

UNIT II

ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral communication is the process of verbally transmitting information and ideas from one individual or group to another. Oral communication can be either Formal or Informal. Examples of informal oral communication include:

- Face-to-face conversations
- Telephone conversations
- Discussions that take place at business meetings

More formal types of oral communication include:

- Presentations at business meetings
- Classroom lectures
- Commencement speech given at a graduation ceremony

With advances in technology, new forms of oral communication continue to develop. Video Phones and Video Conferences combine audio and video so that workers in distant locations can both see and speak with each other. Other modern forms of oral communication include Podcasts (audio clips that you can access on the Internet) and Voiceover Internet Protocol (VoIP), which allows callers to communicate over the Internet and avoid telephone charges. Skype is an example of VoIP.

Advantages of Oral Communication

- There is high level of understanding and transparency in oral communication as it is interpersonal.
- There is no element of rigidity in oral communication. There is flexibility for allowing changes in the decisions previously taken.
- The feedback is spontaneous in case of oral communication. Thus, decisions can be made quickly without any delay.
- Oral communication is not only time saving, but it also saves upon money and efforts.
- Oral communication is best in case of problem resolution. The conflicts, disputes and many issues/differences can be put to an end by talking them over.
- Oral communication is an essential for teamwork and group energy.
- Oral communication promotes a receptive and encouraging morale among organizational employees.
- Oral communication can be best used to transfer private and confidential information/matter.

Disadvantages/Limitations of Oral Communication

- Relying only on oral communication may not be sufficient as business communication is formal and very organized.
- Oral communication is less authentic than written communication as they are informal and not as organized as written communication.

- Oral communication is time-saving as far as daily interactions are concerned, but in case of meetings, long speeches consume lot of time and are unproductive at times.
- Oral communications are not easy to maintain and thus they are unsteady.
- There may be misunderstandings as the information is not complete and may lack essentials.
- It requires attentiveness and great receptivity on part of the receivers/audience.
- Oral communication (such as speeches) is not frequently used as legal records except in investigation work.

Nature and Characteristics of Oral Communication

□ Oral communication does not require much planning. It requires appropriate Para-linguistic features like tone, pitch, register, facial expressions, gestures and body language. Effective oral communication depends on purpose of the message.

□ For oral communication to be effective, it should be clear, relevant, tactful in phraseology and tone, concise, and informative. Presentations or conversations that bear these hallmarks can be an invaluable tool in ensuring business health and growth. Unclear, inaccurate, or inconsiderate business communication, on the other hand, can waste valuable time, alienate employees or customers, and destroy goodwill toward management or the overall business.

The importance of oral communication in business are discussed below:

□ Oral communication should be used because it is simple, faster, informal, more direct and more personal. It saves more time and creates efficiency.

□ In oral communication, there are no formalities of using pen, paper, stamps, etc. and waiting endlessly for the response. Thus, even most personal and confidential matters can be placed before the receiver in a simple and direct way.

- **Scope of oral communication**

Scope means the possibility of any particular subject in a particular field. It can be understood by dividing in two parts:

□ **Internal (within the organization)**

□ **External (outside the organization)**

- **Scope within the organization**

The types of oral communication commonly used within an organization include staff meetings, personal discussions, presentations, telephone discourse, and informal conversation.

- **Scope outside the organization**

Oral communication with those outside of the organization might take the form of face-to-face meetings, telephone calls, speeches, teleconferences, or videoconferences.

- **Scope within the organization**

The study of oral communication considers the process as essential to facilitate understanding between the speaker and the audience. Thus, Therefore, oral communication is understood as that dynamic and systematic process of sharing meaning and understanding the meaning through verbal and non-verbal exchange between individuals in interaction within a given context.

he channels or methods or oral communication may be classified broadly in two categories non mechanical channels and mechanical channels which are described below:

A. Non mechanical channels

- **Conversation:** conversation means the informal discussion among the people. When one person discusses his views, opinion to another person and exchanges their views in the presence of both then it is called face to face conversation. It also includes the face-to-face discussion on a particular issue. In this method both the information receiver and sender can exchange their views freely and fairly.
- **Interview:** It suggests a meeting between two or more persons for the purpose of getting a view of each other or for knowing each other. When we normally think of an interview, we think a situation in which an employer tries to size up an applicant for a job. The employer's aim is to know whether the applicant can be fit for service to this organization and the applicant's aim is to find whether the job being offered by the organization can be suitable to him. Its first, the speaker asks questions to the listener and then the listener answers the question. There are three major techniques of interview. They are as follows:
 - Direct questioning
 - Non-directive interview and
 - Guided interview
- **Speech:** Speech means what the speaker says in front of the audience. It is fully audience-oriented system. Generally the political leaders, the managers, the business man or the workers' leaders use this system sometimes. It can build tension or it can relax tension. This system is practiced in public gathering at company meetings, inauguration and seminars etc. In needs to considerable skills otherwise it is not effective.
- **Group discussion:** Group discussion is a popular method of oral communication. Management arranges group discussion to take a decision on a special matter. Group discussion is very helpful to human relation, idea getting an idea development and training.
- **Formal training courses:** Effective communication can be performed through formal training courses. It is a wide used technique of oral communication. Both the trainer and the trainee can exchange their views directly.

- **Meeting:** Meeting means the formal group discussion about a specific predetermined topic or subject. Meeting members get together and discuss about a problem or issue or a special matter. There are several types of meeting such as –
 - Security meeting
 - Minutes meeting
 - Social meeting
 - General meeting itself
- **Counseling:** Counseling is an effective medium of **oral communication**. Generally it is held yearly or bi-yearly. It is adopted by the higher authority for their followers.
- **Committee:** Committee is an organization. The committee meeting is a popular technique of oral communication. Special decision is taken through face to face discussion of a committee meeting.
- **Special prize-giving ceremony:** Sometimes the businessmen can meet with others arranging a special prize giving ceremony for the workers. In this ceremony the businessmen can exchange their views and ideas orally.
- **Conference:** Conference is a kind of meeting at which participants exchange views and talk together. A conference may be held to exchange views on some problem being faced by the organization or some other issue related to it and it may even suggest a solution but the suggestions from a conference are not binding. They are more in the nature of the recommendation.
- **Lectures:** Lecture is used to create an understanding of a topic or to influence behavior, attitudes of the trainee through spoken words. The lecture is telling someone about something. The method is an effective way to introduce new information or concepts to a group of learners who gathered at one place. A lecture is given to enhance the knowledge of the listener or to give him the theoretical aspect of a topic.
- **Informal communication:** Informal communication is another technique to exchange information orally. It can be occurred in the playground, tea table etc. In those situations both the boss and subordinate can exchange their views informally.
- **Others:** Invitation to a lunch, Brainstorming, Advisory board, Inspection of factory and office.

B. Mechanical channels

Telephone: Telephone set is an instrument that converts voice and other sound signals into a form that can be transmitted to remote locations and that receives and reconverts waves into the waves into sound signals. The telephone plays a vital role in communication when the two persons stay in different places they communicate with each other by telephone. Their exchange information and their views and immediate feedback are possible under this system. Now-a-days we can see that every organization is using the telephone to exchange the information and views orally.

- **Mobile or cell phone:** A mobile phone (also known as a cellular phone, cell phone and a hand phone) is a portable telephone that connects to the telephone network over the radio wave transmission. It connects to a wireless communications network through radio wave or satellite transmissions.
- **Radio:** Radio is the indirect media of oral communication. It is a one-way communication system. The receiver can only hear the message from the sender. The receiver cannot reply.

- **Television:** Television is also the indirect media of oral communication. It is a one-way communication system. Here, receiver can see the messages and side by side see the sender. The receiver cannot reply.
- **Video conference:** Video conference is a kind of teleconferencing communication where people staying in different corner or locations and participate in a face-to-face group meeting or group discussion through the help of electronic video camera technology.
- **Teleconferencing:** Teleconferencing is a kind of communication where people staying in different corner or locations and participate in group meetings or group discussion through electronic telephone technology.

Teleconferencing

It means meeting through a telecommunications medium. It is a generic term for linking people between two or more locations by electronics. There are at least six types of teleconferencing: audio, audiographic, computer, video, business television (BTV), and distance education. The methods used differ in the technology, but common factors contribute to the shared definition of teleconferencing:

- Use a telecommunications channel
- Link people at multiple locations
- Interactive to provide two-way communications
- Dynamic to require users' active participation

Types of Teleconferences

Audio Teleconference: Voice-only; sometimes called conference calling. Interactively links people in remote locations via telephone lines. Audio bridges tie all lines together. Meetings can be conducted via audio conference. Preplanning is necessary which includes naming a chair, setting an agenda, and providing printed materials to participants ahead of time so that they can be reviewed.

Distance learning can be conducted by audio conference. In fact, it is one of the most underutilized, yet cost effective methods available to education. Instructors should receive training on how to best utilize audio conferences to augment other forms of distance learning.

Computer Teleconference: Uses telephone lines to connect two or more computers and modems. Anything that can be done on a computer can be sent over the lines. It can be synchronous or asynchronous. An example of an asynchronous mode is electronic mail. Using electronic mail (E-Mail), memos, reports, updates, newsletters can be sent to anyone on the local area network (LAN) or wide area network (WAN). Items generated on computer which are normally printed and then sent by facsimile can be sent by E-Mail.

Computer conferencing is an emerging area for distance education. Some institutions offer credit programs completely by computer. Students receive texts and workbooks via mail. Through common files assigned to a class which each student can access, teachers upload syllabi, lectures, grades and remarks. Students download these files, compose their assignment and remarks off-line, then upload them to the common files.

Students and instructors are usually required to log on for a prescribed number of days during the week. Interaction is a large component of the students' grades.

Through computers, faculty, students and administrators have easy access to one another as well as access to database resources provided through libraries. The academic resources of libraries and special resources can be accessed such as OCLC, ERIC, and Internet.

Administrators can access student files, retrieve institutional information from central repositories such as district or system offices, government agencies, or communicate with one another. Other resources can be created such as updates on state or federal legislation.

Video Teleconference: Combines audio and video to provide voice communications and video images. Can be one-way video/two-way audio, or two-way video/two-way audio. It can display anything that can be captured by a TV camera. The advantage is the capability to display moving images. In two-way audio/video systems, a common application is to show people which creates a social presence that resembles face-to-face meetings and classes and enables participants to see the facial expressions and physical demeanor of participants at remote sites. Graphics are used to enhance understanding. There are three basic systems: freeze frame, compressed, and full-motion video.

Video conferencing is an effective way to use one teacher who teaches to a number of sites. It is very cost effective for classes which may have a small number of students enrolled at each site. In many cases, video conferencing enables the institution or a group of institutions to provide courses which would be canceled due to low enrollment or which could not be supported otherwise because of the cost of providing an instructor in an unusual subject area. Rural areas benefit particularly from classes provided through video conferencing when they work with a larger metropolitan institution that has full-time faculty.

Through teleconferencing, institutions are able to serve all students equitably.

Press conferences

Press conferences are an indispensable tool for getting media attention. They can be organized by campaigners to present issues related to the campaign to journalists.

When can a press conference be useful?

If the stories to be told at the press conference are of major social interest, and perceived as such by media representatives.

If there is something important to announce, preferably linked to a significant event, e.g. at the launch of a national campaign, or when the campaign has achieved a significant milestone, e.g. a draft law on domestic violence is scheduled for discussion in parliament.

If a prominent individual (politician, celebrity) is present at a campaign event.

If there is an issue related to or associated with the campaign that receives media attention. In this case, the press conference should take place quickly after the fact in order to sustain attention, correct misconceptions if any, and reinforce key messages.

Steps for planning a press conference

Start planning several weeks before the press conference is to take place.

1. Define the message

Your message should be summarized in 3-5 key points. If a date, a time, an address or phone number, or other specific information is part of the message, state it more than once, and display it prominently in your press kit. Double- or triple-check any such information.

2. Schedule the date and time.

Ensure the date and time for the press conference does not conflict with other press events or media deadlines. Check with the local media and the wire services about such deadlines/events. Also, find out what the ‘slower’ news days in a week might be, then try to have your press conference on a “slower” day. For example, in the USA, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are the best days for press conferences, as they are generally considered “slower” news days (barring any sudden or last minute news events). In many countries, the best time to schedule your press conference is between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., to ensure maximum coverage by the media. In some countries, breakfast briefings earlier in the morning could also be useful to offer to attract media attendance.

3. Pick the site.

Choose a location for the press conference that is easy to reach and not too far for reporters to travel. Ideally, the site should offer visual interest and relationship to the topic – e.g. a government building, a courthouse, or a local clinic. Choose a place with little background noise (e.g. from traffic, telephones, aircraft), and which has adequate electrical outlets and extension cords for lighting and other purposes.

4. Select and train participants.

Speakers must be knowledgeable and articulate. They should be able to handle press questioning and scrutiny as well. People with high credibility, such as local politicians, the director of a well-known organization, a physician or a judge may make effective spokespeople. Firsthand testimony from people affected by the issue can be extremely powerful and convincing. If survivors of VAW are to give any testimonies at a press conference, ensure they are psychologically ready for it, and that ethical rules are strictly followed. Plan for any difficulties that may arise for them during the event.

Tips for participants:

- Be clear and concise – avoid using jargon, rhetoric, digressions or inflammatory language.

- Assume the audience is intelligent – avoid sounding patronizing.
- Do not fiddle with or clutch anything – it’s distracting and makes you appear nervous.
- Appearance counts – participants should be dressed neatly and appropriately for the occasion.
- Always tell the truth. If you do not know the answer to a question, say so. Do not exaggerate or give figures that aren’t backed up by evidence, and do not state opinions as facts.

Find a moderator who is experienced with the press and the issue. She or he will facilitate the press conference by introducing the issue and participants. The moderator also directs questions to the appropriate participants. If you are inexperienced with press conferences, attend the press conference of a different group to familiarize yourselves. Conduct a dress rehearsal, i.e. a private simulation of the real press conference. Speakers should have scripts to memorize the 3-5 key points, and to ensure they speak no longer than 3-5 minutes each. During the rehearsal, get someone from your group to ask challenging questions in preparation for difficult situations at the real press conference.

A suitable response to a tough or misguided question might be, "That's a good question, but it is not within the scope of this press conference. Our focus today is on..." If the question is legitimate but you do not know the answer to it, call on someone else from your group, or check out the answer and get back to that reporter later.

5. Contact the media.

Create a comprehensive mailing list of reporters and editors at television stations, news directors at radio stations, and at major newspapers, editors at weekly newspapers and news wire services. Make sure you include reporters who may have covered the issue in recent months. Mail your press advisory about one week ahead of time to the media, and then again on the day before the meeting.

6. Follow up with the media.

Follow up your press advisory with phone contact to the major media outlets on the third day after you sent it, and a second time the morning of the press conference.

7. Develop a press kit and prepare a sufficient number of copies

8. Prepare the room

- Check the location of electrical outlets for microphones and lights
- Set up the room with a table long enough to seat all your spokespeople, with name cards
- Provide enough seating in the room for reporters, and room for their equipment
- Display visuals as a backdrop to your speaker's table, e.g. charts and posters.

- Have a sign-in pad for attendance
- Have coffee, tea, water, and any other refreshments set up

After the Press Conference

Contact representatives of the major media outlets represented. If you can have a conversation, they'll remember you when they need information about your issue. By looking through your attendance register, you should be able to determine which major media were not represented. Deliver a press release and press kit to these people, send a recording of the event, or schedule an interview with a reporter and one of the press conference speakers.

Review the press conference with others from your organization that attended. What went well? What could you have done better? And how will you improve the next press conference you hold?

Meetings

A formal meeting is a pre-planned gathering of two or more people who have assembled for the purpose of achieving a common goal through verbal interaction. Formal meetings are characterised by their predetermined topics, a set of objectives and formal notices. These meetings are held at a specific time, at a defined place and according to an agreed agenda. Formal meetings are typically lead by a chairperson with the discussions and agreements recorded in a written form known as minutes. A formal meetings is also known as a board meeting, a committee meeting, a caucus meeting, a conclave, a congress, a council meeting, a stockholders meeting as summit meeting or a symposium.

What is the purpose of a formal meeting?

The purpose of a formal meeting is to discuss the list of predetermined topics and address the set of objectives, and make decisions relating to them. Formal meetings are a requirement of some companies to promote transparency and accountability. These meeting allow proper discussions to be taken about issues within the company.

What are the different types of formal meetings?

Annual General Meeting – These are usually a requirement of a company. Employees and Shareholders will meet to discuss progress in the past year, and what to do in the next one.

Planning Meetings – Groups will gather together to plan what to do and how to do it.

Review Meetings – Participants will gather to discuss what has been done, how successful it was and whether it could have been done differently.

Group Discussion

A *discussion group* is a group of individuals with similar interest who gather either formally or informally to bring up ideas, solve problems or give comments.

Advantages

1. More information:

A group is better equipped as far as information is concerned.

An individual cannot have all the information that is available to a group as it consists of several individuals.

2. Diversity of views:

A group always has the advantage of varied views. This is because a group always has more than one member, and since every member is unique, there is bound to be a variety in their views also. This is also the reason why there are varied approaches to solving a problem. As group decisions tend to cover a greater area, they provide a better insight for decision-making.

3. Greater acceptability:

The views expressed by a group have more acceptance than those from an individual. This is because the decisions are not imposed, but are part of a larger consensus (general agreement). A group decision is automatically assumed to be more democratic, and the decision of an individual can be perceived as being autocratic (dictatorial).

4. Expert opinions:

There may be some group decisions that require expert opinion. The group can either include experts or can call them from outside to form a separate group to take a decision on a particular issue.

5. Degree of involvement:

The members of a group feel involved with a given problem. This minimizes their resistance. It strengthens an organisation and facilitates decision-making.

6. Encourages people's participation:

A group usually provides a platform for people to present their ideas. Group dynamics is more likely to draw out participation from people who may otherwise be hesitant to talk or interact. It encourages people to take an initiative as they feel part of the decision-making process.

Usually there is no individual onus (burden) in the event of failure, which makes it easier for people to come up with suggestions and solutions to problems.

Disadvantages:

1. Time-consuming:

A group involves several individuals. Getting them organised, planning and coordinating their meetings, defining and explaining to them the purpose of a meeting and the goals, and finally reaching a solution or arriving at a decision can be quite cumbersome. Making decisions in a group can, thus, be time-consuming. The time loss involved in group dynamics cannot be ignored.

2. Lack of onus:

It is difficult to fix responsibility in a group. In an organisation, it is often essential to fix responsibility before a problem can be solved. It is difficult to do so if anything goes wrong with a decision made by a group.

3. Individual domination:

Quite often, discussions in a group are dominated by a few members. Although a group discussion means a collective discussion, some people usually manage to usurp (draw to them) a position of informal leadership owing to their personality or style of participation.

This position can also be because of the position held within the organisation or simply because of self-confidence generated by previous experiences. Sometimes only a few individuals dominate and the others fade away in a group, thereby defeating the very purpose of group discussion.

4. Compromise decisions:

The need to arrive at a group decision sometimes results in a compromise. The solution offered is not essentially the best. It is, instead, a compromise acceptable as a mid-point to all

concerned. There are different demands and social pressures, and members may agree to a proposal without really evaluating it. Such support may not be wholehearted.

5. Expensive:

Group decision-making is quite expensive in terms of time, money, energy and man-hours. There is also a theory which says that the larger a group gets, the less is the individual contribution from each member.

6. Groupism:

The very word has negative connotations. Some members of a group may start harbouring a feeling that they are different from the others. This actually leads to informal groups within the larger formal group, which may generate negative sentiments towards other groups or people outside the group.

Grapevine communication

Informal communication is also known as grapevine communication because there is no definite route of communication for sharing information. The most informal communication system of an organization is **grapevine communication** system. **Grapevine network** is commonly criticized for its widely features. According to Prof. **J. W. Newstrom and others,**

"Grapevine has three main characteristics--

1. It is not controlled by management.
2. It is perceived by the most employees as being more believable and reliable.
3. It is largely used to serve the self-interest of those people withing it."

Now features of grapevine can be discussed in the following manner:-

1. Flexibility: There is no formal control on grapevine. For this reason, It is more flexible communication system than any other ways of communication.

2. Lack of control: Actually, there is no managerial control over the grapevine communication system. It is grown by itself.

3. Rapid communication: Grapevine communication system is more faster than other formal or informal channels of communication.

4. No record: We can't keep any documentary record or evidence of grapevine communication system that can be shown or produced as future reference.

5. Used for self-interest: As grapevine communication system is produced by gossip and rumor, It is basically used for self-interest of the employees of an organization.

6. Popular among employees: This communication system is much popular among the employees than other formal or informal channels.

7. Distortion: Distorting of real message is one of the major features of grapevine communication system. In this communication process, information passes rapidly man to man. That's why the information loses its originality.

8 Spontaneous: Grapevine is basically spontaneous. It passes rapidly and spontaneously from top to bottom of the organization. Here is no need to make any effort to make it successful.

Advantage of grapevine or informal communication

The advantages of informal communication are given below:

1. **Interpret:** The information is given by the top level management under the formal system. It is easy for the employees to take the explanation by informal system. So this system plays a vital role to complete the work properly.
2. **Present grievance:** Under the informal system the employees disclose their needs, sentiment and their emotions to others authority without feeling any hesitation.
3. **Alternate system:** The management sometimes does not able to reach all information by formal system. Informal system covers the gap or familiarity of formal system.
4. **Improved relationship:** Any problem between the workers and the management can be solved by informal system. So it makes good relationships among the employees and the management.
5. **Increase efficiency:** Under the informal system, the employees discuss their problem openly and they can solve it. For this, the work is done properly and it develops the efficiency of the employee.
6. **Providing recommendation:** In this system the employees inform their superior about their demands, problem and the way to develop the implementation system of the work. As a result it creates an opportunity to send the recommendation to their management.
7. **Flexibility:** Informal communication is more flexible than formal communication because it is free from all type of formalities.
8. **Rapid communication:** Informal communication transmits very fast. Especially miss-information or rumor spread rapidly to others in the organization.
9. **Improve interpersonal relationship:** Cooperation and coordination in informal communication leads to improve interpersonal relationship which is very much essential to carry out the business activity smoothly.
10. **Others:** Improve labor management relationship. Free flow of information. Remove mental distance. Evaluation of employees. Obtain immediate feedback. Reliving frustration. Increasing efficiency. Solution of problems and helping decision-making. Enhance mutual trust etc.

Disadvantages of grapevine or informal communication

The disadvantages of informal communication are as follows:

1. **Distort meaning:** Something the meaning and the subject matter of the information is distorted in this system.
2. **Spread rumor:** In this system, the miss-information or rumor spread rapidly. The original information may be transformed to wrong information.
3. **Misunderstanding:** Under this system, generally, the employees do not obey the formal authorization system. So it creates the opportunity to develop misunderstanding.
4. **Maintaining secrecy is impossible:** In informal communication system maximum communication is made by open discussion. So it is impossible to maintain the secrecy of the information.
5. **Difficulty in controlling:** Under informal communication system no established rules or policy is obeyed. So it is very much difficult to control the information.
6. **Non-cooperation:** Informal communication system sometimes develops the adversary culture among the employees. So they are not to be cooperative with each other and their efficiency may be reduced.
7. **Others:** Providing partial information. Not reliable. No documentary evidence. Damaging discipline. Contradicting to formal information etc.

Listening

Listening is a process of Receiving, Interpreting and reacting to a message received from the Speaker

Types of Listening → Superficial listening → Appreciative Listening → Focused listening → Evaluative listening → Attentive listening → Content listening → Critical listening → Empathetic listening

Superficial Listening } In this type of listening the listener has little awareness of the content what is being said. } The output in this type of listening is zero because the listener tends to ignore the message, and is not able to concentrate on the theme, main points and supporting details of the message.

Appreciative listening } The main purpose of appreciative listening is to get enjoyment and pleasure. } The output may be taking part in the entertainment process.

Focused Listening } It involves listening for specific information. } This is the most common type of listening that we practice in non – formal oral communicative situations.

Evaluative Listening } It involves evaluation of the oral message or commentary and developing a line of thought. } The listener interprets and analysis what he or she listens to in order to understand both the explicit as well as implicit meaning of the oral message . } Thus the main purpose of evaluative listening is to evaluate the content of the oral message to select appropriate information.

Attentive Listening ⊕ It demands the complete attention of the listener. ⊕ It is basically active and intelligent listening in situations such as group discussions, meetings, job interviews and so on. ⊕ The listener pays attention to all parts of the message, that is , the central idea, main points, supporting details, examples and illustrations.

Content Listening- It is to understand and retain the speaker's message. θ You may ask questions, but basically information flows from the speaker to you. θ It doesn't matter that you agree or disagree, approve or disapprove-only that you understand.

Critical Listening → It is to understand and evaluate the meaning of the speaker's message on several levels. → When the purpose is to accept or reject the message or to evaluate it critically. For example: listening to a sales person before making a purchase involves critical listening. Similarly, when you read a book with the objective of writing book review.

Empathetic Listening; When we listen to a distressed friend who wants to share his feelings, we provide emotional and moral support in the form of Empathetic Listening. When psychiatrists listen to their patients, their listening is classified as empathetic listening.

Barriers to Listening

A barrier is anything that gets in the way of clear communication. Below is a list of barriers.

Physical barriers -Physical Barriers consist of any sound that prevents a person from being heard. Physical noise interferes with a speaker's ability to send messages and with an audience's ability to receive them. Examples: whispers, cheers, passing cars or intercom interruptions.

People related barriers:

Physiological barriers. • Physiological barriers arise when the listener suffers from ill health, fatigue, sleeplessness, hearing problems and the like, • It may also arise due to the accent and pronunciation shortcomings of the speaker.

Psychological barriers- Psychological barriers cover the value system and the behavioral aspects. Some examples where listening fails to be effective on account of people related factors are as follows: • The speaker speaks in a shrill voice that does not reach the receiver. • The speaker speaks very rapidly or with an accent that is not clear.

• The receiver of the message does not consider the speaker to be well informed. • The receiver lets the mind wander rather than stay focused on the message. • The listener perceives the speaker to be lacking in depth or not having adequate authority.

Overload of message } It is difficult for the brain to digest the overloaded message. } When the message is lengthy or illogical in sequencing, it becomes more painful to retain the concentration. As a result listening becomes ineffective.

Ego ♣ Thinking that my own ideas are more important than those of other persons or "I am always right" and "the other is wrong" is the major stumbling block in the way of listening. ♣ Listening requires open mind and heart free from negative emotions. ♣ If the mind is closed for the other person's message, there will be no listening."

Essentials of Effective Listening

1. Show Respect

Respect that every human beings are different. Other peoples opinions and stories may be different from ours. Showing respect is essential for effective listening.

2. Be sensitive

Sometimes people just needs someone who can listen to their problems and stories so preaching and acting like a problem expert in this situation can cause deeper problems.

There will be moments you need to be a little more sensitive on what other people think and feel, especially if you want to resolve the problem or save the relationship.

3. Pause

Learn to leave at least a couple of seconds pause after the speaker talks before giving your reply. On the other hand, before starting a conversation, set a rule or agreement that both sides will let the other person listen first before speaking or replying. This may feel awkward or weird at first but it's an effective way to create a good conversing environment. It will be uneasy at first, but it will be much easier when it becomes a habit.

4. Listen to Understand

Most of us are listening because we want to have a good reply. This kind of attitude often gives us a problem when it comes to communication. Keep in mind that the most effective conversations are the ones where we've used our ears more than our mouth.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

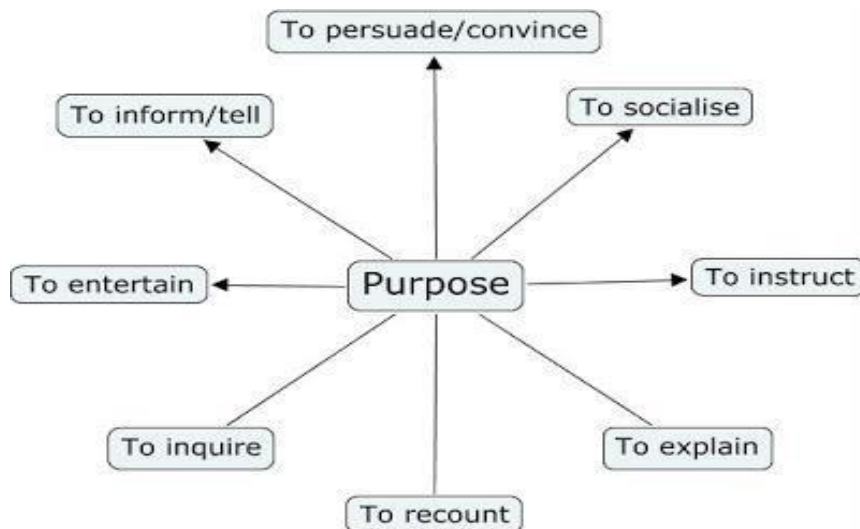
MEANING OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

- Written communication has great significance in today's business world. It is an innovative activity of the mind. Effective written communication is essential for preparing worthy promotional materials for business development.
- Effective writing involves careful choice of words, their organization in correct order in sentences formation as well as cohesive composition of sentences. Also, writing is more valid and reliable than speech. But while speech is spontaneous, writing causes delay and takes time as feedback is not immediate.

DEFINITION

- **written communication** - communication by means of written symbols (either printed or handwritten). It is letters or symbols that are written or imprinted on a surface to represent the sounds or words of languages

PURPOSE OF WRITING:



CLARITY OF WRITING

The clarity of writing can be elaborated as the quality of being clear, in particular Witten content. It is the feature of being coherent (logical) and intelligible.

- Clarity goes beyond a few writing tweak.
- It's a whole new way of thinking and it forces you to think about what you're writing before you start spilling words onto the page.

- It relates to **Know what you want to say.**

Business Writing: The Importance of Clarity

- *It is not enough to write so that you can be understood; you must write so clearly that you cannot be misunderstood.*” – Ralph Waldo Emerson
 - Business writing can also smother your audience with an exhausting amount of information that is usually unnecessary or jargon they just don't understand.
 - Using as much precise information as possible in business writing generates reader confidence in not only you but your product and what you have to say.
1. It can make your business much more easy going
 2. Shortcut are a times inevitable in business writing
 3. It created good impression on coworkers and productivity
 4. Its helps in building credibility and increase your value as employees
 5. Its reflect proper professionalism and communication skills

TIPS FOR CLARITY IN WRITING

- 1) **Know what you want to say.**
 - Your subject.** For example, this blog post is about *clear writing*.
 - Your point.** My point in this article is to explain how to write with clarity.
 - Your outline.** An outline is the basic structure of an article.
- 2) **Know who you're talking to:** Knowing your audience is an important feature of good writing.
- 3) **Define unfamiliar words.**
- One simple technique to make your writing clear is to explain your terms.
- 4) **Create a sentence outline. :** A sentence outline is an outline of your article using complete sentences. When your outline consists of phrases or single words, it's not clear or helpful.
- 5) **Write one-sentence paragraphs.:** creating one-sentence paragraphs. Single-sentence paragraphs cause the eye to
 - stop ...
 - read ...
 - and understand.
- 6) **Make your sentences short :** Short sentences are easier to Understand. If you try to pack a lot of words into a sentence, you lose clarity.

- **7) Don't use long words.** To impress people? To flaunt your knowledge? To most ordinary people, these words mean nothing.
- **8) Leverage writing tools:** Properly use Grammar. Punctuations and other tools
- **9) Be consistent.** :It's good to be predictable. In fact, that's why people come back to your site -- they know what to expect and how your content will speak to them.
- **Mastering Clarity :**Clarity is a lost art in today's content-saturated world. If you can write more clearly than most people, then your writing will stand out.

PRINCIPLE OF EFFECTIVE WRITING

- Knowing your objective
- Make a list
- Organize your idea: (Chronological order, Problem Solution, Question – Answer)
- Back it up with data(facts and information)
- Separate main Ideas
- Use bullets and numbers
- Write complete and short sentences
- Avoid redundancies
- Conclude properly
- Avoid negative approach

WRITING TECHNIQUES

- Adaptation and selection of words
- Effective sentences
- Developing logical paragraph
- Reader views point to be considered
- Having proper punctuation effects
- Using of quotes
- Having accurate facts and figures

Advantages of Written Communication

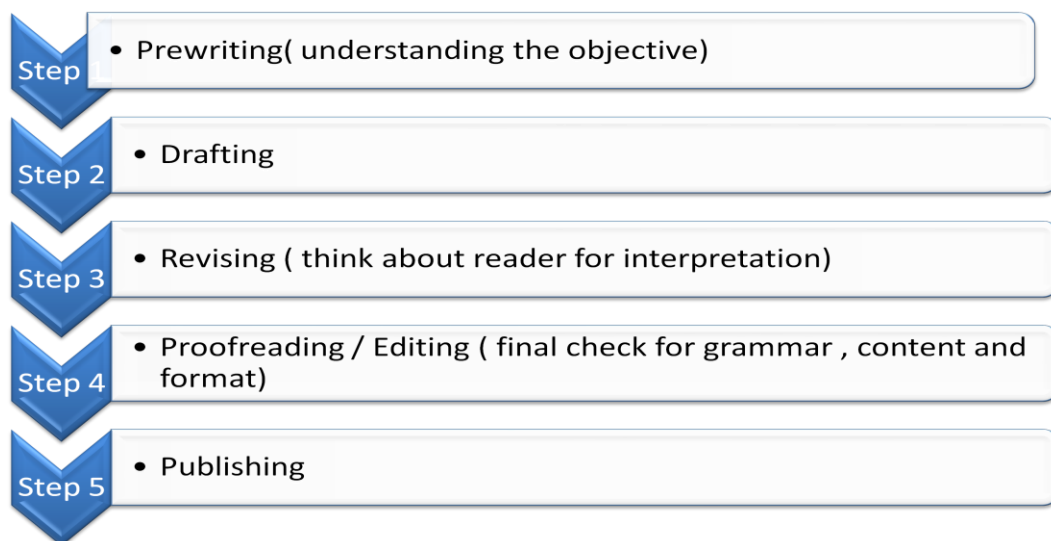
1. **Permanent record:** Written communication generally services as a documentary evidence. Previous records can be used for future references.

2. Legal acceptance: As written communication kept as permanent record it has legal acceptance in eye of law.
3. Better control: Oral directions sometimes create confusions, but written communication is clear and effective measures for control
4. Provides records and References
5. Develops and Enhance Organizational Image
6. Effective communication mode

■ Demerits of written communication:

1. Does not save on cost
2. Time Consuming
3. Overloading of Paper work
4. Chances of misinterpretation in the absence of receiver
5. Duplicity of work

Steps Of Writings



	Steps	Traits (Domains) Involved
Prewriting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the task; Identify role, audience, subject, and purpose; Select organizing pattern; Draft a sentence that expresses your controlling (main or central) idea or point; Jot down what you know about the subject; Free write, make concept map or graphic organizer; Do other prewriting acts (make a list, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaning & Focus Development & Content Organization Style & Language Use
Drafting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize main ideas; Develop content (details); Use language appropriate for the audience; Write an introduction that grabs your reader's attention; Write the body and conclusion; Follow your organizing pattern; State your main points, your support, and include significant details; Plan transitions and unifiers; Write effective sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaning & Focus Development & Content Organization Style & Language Use
Revising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the task; Writer's voice? Audience? Subject (all parts completed)? Purpose? Clear thesis, proofs, and significance? Transitions needed? Proper word choice? Varied sentences? Correct use of grammar, usage, and other conventions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaning & Focus Development & Content Organization Style & Language Use Mechanics & Conventions
Editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paragraphing? Grammar? Usage? Punctuation? Spelling? Capitals? Word choice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaning & Focus Development & Content Organization Style & Language Use Mechanics & Conventions
Publishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand to teacher; Submit for scoring; Read out loud; Print in paper or magazine; Publish on the Internet. 	

ELECTRONIC WRITING PROCESS

- Electronic Writing is also known as E –communication or Electronic communication where digital technology is used for writing purpose.
- They are the forms of writing that are informed by new ways of thinking brought on by the way digital technology has impacted our world, i.e. forms of writing that are organized according to the principles of the database, or that work primarily as texts distributed over the internet.
- The electronic media for short business messages include social networking and community websites, emails, instant messaging, text messaging, micro blogging etc. the nine compositional modes are used in electronic communication are conversations, comments and critiques, orientations, summaries, reference materials.
- Key Features
- It use computer or digital platform for writing
- It use software to reduce errors in writing as spelling , grammar, sentence correction.
- More option to enhanced vocabulary is opened with synonyms and antonyms

- Replace the duplicity of word/ sentences.
- Added attribution to writing, fig, graphs, pictures etc

The three step process



Why business communication uses Electronic writing?

- To gather market intelligence,
- To recruiting new employees
- To finding business partners
- It has Higher Accuracy
- To fasten the delivery of message
- For socializing the business
- For business communication & promotions
- It provides a chance to build their personal brands by providing expertise and they give the companies a chance to address customer complaints and correct misinformation.

Tools of electronic writing with their uses in business

- **Blogs** are used in business management and team communication, company news, customer support etc.
- **Email** was taken as a broad range of communication tasks. Accurate fast message are send, official working platform

- **Instant Messages or IM** helps to send rapid messages and it is lower in cost than phone calls and email.
- **Social Networking** sites a chance to build their personal brands association and address customer complaints and correct misinformation.
- **Company websites** : information providing platform, recruiting new employees and finding business partners.

Business Letters and Reports

Business Letter

Business Letter is a letter which is used by organizations to communicate in a professional way with customers, other companies, clients, shareholders investors, etc. Business letter uses formal language and a specific format.

Companies use it to convey important information and messages.

Business Letter Definition

A letter written for business purpose is a business letter. Inquiry letter, offer letter, order letter, cover letter, notices, termination of employment are some of the business letters. Suppose a person wants to write any of these business letters. The main question is to how to write a business letter?

There is a pre-specified format for writing a business letter. There are some parts of a business letter and rules associated with them. Let us start to know how to write a business letter by knowing the parts of a business letter.

Parts of Business Letter

A business letter will be more impressive if proper attention is given to each and every part of the business letter.

There are 12 Parts of Business Letter

- The Heading or Letterhead
- Date
- Reference
- The Inside Address
- Subject
- Greeting
- Body Paragraphs
- Complimentary Close
- Signature and Writer's Identification
- Enclosures
- Copy Circulation
- PostScript

Need for a Business Letter

In business, letter writing is a major thrust area of communication. The modern goal of nations for a free global trade and the need to cut across national, linguistic and cultural barriers to promote trade have made the letter an important business tool.

A business letter serves certain important functions :

1. A business letter acts as a representative of the organization. It is an inexpensive substitute for a personal visit. i
2. It seeks to provide information on subjects connected with business.
3. A business letter provides valuable evidence for a transaction and thus serves a legal purpose.
4. **A business** letter becomes a reference material to future transactions between organizations and individuals.
5. A business letter promotes and sustains goodwill.
6. A business letter motivates all the people involved in a business to a higher and better level of performance.
7. A business letter enlarges and enhances the business. We can elaborate each of the functions thus.

Every organization has to continuously promote and expand its business. All information on its product and service gets updated through a business letter sent to customers and clients. It is a micro-level substitute even for advertisements. Agents and retailers in turn pass on the information to clientele spread over a large area. It promotes goodwill. New business contacts are forged and the already existing ones get reinforced. Goodwill promotes the image of an organization and gives scope for fair, ethical business values. Letters sent from an organization and received by it when classified and filed serve the purpose of reference. Precedents are available to guide future actions from files of outgoing and incoming letters. It has great archival value in helping to draw a graph of the growth or a slump in trade and business. Business letters have legal validity. In times of dispute and doubt they can provide substantial evidence to solve them. Many issues can be sorted out if mutual positions taken by transacting organizations are available through letters written by them.

Functions of a Business Letter

There are many functions of a business letter. We discuss here some functions depending on its paragraphs.

The main function of a business letter is to carry and deliver a message to an intended receiver. Such message is written in the body of a letter and such body is usually short but written in three (3) parts. Each paragraph reflects a particular task i.e.

- The first paragraph states the main idea,
- Second paragraph states supporting details; and
- Third paragraph highlights concluding message.

The functions of each part or paragraph are detailed as follows:

Functions of a business letter (First Paragraph)

The first paragraph presents the main idea and aims to:

- Get the favorable attention
- Indicate what the letter is about
- Set a friendly, courteous tone
- Refer to previous correspondence, if appropriate.

Get Favorable Attention

The beginning paragraph is like a newspaper heading. It must be attractive so that it can catch the reader's attention and encourage him or her to continue to read the rest of the letter. The first paragraph determines how the reader will react to the letter.

Three (3) typical reactions to letters are positive, negative, and indifferent. Naturally, you want to get a positive reaction.

The reader has a positive reaction to your message whenever he or she is interested and will probably take the action you desire.

- Yes, I am interested in your product.
- Yes, I will attend the seminar.
- Yes, I will provide the information you requested.
- Yes, I will consider your proposal.

The reaction is yes

The reader has a negative reaction when he or she responds in an unenthusiastic way and will probably not take the action you desire.

- No, I am not much interested in your product to buy it.
- No, I would buy later from you.
- No, I am not coming to any meeting that you chair.

The reaction is No

An indifferent response assumes really don't care what this says posture.

- I'll just ignore this letter.
- I don't have enough time to be bothered with this.
- I doubt there is anything new here.
- The reader does not act positively or negatively, neither acts nor reacts to the message.

The reader is indifferent

The objective of the first paragraph is to obtain favorable attention that will gain a positive response from the reader. Make the beginning paragraph work for you to accomplish this objective.

Indicate the Purpose of the Letter;

Let the reader know what the letter is about by getting to the point immediately. Don't ask the reader to search information throughout the letter. Give the message now to get the positive reaction.

Set the Tone of the Letter;

The first paragraph should set the courteous and friendly tone which will create a positive image towards outsiders.

The introduction of the business letter should be a complete sentence to provide useful information.

Do not use Use

Referring to your letter of 15th Jan, Can you help us to know further?

we want to know more about..... about.....

A better informative opening put the reader on the defensive and help to enjoy the positive response.

Refer to Previous Correspondence

It is helpful to make the reader aware by referring to previous correspondence, or conversation. You can write, "As we agreed in our telephone conversation yesterday" or "I am pleased to provide you the following information requested on January 11."

To write the first sentence in a letter i.e. to get the proper start is difficult. A useful technique can be to use such mental lead-in," I Want to tell you that.....," and finish the sentence by telling the reader what you want to say. Such mental lead-in will help you to get a good start.

Functions of a business letter (Middle Paragraphs)

Middle paragraph provides answers to the following questions to be made by a reader, such as:

- Why are you telling me this?
- How will it affect me?
- Why was this decision made?
- What do you want me to do?

Therefore such paragraph should maintain two (2) things clearly i.e

(a) Provide Background Information:

Inform the reader in such a way so that he gets clear about the message of the letter and therefore capable of making intelligent evaluation.

(b) Provide Supporting Information

Provide supporting information to answer the why, how, what, who, when or where questions clearly and completely to satisfy the reader.

The first Paragraph “I want to tell you that.”

Middle paragraphs

Supporting and background information

- Why?
- How?
- What?
- Who?
- When?
- Where?

Final Paragraph Closing

Functions of a business letter (Last Paragraph)

The final paragraph is as important as the opening one. Like the first paragraph, the last paragraph should say something. Every host is familiar with the guest who says good night and then sits down to tell one more story or one last joke. Many business writers use the same technique. Everything has been said but, instead of closing the letter, they repeat the message.

The functions of the last paragraph are to:

- request action
- conclude the message
- present a positive company image.

Request Action:

The final paragraph should make it as easy as possible for the reader to take or accept the point of view of the writer. The closing is specific; it gives the time, date, and action desired.

For example;

- Merely sign the enclosed card and put it in the mail so that you
- This tells the reader what action to take and how easy it is to take that action.
- Be sure the card is postmarked by November 21 so that you will be eligible rescind your free gift.
- This tells the reader that there is a time limit and presents the information in a positive way.

Conclude the Message:

The last paragraph is the summary of the letter. It emphasizes the action you want this reader to take; it states exactly what you want the reader to do. A direct question provides a good closing because it gives the reader a specific query to consider.

For example:

- May we have your answer by the end of the month?
- Will you confirm the date of the meeting?
- Shall we deduct these expenses from your account?
- Provide the reader with direct questions to which a direct response can be made

Present a Positive Company Image:

The last paragraph should be short and friendly, written in the same positive and tone that was used in the first paragraph. The closing paragraph provides for leaving the reader with a feeling of goodwill.

The least effective closings are incomplete ending. Letters should not end with “Hoping to hear from you”, “Thanking you in advance,” “Trusting we shall have your cooperation in the matter.” or “With best wishes, I remain.” These endings are weak, incomplete, outdated, and offer no incentive for action.

Planning a Business Letter

A business letter is not a place for chit-chat. Unlike business conversations where a certain amount of small talk is used to break the ice, a business letter should be clear and concise. By taking time to plan your letter, you will save time in the writing and proofreading stages. During the planning stage, ask yourself a few simple questions. Jot down your answers to create an outline before you start writing.

Who am I writing this letter to?

Identifying your audience always comes first. Are you writing to more than one person, to someone you don't know, or to someone you have known for a long time? This will help you determine how formal the letter needs to be. You may need to introduce yourself briefly in the letter if the recipient does not know you. You may also need to find out the updated address and title of the recipient. This is a good time to confirm the correct spelling of first and last names.

Why am I writing this letter?

The main reason for the letter should be understood from the subject line and first few sentences. You may cover more than one thing in one business letter, but there will almost always be a general reason for the letter. Identify your main goal and what you hope to accomplish. Review some example reasons why people write business letters on the introductory page of this lesson.

Are there specific details I need to include?

Gather any dates, addresses, names, prices, times or other information that you may need to include before you write your letter. Double check details rather than relying on your memory.

Do I require a response?

Many types of business letter require a response. Others are written in response to a letter that has been received. Before you start writing, determine whether or not you require an action or response from the recipient. Your request or requirement should be very clear. In some cases you may even need to provide a deadline for a response. If you do require a response, how should the recipient contact you? Indicate this

information clearly as well. You may want to provide more than one option, such as an email address and a phone number.

How can I organize my points logically?

Think about how you would organize your thoughts if you were speaking rather than writing to the recipient. First you would introduce yourself. Second you would state your concern or reason for writing. After the main content of your letter you would include information on how you can be contacted. The end of the letter is also a place to express gratitude, wish good-luck, or offer sympathy. Here is an example outline:

Business Letter Layout

When writing a business letter, the layout of your letter is important, so that it will be easy to read and looks professional. So is your use of an appropriate salutation and closing, your spelling and grammar, and the tone you employ.

Letter Font and Spacing

- **Properly space the layout** of the business letters you write, with space between the heading, the greeting, each paragraph, the closing, and your signature.
- **Single space your letter** and leave a space between each paragraph. When sending typed letters, leave two spaces before and after your written signature.
- **Left justify your letter**, so that your contact information, the date, the letter, and your signature are all aligned to the left.
- **Use a plain font** like Arial, Times New Roman, Courier New, Calibri, or Verdana. Make sure that the font size you use is large enough that your reader won't need to reach for their glasses – the standard font size for these fonts is 10 point or 12 point.

If you are submitting your business letter to a very conservative organization, it is best to use the traditional Times New Roman 12 point font. Do not, under any circumstances, use fancy fonts like Comic Sans or handwriting fonts like Lucida on business correspondence.

Business Letter Etiquette and Tone

- **Salutation:** It is still standard to use the recipient's title (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., Professor, Judge) before their last names in the salutation of formal business correspondence (Example: "Dear Mr. Smith"). The word "Dear" should always precede the recipient's name; don't simply use their name by itself as you might do in

casual correspondence. By the same token, avoid beginning business correspondence with openings like “Hello,” “Hi,” or “Good morning” – business letters should always begin with “Dear [recipient’s title and name]” unless you use the salutation “To Whom It May Concern” (in instances when you do not know the name of the recipient).

- **Closing:** Your closing needs to err on the side of the conservative. Acceptable closings to use include: “Sincerely,” “Sincerely yours,” “Best regards,” “Regards,” “Thank you,” “Thank you for your consideration,” “Respectfully,” and “Very Respectfully” (this, often abbreviated “V/R,” is common in military business correspondence). Do not use casual closings like: “Later,” “Cheers,” “Cordially,” “Thanks!,” “TTYL,” or “Warmly.”
- **Word Choice and Grammar:** Although your word choice for business letters should not be too stilted, flowery, or ornate, you should also avoid using slang, abbreviations/acronyms, emojis, or text-speak. By no means should you use the sentence fragments that are commonly used when texting. Instead, use complete sentences, watching out for comma splices (where two complete sentences are joined by a comma). Proofread carefully for spelling errors and grammatical mistakes.
- **Paper:** If you are drafting a formal business letter to be mailed as opposed to an email, the paper you use should be a standard white bond paper of a decent weight – don’t use the sort of colored or flamboyant stationery that might be used in marketing “junk mail.” It’s fine to include a simple business logo at the top of the paper.

Business Letter Layout Example

Your Contact Information

Your Name

Your Address

Your City, State Zip Code

Your Phone Number

Your Email Address

Date

Recipient’s Contact Information

Name

Title

Company

Address

City, State Zip Code

Salutation

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Body of Letter

The first paragraph of your business letter should provide an introduction to why you are writing.

Then, in the following paragraphs provide more information and details about your request.

The final paragraph should reiterate the reason you are writing and thank the reader for reviewing your request.

Closing:

Respectfully yours,

Signature:

Handwritten Signature (*for a hard copy letter*)

Typed Signature

Types of Business Letters

The term “business letters” refers to any written communication that begins with a salutation, ends with a signature and whose contents are professional in nature. Historically, business letters were sent via postal mail or courier, although the internet is rapidly changing the way businesses communicate. There are many standard types of business letters, and each of them has a specific focus.

Sales Letters

Typical sales letters start off with a very strong statement to capture the interest of the reader. Since the purpose is to get the reader to do something, these letters include strong calls to action, detail the benefit to the reader of taking the action and include information to help the reader to act, such as including a telephone number or website link.

Order Letters

Order letters are sent by consumers or businesses to a manufacturer, retailer or wholesaler to order goods or services. These letters must contain specific information

such as model number, name of the product, the quantity desired and expected price. Payment is sometimes included with the letter.

Complaint Letters

The words and tone you choose to use in a letter complaining to a business may be the deciding factor on whether your complaint is satisfied. Be direct but tactful and always use a professional tone if you want the company to listen to you.

Adjustment Letters

An adjustment letter is normally sent in response to a claim or complaint. If the adjustment is in the customer's favor, begin the letter with that news. If not, keep your tone factual and let the customer know that you understand the complaint.

Inquiry Letters

Inquiry letters ask a question or elicit information from the recipient. When composing this type of letter, keep it clear and succinct and list exactly what information you need. Be sure to include your contact information so that it is easy for the reader to respond.

Follow-Up Letters

Follow-up letters are usually sent after some type of initial communication. This could be a sales department thanking a customer for an order, a businessman reviewing the outcome of a meeting or a job seeker inquiring about the status of his application. In many cases, these letters are a combination thank-you note and sales letter.

Letters of Recommendation

Prospective employers often ask job applicants for letters of recommendation before they hire them. This type of letter is usually from a previous employer or professor, and it describes the sender's relationship with and opinion of the job seeker.

Acknowledgment Letters

Acknowledgment letters act as simple receipts. Businesses send them to let others know that they have received a prior communication, but action may or may not have taken place.

Cover Letters

Cover letters usually accompany a package, report or other merchandise. They are used to describe what is enclosed, why it is being sent and what the recipient should do with it, if there is any action that needs to be taken. These types of letters are generally very short and succinct.

Letters of Resignation

When an employee plans to leave his job, a letter of resignation is usually sent to his immediate manager giving him notice and letting him know when the last day of employment will be. In many cases, the employee also will detail his reason for leaving the company.

Report

Reports are documents designed to record and convey information to the reader. Reports are part of any business or organization; from credit reports to police reports, they serve to document specific information for specific audiences, goals, or functions. The type of report is often identified by its primary purpose or function, as in an accident report, a laboratory report, a sales report, or even a book report. Reports are often analytical, or involve the rational analysis of information.

Essentials of a Good Report!

1. The report should have a proper title to describe the subject matter reported therein. The report should be in a good form and should have subheadings and paragraph divisions. The name of recipient of the report should be written on the top of the report.
2. The report-should be factual. The whims and ideas of the person preparing the report should not be allowed to influence the report.
3. The report should relate to a certain period and the period of time should be indicated on the top of the report.

4. The report should be clear, brief and concise. Clarity should not be sacrificed at the cost of brevity.

5. The reporting must be prompt because information delayed is information denied. If a considerable time elapses between happening of events and reporting, opportunity for taking appropriate action may be lost or some wrong decisions may be taken by management in the absence of information.

The periodicity of a report should be kept in mind and reports should be submitted in time. The report should be in a good form and should have sub-headings and paragraph divisions.

6. A report should distinguish between controllable and non-controllable factors and should report them separately. It is because management can take suitable action regarding controllable factors.

7. Appropriate remarks should be given in the report. It saves valuable time of the management and ensures prompt attention. Adequate data should be given to suggest possible course of action.

8. A report should be periodically reviewed. The form and contents of a report should not be of permanent nature. They should go on changing with the change in circumstances; otherwise the recipient will take them as stale useless and routine type.

9. The report should be taken as correct within the permissible degree of inaccuracy. The margin of error allowed will depend upon the purpose for which the report is prepared.

10. The report should draw manager's attention immediately to the exceptional matters so that management by exception may be carried out effectively. Thus, reports should highlight significant deviations from standards.

11. Visual reporting through graphs, charts and diagrams should be preferred to descriptive reports because visual reporting attract the eye more quickly and leaves a lasting impression on the mind.

12. Where comparison is reflected in a report it should be ensured that the same is between comparable (i.e., like) matters so that meaningful comparison may be made and idea about efficiency or inefficiency may be formed.

13. In all possible cases a detailed analysis should be given for all the resultant variances between actual for the period compared to standards/budgets, be it sales,

purchases, production, profit or loss, capital expenditure, working capital position, etc., so that exact causes of low performance may be known and timely corrective action may be taken.

14. The format of a report should not be changed from period to period, if the format is to be changed for making any improvement, justification for change in the format or contents should be given.

Purposes or Objective of Business Reports

Reports are the primary means of communication in organization. In large-scale organizations, there is no alternative to use reports. Reports also play an important role in small-scale organizations. Some points highlighting the **purposes or objectives or important of business report** are presented below-

Transmitting Information:

Business report is very important for transmitting information from one person to another or from one level to another. Although a manager can personally collect required information in a small scale enterprise, it is not possible in the context of a large scale organization. In the latter case, the managers rely on reports for obtaining necessary information.

Making decisions:

A report is the basic management tool for making decisions. The job of a manager is nothing but making decisions. Reports supply necessary information to managers to solve problems.

Communication with external stakeholders:

In addition to internal use, reports also communicate information to the external stakeholders like shareholders, creditors, customers, suppliers, government officials and various regulatory agencies. In the absence of formal business report such stakeholders would remain at dark about the organizations.

Development of information base:

Reports also contribute to the development of information based in organization. It develops an information base in two ways. Firstly, day to day information is recorded permanently for writing reports. Secondly, the written reports are preserved for future reference. In these ways, reports help in developing an h3 and sound information base.

Developing labor-management relationship:

Reports also help to improve labor-management relationship particularly, in large organizations. In a large organization, there is little opportunity of direct communication between top-level management and employees. In this case, report is used as mechanism of keeping both sides informed about each other and improving their relationships.

Controlling:

Controlling is the final function of management It ensures whether the actual performance meets the standard. In order to perform the managerial function of controlling, report serves as a yardstick. It supplies necessary information to impose controlling mechanism.

Recommending actions:

Reports not only supply information but also recommend natural actions or solutions to the problem. When someone is given the charge of investigating a complex problem and suggesting an appropriate remedy, the investigator usually submits a report to the concerned manager.

Above discussion makes it clear that reports are the commonly used vehicles that help mangers in planning, organizing, staffing and controlling. In a nutshell, report is indispensable for carrying out the management functions. Report is the nerve of an organization that circulates information.

Types of Business Reports

The information may be facts figures or a detailed analysis of any situation. Businesses make important decisions and plan for the future of the company based on these reports and hence the importance of such reports is self-established. Major decisions like investments and expansions are based entirely on Business reports.

Thus, business reports form a very important part of every business. There different types of business reports based on their need and the situation.

Types of Business Reports used by Organizations

1) Formal Business Reports

These reports are prepared in a given format and they are presented to the authorities in an already established manner. They are submitted to committees and bodies or heads of various departments or organizations. Since the report talks only about business in a formal way they are termed as, formal business reports.

Formal reports of other classified into the statutory report and non-statutory report.

2) Informal Business Reports

These reports are prepared in a convenient format which is convenient to the reporter and presented to the required person immediately after demand. These reports can also be presented in the form of a memorandum or a Business Letter. Since there is no fixed format for these reports it is termed as informal reports.

3) Informative Business Report

These are types of Business reports which are prepared with the intention of providing information in a descriptive way which address is a particular issue or situation or a problem. They provide information in an exhaustive and detailed manner which is used for the by the authorities to gain an insight on the matter that is why they are termed as informative reports.

4) Interpretative Business Report :

Unlike informative report which contains only information, the interpretative report contains facts opinions views or numbers which help to interpret a certain information situation or a problem. The interpretative report may also contain reasons for a certain issue as to why a certain event or an issue occurred and what would be the course of action along with a recommendation for the same.

5) Verbaton Business Reports

The report which is prepared by secretaries or any other individual which record word to word discussions that are made in the meeting are called Verbatim reports. For example, in case of auditor appointment resolution has passed in the meeting and that reservation is recorded as word to word as Verbatim report. Also, in the case of voting where joint votes of different members are taken into consideration, the verbatim reports include names and manners of voting along with the results. These types of business report should not be confused with minutes of the meeting which is a record of proceedings and decisions a summary of the meeting.

6) Summarized Business Reports

The report that is made with the assistance of important details that have been discussed in the meeting is called a summarized report. These types of business reports are made with the intention of sending it for the press release or for the shareholders of the company or a member of the certain institution.

7) Problem Solving Business Report

As the name suggests, problem-solving business report help to solve a problem by suggesting or recommending a plan of action regarding a certain situation. The report also contains causes of such problems and the conclusion is done in various ways that can be adopted to solve the problem. The report also contains ways in which that problem can be avoided in the future by implementing certain steps.

8) Fact Finding Business Report

There are numerous situations in an organization where a finding of a fact is required. For example, the breakdown of machinery in factory premises or rivalry between associate and the manager. The situations require in-depth reasoning for the situation that has arisen. In those cases, the fact-finding report comes in handy which presents facts in the report from a third person view. These reports are presented to the top management based on which they can take action about the situation at hand.

9) Performance report :

The management likes to know the performances of each department on a regular basis. Not only that but also about the newly opened branch, newly appointed employee or even the performance of existing employees who are due for promotion are analyzed by the management for which the performance report is generated. These

reports are important for the management to arrive at a decision and hence these reports are prepared by the seniors of the respective people

10) Technical Business Reports

Technology is advancing faster than the speed of light and that is the reason why companies upgrade themselves with new technology is from time to time. Whenever such a monumental change and Technology is taking place in an organization a Technical Business Report is prepared to assess the level of Technology. These reports include a detailed way to undergo the change including time and money that will cost, which helps the top management to take a decision.

11) Standing Committee Report

A committee which is appointed for a specific reason is called standing. The reason may be financial assessment, employee Assessment, or departmental assessment, the standing committee is expected to submit a detailed analysis of these things. The report submitted by the committee is known as a standing committee report. In many organizations please reports are submitted at frequent intervals.

12) Ad-hoc Committee Report

Adhoc reports are also termed as special committee reports. As the name suggests special committee is appointed to deal with the investigation and that committee is dissolved as soon as the report is presented. Special communities are found in special cases like fire in factory premises are employee accidents during work.

13) Minority Report

A team of the special committee is appointed to submit a report which will be based on an investigation of a special subject. 3 members may be selected to form the committee one of each is the chairman of the said committee. If members have a difference of opinion on the subject the other members may submit the report separately. This separate report submitted by dissentient members is called minority report.

14) Majority Report

The members of a committee which including the chairman, usually have unanimous decision amongst them. In such cases, only one report is prepared and presented to the

official committee. If that is not the case then the majority of the member from their own report and submitted to the examining authority. Such a report is termed as majority report.

15) Annual Report

A yearly report, which consists of the yearly processes of the business including the sales profits and the turnovers is called the annual report. Such a report generated only once a year and is submitted to the corporate heads for studying the business year in detail. Majority of crucial decisions like investments, product portfolio changes, marketing strategies, marketing campaigns etc. are planned on the basis of the Annual report. Pre-decided plans may be modified or changed based on Annual reports.

Report Writing

- **Title Section** – This includes the name of the author(s) and the date of report preparation.
- **Summary** – There needs to be a summary of the major points, conclusions, and recommendations. It needs to be short as it is a general overview of the report. Some people will read the summary and only skim the report, so make sure you include all the relevant information. It would be best to write this last so you will include everything, even the points that might be added at the last minute.
- **Introduction** – The first page of the report needs to have an introduction. You will explain the problem and show the reader why the report is being made. You need to give a definition of terms if you did not include these in the title section, and explain how the details of the report are arranged.
- **Body** – This is the main section of the report. There needs to be several sections, with each having a subtitle. Information is usually arranged in order of importance with the most important information coming first.
- **Conclusion** – This is where everything comes together. Keep this section free of jargon as most people will read the Summary and Conclusion.
- **Recommendations** – This is what needs to be done. In plain English, explain your recommendations, putting them in order of priority.
- **Appendices** – This includes information that the experts in the field will read. It has all the technical details that support your conclusions.

Remember that the information needs to be organized logically with the most important information coming first.