inter-related areas of leadership, decision making and communication.

Presentation Skill

Presentation is a relatively recently developed form of interactive communication. Presentations are so much a part of the business world. It is hard to think of a profession or business that does not make use of presentation. Speeches and presentations have become an integral part of business transactions and relationships. The ability to make a good speech and an effective presentation adds value to a professional or anyone associated with the world of business.

Presentations are made in classrooms, seminars and conferences and to group of persons on certain scheduled topics. The topic for presentation is predetermined and there is nothing rambling or disorganized about it. Presentations have specific objective. The objective is not just to inform, but more importantly to influence, to persuade, motivate and amplify. The verbal message is supplemented with the help of audio-visual aids for greater impact. The objective of presentation is to present all relevant details to the interested target audience on a specific topic or concept or area of interest in a participative manner, properly packaged and presented to create high impact.

Now let us look at the skills relevant for making a good presentation. The presenter keen on making an effective presentation has to necessarily develop various types of interactive skills:

1. The presentation is art of perfection and artistry.
2. The presenter communicates forcefully and clearly
3. He or she should be comfortable in facing the target audience and should build requisite confidence.
4. The presenter should be well versed in presenting various types of audio-visual aids.
5. The person should be able to synchronize the verbal delivery or narration with the visual message.

6. The presentation should not appear rehearsed or stereotype. The person should make the presentation with the allotted time.
7. The presenter should be looking at the visual message as well as audience and should not miss eye contact with the audience.
8. The presenter should develop good fluency of language and also use familiar and appropriate words.
9. The presenter should know which parts of visual message or slides should be emphasized or elaborated and which should be slipped or rushed.
10. The person should be alive to the response from audience and know how to sustain it.
11. The presenter should know how to make effective use of the vocal and visual aspects of body language to make the presentation effective.
12. Good presentation skills constitute good speaking skills plus effective use of visual and other aids to create a total impact.

The Three Stage Process of Presentation: Planning, Preparation and Practice Planning

At this stage what is necessary is to define the topic, set the objective, draw up the main points and do audience analysis.

Preparation

You prepare your presentation by collecting relevant information, selecting and preparing the visual aids and messages and composing your presentation. Any presentation is prepared to cover all the three aspects: introduction, body and closing. You start with a greeting and introduce the topic. You should get the audience hooked by telling a story or illustration, asking a theoretical question or telling something that at once arouse the interest. In introduction, the speaker tells the audience what he or she is going to present and how it would benefit them. Moving to the body of presentation, the speaker covers the main points of the topic, puts in supporting material, and ensures a comprehensive coverage. The closing

or conclusion quickly sums up the main points and emphatically makes the final point. Preparation ensures that all these aspects of presentation are brought out in a clear, cohesive and well organized manner. Preparation also includes choice of the visual aids and ensuring their availability in proper working condition at the time of presentation.

Practice

Practice, it is said, makes a man perfect. Practice here means the rehearsal of presentation. You make sure that the vocal, visual and verbal aspects are in sync to create the desired impact. You ensure that the presentation can be completed within the time allotted, even after providing for some interruption to seek clarification. By practice, the speaker ensures that nothing is taken for granted.

Power Point Presentation

Studies have shown that retention is much higher when people both see and hear when they only hear. Any presentation by definition is much more effective than a speech because oral messages are reinforced by visual messages. When the presenter presents the key points and pictures and figures on the screens or slides, the comprehension of the audience can be sharper and retention longer. The speaker should familiarize himself with the audio-visual aids and make sure that they are in working order. Any presentation depends enormously on the visual aids. The speaker may flounder and create considerable embarrassment if for any reason the visual aids fail to function. Good presenter make it a point to carry some extra hard copies of the presentation to save the situation in such an eventuality.

Since the effectiveness of any presentation depends both on the vocal and visual aspects, care should be given in preparing and designing the presentation slides. Very often, one comes across such poor quality slides that the visibility gets impaired. When the slides presented are in very

small fonts or the colours used are too bright and gaudy or the written messages are clustered, readability gets affected and the audience is unable to read the content. The presenter will create a poor impression in such a way that only the presenter and only those in the front row can see the slide while those in the back cannot. Proper planning should keep in view the size of the audience, the number of the screens and visibility of the slides.

Good slides can be prepared keeping in view the following points

1. Follow a uniform size and design for all your slides. Do not vary the size too much.
2. Make sure that there is a title for every slide and the text covers the title. Use sub-title within the main title when appropriate.
3. Present the logo of your organization at the top of every slide.
4. Take care to keep your sentences short and focused. Use bullet points .Avoid lengthy sentences.
5. Follow one –idea one-slide approach to the fullest extent possible.
6. Choose your colour with care. It should be bright and pleasant and yet ensure readability.
7. Do not use too many colours. Be consistent.
8. Use fonts and enhance readability.
9. Make good use of borders and boxes to improve visual appeal of your text messages.
10. Make sure to proofread. Avoid spelling and grammatical errors. Do not let your credibility suffer.
12. Be creative. With some extra efforts, you can certainly make your slides a treat to watch.
13. Every line should not be read verbatim by the presenter. Give sufficient time for the audience.

14. Add footer with copyright information if and where relevant.
15. Use pointer, not your finger, to draw attention.
16. Do not miss to mention page/slide numbers.

Soft Skills

Job interviews have become a crucial component of the selection and recruitment procedure of an industry. The recruitment experts invited or framed by the industry are keen on appointing an employee who will be an asset to his organization. The panelists judge the proficiencies of aspirants of job in various perspectives. The suitable candidate is to prepare well in order to face the interviews. The process of the recruitment has certain complexities for the seekers of job. There is a common critical factor in this evaluation process: Evaluating the personality of the candidates. We shall interpret the types, the preparations, the questions, the solutions and a mock interview in the subsequent phases of the chapter.

Promotion interviews are conducted by organizations for their own eligible employees who are desirous moving up in the hierarchy. Unlike job interviews at the entry point or for fresh recruitment, the candidates called for promotion interviews are already working within the organization. The objective of the promotion interviews is two-fold: to give an opportunity to the employees who meet the eligibility norms to be promoted to the higher cadre and selection of the best employees among the eligible candidates.

In respect of the promotion interview, the aspirants have to pass through several preliminary stages. They should have minimum experience and/or qualification laid down for the job vacancy. There may be a written test to obtain the qualifying marks. Similarly, there may be group discussion, medical tests or stress test interviews etc. which the candidates may be required to face before appearing the promotion interviews. The preparation for the interviews should commence well in advance. The candidates aim at scoring over competitors and approach the interviews with required seriousness. Attair, appearance, body language, communication skill,

confidence, keenness, a good understanding of the job requirements and sound knowledge of the functional areas contribute the success in interviews.

The panelists for promotion interviews would normally comprise executives from within the organization, with an external specialist being associated, as and when necessary. Each member of the interview panel would be provided with the profile of each candidate covering relevant details such as experience, age, seniority, qualifications, positions handled, significant contributions made, positive and negative attributes, performance appraisal and annual ratings. Based on this interview panel will be in a position to assess the suitability and performance of every candidate. The promotional process in the organizational set-up covers three relevant details: qualification and experience, performance and contribution, future potential.

Exit interviews are conducted by the organizations for those employees who are resigning or retiring. The objective here is to get feedback from the outgoing employees in a frank and forthright manner on the organizational climate so as to bring about improvements. Every organization would like to ensure that employee turnover is low. In order to enhance the turnover, there should be constant feedback from the employees on various aspects of the functioning of the organization. The employees resigning because of new appointments or better career avenues would be in a position to give valuable comments and suggestions for the growth of the organization.

The organizations recognize the fresher's interviews and exit interviews as desirable and worthwhile HRD system. Specific and well thought formats are designed in order to evaluate the responses of the employees through the interviews. These formats cover the essential components:

1. Personal details
2. Service and experience
3. Reasons for leaving the job
4. Comments on work atmosphere , policies and practices
5. Suggestions for improvements

The senior officers, executives or branch-in charge conduct the interviews in a cordial manner with a positive approach .The report or feedback is prepared to submit at the appropriate authority for further action.

Stress interviews are assessments of the ability or proficiencies of the interviewee to face high level of strain or mental pressure. Certain types of jobs or difficult assignments do require the person concerned to possess relatively greater emotional or mental strength. Security forces dealing with border events, police personnel dealing with violent mobs and personnel maintaining sound industrial relations are critical situations in various jobs. An unperturbed and tactful response is desired for a cool and calm solution. Stress levels could be quite high in terms of meeting deadlines, recovery of amounts due, beating competitions. These complex circumstances are handled boldly and coolly even under extreme provocation. This calls for a certain temperament and disposition. Restraint, tact, temperamental strength, reasoning, level-headed approach and ability to withstand the aggressive posture are features assessed through such interviews.

A grievance interview relates to a dissatisfaction, distress or suffering, which in turn leads to complaint or resistance ventilated in an interviewing process. Unless the grievance is dealt with or redressed, it may create further damage. In the business and organizational context, there would be essentially two kinds of grievance-grievance relating to employees and grievance relating to customers. Since grievance is quite common, large organizations and service sectors unites lodged complaints and put in place in formal grievance redressal committee or customer complaint redressal

forum. There should be swift solutions and suggestions for solutions of the emerging matters for smooth running and functioning of the organizations.

A face-to-face interaction of the aggrieved employees or customers is a sound methodology for remedial actions for befitting solutions. The dissatisfied or disgruntled employees get an opportunity to meet a person in authority to express their sources of dissatisfaction for solutions. The person responding to the aggrieved persons should have good listening skills. The grievance interview remove the feeling of neglect or indifference that the complaint may be harbouring. The interviewer makes the interviewee comfortable and lends a patient ear. The aggrieved person may be quite agitated or angry, the interviewer uses placating skills to assuage hurt feelings. There are separate departments or grievance redressal offices well equipped to listen to grievances and ensure redressal. The employees realize that sincere efforts are made for their genuine demands and dues.

Mastering the Art and Technique of Interviews

Reaching well in time is the first requirement for attending interview peacefully. It gives you sufficient time to find the exact venue, well familiar with the ambience and be comfortable. Arriving late for the interview lead you to put into you an embarrassing situation. If the place of the interview is a city /area which you are not very familiar, make sure to either visit the place earlier or start sufficiently early.

Any interview is much more than a question and answer session. It is actually the challenge of marketing oneself. The overall impression the candidate makes on the interview panel assumes the significance. The candidate makes the first impression on the presence of oneself. It is axiomatic that attire often proclaims a man/woman, especially in a serious appointment like interview. It is very necessary, therefore, that the candidate dresses well for the occasion. It may be a suit, a tie, a full sleeve

shirt and other accessories that make the candidate look smart. Being well dressed for the interview gives the message that one is keen on creating the right impression. The candidate makes sure that he is presentable.

The physical appearance generates the level of confidence for the candidate. Imagine interview for a senior post where most of the other candidates are in a suit and you are in slack. May be if you are really smart, you may still do well, but then it all depends on how the interviewer interprets it. It is important to be self-confident. It is always desirable to avoid the feeling that you are likely to be at disadvantage for being under-dressed for the occasion. If you are not comfortable and at ease with a suit or tie, get used it by practicing it well in advance.

There are several dimensions of body language. Right posture, alert look, firm handshake, confident and clear voice and appropriate eye contact create the right impression. Slouching, drooping, sitting with a hunchback, fidgeting , blinkering and shaking the legs create a negative impression.

Try to build a rapport with the interviewer or the members of interview panel. This can be well performed by looking confident, smiling, greeting and firm handshake. Establish eye contact with and reply to the person who has asked you a question. Be conscious of your mannerisms. Refrain from making statements such as 'you have get me wrong', 'you have not understood me', 'What you are saying is not correct' and 'it is impertinent' Do not interrupt when the panelists are discussing with each other.

Make sure that you have understood the question. This is possible when you are attentive. Active listening is very important. Do not be in a hurry. Do not interrupt. If you do not interrupt, there is possibility that the interviewer will give you some hints of what he/she is driving at.

Organize your thoughts quickly and give earnest replies. State whatever you know with confidence. Give correct facts and figures. Bring out not your knowledge or depth of understanding of the subject, but also

your attitude and concerns. As far as possible, use positive words. Use bright, sharp and appropriate words relevant to the discipline or profession. Be assertive, but avoid extreme positions. There are some questions in which it is possible to hold different views. Keep balance. Make your reply as brief or as long as the interviewer expects.

Probable Interview Questions

After the preliminaries, which are no less important, starts the phase of the phase of questioning. A candidate must be prepared to face a volley of questions from the other side of the table-questions of different types and nature, to which intelligent answers are expected. It is always better to prepare beforehand the answers to some probable questions of varying nature that might be asked. This might be help in answering the questions also.

Here are some questions and answers that interviewers often ask to get a peak into the candidate's personality. While these are guiding points, it is important for you to answer these questions based on your judgments.

1. Tell us about yourself

While answering such questions, always focus on the strength that are relevant to the job. You may tell the interviewer about your skills and awards in debates, extempore speech competitions and significant project works.

You must also mention if you had any internship in any organization. An internship is usually the first job exposure of any candidate. Hence the interviewers are often keen to learn how you performed. Mention the name of the company and state clearly the actual nature of the work or project you did there and what you achieved. You may also mention how the experience you gathered there may be of great help to you in performing the task that may be assigned to you.

2. Would you call yourself a team player?

The obvious answer is yes. But you have to support your statement with evidence. Try to think of some incidents when you kept cool and resolved the crisis that your team encountered. Suppose students of your college had become dissatisfied with a difficult project given. They had started clamoring for an easier project. At that juncture you had taken the initiative and convinced them by telling that though a bit difficult, knowledge of such project would increase their confidence and prompt them to crack harder problems in future. Giving more details on how you carried your team through this journey and got their full commitment. This is quite revealing.

A few tricky questions and possible answers

It is good to be careful about some questions that may inadvertently make you state some inappropriate views and perspectives.

1. Why should we employ you?

For this question, your answer should list out strengths that you feel relevant to the job. Given below are some answers that could help you with your answers. However, structure them to suit your arguments.

1. I have good co-ordination skill.
2. I possess strong analytical skills.
3. I can persuade people to see my point of view, and get the work accomplished.
4. My greatest asset is my ability to motivate people.
5. Even during emergencies, I do not lose my control.
6. I have good entrepreneurial skills.
7. I have consistently met my deadlines and targets.
8. I can say “no” to people when required to do so.
9. I focus on coaching and developing my subordinates and would like to see them grow.

10 .I am a good team player.

11. I am very flexible, and have the ability to work hard under difficult work conditions.

12. I have the experience and knowledge relevant to this job.

2. Do you have offers from other companies?

This is of course a difficult question to answer. Obviously, you must have applied to other companies if you are looking for a job, or would have some offers from other companies already. Therefore, do not lie that you have not. However, you are on thin ice here! The interviewer could be checking your honesty. On the other hand, he may also be trying to find out how focused you are –are you applying randomly, or is there a well-planned strategy? Whatever your answer is, it should match your career goals.

3. What salary are you expecting?

Try not to get into salary details early into the interviewer. If pressed, you could say that it all depends on the job, and would like to talk about it after a job offer. You can also state that you are more focused on the value you bring to the organization, rather than specifics of salary amount. Say this in a convincing tone. In case you are asked this question again, give a direct answer. Do not sound apologetic while quoting the figure you have in mind.

4. How much do you think you are worth?

If the interviewee is a fresh graduate, the response could be as follows:

‘As I am a still a student, I have not yet thought about it. On the basis of your judgment a fair salary that is offered to me on the basis of your evaluation would be acceptable to me.

5. What kind of a culture you are comfortable with?

It is good to be frank about your preferences. Your interviewer will get a clear idea about your expectations.

6. What is more important to you –salary or growth opportunities?

This one will reveal the real you. So be sure what you are going to say. Above all, be true to yourself. Tell them you always look to the future and therefore growth opportunities are more important to you with reasonable salary and benefits.

7. Tell us about your strengths and weaknesses?

It is important to confidently state both your strengths and weaknesses. Do not say that you do not have any weaknesses. However, be careful that your weaknesses are not constructed as problem areas that could negatively impact the company. Find ways to showcase your strengths in the garb of weaknesses.

Strengths

1. Technical knowledge in certain domains
2. Leadership skills
3. Coordination and leading activities
4. Motivating and energizing people
5. Strong Communication Skill
6. Hard work and perseverance

Weaknesses

1. Do not tolerate if things are not executed perfectly and flawlessly
2. Often trust people too much

8. Where do you see yourself in five or ten years?

A possible response to this question would be as follows:

‘ I see myself making a strong impact to the company’s results through successful execution of projects assigned to me. Based on step-by-step success, I would like to take on more responsibilities inside the company – leading on to leadership roles for people and products.’

‘My goal is to make a strong impact to the success of the company through a combination of people and product leadership.’

Case Analysis and Self Study Assignments

Amit, Vikram and Chandra are candidates for the post of software engineer in a reputed MNC. All three of them B.Tech in engineering from reputed colleges. Their final results are similar, with CPA ranging from 8.8 to 9.00. Only Amit has work experience of just a couple of months. Their performance of the interview is recorded on the four important parameters:

1. First Impression
2. Personality and Soft Skill
3. Concluding the interview

First Impression

Chandra

Chandra was practically panting when he entered the room. He had reached there just before the time scheduled for his interview as he had been held up in a traffic jam. He was still feeling extremely nervous from the anxiety of whether he could make it on the time for the interview. He was profusely sweating too. He was attired in red shirt, his trousers had become crushed on the way. He did not have documents with him. He entered the room brusquely, neither greeted nor the interviewers nor shook hands with them. He sat at the edge of the chair and kept on looking at the floor with his head bent down. His body language clearly revealed his nervous state of mind.

Vikram

Vikram was punctilious by nature. He had arrived well ahead of time. He had carried all his important documents in a small folder. He was professionally attired in crisp and ironed white shirt, polished black shoes. He politely asked for permission to enter the room and take his seat. He greeted the interviewer and shook hands with them. He looked cheerful and

alert. After taking his seat, he made eye contact with all the interviewers and waited for questions.

Amit

Amit was an enthusiastic young man with happy-go-lucky manners with a smile on his face. He arrived on time. He had his CV, but no other documents supporting his educational or professional experience. He was attired in a bright yellow striped shirt, light grey trousers, and dark blue blazer. He entered the room after taking permission and warmly greeted the interviewers, and shook hands with them. He made an informal comment on the weather and took his seat. There was no tension or nervousness in him.

Personality and Soft Skill

Chandra

Chandra was quite uneasy and nervous. His poor pronunciation and articulation were average at best. His poor communication skill led to his complete inability to communicate appropriately. As the interview progressed, his nervousness grew. He started stammering. He was often contesting the perspectives of the interviewers and argued with them a couple of times. He was on the verge of thumping the table to assert his strong views.

Vikram

Vikram spoke fluently. His pronunciation was perfect, voice modulation was appropriate and articulation was of high clarity. The intonation indicated that he had a good training in communication skill. He expressed his views politely and cogently.

Amit

Amit's verbal Communication and body-language were very casual and too informal. He freely used colloquial phrases. He was not a good listener. He tried to show his knowledge by often interrupting the

interviewers and interjected their questions midway with his views. Within few minutes of the interview, he turned sideways and had one arm resting the back of the chair, lending a casual approach of the session.

Concluding the Interview

When the interview ended, Chandra stood up on his own as if he was in hurry for relieved at the end of interview ordeal. He moved his chair back making a screeching sound .He said, 'I hope you will consider my candidature favourably. I am in desperate need for a job' and he left the noisily closing the door behind.

Vikram's response was appreciated by the panelists. Towards the end of the interview, Vikram asked the interviewer the response to one of the queries that he could not answer earlier. This made the lively and critical discussion by thee members of selection committee. At the conclusion, Vikram left the room wishing the interviewer a pleasant 'thank you, sir, you have a good day'. He did not forget to shut the door gently.

Amit was different in his manners towards the panelists. He ended the interview thanking the interviewers. He shook hands with each of the interviewers and asked when and how the selection results will be known to him. His confidence was overflowing in some remarks about a recent event he had read about.

Let us answer the following questions

1. Who is the best candidate for the position and why?
2. Clearly point out on what grounds you rejected the other two candidates?

Results: The panelists selected Vikrm

Why did the interview team select Vikram?

After critical discussions, the interview team converged in selecting Vikram for the post advertised. Vikram was well prepared for the interview from all perspectives. His answering style was admiring. His pleasant skills of communication was his asset. He had very good subject knowledge. His

approach to every questions was satisfying and pleasant. He gave the interviewers the comfort that even if he did not know the answer, he could work out the right approach with the experts of the interview.

Why did not the interview team select Chandra and Amit?

Chandra was inappropriately attired. He was nervous in many times. His communication skill was weak. His subject knowledge was confusing. Amit was superficial in his approach. He displayed lack of depth in almost every aspect. There was an absence of seriousness in his approach.

***** **ALL THE BEST** *****