**SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI COLLEGE**

**(Nationally Accredited at ‘A’ Grade (3rd Cycle) by NAAC)**

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### SEMESTER- IV ( Question with Answer)

**SUBJECT CODE -16CACBM1D**

**BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

Q. Define Business Communication?

Ans: Communication is defined as “The flow of material information perception, understanding and imagination among various parties”.

Business includes those organizations, which are engaged in the production and distribution of goods and services to earn profit. Therefore Business communication means, “Flow of information, perception etc. either within a business organization or outside the organization among different parties”.

## EXPLANATION:-

We can extract the following points form the above definition;

1. Flow between two or more parties.

In business communication the material flow from one person to another person or from many persons to different people. This flow may either be inside the organization or outside the organization.

1. Flow of information, perception, imagination etc.

Flow of information takes place when a party transfers the material to another mind. For example, when a news caster says, “Pakistan has conducted nuclear test on 28th May 1998”. This is a flow of information from news caster to the listeners.

Flow of perception means transfer of different feelings. Finally, flow of imagination that occurs when a painter conveys his/her imaginations through a portrait.

Q. Discuss the role of effective business communication within and outside the organization OR

Why Business Communication is called, “Life blood” of an organization? OR

Ans: A business Organization is a group of people associated to earn profit. Various kinds of activities have to be performed by the people of an organization so as to earn profit. These activities need an effective and systematic communication. Without efficient communication, one can not even imagine to do work and hence will be unable to earn profit. Since the aim of business organization is to earn profit, the organization will die without profit and this death is a result of the absence of communication. This is why communication is called life blood of a business organization. We can prove this statement in the following manner.

## COMMUNICATION INSIDE AN ORGANIZATION:

Different employees and officials in an organization need to communicate to each other.

This internal communication with its importance is shown in the following way:

## Setting goals and Objectives:-

Mostly, the organizations have a variety of formal and informal objectives to accomplish. These objectives may be financial results, product quality, market dominance, employees satisfaction, or service to customers. So the communication enables all the persons in an organization to work towards a common purpose.

## Making and Implementing decision:-

In order to achieve the objective, people in a business organization collect facts and evaluate alternatives, and they do so by reading, asking questions, talking or by plain thinking. These thoughts are put into a written form. Once a decision has been made, it has to be implemented which requires communication.

## Appraisal:-

Having implemented the decision, management needs to determine whether the desired outcome is being achieved. Statistics on such factors as cost, sales, market share, productivity and inventory levels are compiled. This is done through computers, manual papers, memos or reports.

## Manufacturing the products:-

Getting an idea for a new product out of someone’s head, pushing it through the production process and finally getting the product also require communication. Designing the plan regarding product, introducing the workers, purchasing raw material, marketing and distributing the product all require effective communication.

## Interaction between employer & employee:-

Employees are informed about policies and decisions of employers through circulars, reports, notices etc. Employers also get in touch with employees through application, complaint etc. So, communication plays a vital role in the interaction of employer and employee.

## EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION:

1. **Hiring the employees:-**

If a company wants to hire some one, it advertises the vacancy, receives applications, calls the candidates, takes the interview and then offers job to the successful candidates. The whole process requires communication.

## Dealing with customers:-

Sales letters and brochures, advertisements, personal sales calls, and formal proposals are all used to stimulate the customer’s interest. Communication also plays a part in such customer related functions as credit checking, billing, and handling complaints and questions.

## Negotiating with suppliers and financiers:-

To obtain necessary supplies and services, companies develop written specification that outlines their requirement. Similarly, to arrange finance, they negotiate with lenders and fill out loan applications.

## Informing the investors:-

Balance sheet, income statement, and ratio analysis are used to inform the investors regarding performance of business.

## Interacting with Govt.:-

Government agencies make certain rules to regulate the economy. These rules are communicated to organizations through various papers. These organizations try to fulfill, these requirement like filling taxation form and other documents.

Q. Define communication. What is the importance of communication for an individual and for an organization?

COMMUNICATION:-

***Definition:*** “Communication is the process by which information is transmitted between individuals and organization, so that an understanding response results”.

OR

“Communication is the process which involves transmission and accurate replication of ideas, ensured by feedback for the purpose of eliciting action which will accomplish organizational goals”.

#### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION FOR AN INDIVIDUAL

##### Helps in getting a desired job:-

Getting a desired job is not an easy task. It requires a person to be excellent, especially in terms of communication abilities. Communication abilities can be classified into five categories that is reading, writing, speaking, listening and observing. If a candidate is a good reader of not only text books and reference books but also of newspapers and magazines, this would help him developing

confidence level at the time of interview. Writing skills are necessary for preparing an appropriate Bio- data and covering letter, so that a better initial impression could be created. No doubt, conversational skill right at the time of interview is equally countable towards success of the candidate. Listening abilities on the other could prove to be fruitful especially when the interviewer is making a comment or asking a question. In short we can say that the presence of above mentioned five communication skills could give a better chance of being selected during an interview.

##### Help in maintaining social relationships:-

We as human beings live in a cobweb of relationships rather social relationship. These social relations compel us to act simultaneously in the capacity of father, child, husband, uncle, neighbour, cousin, teacher, nephew and so on. All these relationships especially near one’s could be maintained properly if we can communicate well to all these relations, that we are here to take care of them and our services are always there to help them in case of any needs.

##### Helps in getting on the job promotion:-

Perhaps finding a job would not be a big deal in case of if the candidate is well connected and belongs to a well off family. But promotion on the job requires some extra skills on the part of the candidate. Amongst those skills, communication abilities rank on the top. If a person can speak well during interactive and presentation sessions, can reports properly, he will automatically be in the eyes of the management and whenever a chance for promotion comes, he will be on the top of the list.

##### Helps in solving other’s problems:-

It is commonly observed that around us there are so many people whom we like to meet, their company is a source of enrichment for us. When we are with them we feel secured. The only reason for such types of feelings is that such type of people are not only good listeners but they also know it well that whenever they would speak, it would only be for the sake of encouraging, not discouraging others, only for solving other’s problems and not for creating problems for others. Such people are no doubt excellent communicators.

Q.4 Differentiate between formal and informal language; Ans:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Formal language: | Informal Language: |
| 1. It is the language spoken in office, business and other formal places. 2. Proper and standard words are used. 3. It consists of specific purpose words like manager, supervisor, owner, employer etc. 4. It is used comparatively less than informal language. 5. It is used when the speaker is relaxed. | 1. It is the language spoken at home or with friends. 2. Improper words and slangs are used. 3. It has all purpose words like “boss” that stands for various personalities. 4. It is used in daily life. 5. It is used when speaker is in a hurry/ |

Q. Explain the process of communication. OR “Communication is a two way process of exchanging ideas or

information between two human beings”. Explain this statement with the help of a diagram.

Ans: Communication simply means exchange of ideas & information between two persons. A person sends a message to another person and gets the response from the receiver on the message. This whole phenomenon can be explained as under.

## Sender’s thoughts:-

The very first step in the process of communication is generation of thought in the sender’s mind. These thoughts may be about a request, order, inquiry production or any other such activity.

## Encoding / Message:-

The thought generated in the mind of sender is ambiguous and unable to be communicated unless it is put into a receivable form. This step is known as encoding where the sender converts his thought into a message by means of a language. For example, a sender thinks about having a job. Now, he will put his thought on a paper. That is called job application. In his way, his thought becomes a message.

## Transmission through media:-

Once a thought is converted into message, it should be transmitted to the receiver through a suitable medium. This media might be electronic media as T.V., E-mail, radio etc. or it may be print media like newspaper, magazines, letters or merely sound that is transmitted through the medium of air.

## Noise and Barriers:-

While transmitting the information to the receiver, the sender faces lots of barriers. These noise and barriers are explained as under:

* 1. **On sender’s side:-** Noise and barriers may take place during the process of encoding. Some of them may be caused by distraction, lack of concentration, typing mistake, poor language etc.
  2. **In the medium:-** Some barriers are caused by medium such as poor transmission on

T.V. and radio misprinting in newspapers etc.

* 1. **On receiver’s side:-** The receiver can also create certain barriers to the receiving of message such as poor reading ability, emotions, lack of concentration etc.

## Decoding by Receiver:-

Having received the message form the sender, the receiver attempts to understand and interpret the message. This process of converting the language of message into thoughts is known as decoding. For instance, the receiver, having received job application, reads the application and understands the message conveyed by the applicant.

## Idea Received:-

As soon as the process of decoding is finished, the idea given by the sender is received by the receiver. It means the thought that was generated in the mind of sender has been transmitted to the mind of receiver. In our example, the sender wanted to inform the receiver about his thought of having a job. Now the sender has got this idea.

## Feed back:-

Process of communication is incomplete until the receiver responds to the sender. This response may be negative, positive, or for further enquiry. It means when the receiver of job application welcomes or regrets the sender, the process of communication is deemed to be complete.

This whole process can be depicted through the following diagram.

Sender’s Thoughts

Encoding

### Noise & Barriers

Feed Back

Transmission through media

Decoding

Q. Discuss five elements (Factors) of the process of communication;

Idea Received

Ans: Communication is the exchange of ideas between two minds. This process of exchanging idea is based on following five factors.

## Sender:-

Sender is the person who initiates the process of communication. He generates an idea in his mind regarding production invention, innovation, request, order, enquiry etc. So, he is the first factor of communication process and his function is to generate an idea. Therefore, it is necessary that the idea should be clear, and convertible into message. For this purpose, the sender needs to apply his knowledge and imaginative power.

## Message:-

The idea in the mind of sender is transformed into words that is called message. The sender decides on the length, style, organization and tone of the message. The message may be presented in many ways, depending on the subject, purpose, audience, personal style, mood and cultural background.

## Media:-

The media of transmission of message are electronic media as T.V., radio, computer and print media as newspapers, letter, magazine etc. media play a very important role in helping the receiver’s understand the message. A wrongly chosen medium can interrupt the process of communication, Selection of medium depends upon message, audience, urgency and situation.

## Receiver:-

Receiver is the person who gets the message from the sender, decodes it, understands it and interprets it.

## Feed Back:-

Having understood the message, the receiver responds to the sender in yes or no or asks further questions. This process is called feedback.

1. Explain in detail verbal and non verbal communication?

Ans: **VERBAL COMMUNICATION:** Verbal communication means such a communication that takes place by means of a language or words”. It includes the following contents.

#### Oral communication (Speaking & listening)

1. **Written communication (writing & reading)Speaking:-**

In order to send message in business, speaking plays a vital role. Giving instruction, conducting interviews, attending meetings, sending orders through telephone calls are very common in today’s business.

## Writing:-

It is used when a complex message is sent. Placing order through letters, informing employees through circulars, sending reports and memos, filling different government forms, keeping records in writing are some examples of this aspect of verbal communication.

## Listening:-

People in business spend more time in obtaining information then transmitting it. Listening is the most important way to receive information: information regarding order of employers, instruction, rules and regulation, customer trend etc, are obtained through listening. But in listening, people generally forget 75% of the message after few days.

## Reading:-

Reading reports, memos, policies, circulars, and different business statements are essential for an organization: Reading involves understanding and interpreting the material.

**NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION:** It means communication without the use of language or words. It includes appearance, body language, silence, etc. Its explanation is as follows;

## Facial Expressions:-

Face and eyes are helpful means of nonverbal communication. They reveal hidden emotions such as anger, confusion, enthusiasm, fear, joy etc.

## Gestures, postures & movement:-

Postures means the language primarily composed of hand and fingers. Communication of deaf people and signal given by traffic constable are the example of posture. Gestures and body movement also indicate many things. Shaking hand with firmness indicates a warm relationship, moving back and forth reveals nervousness.

Q Enumerate the different categories of non-verbal communication and state their importance in communication process with suitable examples.

#### Ans: NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION:

Communication may be verbal – by written or spoken symbols (usually words) or it may be non-verbal – without words. Non-verbal messages are sometimes more clear, accurate and effective as compared to verbal communication, because they are internationally used and understood. Non-verbal communication may be divided into the following three categories:

1. Appearance
2. Body Language
3. Silence, Time and Sounds

#### APPEARANCE:

Appearance affects the quality of written and spoken messages as follows:

#### Written Messages:

The envelope’s overall appearance size, colour, weight, postage and the letter’s overall appearance length stationary, enclosures, layout, etc. may convey significant information and impressions.

#### Spoken Messages:

Personal appearance of the speaker-clothing, jewelry, hair-style, neatness, etc. may tell about the age, sex occupation, nationality, social, economic and job status. Similarly, appearance of the surroundings room-size, location, furnishings, lighting, etc. may tell a lot about the message.

#### BODY LANGUAGE:

Facial expressions, gestures, posture, smell, touch, voice etc are included in body language.

#### Facial Expression:

The eyes and face may express the hidden emotions e.g. anger, fear, joy, love, surprise, sorrow, interest etc.

#### Posture and Gestures:

The message can effectively be communicated by actions. Deaf people and traffic constables make use of actions. In our daily life clenched fists may indicate anger, leaning forward to the speaker may reveal interest and repeatedly glancing at the watch may be a sign of being bored.

#### Smell:

Good or bad smell often expresses the situation e.g. smell because of oil or gas leakage warns the danger. Similarly, fragrance and perfume convey emotions and feelings better than spoken or written words.

#### IV Touch:

Touching people in different ways (and places) can silently communicate friendship, love approval, anger or other feelings.

#### Silence, Time and Sounds

1. **Silence:**

Silence is an effective medium of expressing serious feelings and emotions e.g. death of relative or loss in business. A mistake may be admitted by silence. Silence may also confirm a statement.

#### Time:

Time communicates in many ways, e.g. waiting for a long time may indicate interest or love and giving a short notice means urgency.

#### iv. Sounds and Para-language:

The style of speaking and the volume of voice (Intonations and Modulations) of voice may produce variations between what is said and what is meant, e.g. the words “how prompt you are” may criticize a person arriving too late.

## Q. Discuss the IMPORTANCE OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION:

1. **Reliability:-**

Non verbal communication is more reliable then verbal communication. Words can be controlled more easily but it’s difficult to hide facial expressions like sadness, gladness, joy etc. So non-verbal communication is regarded as a more reliable means for transmitting message.

## Support to verbal communication:-

Body language and appearance support the verbal communication. A wave of hand, smile etc might be very useful to explain and understand a particular point of view.

## Quickness:-

A denial or acceptance expressed by moving head saves lot of time. So, it is important in this respect that non-verbal communication transmits the message quickly.

## FUNCTION OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION:

There are following six functions of it.

1. To provide information either consciously or unconsciously.
2. To regulate the flow of conversation.
3. To express emotion
4. To qualify, complement, contradict or expand verbal message.
5. To control or influence others.
6. To facilitates specific tasks, such as teaching a person.

Q. Differentiate between oral and written communication;

Ans: The difference between oral and written communication can be enumerated as under:

## Ratio:-

According to a rough estimate, about 75% of total communication is oral whereas the rest is

written.

## Data Safety:-

Data and information are safe in written communication while most of information is forgotten in oral communication.

## Nature of message:-

Written communication is used when the message is complex and oral communication is used for simple message.

## Legal Aspect:-

From legal point of view, oral communication is least reliable and written communication is much more reliable. For example, an oral promise may not be challenged in a court in general but a written promise can be challenged.

## Flow of information:-

Information can be transferred within a short period of time in oral communication but it takes more time in written communication.

## Non verbal facilities:-

Oral communication can be supported by non verbal facilities like gestures, postures etc. but such a support is impossible in written communication.

## Grammar & Accent:-

Oral communication required consideration for accent and pronunciation whereas written communication needs correct grammar and spelling.

Q. How a message is prepared? Why proofreading is necessary for a good written message?

Ans: **PREPARING MESSAGE:**

After having completed the five steps of planning a message, it should be drafted on paper. A routine short communication may be written easily with little or no revising. But complex and longer letters and reports should be revised and edited properly before they are sent out.

#### First Draft:

The first draft of message should be prepared by choosing proper words to express ideas, mistakes of grammar, punctuation and spelling should be ignored for the time being.

#### Revising and Editing:

The draft should be read paragraph by paragraph, sentence by sentence and word by word to check the continuity of ideas and grammatical, punctuation and spelling mistakes. While revising and editing the message it must be ensured that the message meets all the principles of good business communication.

#### Proof Reading:

A careful proof reading is essential after the revised and edited message has been finally typewritten. Before it is mailed, it should be read by responsible and reliable person, because errors, if left un-corrected, may result in loss of goodwill, sales, income and even lives.

Proof reading for everything at once is hard to do. A better practice is to proof read separately for:

1. **Context:** Does the statement mean what the writer meant to say? Does the message posses all the qualities of effective communication?
2. **Accuracy:** Is the language free from errors of spelling, punctuation, grammar, capitalization? Are figures, diagrams and other marks accurate?
3. **Form and Appearance:** Is the layout correct? Does it look good?

#### Proof reading may be done in different ways:

1. Foreword reading.
2. Backward reading.
3. Asking another person to read.
4. Reading with another person.
5. Discuss briefly, in proper sequence, the steps followed in planning an effective communication.

Ans: **PLANNING STEPS:**

* 1. Knowing the purpose of the message.
  2. Visualizing the reader (receiver).
  3. Choosing the ideas to be included.
  4. Getting all the facts to back up the ideas.
  5. Outlining and organizing the message.

#### Knowing the purpose of the message:

Purpose is the primary reason to write or speak. Its identification leads to determination of the contents of the message.

Each message must have a specific purpose e.g. asking for rebate on defective goods, announcing clearance sale, awakening inactive amount, making inquiry, seeking job etc. in addition to the specific purpose, the general purpose of every business message must be to establish good will and good relations. For example, the purpose of a collection letter should be two-fold i.e. asking for money and at the same time maintaining good relations with the customer.

#### Visualizing the Reader:

It is very important to adapt the message to the reader’s views. But writer often does not know much about the reader. However, attempt should be made to know about the following points.

* 1. What relationship is with the reader? Is the reader a customer or a supplier, a boss or a subordinate?
  2. What is position of the reader? Is reader an engineer or an accountant, a supervisor or an executive?
  3. What is reading level of the reader? It can be guessed by noting the educational qualification, technical training, professional status and experience of the reader.
  4. What are interests of the reader relating to job and social activities?
  5. How much reader knows about the subject matter and its background?
  6. Is the reader prejudiced or biased on religious, political and social issues?
  7. What are reader’s unspoken needs for information? This can be known by reading between the lines.

#### Choosing the Ideas:

The next step is to choose the ideas. The ideas to include depend upon the message being communicated. For example. A welcome letter to a customer, should include the following ideas:

1. Welcoming and tanking the reader for opening the account.
2. Stating the services and facilities offered to regular customers.
3. Mentioning the working hours.
4. Informing about the credit terms and discount rates.
5. Assuring to help in solving the customer’s problems.

#### Getting all the Facts:

The facts and figures to be stated in a message may be certain names, dates, address, percentages, statements etc. for some messages all the facts may be in the writer’s mind, but for others extensive primary and / or secondary research may be needed for collecting the required data.

#### Primary Research:

Primary research data may be collected by any of the following research methods.

1. **Experimental Research Method:** Which seeks to determine whether a change in one factor causes change in another.
2. **Observational Research Method:** Which involves either human or mechanical viewing of the actions or results of some-hearing, touching, smelling etc.
3. **Survey Research Method:** Which requires the researcher collect data from respondents through questionnaires.
4. **Combination of the Various Research Method:** May also be used when any one of the above methods is not appropriate.

#### Secondary Research:

Secondary research data may be collected from the following sources.

1. **Company Publications:** Newsletters, bulletins, brochures, pamphlets, handbooks, manuals and company records and reports.
2. **Books:** Relating to the topic under research.
3. **Periodicals:** Magazines, journals and newspapers published at regular intervals.
4. **Other Sources:** Radio and T.V. programmes, publications of other companies and professional association.

#### Outlining and Organizing the Message:

Before writing a message, it should be outlined and organized either on paper or mentally. There are four different organizational plans – the direct request, good news, bad news and persuasive request. The first two use the direct approach and the last two, the indirect approach.

#### Revising and Editing and Proof Reading:

The draft should be read paragraph by paragraph, sentence by sentence and word by word to check the continuity of ideas and grammatical, punctuation and spelling mistakes. While revising and editing the message it must be ensured that the message meets all the principles of good business communication.

7.

A careful proof reading is essential after the revised and edited message has been finally typewritten. Before it is mailed, it should be read by responsible and reliable person, because errors, if left un-corrected, may result in loss of goodwill, sales, income and even lives.

## Q. What are the direct and Indirect approaches?

#### Direct (Deductive) Approach:

The direct approach is used for Direct Request and Good News Plans, because the message is easily understandable and considered favourable or neutral. Under direct approach the message begins with the main idea or good news, and necessary explanatory details follows in one or several paragraphs. The message ends with an appropriate friendly paragraph. Thus a direct approach has three parts – main idea, explanation and friendly close.

#### Indirect (Inductive) Approach:

The indirect approach is used for Persuasive Requests and Bad News Plans, because the receiver is expected to resist and react unfavourably. Under indirect approach the message does not begin with the main idea or bad news. Instead it begins with some relevant pleasant or neutral statements followed by adequate explanations, before introducing the unpleasant idea. Here also the message ends with appropriate friendly or sympathetic words. Thus, an indirect approach has four parts – statements to “get in step” with the reader, explanations, main idea and friendly and courteous close.

1. hat are the four basic organizational plans? Prepare brief outlines for each of these plans.

#### Ans: BASIC ORGANIZATIONAL PLANS:

There are four basic organizational plans:

* 1. Direct request,
  2. Good news
  3. Bad news **and**
  4. Persuasive request.

The first two use the direct approach and the last two, the indirect approach.

#### Direct (Deductive Approach:

The direct approach is used for direct request and good news plans, because the message is easily understandable and considered favourable or neutral. Under this approach the message begins with the main idea or good news and necessary explanatory details follows in one or several paragraphs. The message ends with an appropriate friendly paragraph. Thus a direct approach has three parts shown in the following out lines for Good News and Direct – Request plans.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Good News Plan** |  | **Direct – Request Plan** |
| **01.** | **Good News or main idea:**  **a.** Request, Main statement or question. | **01.** | **Main Idea:**  **b.** Reason(s) if desirable. |
| **02.** | **Explanation:**   1. All necessary and desirable details. 2. Resale material (Favourable information about a product or service has already bought or is planning to buy). 3. Easy reading devices. 4. Sales promotion material (suggestions for additional products or services the customer may find useful). | **02.** | **Explanation:**   1. All necessary and desirable details. 2. Numbered questions if helpful. 3. Educational Material. |
| **03.** | **Positive Friendly Close:**   1. Appreciation 2. Clear statement of action desired, if any. 3. Easy action. 4. Dated action when desirable. 5. Willingness to help further. 6. Reader benefit. | **03.** | **Courteous close with motivation to action:**   1. Clear statement of action desired. 2. Easy action. 3. Dated action when desirable. 4. Appreciation and goodwill. |

#### Indirect (Inductive) Approach:

The indirect approach is used for persuasive requests and bad news plans, because the receiver is expected to resist and react unfavourably. Under this approach the message does not begin with the main idea or bad news. Instead it begins with some relevant pleasant or neutral statements followed by adequate explanations, before introducing the unpleasant idea. Here also the message ends with appropriate friendly or sympathetic words. Thus an indirect approach has four parts shown in the following outlines for Bad-news and Persuasive-Request plans.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Bad – News Plan** |  | **Persuasive – Request Plan** |
| **01.** | **Buffer:** (Pleasant or neutral statements to get in step with reader) | **01.** | **Attention:**   1. Reader-benefit 2. Reader-interest theme |
| **02.** | **Explanation:**   1. necessary details, tactfully stated. 2. Pertinent favourable then unfavourable facts. 3. Reader-benefit reasons. | **02.** | **Explanation:**   1. Descriptive details. 2. Psychological appeals. 3. Reader benefits. |
| **03.** | **Decision:** (implied or stated), along with offer of additional help or suggestions. | **03.** | **Desire:**   1. Statement of request. 2. Conviction material to help create reader’s desire to grant request. |
| **04.** | **Positive Friendly Close:**   1. Appreciation 2. Invitation to future action. 3. Clear statement of action desired. 4. Easy action. 5. Dated action when desirable. 6. Willingness to help further. 7. Reader benefit and goodwill. |  | **Action:**   1. Clear statements of action desired. 2. Easy action. 3. Dated action when desirable. 4. Special inducement. 5. Reader-benefit plug. |

## Opening and Closing

Q Two most important position in any business message is the opening and closing paragraph elaborate.

Ans: Opening and closing in business letters play an important role in making the message effective. They are discussed as under.

#### Opening:

“First impressions are lasting”. This quotation revealed the importance of opening. It has following feature.

#### It Catches Attention:

A good opening catches the attention of readers. The main purpose of senders in persuading request is to convince the reader to read the message. A good opening fulfils this requirement efficiently.

#### It Motivates the Reader:

If the opening of letter is impressive it leaves good impression on the mind and attitude of sender. Ultimately it motivates or induces the reader to do the desired activity.

#### It Helps Reader Understand the Main Idea:

Message is starting with the main idea, the reader realizes that it is a good news or direct request message, on the other hand if it is staring with a buffer or neutral statement it appears to be a bad news or indirect request. In this way the reader treats the message according to its requirement.

#### Closing:

Closing means the last paragraph of the letter. We remember best what we read last. A good closing has following advantages.

#### Emphasis Upon Action:

A business letter is written with a specific objective. In the last paragraph usually the emphasis is upon the action. This action is essential to fulfill the purpose of letter. For example in sales

letter the objective is to sell by mail. In closing paragraph the reader is motivated to visits the shop or purchase the good or services. Because if the reader acquires a lot of information from the letter but does not purchase the good, the main purpose of the letter remains unfulfilled.

#### To Motivate the Reader:

It also motivates the reader to purchase the product as soon as possible. For this purpose, a deadline is fixed or any other incentive with a specific period of time is given.

1. Write a checklist for opening and closing. Ans: **Checklist for Opening Paragraph:**

#### Chose an opening appropriate for the message, purpose and for the reader.

* + 1. Main idea or good news first for direct request, neutral and good news message.
    2. Buffer first for the bad new message.
    3. Attention getting statement first for persuasive requests.

#### Make the opening considerate, courteous, concise and clear.

* + 1. Get reader into opening.
    2. Keep first paragraph relatively short.
    3. Focus on the positive.
    4. Use courteous conversational language.
    5. Avoid unnecessary reputation.

#### Check for completeness regarding.

* + 1. Sentence structure.
    2. Date of letter you are answering.

#### Checklist for Closing Paragraph:

1. **Make your action request clear and complete with the fine list and H (how) if you want your reader to do something.**
   1. What and who: Clearly state what action you desire and who should do it.
   2. How and where: Make action easy.
   3. When: Date the action if desirable.
   4. Why: Show reader benefit if possible.

#### End on a positive courteous thought.

* 1. Include any positives and negatives before the last paragraph.
  2. Be friendly.
  3. Show appreciation.
  4. Occasionally add a person note.

#### Keep the last paragraph concise and correct.

* 1. Avoid trite expressions.
  2. Omit discussions of trivial detail.
  3. Use relatively short and complete sentences.

Q. DISCUSS VARIOUS LEGAL ASPECTS IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION.

Legal aspect refers to the selection of words used in Business Communication so as to ensure their conformity with the rules and regulations laid by the country’s business law failure to which may cause a person to be up against legal actions.

A person or the communicator should be mindful of the following areas while communicating with

1. Defamation
2. Invasion of privacy
3. Fraud
4. Misc. areas.
5. DAFAMATION:

“The unconsented & unprivileged publication of a false idea which injures the reputation of a person in a society is called Defamation.”

We will dilate on this area by giving a focused view to some of the important terms used in the definition.

#### Unconsented:

Unconsented means “without agreement”. This makes the first point clear that whatever a person is to defame the other person, it is against the will or consent of the other person.

However, in some of the cases the act of defamation is carried out with the consent of the person who is aimed at. Some of those cases are as under.

* + Showbiz
  + Sports
  + Politics

#### Unprivileged:

This means “Unrightful”. It’s plain to understand that it is defaming another person when he is not given the privilege or right by the law to defame.

Some bodies/organizations/persons have the privilege to make defaming information/material known to the people other than the two persons in question. Privilege is mainly of two types.

* + Absolute privilege.
  + Conditional/Qualified privilege.

#### Absolute Privilege:

A person has absolute privilege to defame the other person means he has been given full right by the law to defame the other person on any matter whatsoever. This case is limited to the following areas:

* Judicial Proceedings.
* Assembly Proceedings.
* Official Proceedings.

#### Judicial Proceedings:

A particular action or a course of action in the law court is called Judicial Proceedings. The Lawyers in such proceedings have full right to defame the person against whom a suit is filed.

#### Assembly Proceedings:

Legislature is the place where representatives of political parties have full liberty to ensure the government or vice versa.

#### Official Proceedings:

Government bodies such as NAB (National Accountability Bureau) have been given absolute privilege to defame the nabbed person.

#### Conditional / Qualified Privilege:

Privilege under certain conditions or privilege to defame on certain matters is called Conditional Privilege. For example, an employer may defame his employee on the following matters.

* + Tenure
  + Salary
  + Responsibilities

#### Publication:

When a defamatory matter is made known to a third party either intentionally or unintentionally it’s called publication. Publication branches off into two types:

* + Slander
  + Libel

#### Slander:

Slander is an oral defamation.

#### Libel:

It means to use written material such as newspapers, letters, pictures etc. to defame a person.

As against slander, libel is considered as the severer one and is of more serious consequences because the defamatory material is at hand to drag the defamer to the court of law.

#### False Idea:

A statement which is termed as defamatory should be false in its nature. If it’s right and not false, then it can never be termed as defamation. Therefore, if in a court of law the defendant proves that whatever he made public about the plaintiff is absolutely true, he could no more be liable in the case of defamation.

#### Person:

A natural individual.

#### Injury:

Harm.

#### Society:

Any person other than the defamer and the person who is defamed or in short, third party member.

#### Unconsented:

Unconsented means “without agreement”. This makes the first point clear that whatever a person is to defame the other person, it is against the will or consent of the other person.

1. INVASION OF PRIVACY:

#### Intrusion into a Person’s Physical solitude:

This sheds light upon the fact that there are certain activities we engage in our solitude or loneliness. If a person infringes upon another person’s such activities, he’s invading upon that person’s privacy.

#### Disclosure of private facts about an individual:

If some private facts shared by two individuals are disclosed by any one of person, it’s invasion of privacy.

#### Using a person’s name or identity for a commercial purpose without his permission:

We call it invasion of privacy when without the consent of a person, his name or identity is used. Pepsi’s Shahrukh Khan & Fake Hritik Roshan starring ad. Is the point in case.

#### Throwing false public light to a person unintentionally:

If unintentionally a person is exposed to public attention censure then the person responsible for it may have the court of law to answer to for invading upon the innocent’s privacy.

1. FRAUD:

“Fraud is an intentional misrepresentation of facts with a view to induce the other to enter into a contract”.

#### Essential Elements of a Fraud:

1. **It must be intentional:**

To do a fraud a person should willingly misrepresent a fact.

#### It must relate to a material fact:

It means that a fraud is always related to an important fact (A fact upon which a contract is made).

#### It must be given before the conclusion of the contract:

This signifies that a fraud is always done before the ending of a contract. After the end of the contract a fraud can not be termed as a fraud even if it is a fraud. Therefore, making the person responsible for the fraud not liable for any legal proceedings.

#### It must induce the other party:

A fraud is designed in a manner so as to compel the other party to engage in a contract.

#### It must be a statement of fact not a statement of opinion:

It means that it should base upon a concrete fact, which does not vary from person to person.

#### It must result in a loss to the aggrieved party:

It makes the point distinct that a fraud is always end in a financial loss to the victim.

1. MISC. AREAS:

#### Currency notes and Government papers etc:

A person who counterfeits currency notes, treasury bills or bonds may find himself in the court of law for a crime like that.

#### Copyright:

Theft of copyright material such as republishing a book without the consent of the publisher and reproduction of an authorized recorded tapes or CDs may cause a person liable to legal actions.

#### Pornographic material:

Any obscene material, which is against the morality.

BUSINESS WRITING PRINCIPLES OR

SEVEN C’s IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

#### CORRECTNESS:

Normally it is assumed that correctness only refers to spelling, punctuation and grammar etc. but business Communication is something more than that. Following guideline should be considered for achieving correctness.

* 1. Use the correct level of language
  2. Include only accurate facts and figures.
  3. Maintain acceptable writing mechanics.

#### Use the Correct Level of Language:

There are usually three levels of language that is formal, informal and sub-standard. Informal level of language is the language of business letters, memos and reports. Formal language is used for writing research papers and legal documents etc. Sub-standard level of language is not used in any type of communication because it either refers to the street language or unacceptable language.

**Incorrect:** We thank you in anticipation of this courtesy and assure you that it will be a pleasure to serve you in similar manners.

**Correct:** I will appreciate your helping us. Let me know when I can return the favour.

#### Include Only Accurate Facts and Figures:

The writer of a business message should specifically be careful when he is quoting any fact or figure. The situation is more critical when the reader relies on the accuracy of facts and figures. An incorrect figure may lead even to the loss of customer, because customer might feel that he is not dealing with business like people. For example if a bank manager provides a wrong balance figure to his account holder, the result might be disastrous for the bank.

#### Maintain Acceptable Writing Mechanics:

Writing mechanics include a number of considerations. For instance, use of grammar rules, sentences structure, composition, punctuation, spelling and all other considerations. Which form the structure of English Language?

#### CONCISENESS:

With the advent of information revolution, business messages are getting short day by day. This is because of huge inflow and outflow of messages on daily basis. Therefore, conciseness is a prime requirement. Following points should be considered for achieving conciseness.

* 1. Omitting trite expressions.
  2. Avoid unnecessary repetition.
  3. Include relevant facts.

#### Omitting Trite Expressions:

Trite expressions are also called clichés or stereo typed expressions. They are usually longer, formal and relatively meaningless because of over use.

#### Example:

**Trite:** In accordance with your request of recent date, we are enclosing herewith our cashier’s cheque in the amount of Rs 20,000, representing a withdrawal of said saving A/c. No. 3595.

**Improved:** According to your request of April 25, cheque of Rs. 20,000 is enclosed.

#### Avoid Unnecessary Repetition:

Skillful business writers avoid unnecessary repetition by rewording their message and trying to reduce it by almost 50%. In other words first draft of the message is never final and it always requires a second reworded reduced draft before dispatched to the receiver.

#### Example:

**Wordy:** I have your letter of October 14 and wish to say that we will be glad to give you a refund for shirt you purchased here last week.

**Improved:** You can avail refund for the shirt you purchased last week.

#### Include Relevant Facts:

Relevant facts refer to those necessary facts which should be present and should never be compromised for achieving conciseness.

#### CLARITY:

Clarity refers to a clear understanding of the message by the receiver. In other words the receiver should not face any problem in getting the meaning of the message. The clarity could be achieved by the following techniques.

* 1. Choose words that are short, familiar and conversational.
  2. Construct effective sentences and paragraphs.
  3. Achieve appropriate readability.
  4. Include examples, illustrations etc.

#### Choose Words that are Short, Familiar and Conversational:

The vocabulary of English language is so rich that a number of words are possible for a single occasion. In today’s business English, analysts suggest that it’s better to use such words in business writing, which are normally used in day to day conversation. Therefore, it is always better to avoid difficult and high sounding words.

#### Example:

The bank statement shows an Overdraft of Rs. 10,000.

The bank statement shows an excess withdrawal of Rs. 10,000.

#### Construct Effective Sentences and Paragraphs:

The number of paragraphs for a business message should not exceed more than 3-4 paragraphs. Within one paragraph, number of sentences should not exceed more than 3-4 sentences and within one sentence, number of words should not exceed more than 12-15 words.

#### Achieve appropriate Readability:

For achieving readability ‘FOGINDEX’ is calculated. The calculation is given below.

#### Formula:

Word Count 110

No. of sentences 7

Average sentence length (110 ÷ 7) 15.7  (a)

Hard Words 13

% age of hard words (13 ÷ 110 x 100) 11.8  (b) Total of ‘a’ and ‘b’ 27.5

Multiplier (27.5 x 0.4) 0.4

#### FOGINDEX 11

If the answer of Fog Index ranges between 10 and15, this means the message is readable by a person having average educational backgrouIf the answer exceeds the mark of 15, this means to understand the message, some higher educational qualification is required.

#### Include Examples, Illustrations etc.:

Examples and illustrations work as supplementary tools for the writer. Examples help the reader to understand meaning of the message.

#### COMPLETENESS:

It is not necessary that all seven C’s could be applied to all types of business messages. The ‘C’ of completeness should be kept in mind especially giving replies to inquiries and writing adjustment letter. Following points are considered for the ‘C’ of completeness.

* 1. Answer all questions asked.
  2. Give something extra. When desirable.
  3. Check for five W’s.

#### Answer all Questions Asked:

If in the product related inquiry the prospective customer has asked four questions, it is much necessary to answer all the four questions. Even if a single question is missed and not answered, the inquirer is having all the reasons to believe that the person giving reply is a careless person or he is not interested in answering the questions or there is something wrong which he is willing to hide.

#### Give Something Extra When Desirable:

Normally a good marketing technique applied by managers is to offer something extra apart from original questions asked. This something extra may be the point of sale for the producer because customer would like to buy from such a manufacturer who is offering something extra, which others are not offering.

#### Check for 5 W’s:

Five W’s to Who, What, When, Where and Why. For example to order merchandise, we should make clear **What** we want, **When** we need it, **Where** it is to be sent, **How** the payment will be needed.

#### CONCRETENESS:

Concreteness adds conviction to the message. It is easy for the reader to believe on concrete messages. Concreteness also increases credibility of the sender of message. Following points should be considered for achieving concreteness.

* 1. Use specific facts and figures.
  2. Put action in the verb.
  3. Choose vivid image building words.

#### Use Specific Facts and Figures:

Use of fact and figures play a vital role especially when describing a product or service.

#### Example:

**General:** These brakes stop car within short distance.

**Specific:** The hydraulic pressure brakes stop a car with a distance of two feet as soon as they are applied.

#### Put Action in the Verb:

The basic function of the verb is to describe action of a noun or pronoun. Therefore, care should be taken that the action should always be represented by verb and an action is found in a noun, it should be converted into verb.

#### Example:

**Noun:** They held meeting in the office.

**Verb:** They met in the office.

#### Choose Vivid Image Building Words:

Vivid image building words are generally used for creating an impression upon the reader, so that the reader should start building an image of the product or service in his mind. Such words are used in sales and sales promotion letters.

**Example:** This is a very good computer.

The P-IV 800 MHz, 20GB HD, 64MB RAM, 500 MB CACHE, Intel genuine processor, in ATX casing is a computer of new millennium.

#### CONSIDERATION:

Consideration refers to giving importance to the other person whether he is a reader audience, spectator or listener. For achieving consideration following points are considered.

* 1. You attitude
  2. Show readers interest
  3. Apply integrity in the message
  4. Emphasize the positive

#### You Attitude:

You attitude means writing a business message from the point of view of the customer or at least showing that the customer is very important.

#### Example:

**I - Attitude:** We allow 5% discount on Cash Payment.

**You - Attitude:** You can enjoy 5% discount on Cash Payment.

#### Show Readers Interest:

People are basically selfish in their nature. They are only interested in themselves and they always look for some material benefit. Therefore business messages should always be drafted in such a manner to offer something to the customer, which is of interest for him. Mind it customers are not interested in the producer or service provider. Their focus of concentration is their own self. A customer will be a loyal customer, if he is obtaining some benefit on a regular basis.

#### Apply Integrity in the Message:

Integrity refers to character in the business message. This would come by being honest and truthful with the customer. Never make such a promise, which can be fulfilled never give false hopes to the customer and also never bluff the customer.

#### Emphasize the Positive:

Most of the statements even in business messages could be written from angles. One is the positive angle and the other is the negative one. It is always better to highlight positively rather than negatively.

#### Example:

**Negative:** We do not refund if the refund item is soiled and unsalable.

**Positive:** We do refund if the returned item is clean and saleable.

#### COURTESY:

Surviving in today’s business world requires courtesy on the part of producer or seller. A discourteous producer or service provider cannot succeed in the buyer’s market. That is why famous slogan of ‘Customer is always right’ invented. To achieve courtesy following points should be considered.

* 1. Be tactful.
  2. Omit expressions that can irritate.
  3. Answer/mail promptly.
  4. Grant and apologize.

#### Be Tactful:

Tact means handling customer with a right technique. Otherwise, if customers are not handled properly, business may suffer.

#### Example:

**Tactless:** Your letter is not complete I cannot understand it.

**Tactful:** If I understand your letter correctly, you want to say that…….

#### Omit Expressions that Can Irritate:

Irritating expressions are disliked by all and customers are not any exception.

#### Example:

* + - 1. You have failed
      2. You have no choice
      3. You neglect
      4. You claim that

#### Answer / Mail Promptly:

It is a matter of business courtesy that all mails should be answered promptly. A late reply may give an impression that the manufacturer is not interested in the customer.

#### Grand and Apologize:

It is always advisable to give some favor to the customer if he asked for it, and if some mistake is committed, it is better to apologize.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

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

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