

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION SKILLS

STUDY TEXT

T04

Accounting
Technician
Level I



THE NATIONAL BOARD OF
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FOREWORD.

The National Board of Accountants and Auditors is a professional body in Tanzania, established under the Auditors and Accountancy Registration Act No 33 of 1972 (CAP 286 R.E.2002). The Board has been charged with among other things, the responsibility to promote, develop and regulate the accountancy profession in the country.

In fulfilling its statutory obligations, NBAA prepares National Accountancy Examination Scheme for students aspiring to sit for Accounting Technician and Professional Examinations. Further, for effective implementation of the examination scheme and improve examination results, the Board provides Study Guides for all subjects to assist both examination candidates and trainers in the course of learning and teaching.

The Study Guides have been prepared in the form of text books with examples and questions to enable the user to have comprehensive understanding of the topics. The Study Guides cover a wide range of topics in the NBAA syllabi and adequately cover the most comprehensive and complete knowledge base that is required by a learner to pass the respective examination levels.

Furthermore, the Study Guides have been prepared to match with the Competency Based Syllabi to enable the learners to be exposed to practical understanding of issues rather than memorisation of concepts. In this case, the Study Guides are characterized by the following features:-

1. Focus on outcomes – The outcomes shown in every topic provides clear understanding on what to be learnt.
2. Greater workplace relevance – the guides emphasize on the importance of applying knowledge and skills necessary for effectively performance in a work place. This is different from the traditional training where much concern has been expressed in theoretical perspectives.
3. Assessments as judgments of competence – The assessment questions embedded in the Study Guides are adequate measures of understanding of the subject matter.

Study Guides are also useful to trainers specifically those who are teaching in the review classes preparing learners to sit for the professional examinations. They will make use of these Study Guides together with their additional learning materials from other sources in ensuring that the learners are getting sufficient knowledge and skills not only to enable them pass examinations but also make them competent enough to perform effectively in their respective workplace.

NBAA believes that these standard Study Guides are about assisting candidates to acquire necessary skills and knowledge that will enable them to perform as professionals. The outcomes to be achieved are clearly stated so that learners may know exactly the skills and knowledge they are supposed to acquire in a particular topic.

NBAA wishes all the best to NBAA Examination candidates, trainers in their review classes, lecturers in the higher learning institutions and all other beneficiaries of these learning materials in making good use of the Study Guides towards promoting the accountancy profession in Tanzania.

CPA. Pius A. Maneno
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JUNE, 2019

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170

Features of the book

The book covers the entire syllabus split into various chapters (referred to as Study Guides in the book). Each chapter discusses the various Learning Outcomes as mentioned in the syllabus.

Contents of each Study Guide

‘Get Through Intro’: explains **why** the particular Study Guide is important through real life examples.

‘Learning Outcomes’: on completion of a Study Guide, students will be able to understand all the learning outcomes which are listed under this icon in the Study Guide.

The Learning Outcomes include:

‘Definition’: explains the meaning of important terminologies discussed in the learning Outcome.

‘Example’: makes easy complex concepts.

‘Tip’: helps to understand how to deal with complicated portions.

‘Important’: highlights important concepts, formats, Acts, sections, standards, etc.

‘Summary’: highlights the key points of the Learning Outcomes.

‘Diagram’: facilitates memory retention.

‘Test Yourself’: contains questions on the Learning Outcome. It enables students to check whether they have assimilated a particular Learning Outcome.

Self Examination Questions: exam standard questions relating to the learning outcomes given at the end of each Study Guide.

EXAMINATION STRUCTURE

The syllabus is assessed by a three-hour paper-based examination.

The examination will consist of

Three conventional question of 20 marks (testing for writing and reading skills)	60 marks
Twenty objective questions of 2 marks	40 marks
	100 marks

STUDY GUIDE A1: INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION SKILLS

■ Get Through Intro

Imagine human life without communication. How could it be? Or imagine that there is only one way of transferring messages to people with different personalities. Could it yield desired outcomes? Undeniably, communication is inevitable in any organisation. However, not all forms and types of communication yield similar outcomes.

This unit therefore introduces you to a number of basic issues that can facilitate effective communication in an organisation.

■ Learning Outcomes

- a) Explain the concept of “communication” and “communication skills”
- b) Describe the basic elements of communication
- c) Describe the types and importance of communication
- d) State the barriers to effective communication
- e) Discuss the principles of effective communication
- f) Describe different personality traits

2: General Introduction to Communication Skills

1. Explain the concept of “communication” and “communication skills”

[Learning Outcome a]

1.1 Communication



Definition

Communication is the process of transmitting information from one person to another. It involves giving, receiving or exchanging information, ideas or opinions via writing, speaking or visual means or via combining the three so that the material communicated is completely understood by everyone intended.

Communication skills

A communication skill is the ability of a person to convey information effectively and efficiently from one person to another by considering the context of interaction, for instance at work, school, and in a public gathering. There are four basic communication skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the following part, we are going to look at the basic elements of communication.

2. Describe the basic elements of communication

[Learning outcome b]

2.1 Basic elements of communication

There are mainly five elements of communication, namely:

- Sender/source/encoder/initiator
- Message
- Channel/medium
- Receiver
- Feedback

(a) The sender

The sender is the one who initiates communication by sending the message to another person (the receiver). The sender is sometimes known as the encoder of the message. Encoding is the process of packing ideas or expressing what the sender wants to present via language.

Thus, the sender does the following:

- He/she decides the message to send.
- He/she encodes it using symbols he/she assumes the receiver will understand.
- He/she converts the message to a signal.
- He/she sends the message over the communication channel to the receiver.

(b) The Message/goal

The message is a piece of information which is transferred from the sender to the receiver. It is the content of communication.

(c) The channel/medium

This refers to the path which communicators use to pass or convey their messages. It is the means by which a message is carried from one person to another.

(d) The receiver/recipient

This refers to the person receiving the message from the sender. The receiver sometimes is known as the decoder of the message. Decoding is the process whereby a receiver is interpreting or understanding the meaning of a word in a language. The receiver decodes the message and responds to the message by acting in a manner consistent with the interpretation.

(e) Feedback

Feedback is a comment, response or act from the receiver after receiving the message sent by the sender.

3. Describe the types and importance of communication
--

[Learning outcome c]

3.1 Types of communication

People communicate with each other in many ways depending on the message and the context of interaction. There are mainly two types of communication, based on the channel used. These are

- Verbal Communication
- Nonverbal communication

Verbal communication refers to a type of communication in which the message is communicated verbally, through speaking and/or writing. Thus, verbal communication is further divided into oral and written communication.

Nonverbal communication is a type of communication that does not involve words. It involves body language, such as gestures, posture, tone of voice, and facial expressions.

3.2 Importance of communication

Communication serves the following purposes, among many others:

- It helps people to get information for planning and decision making.
- In working places, it enables employees understand their tasks/duties.
- It provides information about the organization and its services or products.
- It increases job satisfaction.
- It ensures consistency in performance.

4. State the barriers to effective communication

[Learning outcome d]

Having a message to be communicated in a business context is one thing but getting the intended interpretation of the conceptualized message is another thing. Most messages are misinterpreted due to different factors. It is therefore important to know these factors that prevent effective communication. The following are some of them:

(a) Jargon

Jargon involves words or expressions that are used by a particular group of people and are difficult for others to understand. These should be avoided whenever possible via using simple English since the aim of communication is for the addressee to understand the message being communicated.

(b) Emotional and psychological barriers (e.g. worry, overexcitement, and confusion)

Our emotional state of being or mindsets can influence communication, both negatively and positively. For example, a distinguished public speaker may be psychologically challenged by the critical illness of his/her beloved one. This will likely affect his/her speech, should he/she be required to give a speech in such a state of distress.

(c) Physical and environmental barriers

Things in the environment may act as a barrier to effective communication, e.g. a wall, noise, and the weather condition. Noise from the surrounding environment, for instance, can make it difficult for people to communicate. Likewise, a hot weather condition can make students doze in class. Thus, it would be difficult for them to communicate in the classroom context.

(d) Belief systems

These normally lead to communication breakdown. Some values and beliefs, which are shared by many people, may be acceptable in one group but not the other. Thus, one group tends not to pay attention to what they do not accept, for instance religious views on a particular phenomenon. This situation acts as a barrier to communication.

4: General Introduction to Communication Skills

(e) Meaning differences

This is one of the most common causes of communication breakdown. The same word in one language may have a completely different meaning in another language or may sound offensive. For instance, whereas Sungura and Tembo are used as surnames among Ngoni speakers in Tanzania, the same words mean 'hare' and 'elephant' respectively, among Swahili speakers.

(f) Gender differences

Different genders (males and females) use language differently. For instance, a Swahili-speaking woman may call any other woman 'shoga' but may not call any man 'shoga'. The word may be perceived offensive to some men because it means either a woman's female friend or a gay.

(g) Information overload

Information overload denotes communicating too much information at the same time. This normally causes communication breakdowns. For instance, when the boss gives too many instructions to his/her subordinates, chances are likely that they will not understand everything the boss says.

(h) Inadequate information

Providing insufficient information can also act as a barrier to communication.

(i) Information distortion

The original information may be distorted in the process of communication. This normally occurs in oral communication, when one is asked to pass information to someone else, orally.

(j) Denotations, connotations, abbreviations, and acronyms

Whereas denotations refer to when the speaker mean what they say, connotations refer to situations in which people mean different things from what they say. Connotations thus normally lead to communication breakdowns. As for abbreviations, these are short forms of words or names. Acronyms are initial letters of words, for instance TBC (To be confirmed) and FYI (For your information). Some acronyms may lead to communication breakdown. TBC—for example—is a broadcasting company in Tanzania.

5. Discuss the principles of effective communication

[Learning outcome e]

Since we have already identified and described some barriers to effective communication, the question that arises at this point is how we can ensure effective communication. We can do so by being

- clear and transparent
- assertive
- able to use simple English
- certain with what we are communicating
- well prepared
- able to encourage two-way communication
- generic
- able to pick up a good time to talk
- able to use good body language
- attentive
- Consistent, firm, and fair.

6. Describe different personality traits

[Learning outcome f]

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately.

EI plays a role in determining leadership effectiveness, especially when leaders are dealing with teams in their respective work places (Srivastava, 2013). Different personalities have to be handled differently. The following are some of the common personality traits:

- *Cantankerous*: Such people often engage in the provocative type of communication as they hardly mind other people's opinions or emotions.
- *Over Confident*: Such individuals assume they are Jacks-of-all-trade and often think they know everything and may easily intimidate or despise others.
- *Stingy or Judicious*: They often like to keep ideas and information to themselves and they are not willing to engage in information sharing. They often do not want to interact and are almost anti-social.
- *Social*: They are often talkative and noisy. They may cause confusion if not watched as they do not want to keep quiet and may say a lot of irrelevant things.
- *Inept*: They have ideas, information, and opinions. They usually want to share but are unable to articulate or express themselves.
- *Logical*: These are usually critical; they normally take their time and pick details.

Considering all these different traits in a business organisation, managers need to possess emotional intelligence for them to manage and motivate the people they supervise.

STUDY GUIDE B1: SENTENCES

■ Get Through Intro

Imagine that different pieces of a puzzle are scattered in front of you. Each piece is an individual part of the entire picture. The picture will only make sense when all the pieces are placed in the right position next to each other.

In the same manner, a sentence in the English language is formed when various elements (like the pieces of a puzzle) are put together. These elements, which together form a sentence, are known as '**parts of speech**.'

Only when these parts of speech are placed in the correct order next to each other, will the sentence make sense!

In this study guide, we will learn about the different parts of speech and study the principles of constructing correct sentences. We will also look at some of the common errors that are made when constructing sentences and learn how to avoid them.

■ Learning Outcomes

- a) Explain and use parts of speech correctly.
- b) Describe how to construct correct sentences.
- c) Identify common sentence errors.

8: Demonstrate a Mastery use of English Language

1. Explain and use parts of speech correctly.

[Learning Outcome, a]

Parts of speech are the different parts of a typical sentence, which, when placed at appropriate positions, make the sentence meaningful.

Traditionally, there are 8 main parts of speech in the English language, as shown in the diagram below.

Diagram 1: Parts of speech

Parts of Speech							
Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb	Pronoun	Preposition	Conjunction	Interjection

Usually, not all 8 parts of speech are found together in a sentence. However, a sentence can sometimes have all 8 parts. In this chapter, you will learn about each one of these parts of speech and their application to various sentences.

1.1 The Noun

A noun is the part of a sentence that names a person, animal, place, thing or any abstract idea.



Example

Examples of nouns

Person – Jim, Henry, King George, librarian, judge, teacher.
Animal – goat, bird, lion, whale.
Place – London, New York, Tanzania, Australia, café, restaurant.
Thing – box, bag, cup, chair, tree.
Abstract idea – philosophy, childhood, justice.

Singular and Plural nouns

Singular and plural refer to the number quantity of a noun. A **singular noun** means that the quantity of the noun that is being spoken about is one. For example: box, pen, shoe, phone. A **plural noun** means that the quantity of the noun is more than one. For example: boxes, pens, shoes, phones.

Usually, nouns can be changed from singular to plural by simply adding an 's' at the end of the noun. Example: rings, rivers, apartments.

Some nouns have **irregular plurals**, and there are different rules for converting singular nouns into plural. Some of the rules are as follows:

- For nouns that end in ch, x, s, or s sounds**, add es. For example, box – boxes, watch – watches, bus – buses etc.
- For nouns ending in f or fe**, change f to v and add es. For example, wolf – wolves, wife – wives etc.
- Some nouns have different plural forms**. For example, child – children, woman – women, man – men, mouse – mice, goose – geese etc.
- Nouns ending in y or o** do not have definite rules. For example, baby – babies, potato – potatoes, memo – memos etc.
- A few nouns have the same singular and plural forms**. For example, sheep – sheep, deer – deer etc.

Types of nouns

Nouns are divided into four main categories:

1. Common nouns

A common noun is a general reference to a person, animal or thing without actually naming it. Hence, general places such as school, restaurant, office etc. and general things such as table, chair, hammer etc. are all common nouns.



Example

The **banker** bought a new **car** last **week**.

Common nouns are made bold

The bold words are all common nouns because they indicate a general reference to a person or thing without actually revealing their names. We know that a banker bought a car, but we do not know specifically the identity of the banker, the make of the car or the exact day of the week.

2. Proper nouns

A proper noun is the name of a person, animal or thing. The names of the days, week, months, organisations, institutions, religions, their holy texts etc. are proper nouns.



Example

Let us now compare the following sentence with the above example:

James bought a new **Mercedes Benz** last **Saturday**.

Proper nouns are made bold

The bold words are all proper nouns because they are names of nouns. James is the name of the banker (a person), Mercedes Benz is the name of the car (a thing) and Saturday is the name of the day of the week.

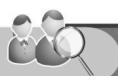


Tip

A common noun never starts with a capital letter unless it is the first word of the sentence. However, a proper noun always starts with a capital letter. Therefore, while reading a sentence if you get confused, you can identify whether a noun is a proper noun or a common noun by looking at the first letter!

3. Collective nouns

Sometimes, a group of people or things are regarded as one single object. A collective noun is one that names such a group of persons, animals or things, e.g. jury, committee, army etc. Since the group is regarded as a single entity, the verb form used with such collective nouns is also singular.



Example

The **class** was ready to break for lunch.

Here, 'class' is a collective noun, as it is used to mean all students in the class; i.e. all the students are treated as one single entity. Note that the verb form used here is 'was', which is singular (as against 'were', which is plural).

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4. Abstract nouns

An abstract noun is the name given to some idea or emotion that is intangible; i.e. which has no physical existence. Examples of abstract nouns are justice, pride, happiness etc. These are intangible, i.e. you cannot touch them, and cannot physically interact with them.



Tip

All the nouns that we have learnt in this learning outcome (other than abstract nouns) are called concrete nouns. These nouns have physical existence. Abstract nouns are the opposite of concrete nouns.



Example

The soldier was awarded a medal for his bravery.

Here, 'bravery' is an abstract noun, as it is a name given to an emotion / idea, and it is intangible, i.e. you cannot touch bravery. On the other hand, 'soldier' is a concrete noun, because it is tangible; you can touch a soldier!

Below is a table of some common nouns and proper nouns.

Common nouns	Proper nouns
River	Nile
City	London
Shoes	Jimmy Choo
Phone	Samsung
Street	Ring road
Coffee	Starbucks
Sunglasses	Prada

Below is a table of some collective nouns and their meaning

Team	A group of people doing an activity together
Panel	A group of experts on a particular topic
Board	A group of top decision makers in a company
Fleet	A large number of sheep together
Army	A large number of soldiers

Below is a list of some abstract nouns

Love	Anger
Peace	Pride
Delight	Reality
Wisdom	Kindness



Test Yourself 1

Identify the nouns in the following sentences and state their type.

- (a) I will be visiting Kenya soon.
- (b) The Bible is a holy book.
- (c) Xpetra Ltd manufactures pencils.



Test Yourself 2

Which of the following is an abstract noun? Justify your answer.

- A Flag
- B Patriotism
- C Politician

1.2 The Verb

A verb is that part of the sentence that depicts action (doing something) or a state (being something). A verb describes an action, event or a state of being with regard to the subject of the sentence (the concept of subject of a sentence is discussed in detail in learning outcome 2 of this study guide). A verb is simply used to say something about a person, place or a thing.



Example

- (i) Henry sat on a wooden chair.

Here, the verb is the word 'sat', as it is used to describe the action performed by Henry.

- (ii) Rafael is the CEO of Tranton Technologies.

Here, the verb is the word 'is', as it describes the state - of being the CEO.



Important

Words like 'is, are, was, were, will be' are all forms of the verb 'to be', and describe the 'state of being' of the noun.



Tip

To identify a verb, you can follow these steps:

Step 1: Identify the noun in the sentence.

In the 1st example, the noun is Henry.

Step 2: Identify the action done by the noun. What did Henry do?

In the 1st sentence, Henry performed the action of sitting. Hence, the verb is 'sat'.

Some commonly used verbs are as given in the table below:

Be	Take	Find
Have	See	Tell
So	Come	Ask
Say	Think	Work
Get	Look	Seem
Make	Want	Feel
Go	Give	Try
know	Use	Leave



Test Yourself 3

Which is the verb in the following sentences?

- (a) I like coffee.
 (b) The protestors threw stones at the politicians.
 (c) Birds fly.

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1.3 The Pronoun

Sometimes, in a sentence, nouns need to be repeated again and again. Such a sentence sounds awkward. Hence, to avoid this, pronouns are used. Pronouns are words that are used in place of nouns to avoid repetition of the same noun more than once. Examples of pronouns are 'he', 'him', 'she', 'her', 'it', 'them' etc.



Example

Consider the sentence below, where only nouns are used.

Mary works as a senior sales executive with a multinational company. **Mary** loves **Mary's** job. Every morning, **Mary** starts work by reviewing **Mary's** task list and reading **Mary's** emails.

By using pronouns to replace the nouns, the sentence will be written as follows:

Mary works as a senior sales executive with a multinational company. **She** loves **her** job. Every morning, **she** starts work by reviewing **her** task list and reading **her** emails.

Doesn't the second version sound better!



Important

It is not advisable to replace all the nouns in a sentence with pronouns, as it will hamper the understandability of the sentence. In the above example, in the second version, if we replace the word 'Mary' from even the start of the sentence, the text will read as:

She works as a senior sales executive with a multinational company. **She** loves **her** job. Every morning, **she** starts work by reviewing **her** task list and reading **her** emails.

In this case, the reader will not know who the writer is talking about. Therefore, at the start of the communication, it is better to use the noun rather than the pronoun.

Following are some pronouns that are used to replace nouns.

me	mine	my
you	yours	your
he	his	him
she	hers	her
it	Its	it
we	ours	our
they	theirs	their



Test Yourself 4

Rewrite the following sentences with pronouns.

- (a) Sue requested John to keep quiet. John did not listen to Sue and continued talking loudly.
- (b) Jill was watching TV. The TV suddenly went blank.

1.4 The Adjective

Adjectives are words that are used to modify, describe, limit or add meaning to the noun or pronoun in the sentence. The adjective is usually written before the noun or pronoun that it describes.



Example

He is a **brave** boy.

Here, the adjective is the word brave. It describes the kind of person that the boy is. According to the definition, it gives meaning to the pronoun (he).

Some more examples:

The girl played with a **yellow** ball.
He wore a **silk** scarf round his neck.
The coal mines are **dark** and **dank**.

The adjectives
in the sentences
are made bold



Tip

Two simple steps to identify the adjective are as follows:

Step 1: Identify the noun /pronoun.

The pronoun identified here is 'he'.

Step 2: Always ask the question 'How is the noun/ pronoun? i.e. How is the boy?

In the sentence, it is given that the boy is 'brave'. Hence, the word 'brave', which describes the pronoun 'he', is the adjective.



Important

Articles ('a', 'an' and 'the') are special types of adjectives. They give information about the noun and add meaning. E.g. a book: the article 'a' adds meaning; it implies that there is just one book.

Some commonly used adjectives are as follows:

Other	Young	Religious
New	Different	Popular
Good	Hard	Traditional
Important	Late	Entire
High	Social	Final
Old	Private	Hot
Great	Poor	Entire
Big	Significant	Final



Test Yourself 5

Underline the adjectives in the following sentences:

- An old box sat on the antique table.
- The picturesque village was dotted with pretty flowers.
- The yellow balloons floated over the vast city.

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1.5 The Adverb

An adverb is a word in the sentence that is used to add meaning to a verb, an adjective or another adverb. It indicates the manner, time, place, cause, or degree. It answers questions such as "how," "when," "where," "how much".



Tip

An adverb is generally written with the "ly" suffix. E.g. constantly. However, a few adverbs do not have the 'ly' suffix e.g. fast.



Example

He climbed the ladder **carefully**.

(It answers the 'how' of the verb 'climb' i.e. 'how did he climb the ladder?')

There were other students **still** to come.

(It answers the 'when' of the verb 'come' i.e. when were the students to come?)

The adverbs
in the
sentences are
made **bold**

Some commonly used adverbs are as follows:

Dimly	Easily	Masterfully
Doubtfully	Selectively	Elegantly
Busily	Energetically	Newly
Truthfully	Boldly	Ghastly
Enthusiastically	Carefully	Clearly
Curiously	Quickly	Equally
Slowly	Especially	Sweetly
Enormously	Even	Firmly



Test Yourself 6

Underline the adverbs in the following sentences:

- (a) The tailor sewed the evening gown quickly.
- (b) The customer waited patiently for his turn at the cash counter.
- (c) She walked fast.

1.6 The Preposition

A preposition usually comes before a noun, pronoun or noun phrase, and links nouns, pronouns and phrases to other words in a sentence. It shows the position of the noun or pronoun.



Tip

The word 'preposition' includes the word 'position'. Hence, to remember what a preposition is, remember that it signifies the 'position' of the noun or pronoun.



Example

The book is **on** the table.

The preposition here shows the position of the noun, i.e. 'table'.

The prepositions
in the sentences
are made **bold**

Other examples are:

The book is **beneath** the table.

The book is leaning **against** the table.

The book is **beside** the table.

She held the book **over** the table.

She read the book **during** class.

A list of commonly used prepositions is given below:

about	outside
above	over
across	since
after	through
against	throughout
around	till
at	to
before	toward
behind	under
below	until
beneath	up
beside	upon
besides	with
between	without
beyond	into



Test Yourself 7

Underline the preposition in the following sentences:

- The children climbed over the wall.
- There was rejoicing throughout the land when the government was defeated.
- The spider crawled slowly along the roof.

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1.7 The Conjunction

A conjunction is a word that joins two words, phrases or sentences together. Examples of conjunctions are 'and', 'but', 'because', 'or' etc.



Example

It is a small **but** easy-to-use kitchen.

The conjunction 'but' joins the words 'small' + 'practical'

The gold is hidden at the beach **and** by the mountains.

'And' joins the phrase 'at the beach' with the phrase 'by the mountains'

A little sincerity is a dangerous thing. A great deal of it is absolutely fatal.

A little sincerity is a dangerous thing, **and** a great deal of it is absolutely fatal.

'And' joins the first sentence and the second sentence to make a new, longer sentence

Some commonly used conjunctions are:

and	that	but
or	as	if
when	than	because
while	where	after
so	though	since
until	whether	before
although	nor	like
once	unless	
except	now	



Test Yourself 8

Fill in the blanks with appropriate conjunctions.

- Anna had learned to drive, _____ she felt more independent.
- The manager lost his job _____ he committed fraud.
- Ginny had to begin her project all over again _____ her computer crashed.

1.8 The Interjection

An interjection is an exclamatory word or expression that conveys surprise or another strong emotion, and is usually used alone and punctuated with an exclamation point.



Example

Here are three sentences that use interjections.

- Ouch**, that hurt!
- Oh no!** I forgot that the exam was today.
- Hey!** Put that down!

Here are some commonly used interjections:

oh!	gosh!	wow!	good!
Hurray!	ouch!	hey!	yikes!



Test Yourself 9

Write a sentence each with the following interjections:

- (a) Wow!
- (b) Hurray!
- (c) Oh no!

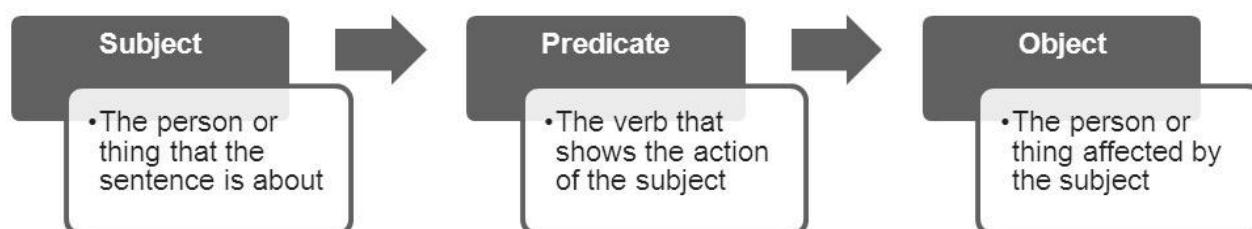
2. Describe how to construct correct sentences.

[Learning Outcome b]

In the earlier learning outcome, we studied the parts of a sentence – the 8 parts of speech. In this learning outcome, we will see how to use the parts of speech to construct meaningful sentences. A sentence makes sense only when the parts are placed in the correct order. This is known as the 'word order'.

2.1 The basic structure of a simple sentence is shown in the diagram below:

Diagram 2: Sentence Structure



Let us study each of the parts of the structure in detail.

1. The Subject

The subject is the person or thing the sentence is 'about'. Often (but not always) it will be the first part of the sentence. The subject will usually be a noun phrase (a noun and the words, such as adjectives, that modify it). Steps to find the subject:

- i. Determine the verb in the sentence.
- ii. Ask a wh...? question of the verb (a wh...? question is 'when', 'where', 'what' etc.)
- iii. The answer to the above question will be the subject.



Example

Consider the following simple sentence:

David works hard.

Let us follow the given steps.

- i. **Determine the verb in the sentence:** the verb is 'works.'
- ii. **Ask a wh...? question of the verb:** 'who works?'
- iii. **The answer to the above question will be the subject:** the answer is David.

Therefore, David is the subject of the sentence.

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2. The Predicate

In traditional grammar, the remainder of the sentence apart from the subject is the predicate. A predicate tells us what the subject does or did. However, in modern grammar, the predicate only comprises the verb and the supporting / helping verbs.



Example

Michael Schumacher drove the race car.

Subject: Michael Schumacher

Predicate (traditional view): drove

Predicate (modern view): drove the race car

3. The Object

The object is the person or thing affected by the action described in the verb. Not all sentences have an object.



Example

Continuing the above example

Consider two sentences:

Michael Schumacher drove.

Michael Schumacher drove the race car.

In the first sentence, there is no object, only the subject: Michael Schumacher; and the predicate: drove.

In the second sentence, the subject is 'Michael Schumacher', the predicate is 'drove', and the object is 'the race car'.

There are two types of objects: direct and indirect.

The direct object: it refers to a person or thing affected by the action of the verb.

The indirect object: it refers to a person or thing who receives the direct object.



Example

He opened the door.

Here, the door is the direct object as it is the thing being affected by the verb to open.

I gave him the book.

Here, 'him (he)' is the indirect object as 'he' is the beneficiary of the action.



Test Yourself 10

Identify the subject, the predicate and the object:

- (a) We went to the theatre.
- (b) Mary and I played tennis.
- (c) She ordered a coffee and cake.

2.2 Types of sentences

Every sentence is not of the same type. Some sentences are simple and short, and therefore easy to understand. However, when more information that is detailed is to be conveyed, a simple sentence will not serve the purpose. Hence, compound and complex sentences are used, which are not as easy to understand, but need to be used to get the information across. Let us study the types of sentences in detail.

Sentences are differentiated based on the number of clauses they contain. **A clause can be defined as a set of subject and its corresponding verb that conveys some meaning even when standing on its own.** A clause can be of two types:

Independent clause: independent clauses are usually complete sentences. They contain a subject and a verb, and convey meaning independently. In short, they are complete sentences. E.g. 'the car door opened' is an independent clause.

Dependant clause: dependent clauses, (also known as subordinate clauses) also contain a subject and a verb, but they do not convey meaning independently. In some cases, they may convey meaning independently; however, they need to rest of the sentence to convey the intended meaning. E.g. 'because it was not locked properly' is a dependant clause.

Two main criteria can be used to categorise sentences, namely clause types and function. Considering the clause type criterion, there are three main types of sentences:

1. Simple sentences
2. Compound sentences
3. Complex sentences

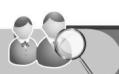
We will study each of them below.

1. Simple Sentences

A simple sentence **contains a single subject and predicate**. It describes only one thing, idea or question, and has only one verb. In other words, it contains only one clause - the independent (main) clause.

Let us look at some of the characteristics of a simple sentence:

- (a) Any independent clause can stand alone as a sentence. It has a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought.

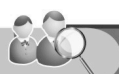


Example

Jason reads.

This is an independent clause, which is also a simple sentence.

- (b) Adding adjectives, adverbs and/or prepositional phrases to a simple sentence does not change it into a complex sentence.



Example

The black dog with the yellow collar always barks loudly.

Here, if you omit the adjectives, adverbs etc., the main sentence that is left is 'The dog barks', which is essentially a simple sentence.

- (c) Even if you join several nouns with a conjunction, or several verbs with a conjunction, it remains a simple sentence.



Example

Timmy and Bruno barked and growled loudly.

Here, two nouns (Timmy and Bruno) and two verbs (barked and growled) are joined with a conjunction 'and'. However, this is still a simple sentence.

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2. Compound Sentences

Compound sentences are made up of two or more simple sentences that are combined using a conjunction such as **and, or, but etc.** In other words, they are made up of two or more independent clauses joined together with a co-ordinating conjunction.



Tip

Coordinating conjunctions are conjunctions that are used to join two equally important items. You can easily remember the most commonly used coordinating conjunctions with the help of the mnemonic "FAN BOYS":

For
And
Nor
But
Or
Yet
So



Example

I went to the grocery store, but my friend did not come.

This is a compound sentence because:

It has two simple sentences / independent clauses that can stand alone as sentences: first "I went to the grocery store" and the second "my friend did not come".

The two clauses are joined together with the coordinating conjunction 'but'.

3. Complex Sentences

Complex sentences describe more than one thing or idea and **have more than one verb in them**. They are made up of two or more clauses consisting of an independent clause (that can stand by itself) and a dependent (i.e. subordinate) clause (which cannot stand by itself).



Example

Mary left when Joe arrived at the office.

This is a complex sentence because:

It contains two clauses, one dependent and one independent. 'Mary left' is the independent clause and 'when Joe arrived at the office' is the dependent clause.

It contains two verbs – 'left' and 'arrived'.

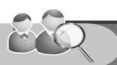
Considering the function criterion, there are four types of sentences:

1. Declarative
2. Interrogative
3. Imperative
4. Exclamatory

Let us look at each of these below:

1. A declarative sentence

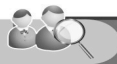
A declarative sentence is sometimes known as a statement. It is used to give or convey information. It always ends with a full stop.

**Example**

I took some money out of the bank.

2. An interrogative sentence

This sentence is used for asking questions or making requests. They normally end with a question mark.

**Example**

Does she bring relevant material?

This kind of interrogative sentences is used in asking for information.

May I come in?

This kind of interrogative sentences is used in making requests.

3. An imperative sentence

An imperative sentence gives advice, instructions or command.

**Example**

Consider the following examples:

An invitation: Plan not to miss.

A command: Sit down; shut up.

An instruction: Turn left to the supermarket.

**Tip**

Imperatives do not have an explicitly stated subject in writing, as in "Do your chores.". The subject is understood from the context of interaction.

3 An exclamatory sentence

This sentence presents an exclamation. It normally ends with an exclamation mark (!).

Examples

Wow, that is exciting!

What a contest!

Oh, I hope your poem wins a prize!

What an exciting journey!

What great parents I have!

**Test Yourself 11**

1. Identify whether the following sentences are simple, compound or complex, and justify your answer.

- (a) Jill waited for the bus.
- (b) Jill waited for the bus, but it was late.
- (c) While Jill waited for the bus, she thought about other options to travel.

2. Attempt the following exercise according to the instructions given in the brackets.

- (a) Does she work hard in her studies? (Change it into a declarative sentence.)
- (b) We did semester examinations last month. (Change it into an interrogative sentence.)
- (c) You can open the door. (Change it into a command.)
- (d) I have great parents. (Change it into an exclamation sentence.)

3. Identify common sentence errors

[Learning Outcome c]

As studied in the earlier learning outcomes, each sentence has self-contained meaning. Sentences are put together in a sequence, one after another, and meaning should flow from one sentence to the next, carrying the concept forward clearly. If you do not use correct grammar and punctuation, or if the sentences are too long and complicated, what you are trying to say will not be clear. Therefore, it is very important to identify and learn to correct sentence errors.

Sentence errors are a hindrance if you want to write clear and interesting sentences. One should always aim at writing without any errors in order to communicate without any confusion. Hence, it is crucial that these errors are avoided in order to provide the reader with flawless sentences.

Some common sentence errors are listed below:

1. The sentence fragment
2. Lack of subject-verb agreement
3. Lack of pronoun-reference agreement
4. Lack of parallel structure

1. Sentence fragments

A fragment is an incomplete sentence which in turn makes it grammatically incorrect. Sentence fragments cause problems because they are incoherent and confuse the reader. Typically, a sentence fragment does not contain one or more of the essential parts of a sentence, commonly, the subject or the verb. E.g. 'Will not go there': here, the subject is missing in the sentence; hence it is a sentence fragment.

There are three ways to determine whether a sentence is complete:

a) Identify the subject

We have seen how to identify the subject of a sentence in learning outcome 2 of this study guide. If the subject is missing, then the sentence is a fragment of some whole sentence.



Example

Consider the two examples below.

Rita thought about leaving the room.

Thought about leaving the room.

The first sentence above is complete, because it contains both a subject (i.e. Rita) and a verb (i.e. thought).

The second sentence is a fragment, because there is no identifiable subject. The sentence is missing a subject that answers the question, "who or what thought about leaving?"

b) Identify the verb

We have studied verbs in learning outcome 1 of this study guide. If there is no identifiable verb in a sentence, the sentence is only a fragment.



Example

Many scientists think in strange ways. Einstein, for example.

The above example has one complete sentence followed by a fragment. "Einstein, for example" is a fragment because it contains no verb. "Einstein" is the subject (he is the one doing something), but the rest of the sentence does not tell the reader what he is doing.

c) Look for certain typical words

Some words introduce a particular thought into the sentence which requires a follow up phrase to complete the sentence. These words are sometimes known as 'danger' words or "cliff-hanger" words. Commonly used danger words are: after, unless, although, how, as if, when, because, where, before, while, if, until, once, so that, since, whether.



Example

Consider the examples below. These are all incomplete sentences.

"If you come home."

"When it rains."

"Because he is mean."

The danger words above are "if," "when" and "because." These words require a follow-up phrase to complete the thought.



Test Yourself 12

Identify the errors in the following sentences and correct the sentences:

- (a) Working on his assignment all day.
- (b) Because Jason was new in the city and had not been to any of the shops.
- (c) Richard, here, the bottle.

2. Subject-verb agreement

The subject and verb need to both be either singular or plural in order for the sentence to be grammatically correct. They should also have the same tense. That is, if the subject is singular, the verb should also be in singular form (and vice versa).

To ensure that there is subject-verb agreement, identify the main subject and verb. Then check to see if they are both plural or singular.



Example

The group of students are complaining about grades.

This is an incorrect sentence as the main subject in this sentence is "group," which is singular and the main verb is "are complaining," which is plural. This is a sentence error. The correct sentence is "The group of students is complaining about grades."

3. Pronoun-reference agreement

A variant of the subject-verb agreement is the pronoun-reference agreement. All the pronouns should agree with the subject, and also with one another.



Example

Employers must be careful about discriminating against its employees.

The sentence is incorrect because the subject here is "employers," which is plural, but the pronoun, "its," is singular. The correct sentence is: "Employers must be careful about discriminating against their employees."

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Test Yourself 13

Identify the errors in the following sentences and correct the sentences.

- (a) One of my friends are performing in the play.
- (b) Emma and I am going shopping.
- (c) The auditors must ensure that she has followed all necessary procedures.

4. Parallel structure

The parallel structure talks about different parts of a sentence and the extent to which they match each other. The two phrases or parts, when used in a single sentence, should be consistent with one another in their wording and the form. Having a parallel structure is important because it enhances the readability of the sentence and makes the idea behind the sentence, clearer.



Example

The new CEO is a smart strategist, an effective manager, and works hard.

The sentence is incorrect because "a smart strategist" and "an effective manager" are consistent with one another, but not consistent with "works hard."

It can be corrected keeping in mind the parallel structure as follows:

"The new coach is a smart strategist, an effective manager, and a hard worker."



Test Yourself 14

Correct these incorrect sentences:

- (a) On weekends, Arnie likes to eat, to watch movies, and going swimming.
- (b) She learnt how to study the subject and making notes.

Answers to Test Yourself

Answer to TY 1

- (a) **Kenya is a proper noun because it is the name of a place.**
- (b) **Book** is a common noun. The Bible is a proper noun because it is the name of a book.
- (c) Pencils is a common noun. Xpetra Ltd is a proper noun because it is the name of a company.

Answer to TY 2

The correct option is **B**.

Patriotism because it is an emotion, which has no physical existence; i.e. it is intangible.

Answer to TY 3

- (a) I like coffee.
- (b) The protestors threw stones at the politicians.
- (c) Birds fly.

Answer to TY 4

- (a) Sue requested John to keep quiet. **He** did not listen to **her** and continued talking loudly.
- (b) Jill was watching TV. **It** suddenly conked off.

Note: The nouns in the first sentence are not replaced with pronouns because it is not advisable to write pronouns in the introductory first sentence because then the communication will lose clarity. Therefore, only the nouns in the second sentence are replaced with pronouns.

Answer to TY 5

- (a) An old box sat on the antique table.
- (b) The picturesque village was dotted with pretty flowers.
- (c) The yellow balloons floated over the vast city.

Answer to TY 6

- (a) The tailor sewed the evening gown quickly.
- (b) The customer waited patiently for his turn at the cash counter.
- (c) She walked fast.

Answer to TY 7

- (a) The children climbed over the wall.
- (b) There was rejoicing throughout the land when the government was defeated.
- (c) The spider crawled slowly along the roof.

Answer to TY 8

- (a) Anna had learned to drive, so she felt more independent.
- (b) The manager lost his job because he committed fraud.
- (c) Ginny had to begin her project all over again when her computer crashed.

Answer to TY 9

- (a) **Wow!** That play was marvellous!
- (b) **Hurray!** We finally won the contract!
- (c) **Oh no!** I burnt the toast.

Answer to TY 10

- (a) We went to the theatre.

Subject – we
 Predicate – went
 Object – theatre

- (b) Mary and I played tennis.

Subjects – Mary, I
 Predicate – played
 Object – tennis

- (c) She ordered a coffee and cake.

Subject – she
 P – ordered
 O – coffee, cake

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Answer to TY 11

Question 1

- (a) **Simple**. The sentence has only one subject (i.e. Jill) and predicate (i.e. bus).
- (b) **Compound**. The sentence contains a conjunction (but) that is connecting two simple sentences: "Jill waited for the bus" and "It was late".
- (c) **Complex**. The sentence has two clauses, one dependent: "While Jill waited for the bus" and one independent "she thought about other options to travel". It also has two verbs – 'waited' and 'thought'.

Question 2

- (a) She works hard in her studies.
- (b) Did we do semester examinations last month?
- (c) Open the door.
- (d) What great parents I have!

Answer to TY 12

- (a) This is a sentence fragment as the sentence lacks a subject. The correct sentence will be "He was working on his assignment all day."
- (b) This is an incomplete sentence, containing a 'danger word' – i.e. because. The correct sentence will be "Jason was new in the city and had not been to any of the shops."
- (c) This is a sentence fragment as it lacks a verb. The correct sentence will be "Richard, here, catch the bottle".

Answer to TY 13

- (a) There is lack of subject verb agreement here. The correct sentence is "One of my friends is performing in the play."
- (b) There is lack of subject verb agreement here. The correct sentence is "Emma and I are going shopping".
- (c) There is lack of pronoun reference agreement here. The correct sentence is "The auditor must ensure that she has followed all necessary procedures."

Answer to TY 14

- (a) On weekends. Arnie likes to eat, watch movies, and relax.
- (b) She learnt how to study the subject and make notes.

Self Examination Questions

Question 1

Identify the part of speech which each of the underlined words in the following sentences represents:

- (a) We went to the park on Tuesday.

- A Noun
B Pronoun
C Verb
D Adjective

- (b) We can go today or we can go tomorrow.

- A Conjunction
B Pronoun
C Preposition
D Adjective

- (c) Oh no! I lost my wallet.

- A Conjunction
B Interjection
C Preposition
D Adjective

(d) Tanya speaks Japanese fluently.

- A Noun
- B Pronoun
- C Verb
- D Adverb

(e) The baby cried all night.

- A Noun
- B Pronoun
- C Verb
- D Adjective

(f) Alexander was the head of the finance department.

- A Proper noun
- B Common noun
- C Verb
- D Adjective

(g) Jeana, sits beside me.

- A Conjunction
- B Interjection
- C Preposition
- D Adjective

Question 2

Choose the correct pronoun provided and fill in the blanks in sentences below:
(whom, what, whose, where, who)

- (a) These are the men.....clothes were burnt last week.
- (b) The man with..... I want to write the proposal is not good at all.
- (c) I don't know..... this man is going.
- (d) Focus onmany people say about corruption.
- (e) This is the lecturer assisted me to do this assignment.

(November 2012)

Question 3

Write the singular forms of the following words:

- (a) Wolves
- (b) Geese
- (c) Feet
- (d) Deer
- (e) Hooves

(November 2012)

Question 4

In the following sentences, identify the subject, object and predicate:

- (a) The vandals are destroying the park.
- (b) Professor Lynn is teaching the students.

Question 5

Identify the types of the following sentences and justify your choice:

- (a) Because the old woman had nothing else to do, she was sleeping.
- (b) After they finished their work, Jill and Brenna went to the club.
- (c) Alex played Chess, and Suzie went shopping.

Answers to Self-Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

- (a) The correct option is **B**.
- (b) The correct option is **A**.
- (c) The correct option is **B**.
- (d) The correct option is **D**.
- (e) The correct option is **C**.
- (f) The correct option is **A**.
- (g) The correct option is **C**.

Answer to SEQ 2

- (a) Whose
- (b) Whom
- (c) Where
- (d) What
- (e) Who

Answer to SEQ 3

- (a) Wolf
- (b) Goose
- (c) Foot
- (d) Deer
- (e) Hoof

Answer to SEQ 4

- (a)

Vandals: Subject

'are destroying' – Predicate

'park' - Object

- (b)

'Professor Lynn – Subject

'is teaching' – Predicate

'the students' – Object

Answer to SEQ 5

- (a) Complex. The sentence contains two verbs – 'was sleeping' and 'had', and consists of one independent and one dependent clause.
- (b) Complex. The two verbs are – 'finished' and 'went', and there is one independent and one dependent clause.
- (c) Compound. The sentence has a conjunction 'and' that is joining two simple sentences.

STUDY GUIDE B2: BASICS OF PUNCTUATION AND PARAGRAPHS

■ Get Through Intro

In order to understand any language completely, you need to understand all of its components that pertain to writing and reading the language. In English, using the correct punctuations as well as writing effective and logical paragraphs is very important. It makes for better readability and adds meaning to the subject matter.

Punctuation marks are as important as the sentence itself. In this chapter, you will learn about the various types of punctuations in detail and their uses. You will also learn how to write and structure paragraphs to enhance comprehension of your writing.

■ Learning Outcomes

- a) Explain how punctuations used effectively.
- b) Describe how to develop paragraphs effectively.

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1. Explain how punctuations used effectively.

[Learning Outcome a]

Sentences are the building blocks used to communicate meaning. However, in written communication, we cannot add in verbal cues to enable the sender to get the intended meaning across. This can sometimes lead to errors in interpreting a particular sentence. To avoid this, the English language has a set of signs and symbols known as punctuation, to be used in written communication, to show how a sentence should be read, where there should be a pause etc. and makes the meaning clear. In this learning outcome, we will study each of these symbols in detail.

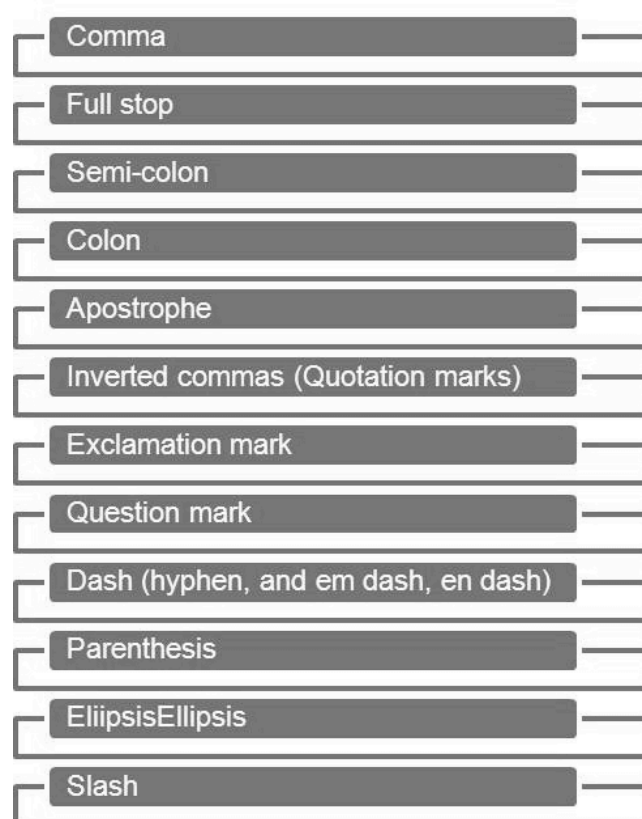


Definition

Punctuation is the system of signs or symbols which are used to show sentence structure, i.e. how a sentence is constructed and how it should be read.

There are 12 punctuation marks that are commonly used, which are shown in the diagram below.

Diagram 1: Punctuation marks



Tip

Every sentence should have at least one punctuation mark, which is at the end – be it a full stop, exclamation mark or question mark.



Important

Each of the punctuation marks has a number of uses. In this Study Guide, we will discuss only the main cases where the punctuation marks are used.

1.1 The Comma

The comma is denoted by the symbol ','. It marks a break between different parts of a sentence. Commas make the sentences and their meaning, much more clear by combining and separating words, phrases, and clauses.

Commas are used mainly in the following situations:

1. Using commas in lists

Often, you need to write a list in a sentence. When there are three or more items in a list, a comma should be placed between the different items, except before the last item, as in the example below. The last item is separated using the word 'and'.



Example

'I ate a heavy breakfast of scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage and toast.'

Here, 'scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage and toast' is the list that is included in the sentence, and each item of the list is separated with a comma, except for the last item, i.e. 'toast', which is separated using the word 'and'.

2. Using commas in direct speech

When a writer quotes a speaker's words exactly as they were spoken, this is known as direct speech. There are a number of ways in which direct speech is written. Let us discuss the different ways and how the commas are placed in each case.

- (a) If **the piece of direct speech comes after the information about who is speaking**, you need to use a comma to introduce the direct speech. The comma is inserted in front of the opening quotation mark ("). (Quotation marks are discussed in detail later in this Study Guide.)

Note that the final quotation mark is placed **after** the full stop at the end of the sentence.

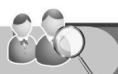


Example

Steve replied, "No problem."

This is an example of direct speech, and the words in quotation marks (") are quoting Steve's words exactly as they were spoken. In such cases, there has to be a comma just before the quotation marks are placed. In this example, note that the comma is placed after the word 'replied' and before the opening quotation mark.

- (b) You also need to use a comma at the end of a piece of direct speech, if **the speech comes before the information about who is speaking**. In this case, the comma goes inside the quotation mark.



Example

"No problem," Steve replied.

In this case, the comma is placed after quoting Steve's words exactly as they were said. Here, the comma is placed right after the word 'problem', **inside** the quotation marks.

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- (c) **Direct speech is often broken up by the information about who is speaking.** In these cases, you need a comma to end the first piece of speech (inside the quotation mark) and another comma before the second piece (before the quotation mark):



Example

“No problem,” Steve replied, “you can take my help.”

Here, the words ‘Steve replied’ are breaking up the direct speech. Here, two commas are placed. The first comma denotes the end the first part of direct speech and is placed right after the word ‘problem’, inside the quotation marks. The second comma denotes the start of the second part of the direct speech and is placed right after the word ‘replied’, before the quotation marks start.

3. Using commas to separate clauses

Commas are used to separate clauses in a complex sentence; to separate introductory words and phrases that come before the main clause.



Example

To qualify for the course, you need to clear an entrance exam.

Here, the main clause (i.e. it can be a whole sentence in itself) is “you need to clear an entrance exam”. The words ‘to qualify for the course’ are the introductory words that come before the main sentence and are separated by a comma.

Other examples are:

Studying the report carefully, the manager decided to place the order.
Although he was interested, he couldn’t sign up for the course.

4. Using commas to mark off parts of a sentence

Commas are used to separate a part of a sentence that is an optional ‘aside’ and not part of the main statement. The optional words are words providing clarification or additional information not essential to complete the sentence, and without which, the sentence still makes sense.



Example

The company, which introduced product Alpha, is winding up.

Here, the words ‘which introduced product Alpha’ provide additional information which is not essential to complete the sentence, and without which, the sentence still makes sense.

Other examples:

His latest film, Calypso Dreams, opens next month.
John, the finance director, quit his job in early November.



Tip

If you aren’t sure whether you’ve used a pair of commas correctly, try removing the information enclosed by the commas altogether, and then see if the sentence is still understandable.

In the sentence from above example ‘The company, which introduced product Alpha, is winding up’, if you remove the words enclosed by the commas, the sentence will read ‘The company is winding up’, which makes sense; therefore, the pair of commas is used correctly.



Test Yourself 1

Add commas wherever required.

- (a) The bag was filled with fruit vegetables toilet rolls cereals and cartons of milk.
- (b) Even though the Martins lost the game they did not lose hope.
- (c) "I don't know " he said "it wasn't my fault."

1.2 The Full Stop

The full stop is denoted by the symbol '.' and is used to end a sentence. The full stop indicates that a point has been made and that you are about to move on to further explanations or a related point.

Apart from its main purpose of signifying the end of a sentence, it is also used to indicate the abbreviation (i.e. the short form) of commonly used words, and in email and website addresses.



Example

The event will be held on 15 Sept. at the Waterfront Restaurant.

The short form of September is written with a full stop at the end

Email addresses and websites use full stops

Contact Beth at bethgreen@oup.com or visit www.oup.com for further information.



Test Yourself 2

Add a full stop wherever required:

- (a) Julie stopped in the middle of the road
- (b) She was born on 15 Dec in St Mary's hospital
- (c) She liked to dance, sing, write, play etc

1.3 The Semi-colon

The semicolon is denoted by the symbol ";". The main task of the semicolon is to mark a break that is stronger than a comma but not as final as a full stop. It is mainly used to:

separate two main clauses of a sentence that are closely linked to each other; such that if they are made into separate sentences, the meaning will be hampered; and the two clauses could stand on their own as two separate sentences.



Example

We set out at dawn; the weather looked promising.

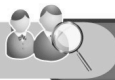
Here, the two clauses are 'We set out at dawn', and 'the weather looked promising', which could stand on their own as two separate sentences.

These two clauses are closely linked to each other in meaning.

This sentence conveys that the weather looked good and they noticed this when they started at dawn if made into separate sentences, this interlinking of the meaning might be lost on the reader

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Apart from the main use mentioned above, the semi-colon can also be used to assemble detailed lists. As explained in section 1.1, lists are separated by commas. However, sometimes, the lists are complex or detailed in nature. Putting in so many commas compromises the understandability of the sentence. Therefore, a combination of commas and semi-colons are used, as shown in the example below.



Example

The conference was attended by delegates from Paris, France; Houston, United States; London, UK; Stockholm, Sweden; Colombo, Sri Lanka; and Mumbai, India.

The above sentence contains a detailed list, which includes the names of cities as well as the names of countries where the cities are located. Without the semi-colon, if only the commas would have been used, it would have created confusion as the reader would have taken some time to understand the difference between cities and countries.



Test Yourself 3

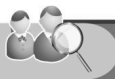
Insert the semi-colon wherever necessary in the sentences below.

- (a) This conference has people who have come from Boise, Idaho Los Angeles, California and Nashville, Tennessee.
- (b) Call me tomorrow I will give you my answer then.
- (c) I have paid my dues therefore, I expect all the privileges listed in the contract.

1.4 The Colon

The colon is denoted by the symbol ':', and is mainly used in the following cases:

- Within a sentence: here, it makes a very pointed pause between two clauses.
- To precede a list of items, whether horizontal or vertical
- To denote time
- To denote ratios



Example

He bought some grocery items from the store: milk, eggs, bread, flour and biscuits.

Colon before vertical list

Colon before horizontal list

He bought some grocery items from the store which were:

milk
eggs
bread
flour
biscuits

To denote time

Sheila has planned a presentation at 2:30 PM.

To denote ratio

The gearing ratio of Raffel Plc is 1:2.



Tip

Because a colon is not like a full stop, and does not end the sentence, the first letter of the word following the colon should not be capitalised. E.g. in the first sentence from the above example, the word following the colon, i.e. 'milk' is written with a lowercase first letter 'm'.



Test Yourself 4

Insert a colon wherever appropriate:

- (a) The names of the contestants George, Martin, Keri and Rachel.
- (b) Some Indian spices in the recipe Clove, Cardamom, Star Anise and Bay leaf.

1.5 The Apostrophe

The apostrophe is denoted by the symbol (') and is used mainly in the following cases:

1. To indicate the omission of a letter or letters from a word
2. To indicate the possessive case
3. To make the plurals of numbers, letters and abbreviations

Let us study each of the above cases in detail.

1. Omission of letters from a word

In informal language, a few words are sometimes omitted to abbreviate certain pairs of words. An apostrophe is used in the place of the missing letters to denote that the words have been abbreviated.



Example

I will leave for the meeting early because it is better to reach there early.

In informal language, pairs of words like 'I will' and 'it is' are shortened as shown below:

I'll leave for the meeting early because it's better to reach there early.

Similarly, see below for more examples of such abbreviations:

I'm - short for **I am**
he'll - short for **he will**
she'd - short for **she had** or **she would**
it's hot - short for **it is hot**
didn't - short for **did not**

2. The possessive case

An apostrophe is used to show that a thing or person belongs or relates to someone or something.

Rules for possessive case

- (a) **Singular nouns**: add an apostrophe plus the letter, 's'.



Example

We travelled in Ben's car.

Other examples are:

'Ben's car' indicates that the car belonged to Ben.

The dog's tail wagged rapidly.
 Rita's mother was very ill.

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Tip

With words that end with the letter 's', you can make them possessive in two ways:

- (i) Add an apostrophe plus 's': e.g. 'He borrowed Charles's book.'
- (ii) Add only an apostrophe: e.g. 'He borrowed Charles' book.'

Both ways are acceptable.

(b) Plural nouns: add an apostrophe after the s.



Example

The mansion was converted into a girls' school.

Here, 'girls' is plural, so we make possessive by adding an 's' at the end of the word, i.e. after the 's'. Remember:

Girl's – is the singular form

Girls' – is the plural form



Important

For plural nouns that do not end in 's', add an apostrophe plus an 's'.

E.g. 'He employs 14 people at his men's clothing store.'

The plural of 'man' is 'men', which is not made by adding an 's' to the singular form. In other words, the plural of 'man' is not 'mans', but 'men'. In such cases, in the absence of an 's' at the end, we add an apostrophe as well as an 's' to make it possessive.

(c) Making the plurals of numbers, letters and abbreviations

Apostrophes are used to make the plurals of numbers, letters and short forms when the meaning would be unclear. However, when the meaning is clear in spite of an absence of an apostrophe, do not put an apostrophe.



Example

'Please dot your i's'

An apostrophe is used here to make the plural of the letter 'i'.

Here, if you do not put an apostrophe, the reader will read it as 'Please dot your is', which doesn't make sense.

In the 1990s, the use of the internet was not widespread.

Here, the meaning of the word '1990s' is perfectly clear, so you should not put an apostrophe before 's'. That is, do not write it as "1990's".



Tip

Its and it's

These two words can cause a lot of confusion. Many people are uncertain about whether to use an apostrophe.

These are the rules to remember:

(i) **Its** means 'belonging to it'. E.g.:

The dog wagged its tail.

Each case is judged on its own merits.

(ii) **it's** is the abbreviation of 'it is' or 'it has':

It's been a long day.

It's cold outside.



Test Yourself 5

Insert apostrophes at appropriate places in the following sentences.

- (a) Who's the party's candidate for vice president this year?
- (b) My neighbour's car is an old one, and its going to fall apart soon.
- (c) In three weeks' time well have to begin school again.
- (d) Didn't you hear that they're leaving tomorrow?

1.6 The Inverted Commas

As discussed earlier in paragraph 1.1 of this Study Guide, when a writer quotes a speaker's words exactly as they were spoken, this is known as direct speech. Inverted commas, also known as quotation marks or speech marks, are used to mark out such direct speech from the rest of the text.



Tip

Quotation marks are denoted by the symbol ("...") known as double quotation marks, as well as ('...') known as single quotation marks. Using either of these is a style choice, which is usually country-specific, i.e. it will depend on which country the writer / reader lives in.



Example

As shown in the examples in paragraph 1.1 of this Study Guide, direct speech can be written in the following ways:

Steve replied, "No problem."

"No problem," Steve replied.

"No problem," Steve replied, "you can take my help."

The text enclosed in quotation marks quotes Steve's words exactly as they were spoken.



Test Yourself 6

Insert inverted commas where required:

- (a) That, he said, is nonsense.
- (b) What is his name? she asked.

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1.7 The Exclamation Mark

The exclamation mark is denoted by the symbol '!', and indicates a strong feeling within a sentence, such as fear, anger or love. The exclamation mark also signifies the end of a sentence; therefore, you do not need to add a full stop at the end.



Important

An exclamation mark should be used only once. Writing a series of exclamation marks (e.g. excellent!!!), though commonly used in informal writing, is not acceptable in formal writing.

The main uses of the exclamation mark are to end sentences that express:

- an exclamation (often denoting fear, anger etc.)
- direct speech that represents something shouted or spoken very loudly
- something that amuses the writer
- for interjections



Example

Ow! That hurt!

An interjection

An exclamation

Look up there!

To indicate loudly spoken words

Included on the list of banned items was 'cranky kids'!

This indicates that the writer was amused



Test Yourself 7

Insert an exclamation mark where necessary:

- (a) 1.He exclaimed: "What a fantastic house you have"
- (b) 2."Good heavens" he said, "Is that true?"
- (c) "Oh When are you going?"

1.8 The Question Mark

The question mark is denoted by the symbol '?' and simply indicates that a sentence contains a question. Just like the exclamation mark, the question mark also signifies the end of a sentence; therefore, you do not need to add a full stop at the end.

You **should not use** a question mark at the end of a question in reported speech, i.e. when the writer is 'reporting' what someone else said.



Example

Have you sent the report on project NXMB?
Do you feel you are the right person for the job?

Sentences containing questions, having a question mark at the end

He asked if I had sent the report on project NXMB .
She asked if he felt he was the right person for the job.

Reported speech without a question mark



Test Yourself 8

Add a question mark if necessary.

- (a) Does this camera belong to you
- (b) She asked whether his stomach was still hurting
- (c) What have you done

1.9 The Dash (hyphen, em-dash and en-dash)

There are three types of dashes that are used, as discussed below:

(a) Hyphens

These are used to join two words in order to link them, or to separate the syllables of a word. It is denoted by the symbol ‘-’



Example

The product has an **un-American** look to it.

My **ex-boss** was a very good manager.

In the above examples, a hyphen is used to separate the syllables of the word.

The goods are transported using a **twenty-ton** lorry.

She was a **fifty-year-old** woman.

In the above examples, a hyphen is used to join two words in order to link them.

(b) Em-dash

An **em-dash** is generally used where commas are used, to separate phrases—or a word—in sentences. It is denoted by the symbol ‘—’



Example

It's quite astonishing that Jerry—the unluckiest man I know—won the lottery.

Here, the em-dashes can be replaced by a pair of commas.

(c) En-dash

It is used to depict a range. It is generally used to replace the preposition “to”, and is denoted by the symbol ‘–’



Example

The years **1990 – 1999** were the most wonderful years of my life.

This shows a range of numbers: from 1990 to 1999. Notice how you can replace the en-dash by the word ‘to’.

Refer to pages 31–39.

Similarly, this also shows a range of numbers: from 31 to 39. You can replace the en-dash by the word ‘to’.

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Important

Remember, the symbols used to depict all three dashes are distinct from each other. The hyphen is the shortest dash, the en-dash is a little longer than the hyphen, and the em-dash is the longest. Even if you place a dash correctly but make an error in the symbol used, you could lose marks.

Also, note the following:

The hyphen is not surrounded by spaces on either side (e.g. ex-boss).

The em-dash is also not surrounded by spaces on either side (e.g. ... **Jerry—the unluckiest man I know—won...**).

The en-dash is surrounded by spaces on either side (e.g. **1990 – 1999**).



Test Yourself 9

Insert the appropriate dash wherever necessary and name the type of dash:

- (a) Her anti-Christian sentiments kept her away from the church.
- (b) His name is Tom the last animal of his species.
- (c) Read pages 15 20.

1.10 Parenthesis

A parenthesis, also known as the bracket, is generally used to enclose matter within it that adds to the matter that is outside it, but is usually unrelated to it and is of a completely different subject.

It is denoted by the symbol ()



Example

The President (of the opposition party) prepared for the debate.

Here, parenthesis is used to add supplementary information

They would have their claim(s) rejected.

Here, it is used to denote singular or plural when both may apply.

National Education Association (NEA)

Here, it is used to show abbreviations



Test Yourself 10

Use Parenthesis wherever required:

- (a) My sister her name is Kathy studies in the U.S.A.
- (b) The American Automobile Association AAA has millions of members.

1.11 Ellipsis

An ellipsis is a series of three full stops (...) can be used to indicate where a section of a quotation has been omitted, when it is not relevant to the text. It can also be used to show an incomplete idea or thought – where the writer trails off and does not finish a sentence.



Example

Mary thought and thought ... and then thought some more.
 "I'm wondering ..." Mary said, bemused.
 "The boy was happy... at the start of his summer holiday."



Tip

The most common mistake made by writers is to use more than three full stops as ellipsis (e.g. I don't know.....). Do not use a long line of full stops!



Test Yourself 11

Insert ellipsis as appropriate:

- (a) "If only she had Oh, it doesn't matter now.
- (b) As to what we do next that I'm unsure of.

1.12 The Slash

A slash (denoted by '/') is used to replace the word "or" where it indicates a choice. It is also widely used to write dates, fractions and some abbreviations.



Example

Male/Female

22/4/1993 (dates)

10/5 (fraction in mathematics)

N/A (abbreviation for "not applicable")



Test Yourself 12

Insert a slash wherever required (you can replace words if necessary).

- (a) She was born on 5 04 1990.
- (b) He has a large notebook or binder.
- (c) I don't open letters mail that aren't isn't addressed to me.

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Summary of the rules of punctuation

Punctuation mark	Symbol	Uses
Comma	,	Used to insert pauses and separate words or phrases
Full stop	.	Used to end sentences.
Semi-colon	;	Used to mark a break that is stronger than a comma.
Colon	:	Precedes a list. Also used to denote time.
Apostrophe	'	Used to indicate a possessive case
Inverted commas (Quotation marks)	"..."	Used in speech or quotations
Exclamation mark	!	Used in order to show exclamation; it also ends a sentence.
Question mark	?	Used at the end of a question; it ends a sentence.
Dashes: hyphen;	-	Used to separate syllables or used to join words.
Em-dash;	—	Used to separate phrases
En-dash	–	Used to show a range
Parenthesis	()	Separates text that usually contains additional information from the main sentence
Ellipsis	...	Used to show that the quoted speech is incomplete.
Slash	/	Replaces "or"

2. Describe how to develop paragraphs effectively.

[Learning Outcome b]

Imagine if this Study Guide was written without any paragraphs – just pages and pages of sentences, one after the other. Would you be able to understand the concepts explained? In all probability, you will not be able to understand it fully, your concentration will waver, and you will eventually tune out. In order for the reader to make sense of the text, it needs to be broken down into bite sized portions, i.e. paragraphs.

Paragraphs are a group of sentences about one topic or one line of thought. In this learning outcome, we will look at the guidelines for structuring your writing into clear, effective paragraphs.

Here are the steps that should be followed in order to create effective paragraphs:

1. Planning

Identify the main topics in your text: first of all, you need to be clear on what will be the main points that you wish to make in your written communication. Then pick out the central ideas, and jot down the points. Do not write out whole sentences yet.

Decide on the structure: review the main topics and ensure that there are no gaps and the ideas are progressing in a logical flow. Finalise the order in which you want to present the points.

2. Writing

Write the opening sentence: in the first sentence of a paragraph, you need to include a brief introduction of the main topic of that paragraph. This is done to let the reader know about the central idea of the paragraph, and to prepare the reader for what is to follow. Without a proper opening sentence, the paragraph will lack focus.



Example

If you write a paragraph on the purpose of business organisations, the opening paragraph will read as follows:

"An organisation brings together a number of people, who work collectively towards the common objectives.

Following are the reasons behind formation of organisations."

Write the main body of the paragraph: now, here you should develop the central idea of the paragraph, i.e. actually write out sentences explaining the topic. The sentences should be in a proper flow, each taking the explanations forward. Associate each sentence with the next one by using words such as 'however', to show contradiction, or 'moreover' to build up the idea etc. This part is the substance of your paragraph, and hence, very important.

Write a closing sentence: before you move on to the next topic (i.e. the next paragraph), it is a good idea to 'close' the explanation of the first topic by writing a concluding sentence. This way, the reader would not be confused as to when one topic is closed and the next is started.



Example

In the minutes of a board meeting, the closing paragraph would read as follows:

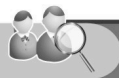
'We as a board need to discuss and debate the issues to ensure we act responsibly in the interests of promoting the long-term success of our business following the acquisition of Redco.'

Check the length of the paragraph: too long paragraphs defeat the purpose for which we make paragraphs while writing – to present the information in bite-sized pieces. Conversely, too short paragraphs hamper the flow of understanding of the reader. Hence, the general thumb rule is that the average length of a typical paragraph should be not less than three sentences, and not more than five sentences.

However, this is not a strict rule, as in some cases, the explanation / developing of the point may take more than five sentences. On the other hand, sometimes, in order to make more impact, or where brevity is needed, paragraphs of less than three sentences are also acceptable. But such paragraphs should be the exception, not routine.

Know when to start a new paragraph: care should be taken to determine the point at which you start a new paragraph. Ensure that no two important points are clubbed into one paragraph, and also that one main point is explained using only one paragraph.

Also, when making a comparison between two things, or presenting two opposite points of view, it is better to make a separate paragraph for each view.



Example

The minutes of a board meeting read as follows:

"The board committed to acquire Teabag Coffee Plc and to an implementation plan using a top management team led by Timmy Bean, the operations director. The acquisition has gone ahead.

The paragraph ends here,
and a new one begins as a
new topic is being presented

The board receives monthly reports by Mr. Bean on the project with reports covering operational, financial, marketing and human resource aspects of the integration project. Close attention is being focused on critical success factors represented by key performance indicators on revenues, staff turnover, refurbishment targets, on cost, time and quality and on unit costs."

3. Reviewing

Read the paragraph: after you finish writing the paragraph, it is important to review your paragraphs in terms of grammatical and syntax errors, typographical errors etc. as well as errors in the flow of logic, errors in consistency etc.

Also, look at it from the reader's perspective to know whether the central idea is being explained properly, and whether the paragraphs seem complete, i.e. whether the explanation of the idea contained in each paragraph seems complete.

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Review the length of the paragraph: check the length of each paragraph to confirm that it is not too long or too short. If there are quite a few long paragraphs in your text, you may make two paragraphs out of the long ones if it is logically feasible to split the central idea into two sub-ideas. Moreover, in case your text has quite a few short paragraphs, it will be a good idea to merge two paragraphs into one, again, if the central ideas are compatible with each other.



Example

Go through this Learning Outcome – ‘Writing effective paragraphs’ once again, and notice how the text is divided into paragraphs using the ground rules for effective paragraphs. (Note, each bullet point can be considered to be a separate paragraph).

Here are a few points that you will notice:

Planning: notice how the main topics were identified and each main point was made into the central idea of a paragraph. E.g. the central idea of the first paragraph of this learning outcome is ‘the purpose of making paragraphs’, the central idea for the next paragraph is ‘the meaning of a paragraph’ etc. Then the structure/order is decided upon – the purpose first, then the meaning, then the steps to be followed to write paragraphs, etc.

Writing: in the first paragraph, the opening line is ‘Imagine if this Study Guide was written without any paragraphs....’ – this sentence tells the reader about the central idea – which is the purpose of making paragraphs. Then, in the main body, the purpose is explained. The closing line is ‘.....it needs to be broken down into bite-sized portions...’ – which concludes that paragraphs are, in fact, needed. The length of a paragraph throughout this learning outcome is less than 5 sentences.

Reviewing: once the learning outcome was complete, it was reviewed to check for errors. Also, wherever there were too long paragraphs, they were separated into short ones.



Test Yourself 13

‘A good paragraph is never of less than three sentences or more than five sentences’. State whether this statement is true or false.

Answers to Test Yourself

Answer to TY 1

- (a) The bag was filled with fruit, vegetables, toilet rolls, cereals and cartons of milk.
- (b) Even though the Martins lost the game, they did not lose hope.
- (c) “I don’t know,” he said, “It wasn’t my fault.”

Answer to TY 2

- (a) Julie stopped in the middle of the road.
- (b) She was born on 15 Dec. in St. Mary’s hospital.
- (c) She liked to dance, sing, write, play etc.

Answer to TY 3

- (a) This conference has people who have come from Boise, Idaho; Los Angeles, California; and Nashville, Tennessee.
- (b) Call me tomorrow; I will give you my answer then.
- (c) I have paid my dues; therefore, I expect all the privileges listed in the contract.

Answer to TY 4

- (a) The names of the contestants: George, Martin, Keri and Rachel.
- (b) Some Indian spices in the recipe: Clove, Cardamom, Star Anise and Bay leaf.

Answer to TY 5

- (a) Who's the party's candidate for vice president this year?
- (b) My neighbour's car is an old one, and it's going to fall apart soon.
- (c) In three weeks' time we'll have to begin school again.
- (d) Didn't you hear that they're leaving tomorrow?

Answer to TY 6

- (a) 'That,' he said, 'is nonsense.'
- (b) 'What is his name?' she asked.

Answer to TY 7

- (a) 1.He exclaimed: "What a fantastic house you have!"
- (b) 2."Good heavens!" he said, "Is that true?"
- (c) "Oh! When are you going?"

Answer to TY 8

- (a) Does this camera belong to you?
- (b) She asked whether his stomach was still hurting.
- (c) What have you done?

Answer to TY 9

- (a) Her anti-Christian sentiments kept her away from the church. (hyphen)
- (b) 2.His name is Tom—the last animal of his species. (em-dash)
- (c) 3.Read pages 15 – 20. (en-dash)

Answer to TY 10

- (a) My sister (her name is Kathy) studies in the U.S.A.
- (b) The American Automobile Association (AAA) has millions of members.

Answer to TY 11

- (a) "If only she had... Oh, it doesn't matter now."
- (b) As to what we do next... that I'm unsure of.

Answer to TY 12

- (a) She was born on 5/04/1990
- (b) He has a large notebook/binder.
- (c) I don't open letters/mail that aren't/isn't addressed to me.

Answer to TY 13

The statement is false.

The general thumb rule is that the average length of a typical paragraph should be not less than three sentences, and not more than five sentences. However, this is not a strict rule, as in some cases, the explanation / developing of the point may take more than five sentences. On the other hand, sometimes, in order to make more impact, or where brevity is needed, paragraphs of less than three sentences are also acceptable.

Therefore, good paragraphs can be of less than three sentences or more than five sentences.

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Self Examination Questions

Question 1

Insert the correct punctuation marks and replace with capital letters wherever needed:

- (i) Larry the bird was flying around the town one day when he saw a strange object in front of him
- (ii) what is that he thought to himself Larry was intrigued so he flew a little bit closer in order to see it better
- (iii) whos there he echoed out there was no response
- (iv) hello is anybody there he shouted but again there was no reply suddenly a large bird appeared in front of him
- (v) go away it shouted
- (vi) poor Larry was really scared he flew home and hid under his bed

Question 2

Correct the punctuations and add punctuation marks wherever necessary. (You would need to adjust the capital letters wherever needed)

Excuse me. Said six year old Sarah could I have some cake: Sarah my friend was usually very shy but she recently became braver. Sarah used to (come to my house) each morning so that Sarahs mom a chief operating officer could get to work on time. When Sarah first began, coming to my house in the morning she, hardly used to speak. One day Sarah joined two young boys my cousins at the breakfast table. After I got Sarah her cake she exclaimed these boys are so weird, That was the first time I heard her speak so boldly.

Question 3

Explain in brief the main purpose of structuring text into paragraphs.

Answers to Self Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

- (i) Larry, the bird, was flying around the town one day, when he saw a strange object in front of him.
- (ii) "What is that?" he thought to himself. Larry was intrigued, so he flew a little bit closer in order to see it better.
- (iii) "Who's there?" he echoed out. There was no response.
- (iv) "Hello. Is anybody there?" he shouted, but again there was no reply. Suddenly, a large bird appeared in front of him.
- (v) "Go away!" it shouted. Poor Larry was really scared; he flew home and hid under his bed.

Answer to SEQ 2

"Excuse me," said six-year-old Sarah, "could I have some cake?"

Sarah, my friend, was usually very shy, but she recently became braver. Sarah used to come to my house each morning, so that Sarah's mom, a chief operating officer, could get to work on time. When Sarah first began coming to my house in the morning, she hardly used to speak. One day, Sarah joined two young boys, my cousins, at the breakfast table. After I got Sarah her cake, she exclaimed, "These boys are so weird!" That was the first time I heard her speak so boldly.

Answer to SEQ 3

Paragraphs are a group of sentences about one topic or one line of thought. Long text is usually broken down into paragraphs to enable the reader to comprehend the meaning better. Instead of one long unending stretch of information to digest, the text is structured into bite-sized pieces for better understanding.

Also, a paragraph signals a change in the line of thought or a change in the topic being discussed thus making the reader aware of the shift in the discussion.

STUDY GUIDE B3: TENSES

■ Get Through Intro

The English language has many components in it that need to be kept in mind while writing grammatically correct sentences.

One of the most important components is 'Tenses'. Tenses talk about the time that the sentence or the paragraph took place in. There are a vast number of tenses, and choosing the correct tense is very important. In this Study Guide, you will learn about all the tenses in the English language, along with their uses.

■ Learning Outcomes

Explain how to use tenses correctly.

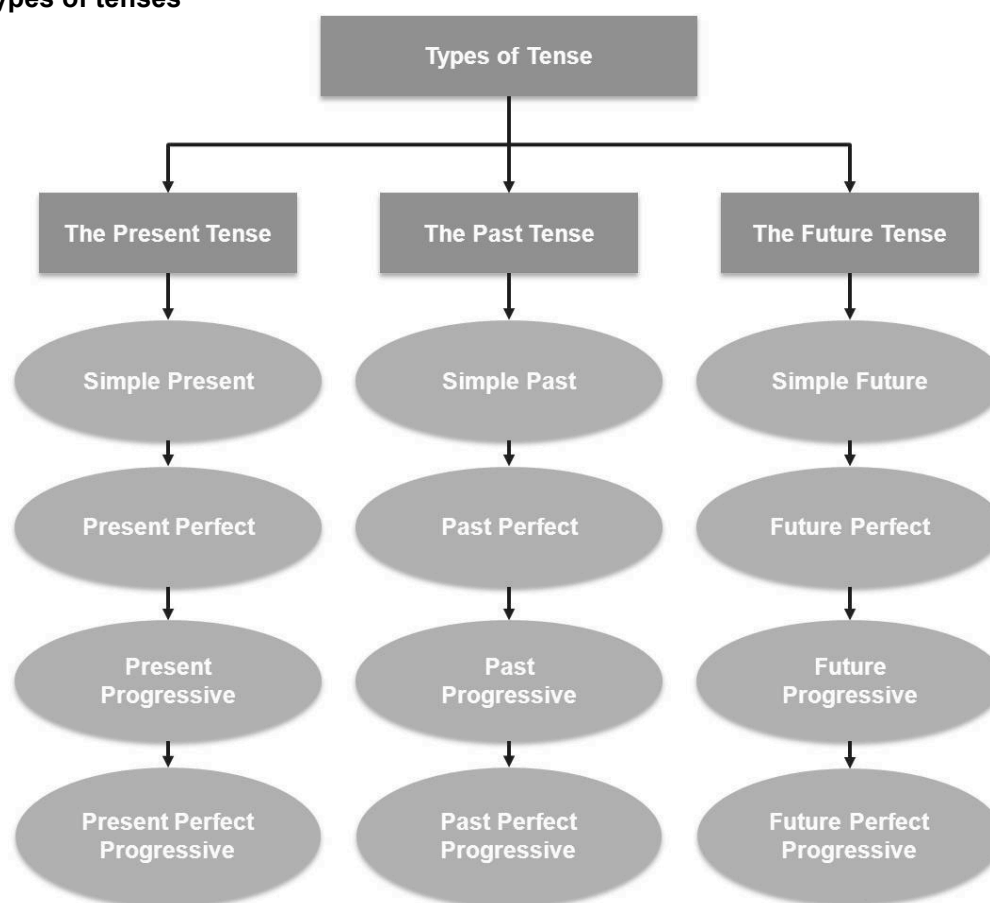
1. Use tenses correctly.**[Learning Outcome a]**

In a language, tenses are used to refer to time – **past, present and future**. In this learning outcome, we will learn what the different types of tenses are and how to use them properly.

**Definition**

Tense is a form of a verb used to indicate the time, and sometimes to indicate the continuation or completeness of an action in relation to the time of speaking.

The main tenses, i.e. past, present and future, are then further categorized into simple, progressive and perfect tenses, depending on the status of the action being performed. Altogether, there are 12 types of tenses, which we will learn in detail.

Diagram 1: Types of tenses**1.1 The present tense**

As the name suggests, the present tense is used to indicate that the speaker is talking about the current time, or the present, about events that are happening at the time of speaking. The present tense can be further categorized into four types as shown in diagram 1. Let us study the four types in detail.

1. The simple present

The present tense is expressed by using the base form of the verb (and its conjugations). E.g. I **work** in London; she **works** in London, etc.

**Tip**

The **base form** of the verb is the simplest form, i.e. without any special letters or words added to the end or beginning of the verb. E.g. 'work' is the base form, but if 'ing' or 'ed' is added at the end (working, worked), or words such as 'is', 'had' are added before the verb (is working, had worked), it is no longer a base verb.

Conjugations are forms of the verb used with specific persons e.g. I work, you work, he/she/it works, we work, they work etc. 'Work' and 'works' are both the base forms.

The present tense indicates that an action is taking place in the present, relative to the speaker or writer. We use the present tense to talk about:

(a) something that is true in the present:

I'm nineteen years old.
He lives in London.
I'm a student.

(b) something that happens again and again in the present:

I play football every weekend.
I go to the church every Sunday.
I spend an hour at the gym every day.

Note that in this case, the present tense is used to talk about the future!

(c) something that is always true:

The adult human body contains 206 bones.
Cows give milk.
January has 31 days.

(d) something that is certain to happen in the future:

The school term starts next week.
The train to Timbuktu leaves at 9:45 PM.
The zoo opens at 11:00 AM.

2. The present perfect

The present perfect tense is formed by adding the present tense form of "to have" (i.e. 'have') before the past participle of the verb; e.g. have worked.



Tip

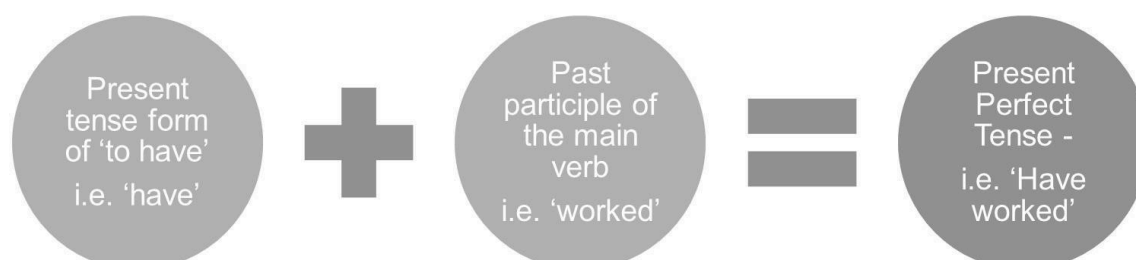
The **past participle** of a verb is the form of the verb that indicates that the action described by it is in the past, or has been completed. Usually, we add 'ed' to the base form of the verb to form its past participle e.g. the past participle of 'work' is 'worked'. However, there are exceptions to this, called 'irregular verbs'. There are no rules to form the past participle of irregular verbs, these have to be memorized! E.g. the past participle of 'begin' is 'begun', 'break' is 'broken' etc.



Important

We have provided a list of irregular verbs and their past participles in the Appendix at the end of this Study Guide.

Diagram 2: How to form the present perfect tense



The present perfect tense indicates that:

either an action was completed (finished or "perfected") at some point in the past; or that the action extends to the present.

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Example

(a) I **have walked** two miles already.

This implies that the action of walking started in the past and extends to the present

(b) I **have run** the Boston Marathon.

This implies that the action took place in the past and finished in the past

3. The present progressive

The present progressive tense indicates **continuing action**, something that is going on now. This tense is formed with the helping verb "to be", in the present tense, plus the present participle of the verb e.g. 'am working'.



Tip

Helping verbs, as the name suggests, are verbs that 'help' the main verb to form meaning. They do not have any real meaning by themselves. 'To be' is one such helping verb, with different conjugations of the verb being used as follows: I am, you are, he/she/it is, we are, they are etc.

The **present participle** of a verb is the form of the verb that denotes repetition / duration / continuing action. It is formed by adding 'ing' to the verb at its end e.g. the present participle of 'walk' is 'walking'.

The present progressive can also suggest that an action is going to happen in the future, using verbs that convey a future plan of action or of movement from one place or condition to another.



Important

Remember, the present progressive is used to denote either the present or the future. Therefore, it is usually accompanied by words describing time, such as today, this year, this summer etc.

Diagram 3: How to form the present progressive tense



Example

(a) I **am buying** all my family's Christmas gifts early this year.

This sentence shows that the action is taking place in the present, and is still continuing as of now.

(b) The team **is arriving** in two hours.

This sentence conveys a future action plan

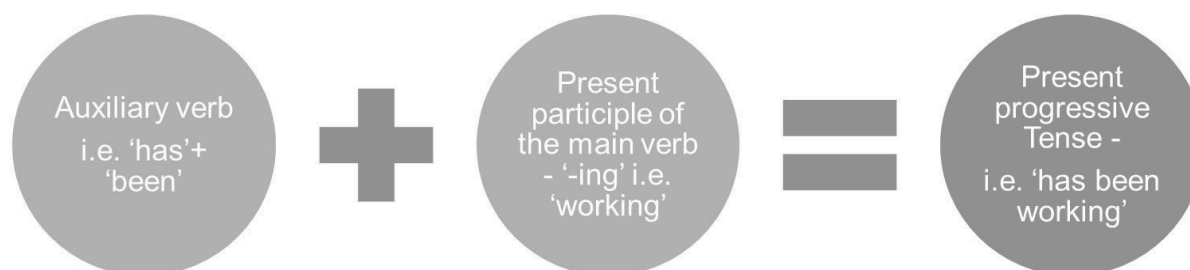
Note: in sentence (1), 'this year' are the words denoting time and in sentence (2), 'two hours' are the words denoting time.

4. The present perfect progressive

The present perfect progressive tense indicates a continuous action that has been finished at some point in the past or that was started in the past and continues to happen in the present. The action is usually of limited duration and has some current relevance. This tense is frequently used to describe an event of the recent past; and therefore, it is often accompanied by the word 'just'.

The present perfect progressive tense is formed with the verb "have" or "has" plus the verb "been," together with the present participle of the verb (i.e. the base verb with an 'ing' ending) e.g. has been working.

Diagram 4: How to form the present perfect progressive tense



Example

(a) "She **has been running** and her heart is still beating fast."

(b) "It has just been raining."

This shows action of the recent past and is accompanied by 'just'

This shows that an action was started and ended in the past, but has current relevance



Test Yourself 1

Choose the most appropriate answer, and identify the tense of the verb.

- How often does Peter go to the swimming pool? He _____ to the swimming pool every day.
 - goes
 - is going
 - has gone
 - has been going
- Please be quiet. My children _____ now.
 - sleeping
 - are sleeping
 - have slept
 - have been sleeping
- Listen! Someone _____ the piano.
 - plays
 - is playing
 - has played
 - has been playing
- We _____ this report for four hours. I'm tired. Let's take a break.
 - write
 - are writing
 - have written
 - have been writing

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1.2 The past tense

As the name suggests, the past tense is used to indicate an action that took place in the past. It can be further categorized into four types as shown in diagram 1. Let us understand the four types in detail.

1. The simple past

The simple past tense is used to convey that an action started and finished at a specific time in the past. Sometimes, the speaker may not actually mention the specific time, but they do have one specific time in mind.

The simple past tense is formed by adding 'ed' to the base form of the verb in case of regular verbs e.g. the past tense of 'work' is 'worked'. For irregular verbs, there are no rules to form the past tense, and it has to be memorized.



Important

We have provided a list of irregular verbs and their past tenses in the Appendix at the end of this Study Guide.

We use the simple past tense in the following situations:

- something that happened **once in the past**
- something that happened **again and again in the past**
- something that was **true for some time** in the past



Example

(a) I **met** my wife in 1983.

This happened only once in the past

(b) When I was a boy I **walked** a mile to school every day.

This happened every day, i.e. again and again in the past

(c) I **lived** abroad for ten years.

This was true only for 10 years, i.e. only for some time in the past

2. The past perfect

The past perfect expresses the idea that something occurred before another action took place in the past. Here, both the actions are essentially in the past, but one is further in the past than the other. It can also show that something happened before a specific time in the past.

This tense is formed by adding the past tense form of the verb 'to have' before the past participle of the main verb e.g. 'had worked'.



Tip

The past tense of the verb 'to have' is conjugated as follows: I had, you had, he/she/it had, we had and they had.

Diagram 5: How to form the past perfect tense



Uses

The Past perfect tense is used for actions which took place in the past that happen before another action in the past.



Example

Take a look at this situation and how past perfect tense is used:

6:00 I ate supper.
7:00 He invited me to a café.

He invited me to a café but I **had eaten** supper.

3. The past progressive

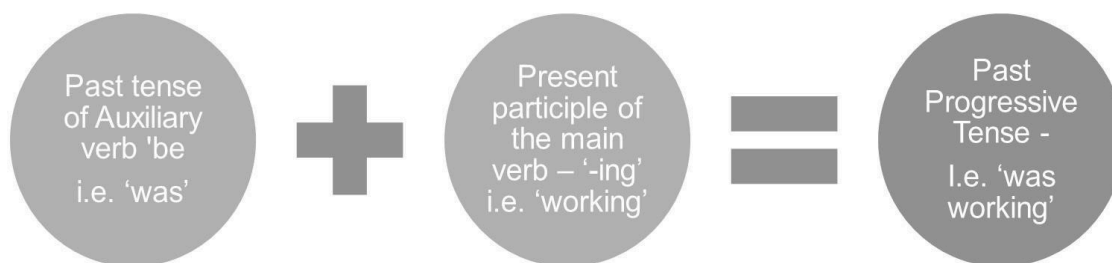
The past progressive tense (**also called the past continuous tense**) is formed from the past tense of the helping verb '**be**' with the present participle of the main verb e.g. 'was working'.



Tip

The past tense of the helping verb 'to be' is conjugated as follows: I was, you were, he/she/it was, we were and they were.

Diagram 6: How to form the past progressive tense



Example

(a) The children **were doing** their homework when Tia got home.

They were doing homework before and continued even after Tia got home

(b) It was eight o'clock. Sue **was writing** a letter.

Sue was writing the letter before and also after 8 o'clock

(c) My head **was aching**.

Head continued to ache for some time

(d) They **were meeting** secretly after school.

They met again and again in the past

(e) Her English **was improving**.

This shows a change in her English



Tip

The use of the past continuous is very common at the beginning of a story. E.g. 'The other day Rihana **was waiting** for a bus when ...' or 'Last week, **as Tom was driving** to work ...'

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4. The past perfect progressive

This tense is also called the **past perfect continuous**. We use it to show that something started in the past and continued up until another time in the past. "For five minutes" and "for two weeks" are both durations, which can be used with the past perfect continuous.

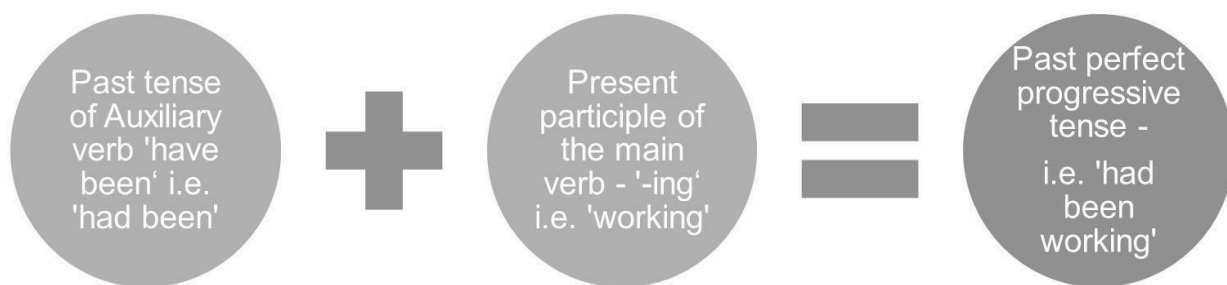
This tense is formed by adding the past tense of the verb 'to have' and the past participle of 'to be', before the present participle of the main verb e.g. 'had been working'.



Important

Notice that this tense is similar to the present perfect continuous; however, the action does not continue up till the present, it stops before something else in the past.

Diagram 7: How to form the past perfect progressive tense



Example

(a) They **had been talking** for over an hour before Tony arrived.

Notice that the duration is mentioned, i.e. three years

The action of talking started in the past, and continued till another event happened – i.e. Tony arrived

(b) She **had been working** at that company for three years when it went out of business.



Test Yourself 2

Choose the most appropriate answer, and identify the tense.

- I burned my finger while I _____ breakfast.
A was cooking
B had cooked
C had been cooking
- He _____ for twenty years when he finally quit smoking.
A smoked
B was smoking
C had been smoking
- Yesterday I went to an interesting museum that I _____ before.
A didn't visit
B wasn't visiting
C hadn't visited

1.3 The future tense

The future tense, as the name suggests, is used to indicate that an event took place in the future. It can be further categorized into four types as shown in diagram 1. Let us understand the four types in detail.

1. The simple future

This tense is used to express an action which has not occurred yet and will occur in future, be it in the immediate future or distant future. The simple future tense is formed by adding the helping verb 'will' before the base form of the verb e.g. I will work.

The simple future is used in the following situations:

When there is no plan or decision to do something before we speak.

To make a prediction about the future.

When we have a firm plan or decision before speaking. Here, we use the verb 'be' to express the plan or decision.



Example

(a) We **will see** what we can do to help you.

We have no firm plan at the time of speaking.

(b) It **will rain** tomorrow.

We are making a prediction here

(c) I'll **be** in London tomorrow.

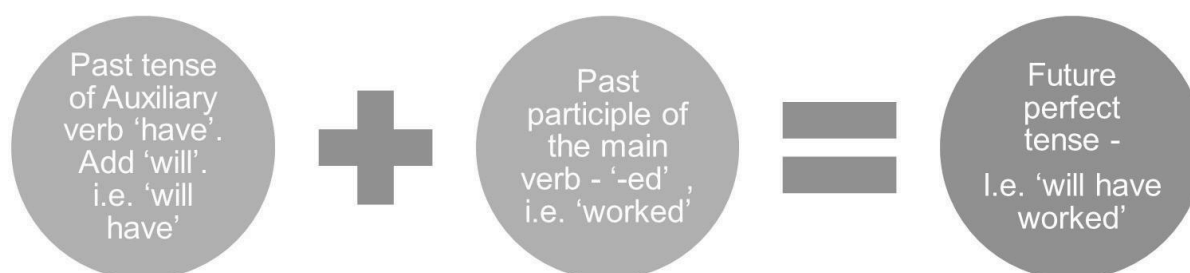
We have a plan before we speak – this is expressed using 'be'

2. The future perfect

This tense is used to express an action which will occur in future and is thought to be completed in future. It expresses a sense of completion of an action which will occur in future.

The future perfect is also used to express the idea that something will occur before another action in the future. It can show that something will happen before a specific time in the future.

Diagram 8: How to form the future perfect tense



Future perfect has two different forms:

the helping verbs 'will' and 'have' are added before the past participle of the main verb e.g. "**will have worked**"; and

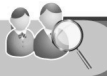
the conjugations of the helping verb 'to be' (i.e. am/is/are) + going to have + past participle of the main verb e.g. "**are going to have worked**."

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Tip

These two forms are usually interchangeable, i.e. either one can be used; they mean the same thing. E.g. 'You will have perfected your English by the time you come back from the U.S' will mean the same as 'You are going to have perfected your English by the time you come back from the U.S'. **However, the latter style is not very commonly used.**



Example

(a) John will have gone tomorrow.

It shows completion of an action (go) which will occur in future (tomorrow).

(b) By next Christmas, I **will have received** my promotion.

The promotion will occur before another event in the future, i.e. Christmas

3. The future progressive

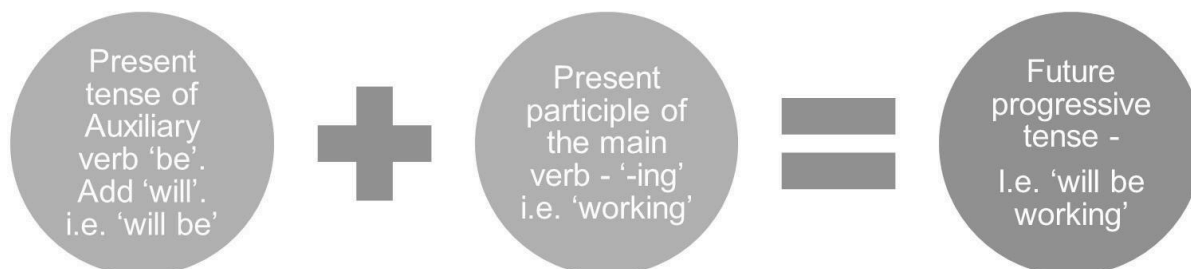
This tense is also known as **the future continuous**. It has two different forms:

The words 'will be' and the present participle of the main verb e.g. **will be working**; and

The conjugations of 'to be' (i.e. am/is/are) + going to be + the present participle of the main verb e.g. **be going to be working**.

You may use either "will" or "be going to" to create the future continuous with little or no difference in meaning. E.g. 'You **will be waiting** for her when her plane arrives tonight' will mean the same thing as 'You **are going to be waiting** for her when her plane arrives tonight'. However, the latter style is not very commonly used.

Diagram 9: How to form the future progressive tense



This tense is used in the following situations:

- (a) **Interrupted Action in the Future:** to indicate that a longer action in the future will be interrupted by a shorter action in the future. Remember this can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.
- (b) **Specific Time as an Interruption in the Future:** in the above described use, the future continuous is interrupted by a short action in the future. In addition to using short actions as interruptions, you can also use a specific time as an interruption.
- (c) **Parallel Actions in the Future:** when you use the future continuous with two actions in the same sentence, it expresses the idea that both actions will be happening at the same time. The actions are parallel.
- (d) **Create Atmosphere in the Future:** we often use a series of parallel actions to describe atmosphere at a specific point in the future.



Example

- (a) I **will be watching** TV when Glenda arrives tonight. Interrupted action – watching TV will be interrupted by Glenda's arrival
- (b) At midnight tonight, we **will be driving** through the desert Specific time – driving through the desert will be at a specific time, at 12 am
- (c) I **am going to be studying** and he **is going to be making** dinner. Parallel actions – studying and making dinner will be taking place at the same time
- (d) When I arrive at the party, everybody **is going to be celebrating**. Some **will be dancing**. A few people **will be eating** pizza, and several people **are going to be talking**. Creating atmosphere of a future party

4. The future perfect progressive

This tense is also known as **the future perfect continuous**, and has two different forms:

The helping verbs 'will have been' + the present participle of the main verb, e.g. "**will have been working**"; and

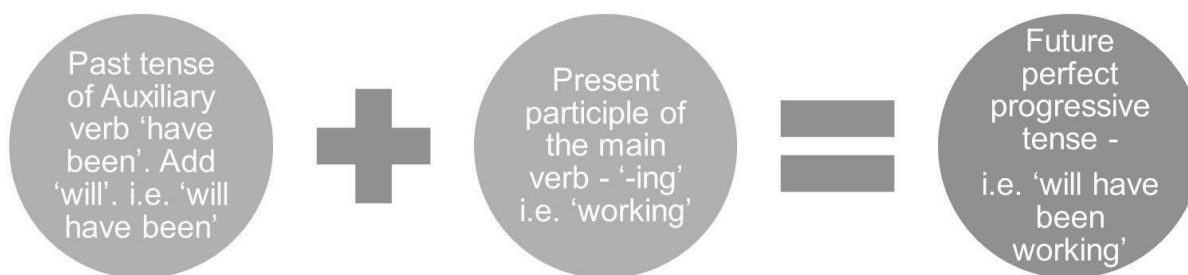
The conjugations of 'to be' (i.e. am/is/are) + going to have been + the present participle of the main verb, e.g. "**be going to have been working**".



Tip

You can use either "will" or "be going to" to create the future perfect continuous with little or no difference in meaning. E.g. 'You **will have been waiting** for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives' will mean the same thing as 'You **are going to have been waiting** for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives'. However, the latter form is not very commonly used.

Diagram 10: How to form the future perfect progressive tense



This tense is used in the following situations:

Duration before something in the future: we use the Future Perfect Continuous to show that something will continue up until a particular event or time in the future. "For five minutes," "for two weeks," and "since Friday" are all durations which can be used with the Future Perfect Continuous.

Cause of something in the future: using the Future Perfect Continuous before another action in the future is a good way to show cause and effect.

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Example

(a) They **will have been talking** for over an hour by the time Thomas arrives.

Cause and effect – cause:
he will be jogging; effect:
he will be tired

Duration – the
talking will continue
for an hour and then
Thomas will arrive

(b) Jason will be tired when he gets home because he **will have been jogging** for over an hour.

Let us take a main verb 'buy' and see the different tenses that are formed.

	Present	Past	Future
Simple	Buy/buys	Bought	Will buy
Progressive	Am/is/are buying	Was/were buying	Will be buying
Perfect	Have/ has bought	Had bought	Will have bought
Perfect progressive	Have/has been buying	Had been buying	Will have been buying



Test Yourself 3

Choose the most appropriate answer and identify the type of tense used.

- Let's meet at eleven o'clock tomorrow. – No, sorry, I _____ at eleven o'clock.
A will be working
B will have worked
C will have been working
- By 2020, he _____ as the director of this company for thirty years.
A will work
B will be working
C will have been working
- Where are you going to spend your vacation? – I don't know yet. Maybe, we _____ to Italy next summer.
A will go
B will have gone
C will have been going
- Oh, you'll recognize him. He _____ a brown leather jacket and a red scarf.
A will be wearing
B will have worn
C will have been wearing

Answers to Test Yourself**Answer to TY 1**

1. The correct option is **A**.

The tense used is simple present.

2. The correct option is **B**.

The tense used is present progressive.

3. The correct option is **B**.

The tense used is present progressive.

4. The correct option is **D**.

The tense used is present perfect progressive.

Answer to TY 2

1. The correct option is **A**.

The tense used is past progressive.

2. The correct option is **C**.

The tense used is past perfect progressive.

3. The correct option is **C**.

The tense used is past perfect.

Answer to TY 3

1. The correct option is **A**.

The tense used is future progressive.

2. The correct option is **C**.

The tense used is future perfect progressive.

3. The correct option is **A**.

The tense used is simple future.

4. The correct option is **A**.

The tense used is future progressive.

Self Examination Questions

Question 1

Choose the appropriate form of the words in the brackets in the passage below:

My grandfather was not at all the way my friends describe their grandfathers.

They still (speak, spoke) of Grandpa as a grey-haired old man who (is, was) always forgetting things he should remember and remembering things no one else is very interested in. My grandfather (is, was) not at all like that. He (is, was) always very lucid. No matter what we (do, did) as children, Grandpa always (wants, wanted) to hear about it. I will never (forget, forgot) my first date. I didn't even want my brothers and sisters to know about Jason. But Grandpa (is, was) different. Even before I (tell, told) my mother, I (rush, rushed) over to grandpa's and let him in on the secret.

He just (smiles, smiled) and kept rocking and (tells, told) me to be sure to bring Jason over to meet him sometime. That night, on the way to our first dance together, Jason and I (stop, stopped) in for a minute to see Grandpa. He (is, was) someone we always wanted to share our secrets with.

Question 2

Identify the different types of tenses highlighted below:

Julie's novel 'The grief' **examines** the period of sadness that follows the death of a loved one. The novel **is based** on the death of Julie's husband, James Dorothy, who **died** in January, 2012. At that time, their daughter, Amy, **was hospitalised** for tuberculosis. Julie and James **had just returned** from visiting their daughter at the hospital when James **suffered** a fatal heart attack. The novel **describes** how Julie copes with this incident and thereby **offers** the reader a compelling account of what **occurs** during the grieving phase.

Answers to Self Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

My grandfather was not at all the way my friends describe their grandfathers. They still (**speak**) of Grandpa as a grey-haired old man who (**was**) always forgetting things he should remember and remembering things no one else is very interested in. My grandfather (**was**) not at all like that. He (**was**) always very lucid. No matter what we (**did**) as children, Grandpa always (**wanted**) to hear about it. I will never (**forget**) my first date. I didn't even want my brothers and sisters to know about Jason. But Grandpa (**was**) different. Even before I (**told**) my mother, I (**rushed**) over to Grandpa's and let him in on the secret. He just (**smiled**) and (**told**) me to be sure to bring Jason over to meet him sometime. That night, on the way to our first dance together, Jason and I (**stopped**) in for a minute to see Grandpa. He (**was**) someone we always wanted to share our secrets with.

Answer to SEQ 2

examines – Simple Present

is based – Present Progressive

died – Simple Past

was hospitalised. – Past progressive

had just returned – Past perfect

suffered – Simple past

describes- Simple present

offers – Simple present

occurs – Simple present

Appendix

List of irregular verbs, their past tense and their past participles (Note: this list is not exhaustive).

Simple present	Simple past	Past participle
Arise	Arose	Arisen
Awake	Awoke	Awoken
Be	Was, were	Been
Bear	Bore	Borne
Beat	Beat	Beaten or beat
Become	Became	Become
Begin	Began	Begun
Bite	Bit	Bitten
Bleed	Bled	Bled
Blow	Blew	Blown
Break	Broke	Broken
Bring	Brought	Brought
Build	Built	Built
Buy	Bought	Bought
Catch	Caught	Caught
Choose	Chose	Chosen
Cling	Clung	Clung
Come	Came	Come
Cost	Cost	Cost
Creep	Crept	Crept
Cut	Cut	Cut
Deal	Dealt	Dealt
Dig	Dug	Dug
Dive	Dived or dove	Dived
Do	Did	Done
Draw	Drew	Drawn
Dream	Dreamed or dreamt	Dreamed or dreamt
Drink	Drank	Drunk
Drive	Drove	Driven
Eat	Ate	Eaten
Fall	Fell	Fallen
Feed	Fed	Fed
Feel	Felt	Felt
Fight	Fought	Fought
Find	Found	Found
Fit	Fit, fitted	Fit, fitted
Flee	Fled	Fled
Fling	Flung	Flung
Fly	Flew	Flown,
Forbid	Forbade or forbad	Forbidden or forbade
Forget	Forgot	Forgotten
Forgive	Forgave	Forgiven
Forgo	Forwent	Forgone
Freeze	Froze	Frozen

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Simple present	Simple past	Past participle
Get	Got	Gotten or got
Give	Gave	Given
Go	Went	Gone
Grind	Ground	Ground
Grow	Grew	Grown
Hang	Hung or hanged	Hung or hanged
Have	Had	Had
Hear	Heard	Heard
Hide	Hid	Hidden
Hit	Hit	Hit
Hold	Held	Held
Hurt	Hurt	Hurt
Keep	Kept	Kept
Kneel	Knelt or kneeled	Knelt or kneeled
Knit	Knitted or knit	Knitted or knit
Know	Knew	Known
Lay	Laid	Laid
Lead	Led	Led
Leap	Leapt or leaped	Leapt or leaped
Leave	Left	Left
Lend	Lent	Lent
Let	Let	Let
Lie (down)	Lay	Lain
Light	Lit or lighted	Lit or lighted
Lose	Lost	Lost
Make	Made	Made
Mean	Meant	Meant
Meet	Met	Met
Pay	Paid	Paid
Prove	Proved	Proved or proven
Put	Put	Put
Quit	Quit	Quit
Read	Read	Read
Ride	Rode	Ridden
Ring	Rang	Rung
Rise	Rose	Risen
Run	Ran	Run
Saw	Sawed	Sawed or sawn
Say	Said	Said
See	Saw	Seen
Seek	Sought	Sought
Sell	Sold	Sold
Send	Sent	Sent
Set	Set	Set
Sew	Sewed	Sewn or sewed
Shake	Shook	Shaken
Shave	Shaved	Shaved or shaven

Simple present	Simple past	Past participle
Shear	Sheared	Sheared or shorn
Shine	Shone or shined	Shone or shined
Shoot	Shot	Shot
Show	Showed	Shown or showed
Shrink	Shrank or shrunk	Shrunk or shrunken
Shut	Shut	Shut
Sing	Sang	Sung
Sink	Sank	Sunk
Sit	Sat	Sat
Slay	Slew	Slain
Sleep	Slept	Slept
Slide	Slid	Slid
Sneak	Sneaked or snuck	Sneaked or snuck
Speak	Spoke	Spoken
Speed	Sped	Sped
Spend	Spent	Spent
Spill	Spilled or spilt	Spilled or spilt
Spin	Spun	Spun
Spit	Spat or spit	Spat or spit
Split	Split	Split
Spread	Spread	Spread
Spring	Sprang	Sprung
Stand	Stood	Stood
Steal	Stole	Stolen
Stick	Stuck	Stuck
Sting	Stung	Stung
Stink	Stank or stunk	Stunk
Strew	Strewed	Strewn
Strike	Struck	Struck or stricken
Strive	Strove or strived	Striven or strived
Swear	Swore	Sworn
Sweep	Swept	Swept
Swim	Swam	Swum
Swing	Swung	Swung
Take	Took	Taken
Teach	Taught	Taught
Tear	Tore	Torn
Tell	Told	Told
Think	Thought	Thought
Thrive	Thrived or throve	Thrived or thriven
Throw	Threw	Thrown
Undergo	Underwent	Undergone
Understand	Understood	Understood
Upset	Upset	Upset
Wake	Woke or waked	Woken or waked
Wear	Wore	Worn
Weave	Wove	Woven

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Simple present	Simple past	Past participle
Weep	Wept	Wept
Win	Won	Won
Wind	Wound	Wound
Withdraw	Withdrew	Withdrawn
Wring	Wrung	Wrung
Write	Wrote	Written

STUDY GUIDE B4: TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

■ Get Through Intro

Communication is a two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange (encode-decode) information, news, ideas and feelings but also create and share meaning. In general, communication is a means of connecting people or places.

Conventionally, the two main types of communication are: oral communication and written communication.

However, apart from the conventional types, there is another aspect to communication that can have a greater impact on our daily interactions and expression. This is known as 'non-verbal communication' that takes place separately from the spoken or the written word and pertains to actions, body language, gestures and expressions.

In this Study Guide, we will be learning each one of these forms of communication in detail.

■ Learning Outcomes

- a) Explain how oral communication differs from written communication.
- b) Explain what non-verbal communication is all about.

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1. Explain how oral communication differs from written communication.

[Learning Outcome, a]

We will first learn the meaning of communication and its attributes, and then move on to discuss the main types of communication, i.e. oral and written and their differences.

1.1 Effective communication and its attributes



Definition

Communication is a two-way process of giving and sharing information.

We see people around us occupied with various types of activities and interactions involving formal conversations, discussions, meetings, phone calls, informal chatting and so on. In other words, people communicate to relate with each other. Communication is a two-way process involving a sender and a receiver. For communication to be effective, the following attributes need to be in place:

1. The sender needs to be:

(a) **Clear:** he should clarify the purpose of the communication to the receiver.



Example

Employees of Write1 (a small Knowledge Process Outsourcing organisation located in India) are dismayed one day to receive a very abrupt email from the Vice President of Operations. The email states that internet access for all employees will only be granted for two fixed hours a day going forward.

The employees are disappointed by the wording of the email and also feel that they have been deprived of internet access for no reason at all. This then starts to affect employee morale, and correspondingly, productivity.

To remedy the problem, the CEO of Write1 sends a follow up and more detailed email to all staff. The CEO explains that the organisation's internet bills have been extremely high for the past 6 months. Management of Write1 has looked into the problem and found the reason is that certain employees are using their machines to download personal files (e.g. songs) from the internet.

Therefore, a time restriction has been placed on internet usage for all employees. The CEO further clarifies that since employees do not primarily need internet access for more than two hours a day for work related reasons; the organisation's costs can be reduced without affecting its productivity.

This mail has the effect of increasing morale and productivity as employees now understand and support the organisation's decision to restrict internet usage.

(b) **Direct:** the information should be sent directly to the receiver, if possible.

(c) **Relevant:** the media should be matched to the kind of message sent. For instance, highly formal information should be communicated in written form.

(d) **Appropriate:** language used should be **simple and easy** to understand. Furthermore, the style of language and communication should match the level of understanding of the receiver.



Example

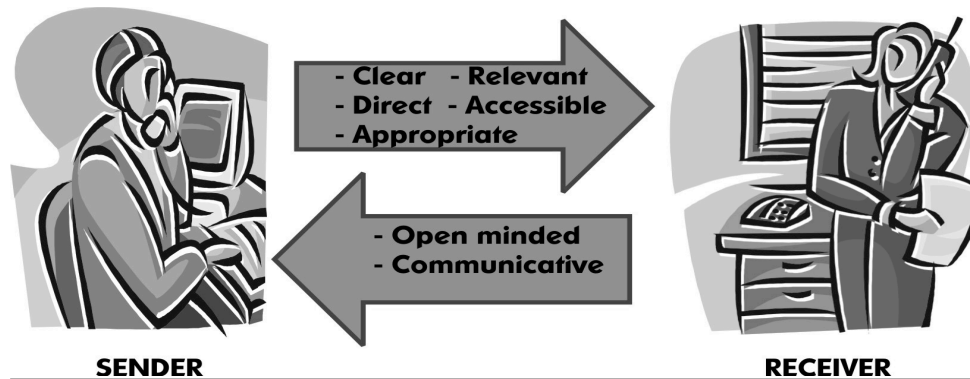
An R&D manager, when communicating with the account's manager, should ensure that the communication is not too technical or detail oriented, because the accounts manager may not understand certain technical terms, rendering the communication ineffective.

(e) **Accessible:** the sender should encourage and be attentive to feedback from the receiver.

2. The receiver needs to be:

- (a) **Open minded:** he should absorb the message / information being communicated with an open mind.
- (b) **Communicative:** he should provide **feedback** showing he has understood what the sender is trying to communicate.

Diagram 1: Attributes of effective communication



1.2 Oral communication

Oral communication is the ability to talk with others to give and exchange information & ideas, such as: asking questions, giving directions, coordinating work tasks, explaining, persuading etc.

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

(a) Non mechanical channels

These are channels that are used to communicate with people who are physically in one location.

- (i) **Conversation:** conversation means a face-to-face, informal discussion among people. When one person exchanges his views, opinions, etc. with another person in the physical presence of the other, then it is called face-to-face conversation.
- (ii) **Interview:** it is a meeting between two or more persons to get to know each other. For instance, an employer interviews an applicant to assess whether the applicant can be fit for service to their organization. Here, one person asks questions to the other and the other person merely answers the questions.
- (iii) **Speech:** speech involves the speaker delivering a monologue in front of the audience. Generally, political leaders, managers, businessmen etc. deliver speeches to express their views and to reach a large audience at one time. This system is practiced at public gatherings, company meetings, inauguration functions, seminars etc.
- (iv) **Group discussion:** group discussion is a popular non-mechanical method of oral communication. Management arranges group discussions to take a decision on a special matter. Group discussion is very helpful because people can exchange their ideas and views with many others at the same time.
- (v) **Meeting:** meeting means a formal group discussion about a specific, predetermined topic or subject. Participants get together and discuss about a problem or issue or a special matter.
- (vi) **Lectures:** lecture is used to create an understanding of a topic or to influence behaviour or attitudes of the trainee through spoken words. A lecture involves telling someone about something. The method is an effective way to introduce new information or concepts to a group of learners who gather at one place. A lecture is given to enhance the knowledge of the listener or to give him the theoretical aspect of a topic.

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(b) Mechanical channels

These are channels that use technology to enable communication between people who are usually in geographically distant places.

- (i) **Telephone/ Mobile phone:** the telephone / mobile phone plays a vital role in communication when the persons who wish to communicate stay in different places. They exchange information and views, and immediate feedback is possible under this method.
- (ii) **Radio:** radio is a one-way communication system. The receiver can only hear the message from the sender. The receiver cannot reply, give feedback or exchange ideas.
- (iii) **Television:** television is also a one-way communication system. Here, the receiver can hear the messages and also see the sender. However, just as with a radio, the receiver cannot reply, give feedback or exchange ideas.
- (iv) **Teleconference:** teleconferencing is a kind of communication where people staying in different locations participate in group meetings or group discussions through electronic telephone technology. Here, the people involved in communication can only be heard.
- (v) **Videoconference:** video conference is a kind of communication where people staying in different locations participate in a group meeting or group discussion through the help of electronic video camera technology. Here, the people involved in communication can be seen and heard.



Tip

Now-a-days, all types of communication that use the non-mechanical channels can be achieved using teleconferencing / videoconferencing technology. E.g. non-mechanical channels such as interviews, group discussions, lectures etc. can all be accomplished through the mechanical channel of teleconferencing/videoconferencing.



Example

Below are examples of a few situations and the form of communication used in those.

Situation	Channel of communication	Type of channel
A CEO is addressing 2000+ employees at a global company meeting	Speech	Non - mechanical
An emergency board meeting has been called to make a top-level company decision.	Group discussion	Non-mechanical
If your car-tyre goes flat on a deserted road, calling a nearby garage or a friend to come pick you up.	Mobile phone	Mechanical
A debate on a news channel between two political candidates.	Television	Mechanical

Let us now discuss the advantages and disadvantages of oral communication.

Advantages of oral communication

In a recent survey about communication, it was found that more than 55% of the executives choose oral communication to be the preferred mode. The **advantages of oral communication** are as follows:

- (a) **Time saving:** when an action/decision is required to be taken immediately, it is best to transmit the message orally.
- (b) **Cost savings:** when the communication takes place orally and face to face, it doesn't need any paper, pen or computer. So it does not incur any cost.
- (c) **Effectiveness:** speech is a more powerful means when persuasion and/or convincing the other person are the aims. With the help of variations in the tone, pitch and intensity of the voice, the speaker can convey shades of meaning.

- (d) **Instant feedback:** the speaker gets instant feedback on whether it is creating a favourable impression on the receiver or whether the receiver will protest or whether the receiver has clearly understood his meaning or is feeling perplexed or baffled. The speaker can then alter and adjust his message accordingly.
- (e) **Ease and flexibility:** oral instructions can easily be changed, so there is a degree of flexibility. It is also easy as it needs little preparation to send a message. No need of pens, pencils and other writing equipment, which are needed in written communication.
- (f) **Correction of errors: if any** error is noticed at the time of oral communication, it is possible to rectify at that time or within a very short time.
- (g) **Motivation:** in oral communication, top executives and sub-ordinates can sit face-to-face and exchange their views directly, so sub-ordinates can be motivated daily.
- (h) **Secrecy:** parties to oral communication can maintain the secrecy of messages easily, because unlike written communication, the messages cannot be shown to others.

Oral communication has many advantages. In spite of this, there are certain **disadvantages** which are given below:

Disadvantages of oral communication

- (a) **No record:** messages are difficult to record. So it is usually not possible to preserve the message for future use.
- (b) **Inaccuracy:** there is a possibility of the receiver interpreting / hearing the message wrongly. So, the reverse result of expected action may occur.
- (c) **Limited use:** the scope of usage is limited, as in it is not suitable for lengthy messages. It should be used for short messages. Also, oral communication is not suitable for communicating official matters such as company's policy, procedure, programs, laws and other important information.
- (d) **Confused speech:** sometimes the receiver fails to understand the meaning of a message correctly due to lack of clarity of speech and pronunciation of the speaker.
- (e) **No legal validity:** there is no legal recognition of the oral message. If the oral message is not taped or recorded, it can be denied easily if the situation goes against the speaker.
- (f) **May create misunderstanding:** the speaker often talks without having properly organized his message beforehand. So, it is possible that he may not be able to properly communicate with the receiver. As a result, misunderstandings may develop.

1.3 Written communication

Written communication is a form of communication where all the interactions and exchange of information, one-way or two-way, happen via a medium that uses the written word.

Writing letters, notes, reports etc. are important skills that would help in one's business and personal life. Effective written documents help to get results, where poor ones fail.

Advantages of written communication

- (a) **Easy to preserve:** the documents (i.e. the written communications) are easy to preserve. Oral and non-verbal communication cannot be preserved. If needed, important information can be collected from the preserved documents.
- (b) **Easy and accurate presentation of complex matters:** written communication is the best way to represent complex matters easily and accurately. For instance, a user manual for complex machinery has to be in written form, it cannot be in oral form.
- (c) **Permanent record:** the documents act as a permanent record. Written communication can also be used as future reference. Due to these characteristics, all the important communication within an organization should be in writing.

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Example

A good example is a company's financial transactions, which are always saved in files permanently for future references.

- (d) **Prevention of wastage of time and money:** where the parties to the communication are geographically distant, written communication prevents the waste of money and time in travelling. Without meeting each other face to face, the communicator can exchange their views.
- (e) **Maintaining/enhancing image:** a professionally written document has the effect of enhancing the image of the organisation and also of the person writing the document.



Example

Here is an email received by Ronald from the marketing head of a company in response to his queries about their products:

To Ronald

Come for seminar on details of new products at The Intercontinental next Saturday at 10 am. You will get your questions answered.

Andrew

Here is another email received by Ronald from the marketing head of another company in response to his queries about their products:

Dear Mr. Ronald,

We really appreciate your interest in our products that were launched last month. To give you detailed information on each of them, we have organized a seminar in The Intercontinental next Saturday at 10 am.

We request you to please attend the seminar to get your queries cleared. We look forward to receiving you at the seminar.

Regards,
Matthew
Marketing Manager

The second email is professionally written, and so will make a favourable impression on Ronald, whereas the first email will create a bad image of the company, as well as of its marketing head.

- (f) **Less distortion possibility:** In written communication, information is recorded permanently. So, there is less possibility of distortion and alteration of the information. Due to this, instances of the receiver misinterpreting the information or messages become less.

For example, a wife asking her husband to cook some dinner for tonight's meal might ring home on the phone and say "I will be late home, are you OK to sort out some dinner?" Possible interpretations by the husband could be:

Sort out your own food...don't worry about me.
Cook some food for both of us
Get some take out food for both of us

The original statement could have been communicated clearer if more information had been provided in the form of text for the husband to refer to again if needed:

"I will be late home, are you OK to cook dinner for us tonight?"

- (g) **Easy to verify:** the information and messages that are preserved can be verified easily. If there arises any misunderstanding, any party can easily verify the information.

Disadvantages of written communication

The following are some of the disadvantages of written communication:

- (a) **Entails cost:** it entails a certain cost, unlike oral communication. Paper, pen, ink, typewriter, computer etc. are needed.
- (b) **Time consuming:** it takes time to communicate, as writing takes more time than speaking.
- (c) **Useless for illiterate person:** if the receiver cannot read and write, written communication is quite impossible.
- (d) **Difficult to maintain secrecy:** it is not always possible to maintain secrecy because both parties to the communication can disclose the communication to outsiders. For example, a lot of secret security files from government organisations get leaked and are used by spies and terrorist organisations for security break-ins.
- (e) **Lack of flexibility:** written documents cannot be changed easily at any time, as in the case of oral communication – which can be altered based on the real time feedback received from the other party.
- (f) **Delay in response:** it takes time to get a response from the receiver. This leads to a delay in decision making too.
- (g) **Cost in record keeping:** it can be expensive to keep all the records of written communication due to the cost involved relating to storage space – both physical for hard copies and computer back up for soft copies.

Difference between oral and written communication

Here is a table that differentiates between oral and written communication:

Oral communication	Written communication
The use of vocal medium to interact.	The use of the written word to interact.
It is an instantaneous form of communication with immediate feedback.	It is not instantaneous and the feedback is not immediate.
It is time saving due to instant interaction.	It is time consuming compared to oral communication
The interaction is not recorded for future reference.	There is a record for future reference and hence there will be less misunderstanding.
More often used in informal interaction than written communication.	More often used for formal interaction than oral communication.



Test Yourself 1

Take the following situations into consideration and, based on the differing characteristics of oral and written communication, choose which form you would use.

- (a) You have just finalised a deal with a client and need to record the deal. What do you do?
 - A You make a legal contract document and sign it.
 - B You say to the client “The deal is done”, and seal it with a handshake to confirm the deal.
- (b) You are in the middle of some work and need an urgent document from somebody.
 - A You call person and ask them to send it as soon as possible.
 - B You drop an e-mail to the person and wait for a reply.

2. Explain what non-verbal communication is all about.

[Learning Outcome b]

Do you sometimes get the feeling that the person in front of you is saying one thing out loud, but thinking the exact opposite in his mind? The subconscious vibes you get from the other person usually arise from the person's facial expressions, body language, tone and pitch of voice etc. All these are types of non-verbal communication.



Definition

Non-verbal communication is the type of communication that does not use words or speech to communicate, but still conveys information across to the receiver, through certain modes such as body language, facial expressions, sounds, tone of voice etc.

Let us discuss the two most common modes of non-verbal communication.

1. Body language

This includes hand gestures, head movements, body posture, facial expressions, eye contact etc. that usually indicate what the person is feeling/thinking. These can be consciously made by the speaker to emphasize a point they are making (e.g. pointing towards the other person to emphasize that they are responsible for something). Sometimes, these gestures, expressions etc. are involuntary, as in the speaker is not aware or is not consciously making them, thus sometimes giving away what they are actually thinking.



Example

Richard is a business development executive working for Astra Technologies Ltd. He is in a meeting with the representatives of a prestigious client, Tetronics Plc, trying to win a big project for his company. However, Richard knows that his company is not equipped to handle a project of this size; they would need to considerably upscale and recruit before gaining the capacity to handle Tetronics' project.

When Richard talks about how his company can easily build the capacity soon enough to handle the project, he starts fidgeting with his hands. His posture becomes stooped. His body language becomes uncomfortable and his facial expressions turn tense. He avoids eye contact with the client.

Here, Richard is communicating non-verbally with the client, possibly giving away the true facts. If the client picks up this non-verbal communication, Richard's company might lose the project.

2. Para-language

This includes the tone of voice, the pitch and speed of speech, pauses, hesitations etc. It also includes certain sounds made by the speaker (e.g. umm, ah etc.). These sounds do not come under the category of 'speech', as in, these are not words per se; just sounds made that nevertheless convey meaning.



Example

In the example of Richard above,

Richard hesitates when starting to talk with the client. When he does start to talk, the pitch of his voice is low, so much that the client can hardly hear him sometimes. He talks at a great speed, like he has rehearsed and learnt by heart what he is going to say. When the client asks him questions relating to the project, he pauses before answering, and interjects his answers with a lot of umms and ahhs.

All this is non-verbal communication through which Richard discloses (maybe unintentionally) to the client his true opinion regarding whether his company can pull off this big project.

Effects of non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication has the following effects:

Emphasizing what is conveyed through speech (e.g. nod vigorously to emphasize a 'yes')

Convey feelings or honest opinion (e.g. steady eye contact conveys honesty)

Manage conversations (e.g. non-verbal cues can signal when one party has finished speaking or if one party wishes to interrupt the other to say something)

Provide feedback to the speaker (e.g. sounds such as 'uh huh' convey that the listener that they understand what is being said)



Test Yourself 2

Differentiate between verbal (oral) communication and non-verbal communication.

Answers to Test Yourself

Answer to TY 1

(a) The correct option is **A**.

A business deal needs to be recorded for future reference and as a proof, so written communication is suitable.

(b) The correct option is **A**.

Oral communication is faster and the reply can also be received quicker as compared to written communication.

Answer to TY 2

Oral communication is talking with others to give and exchange information & ideas, such as: asking questions, giving directions, coordinating work tasks, explaining, persuading etc.

Non-verbal communication is the type of communication that does not use speech to communicate, but still conveys information across to the receiver, through certain modes such as body language, facial expressions, sounds, tone of voice etc.

Verbal communication is always intentional; whereas non-verbal communication may or may not be intentional (e.g. the speaker's body language may unintentionally give away his true feelings).

Verbal communication consists strictly of speech, i.e. words that are a part of a language. Non-verbal communication consists of mere sounds (i.e. which are not words from any language) and gestures.

Effective verbal communication can take place even when the sender cannot see the receiver of the communication (e.g. through telephone or radio). However, for non-verbal communication to be effective, the sender needs to be able to see the receiver.

Self Examination Questions

Question 1

Explain how communication is a two-way process. Discuss five principles of effective communication.

Question 2

What are the major differences between oral communication and written communication?

Answers to Self Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

Communication is a two way process as it involves a sender and a receiver. The sender creates the message and writes in a language that can be understood by the receiver. The message is sent by various means such as e-mail, letter and so on. The receiver receives the message and understands it. The receiver then takes the action accordingly and sends back the answer to the message. This is called feedback. This feedback completes the cycle of communication thus completing the two way process of communication.

Principles of effective communication:

The five principles of effective communication are:

- (a) **Brevity:** communication should be brief. Shortness of sentences go a long way in effective communication. It wins the attention of the reader. Meaningless and unnecessary words should be avoided. There should be flow of information to make communication more effective.
- (b) **Clarity:** clarity of thoughts is the prerequisite of effective communication. The message needs to be clear and free of ambiguity. Clarity is not simply avoiding the use of needless words, but also the choice and arrangement of the right words so that the reader knows at once what is said. Simplify complicated issues with examples and define technical terms to make communication easier to comprehend.
- (c) **Timeliness:** the message should reach the receiver on time. If the message doesn't reach at proper time, it may turn out to be useless.
- (d) **Completeness:** the message should be complete. There should be proper clarifications of any assumptions in the message. Incomplete messages create misunderstanding and ambiguity.

Answer to SEQ 2

Oral communication	Written communication
The use of vocal medium to interact.	The use of the written word to interact.
It is an instantaneous form of communication with immediate feedback.	It is not instantaneous and the feedback is not immediate.
It is time saving due to instant interaction.	It is time consuming compared to oral communication
The interaction is not recorded for future reference.	There is a record for future reference and hence there will be less misunderstanding.
More often used in informal interaction than written communication.	More often used for formal interaction than oral communication.

STUDY GUIDE C1: DEMONSTRATE LISTENING SKILLS

Get Through Intro

Listening is a very important part of the communication process, where the listener hears what is being told and interprets the communication correctly. Messages communicated can be useful only if:

the person giving the message / instructions conveys clearly and in a language that is understood by the recipient of the communication; and

the receiver of the message interprets the message correctly and takes an informed decision.

Therefore, it is not only important to have the skills to convey the message effectively, it is equally essential to have good listening skills by the receiver of the communication to make it meaningful. An effective listener should have the desire to listen, to focus on the core content and pick up the relevant message, thereby understanding the speaker correctly.

This Study Guide explains the basics of hearing and listening, differentiates between a good listener and a poor listener and also identifies the barriers to effective listening. This knowledge will enable you to improve your communication skills, ensure greater efficiency and productivity in your workplace and also achieve better customer satisfaction.

Learning Outcomes

- a) Differentiate between hearing and listening.
- b) Identify barriers to effective listening.
- c) Differentiate a good listener from a poor listener.

76: Demonstrate Listening and Written Communication Skills

1. Differentiate between hearing and listening.

[Learning Outcome a]

1.1 Meaning

1. Hearing

The ear is a sensory organ of the human body. Hearing is the ability through which our ears are able to recognise the various sounds around us. Therefore, each and every sound passing through our ears can be considered 'hearing'. However, everything that is being heard need not be 'listened to' because it may not be useful or meant for us.



Example

The following sounds make up the background noise, and are usually not required to be 'listened to':

- Sound of a passing train
- River water flowing
- Birds chirping
- Children playing
- A song being played at a distant location

2. Listening

Listening is a communication process through which the listener hears what is being told and interprets the communication correctly. For example, a student understanding the instructions given by the teacher during the examination and acting accordingly would be considered 'listening' to the teacher. On the other hand, a student who does not act in accordance with the examination instructions given by the teacher would be considered 'hearing' the teacher rather than 'listening to' the teacher.

Therefore, listening involves:

- hearing the sounds entering our ears;
- understanding what is being heard; and
- making a judgement and/or taking an informed decision.

In short, **listening is hearing what is being communicated and then being involved in it to ensure that the instructions heard are understood.**



Example

- Listening to a favourite song on the radio and humming along with it.
- Attending a lecture on an interesting topic and correctly answering the questions posed by the lecturer.

From the above, it is clear that listening is making use of our auditory system as well as other sensory organs (like our eyes) effectively to understand spoken communication. Real listening (i.e. effective listening) is an active process that has three basic steps, namely, **hearing, understanding and judging.**

1.2 Differentiate between hearing and listening

1. Intentional

Hearing is usually unintentional; however, listening is intentional as the listener is required to focus on what is being told, understand it and make an informed decision or judgement or act in accordance with it.

2. Passive versus active process

Hearing is a passive process, hence, most of the time we do not apply our mind to what is being heard and do not absorb the communication. However, listening is an active process and the listener is actively involved in understanding what is being said.

3. Conscious effort

Hearing is not a conscious effort as it is a passive process, while listening requires a conscious effort being made by the listener.

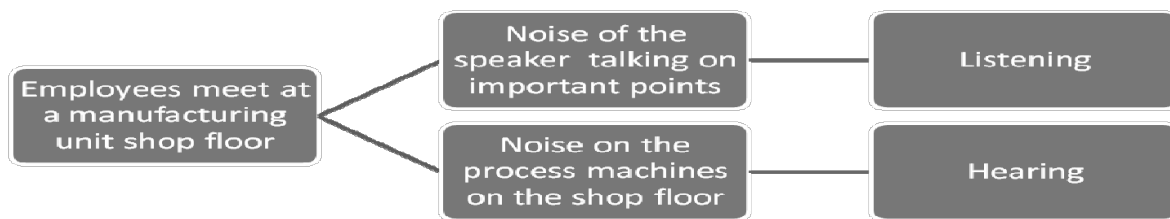
4. Importance in relation to communication

Mere hearing is not important for communication, whereas active listening is an important part in the process of communication as concentration is required to understand what is being said.



Example

Here is an example of the difference between hearing and listening relating to employees working at a manufacturing company.



Test Yourself 1

James Smith is travelling in a train after a busy day in the office and is analysing how his presentation to his client had gone. There is the noise of various people talking to each other around him. James is listening to that noise.

State whether the above statement is:

- A True
- B False

2. Differentiate a good listener from a poor listener.

[Learning Outcome c]

2.1 Meaning of a good listener and a poor listener

While all the intended people receiving the communication are listeners, can there be a good or a poor listener? The answer is yes.

Based on their behaviour and intent, they can be categorized as good or poor listeners.

On one hand, a poor listener does not listen / show interest / make an effort to understand what is being communicated and thereby does not listen effectively. On the other hand, a good listener pays attention or concentrates on what is being said and makes an active effort to understand what the speaker is conveying.

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2.2 Differentiating between the listeners

To understand the difference between a good listener and a poor listener, let us first look at the typical characteristics of both types of listeners:

1. Effective / Good Listener

A good listener displays some verbal or non-verbal signs of listening. Some of the common signs are as follows:

(a) Non-verbal signs

Nonverbal signs include signs involving body language such as:

(i) Nodding, smiling, frowning, laughing or being silent:

A good listener shows interest in what is being verbally communicated through body language such as nodding, smiling, frowning, laughing or being silent and thereby displays an active effort to understand what is being told.

(ii) Right posture

A good listener would generally lean slightly in one direction (forward or on the side) or rest their head on one hand.

(iii) Showing expressions

A good listener would show facial expressions of happiness / sadness / empathy etc.

(iv) Maintaining eye contact

A good listener would encourage the speaker through appropriate eye contact with the speaker (maybe along with a smile). However, shy speakers may feel uncomfortable with eye contact; therefore, eye contact may not always be present. Listeners should maintain eye contact depending on the circumstances.

Apart from body language, there are a few other non-verbal signs such as:

(i) Avoiding distractions

A good listener keeps distractions away as much as possible by avoiding fidgeting / looking elsewhere / looking at the watch, using the phone etc. If the listener feels their mind is wandering, they will change the position of their body and try to concentrate on the speaker's words.

(ii) Making notes

A good listener usually takes down notes of relevant and important matters which are being communicated orally.

(iii) Listening for main ideas

A good listener will perk up and appear to pay special attention to statements that begin with phrases such as "My point is..." or "The thing to remember is..."

(b) Verbal signs of good listening

(i) Asking questions

A good listener usually asks questions to seek clarifications on matters which are communicated verbally. This will demonstrate the listener's interest in what is being communicated. However, the listener would wait for the speaker to finish before asking questions.

(ii) Providing feedback

A good listener would be open-minded, without being judgmental, and would provide constructive feedback / answers on the communication.

(iii) Giving verbal cues

Good listeners usually offer verbal cues (such as 'ok', 'hmmm', and 'ah!') to encourage the speaker to continue or to indicate to the speaker that they are paying attention.

(c) Other points include:

- avoid pre-judgement
- control your emotions
- avoid focus on the appearance of the speaker but focus on what is being said

2. Poor Listener

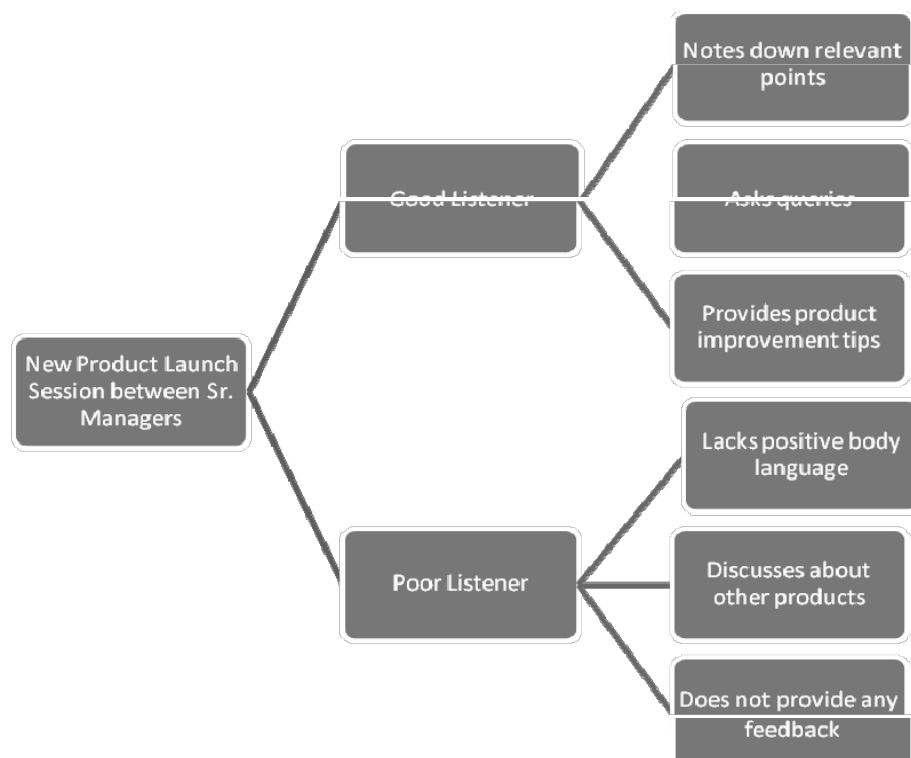
Some of the typical characteristics of a poor listener are discussed below:

- (i) A poor listener **lacks interest** in the communication and hence does **not maintain eye contact** with the speaker.
- (ii) The body language of a poor listener is typical, such as fidgeting, looking elsewhere, yawning, checking their phones etc.
- (iii) A poor listener 'nit-picks' on irrelevant points or argues without reason.
- (iv) A poor listener tends to be distracted very easily or becomes pre-occupied by other thoughts, and thereby does not try to understand what is being said.
- (v) A poor listener jumps to conclusions without making an effort to comprehend the communication.
- (vi) A poor listener either spends time on taking excessive / irrelevant notes without actually making an effort to understand the speaker, or does not bother to note down even important points.
- (vii) A poor listener does not ask any questions.
- (viii) A poor listener does not bother to give constructive feedback or any feedback at all.



Example

Triton Company plans to launch a new product, Xntra. The senior managers have a meeting to discuss the launch. The following diagram shows the difference between a good listener and a poor listener.



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2.3 Difference between a good listener and a poor listener

From the above discussion, we can now summarise and understand the difference between the two types of listeners.

Good listener	Poor listener
A good listener will avoid distractions by avoiding fidgeting / looking out of the room / looking at the watch, etc.	A poor listener is often distracted by the environment.
A good listener maintains eye contact, asks questions, etc. and therefore makes a conscious effort to understand what is being communicated.	A poor listener will only 'hear' what is told and therefore makes no effort to listen.
A good listener uses genuine body language like smiling, nodding, etc. to indicate that they are listening.	A poor listener sometimes displays fake expressions like smiling, nodding etc. to appear to understand what is being communicated.
A good listener tends to ask questions which are important and relevant like seeking clarity on what is communicated.	A poor listener either asks no questions at all or sometimes nit-picks by asking irrelevant questions.
A good listener avoids focussing on the appearance of the speaker and focuses on what is being said.	A poor listener focuses on the appearance of the speaker rather than what is being said.

Since we now have the knowledge of good listening skills, it is important for us to participate in some listening activities in order to assess and evaluate our listening skills.

Activities

Note to the instructor:

The instructor can read a piece of text to the students or use an audio clip. The students should listen carefully and answer some questions based on the text or audio clip. The following text on Weather Conditions is exemplary.

Some questions are presented after the text.

Example task:

1. Weather conditions

The weather conditions in Tanzania vary from one region to another. In the southern part of Tanzania, for instance, Iringa is normally cool and windy. Its average temperature is 12 degrees Celsius; Njombe is rainy and cold. Its average temperature is 6 degrees; and Mbeya is wet and cool. Its average temperature is 14 degrees. In the central part of the country, we have regions such as Dodoma, Singida, and Manyara. To begin with Dodoma, it is hot and sunny. The average temperature is 22 degrees. As for Singida, it is normally warm and sunny. Its average temperature is 18 degrees. Manyara is very wet but warm. Its average temperature is 17 degrees Celsius. In the northern part, we have regions such as Tanga, Kilimanjaro and Arusha. Tanga is very hot and sunny –just like Dodoma. Its average temperature is 24 degrees. Kilimanjaro is rainy and cool. Its average temperature is 11 degrees. Arusha is windy and cloudy. Its average temperature is 10 degrees.

Questions:

1) State the weather conditions and average temperatures of the following regions:

- a) Tanga: Weather condition: _____ Average temperature: _____
- b) Njombe Weather condition: _____ Average temperature: _____
- c) Arusha Weather condition: _____ Average temperature: _____

2) Which region is warm and sunny?

3) Which region has the coldest temperature?



Test Yourself 2

At a shopping mall, Mr. Walker was making a presentation on technical issues to one of the prospective clients on a new electrical appliance. The prospective client, Mr. Parker, is not interested in the information and wants to walk away.

Required:

Explain three strategies which might be adopted by Mr. Parker to indicate that he is not interested.

3. Identify barriers to effective listening.

[Learning Outcome b]

3.1 Effective Listening

As discussed in Learning Outcome 1, effective listening is making use of our auditory system as well as other sensory organs (like our eyes) effectively to understand spoken communication.

In Learning Outcome 2, we studied the characteristics of a good listener and a poor listener and discussed the differences between the two. In this Learning Outcome, we will now discuss some of the barriers to listening faced by a listener, which causes him to be a poor listener.

3.2 Barriers to effective listening

1. People related factors

(a) Information overload

Some people are unable to comprehend what is being listened when too much information is conveyed at one time.



Example

A manager gives a number of verbal instructions to the assistant. The assistant may be overwhelmed by the huge number of instructions bombarded at him and therefore, may miss out some instructions.

(b) Lack of preparation and planning before communication

In the case of complicated communication, effective listening will be affected if the person to whom the message is conveyed does not prepare beforehand for receiving the communication.



Example

The annual budget is being discussed in a senior management meeting. The budget discussion was started in an earlier meeting, which John, the sales director, had not attended. John did not get time to go through the minutes of the earlier meeting, and therefore, did not understand a few aspects of the budget discussion. This was because of lack of preparation to receive the communication in the current meeting.

(c) Other factors

the use of technical jargon, complicated words, etc. For example, the use of accountancy-specific words like 'retained earnings, capital expenditure, etc. may not be understood by a student of science.

language differences i.e. the listener not understanding the language in which the message is communicated, or not understanding the accent used by the speaker in spite of understanding the language.

reacting to unimportant matters rather than the important part of the communication. For example, a staff training session where the listener counts the number of 'umms' said by the speaker rather than concentrating on the topic of the training.

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being preoccupied with something else that is less important at the time. For example, when the boss is communicating important information about a client meeting, the employee may be thinking about the payroll calculation for the month, which is not due for submission until the end of the month.

being repulsed by the speaker may lead to the listener 'tuning out' what the speaker is conveying.

adopting bad listening methods like thinking what is being said is not relevant or useful, and therefore deliberately missing out on what is being said.

incorrect assumptions/bias/preconceived notions regarding what is being said, which leads to ineffective listening.



Example

The boss discusses the appraisal process with the staff and conveys that salary revisions for staff will be based on credit. At the end of the discussion the boss asks staff whether they need any further clarifications on the matter. Some staff assume that the management will purposely give them a poor rating in the appraisal. Therefore they do not seek any clarifications on the process.

2. Physical Barriers

There are times when during communication, some external noise interference / connection problems in the case of telephonic / videoconferencing conversations cause distraction and creates a barrier in listening.



Example

An on-going training session is being distracted by a loud song being played nearby making it difficult to listen to what is being said.

3. Gender barriers

Research has shown that males and females listen differently. Men tend to pay attention to only the core content of what is being said, while women are better at picking up the emotions of the communicator.

4. Lack of training

While some people have inborn skills to understand what is being said, most people require training to acquire skills to make listening more effective.

5. Other points include:

- wrong method of communication
- poor phrased messages
- loss in transmission or poor retention by receiver
- biased interpretation
- mistrust and fear
- ambiguity or vagueness of the message delivered



Test Yourself 3

An English grammar class is in progress. Jay, the trainer, has just finished explaining 'common nouns'. Rex, a student, was earnestly listening to Jay. He asked Jay 'Could you clarify how to identify 'common nouns'?

Required:

Determine whether Rex was an effective listener. Give reasons for your answer.

Answers to Test Yourself

Answer to TY 1

The correct option is **B**.

Mr. Smith is busy in analysing something that happened in the office during the day. Therefore, he is not making a conscious effort to understand what the other people are talking. Hence, he is not 'listening' to the people, but merely 'hearing' them.

Answer to TY 2

To indicate disinterest, Mr Parker should show that he is a bad listener.

To do this, three strategies which can be adopted by Mr. Parker are:

- Not maintaining eye contact with the speaker
- Using body language such as fidgeting, yawning etc. or using other non-verbal cues such as looking at the watch etc.
- Not asking any questions and not giving feedback

Answer to TY 3

'Listening' is to be involved in what is being heard, to understand who is saying, why it is being said, etc. Listening is to apply our mind to understand to what is being told.

The scenario indicates that Rex was listening, and has tried to understand what was said. However, he has not understood it and therefore, he is not an effective listener. He faced the people related barrier of 'not understanding what is being conveyed'.

Self Examination Questions

Question 1

Some children are busy playing on the beach. It was a full moon day, and the tides were exceptionally strong, with waves crashing on the beach with force. The children are listening to the tide. This statement is:

- A** True
- B** False

Question 2

A Maths teacher is explaining the method of solving a particular problem. The students are able to correctly answer the questions posed by the teacher. Are the children listening or hearing the teacher?

Question 3

Mr. Nicholas makes a summary of the important points which he had noted down during a sales meeting he had attended. Mr. Nicholas had been a _____ listener.

Question 4

The audience in a theatre are unable to hear the dialogues in the movie properly as a baby starts crying.

Identify the nature of the barrier to effective listening:

- A** Psychological barrier
- B** Cultural barrier
- C** Physical barrier
- D** Gender barrier

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Question 5

Mr. Lee from China can understand only Chinese. He is attending a conference in the UK, and finding it difficult to understand what Mr. James is saying.

Identify the nature of the barrier to effective listening:

- A Psychological barrier
- B Gender barrier
- C Physical barrier
- D Cultural barrier

Question 6

Explain the features of effective listening.

Answers to Self Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

The correct option is **B**.

Children are busy in their activity and they are only hearing the noise of the tide in the background.

Answer to SEQ 2

The children are listening, as they are interested in hearing what is being taught, understanding and making judgements. Therefore, they are answering the questions posed by the teacher correctly.

Answer to SEQ 3

Mr. Nicholas had taken down important points during the meeting for future reference, which is a feature of a good listener.

Answer to SEQ 4

The correct option is **C**.

A noise causing interruption in listening to something is a physical barrier.

Answer to SEQ 5

The correct option is **D**.

Mr. Lee does not understand the English language, hence finds it difficult to understand what Mr. James is saying.

Answer to SEQ 6

Real listening (i.e. effective listening) is an active process that has three basic characteristics:

Hearing

This is the stage where our ears recognise the various sounds around us.

Understanding

The person 'hearing' the communication is aware of what is being conveyed. This happens as the listener pays attention and grasps what is being conveyed.

Judging

The person makes an informed decision after thinking of the matter which is conveyed. The speaker may also raise a query to seek clarification on what is conveyed.

From the above, it is clear that listening is making use of our auditory system as well as other sensory organs (like our eyes) effectively to understand spoken communication. Real listening (i.e. effective listening) is an active process that has three basic steps, namely, **hearing, understanding and judging**.

STUDY GUIDE C2: DEMONSTRATE WRITING SKILLS IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCES

Get Through Intro

In our daily lives, we exchange our ideas, thoughts and views with our friends and relatives. At times, we directly talk to them and express ourselves verbally. At other times, we write letters to them and express ourselves in a few written words in the form of letters. In the same way, businessmen also exchange ideas and information by writing letters. They communicate information by writing letters to customers, suppliers and others and receiving letters from them. Hence, business correspondence is the medium or means through which views are expressed and ideas are communicated in writing in the process of business activities.

Nowadays, business operations are not restricted to one locality and region. Production takes place in one area and is sold in far off places. There arises the need for the buyer and seller to communicate with each other by different means of communication. Therefore, business correspondence is written evidence which helps to maintain proper relations. It helps in creating and maintaining goodwill and also helps in expansion of business.

With unprecedented advancements in the methods of communication and correspondence, business entities can now easily explore new markets across the globe. The growth of multinational companies is an indicator in this direction. In this chapter, we will learn different types of business correspondence and the appropriate techniques of writing them.

Learning Outcomes

- a) Describe how to write suitable business correspondences (letters, memos, emails and reports).
- b) Describe how to write persuasive requests, proposals and sales letters correctly.
- c) Describe the appropriate techniques in note taking (from lectures, speeches, books, newspapers, the internet, meetings, etc).
- d) Explain how to write summaries correctly.
- e) Identify and write different types of essays effectively.

1. Describe how to write suitable business correspondences (letters, memos, emails and reports).

[Learning Outcome a]

Business correspondence



Definition

Business correspondence is the communication or exchange of information for the purpose of business activities.

In a business setting, communication takes place in a number of ways. For the purpose of this learning outcome, we will concentrate on written correspondence only. Written business correspondence can take place between organisations, within organisations or between the customers and the organisation.

1.1 Importance of business correspondence

Business correspondence has the following objectives:

- (i) Maintaining proper relationships
- (ii) Serving as written evidence
- (iii) Creating and maintaining goodwill
- (iv) Expanding business

1.2 Types of business correspondence

The two widely recognised categories of communication in the business world are external communication and internal communication. Internal communication is needed for the internal functioning of any organisation. External communication is with the suppliers, customers and other outside parties.

Business correspondence can be of different types, such as:

- Memorandum
- Letter
- Report
- Email

1. Memorandum



Definition

A memorandum or memo is a written message sent within an organisation.

Memos are documents exchanged within an office. The length of a memo is usually less than one page but it can vary depending upon the message to be communicated. They are usually sent by managers to their subordinates or to the employees reporting to the manager. Memos can be sent by email, delivered by hand or displayed on the notice board in the office.

(a) Memos are written to serve the following objectives:

- (i) to impart information
- (ii) to bring attention to a problem
- (iii) to advise a solution to a problem

(b) The characteristics of a memo are:

- (i) the sender **does not sign** the memo
- (ii) most businesses have a house format for writing a memo
- (iii) Memos are usually short documents averaging one page

(c) Requisites of an effective memo

Memos play a crucial role in the decision making process in an organisation by enabling the flow of information. A good memo should have the following requisites:

- (i) **Clarity:** a memo must be clearly written because an unclear and vague memo will confuse the reader leading to delays and inaction.
- (ii) **Conciseness:** a memo should contain only essential information and unnecessary explanations and repetitions should be avoided.
- (iii) **Single topic:** one memo should deal with only one topic.
- (iv) **Informal tone:** although a memo is a formal document, its tone is usually informal and conversational.



Example

Here is a memo issued by Xeriot Plc to the marketing department:

“There is going to be a two day programme on value education for some of our staff. The programme will be organised by IIM, Ahmedabad in the last week of May. We need your support to make it successful.”

We can see that the information given in the memo is not **specific and concrete**. There is no mention of the exact topic and date of programme. The memo is also not clear on who the participants are and what kind of support is needed.

Revised version of the same memo

Memo

Ref: RX-12000	Date: 22/10/20X7
To : Tom Green, Head-Marketing	From: Dora Geller, CEO
Subject: Programme on Business Ethics	

On Monday, May 28, the Value Education Cell of IIM Ahmedabad will be organising a two day programme on “Business Ethics” for the trainees of the Marketing Division. Kindly arrange your schedules such that the absence of the trainees would not hamper the workflow.

(d) Parts of a Memo

- (i) **Heading segment:** this segment contains the name of the sender and the receiver, the date of writing the memo and the subject line informing the receiver about the topic of the memo. Informal names of the sender or receiver must not be mentioned in the memo e.g. if the recipient’s name is Mathew, he must not be addressed as Matt. The **subject line** must clearly state the purpose of writing the memo.
- (ii) **Opening segment:** this is the opening paragraph of the memo. This part of the memo states the reason for writing the memo. It provides the receiver with a brief **overview** of the memo. It clarifies the reason for which the receiver must read the memo.
- (iii) **Task segment:** this is the middle section of the memo. It contains details of a problem or information to be given to the receiver. It discusses the steps already taken or those that need to be taken to solve the problem.
- (iv) **Closing segment:** this section requests the recipient to take necessary action. The sender never signs the memo.
- (v) **CC:** this means a carbon copy or complimentary copy. It includes the name of the person who will receive a copy of the memo.
- (vi) **Summary:** this section is written in very rare cases when the memo exceeds one or two pages. It contains the main points of the memo highlighted with the help of bulleted points.

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Example

Memo

Heading

Ref: MD-1786	Date: 22/10/20X7	Opening segment
To : Jedi Wright, Advertising Executive	From: Yoda Dora, Head-Marketing	
Subject: Assistance in launching Model ZZ-236		
<p>Through market research and analysis, it has been observed that we need to launch Model ZZ-236 in four colours. This will align Model ZZ-236 with the styles and trends of our target consumers. The target audience for this product are young adults aged between 19-27 years.</p> <p>It has been noticed that traditional Television and Out of Home advertising has not proved effective in grabbing the attention of our target audience. Hence, the management has decided to extensively use the Internet to advertise Model ZZ-236.</p> <p>I request you to prepare a list of Internet advertisements used by our competitors for their products and send them to me by 26/10/20X7.</p>		
Closing segment		
CC: Dean Vader, Head-Advertising		

Task segment

Closing segment

2. Letter

One of the ways in which people working outside an organisation form an opinion about the organisation is based upon the business letters received by them. Hence, business letters represent the organisation.



Example

A business letter is a formal written form of communicating information to the recipients outside the organisation.

Business letters are written with a definite purpose e.g. to receive a quotation for office stationery, or to provide information about the delivery schedule of a product. A letter is usually sent physically, i.e. delivered by hand or by post. Letters can also be sent electronically, as attachment to emails.

Certain business letters give rise to **legal obligations**. Hence, the author must use a courteous, reasonable, accurate and precise approach while drafting such letters.

(a) A business letter serves the following functions:

- (i) They are inexpensive means of communication
- (ii) They provide proof of a transaction
- (iii) They provide a record for future reference
- (iv) They generate goodwill for the business

(b) Characteristics of a letter

- (i) A business letter is always drafted in a proper format. Most organisations have a house style for sending letters to people working outside the organisation.
- (ii) It contains a date and reference number.
- (iii) A copy of the letter is saved by the sender as a proof of communication.
- (iv) The signature of the sender is included at the end of the letter.

(c) Parts of a letter

(i) Heading

The heading is usually the **letterhead** of the company. It contains the name of the organisation and the address from which the letter is sent, which is placed in the centre of the page, at the top. The address mentioned in the heading can be used by the receiver to send a reply to the letter.

If a letterhead is not being used, and a plain paper is being used for writing a letter, the sender's address is usually located in the top corner on the right hand side of the letter. However, it is also acceptable to write the sender's address on the left hand side, just above the inside address (explained in point (iii) below).

(ii) Date

This is the date on which the letter has been written and sent to the receiver.

(iii) Inside address

This contains the name and address of the individual to whom the letter is sent. The person must be addressed with the proper title e.g. Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr. The person's designation can be used as an honorific title e.g. The Personnel Manager.

(iv) Salutation

The salutation is a **greeting** to the reader. It is chosen on the basis of familiarity with the reader and the formality of the situation. The sender must ensure that the salutation has no grammatical mistakes and is appropriate according to the gender of the receiver. Some commonly used salutations are Dear [Full Name], Dear Sir or Madam.

(v) Subject line

It helps the reader to identify the subject of the correspondence.

(vi) Reference

It serves the purpose of identifying the department or section from which the letter has been written. It enables **replies to be linked** with previous correspondence.

(vii) Body

The message is conveyed in this part of the letter. The body of the letter is divided into various paragraphs depending upon the length of the message.

(viii) Complementary close

The salutation greets the receiver at the beginning whereas the complementary close says '**goodbye**' at the end of the letter. Hence, the complementary close must match the salutation of the letter. A complementary close expresses regards for the person to whom the letter is directed e.g. Yours faithfully, Respectfully yours. A comma follows the complementary close.

(ix) Signature

A signature is the name of the author handwritten in a distinctive style as a form of authorisation or identification. The name of the author is typed four spaces below the complementary close to provide space for the author to sign the letter. The signature follows the complementary close.

(x) P.S.

P.S. stands for post script. It appears after the signature. It is written if the author has forgotten to mention something important in the letter.

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Tip

Nowadays most business letters are typed on a computer using word processing software, which allows for correction of errors / addition of text in between other text even after the letter has been completed. Due to this, P.S. is rarely used nowadays.

(xi) Enclosure

It mentions the documents sent along with the letter.

(xii) CC

It stands for courtesy copies or carbon copy. It includes the names of the people receiving a copy of the letter.



Example

Scaro Electronic Company
14 STRAMONGATE, KENDAL
Lancaster
LA9 4BN

Heading

Date: 23/10/2007

Date

Inside address

To,
Mr. Joshua Dhesi
InfoExcel Market research
TOWN STREET, ULVERSTON,
Lancaster
LA12 7EY

Salutation

Dear Mr. Joshua Dhesi,

Subject and Reference

Subject: Report on online advertising of electronic products
Reference: AD-CR124

Body of the letter

We would like to introduce ourselves as leading manufacturers and retailer of electronic goods. We have developed an electronic gadget targeting youth between 19-27 years.

The board of directors have decided to use the Internet as the primary medium of advertisement. A website will be launched dedicated to the product.

We are interested in knowing the various methods of internet advertising. Please let us know the cost and time required for preparing a report on the effectiveness of various methods of Internet advertising.

Yours Sincerely,

Complementary close

(Signature)
Mr. Yoda Dora (Head-Marketing)
Scaro Electronic Company

Signature

P.S.:

Post script

Enclosure:

Enclosure

CC:

Courtesy copies or carbon copy

(d) Style and tone of a letter

A good business letter can increase your chances of achieving the objectives for writing the letter, whereas a bad business letter may have the exact opposite effect. Good business letters are characterised by appropriate style and tone. An effective style and tone involves proper content, conciseness, courtesy, correct tone and correct attitude.



Important

The five Cs of business letters are:

- C- Clarity
- C- Conciseness
- C- Courtesy
- C- Correct tone
- C- Correct attitude

- (i) Clarity:** a clearly written letter is immediately understood by the reader. Vague and unclear words should be avoided.



Example

Original version

Kindly be advised to let us know a few things such as your service charges, etc.

Revised version (clarity)

Please send us details regarding your service charges, methods of payment and concession schemes.

- (ii) Conciseness:** a letter should be concise and direct. It is important that the letter makes its point in the fewest possible words.



Example

Original version

I would like to express my gratitude for sending our consultancy fee. We have received your cheque no. 255554 dated 15 May 2008 for Tshs300,000.

Revised version (concise)

Thank you for your cheque no. 255554 dated 15 May 2008 for Tshs300,000 towards consultancy fee.

- (iii) Courtesy:** the letter must show courtesy and consideration, as the reader is usually not obliged to do what the writer requests. Positive and encouraging words should be used.



Example

Original version

You have no other choice but to talk to your accounts manager about the problem in my accounts.

Revised version (courtesy)

Please talk to your accounts manager about the problem in my accounts. I look forward to hearing from you.

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- (iv) **Correct tone:** it refers to the manner and mood of expression. A negative tone can lead to a negative response. The tone should be formal, tactful and positive.



Example

The sentence “Your application for the post of senior manager has been received” has a tactless tone. “Thank you for your application for the post of senior manager” is a tactful tone to impress the reader.

- (v) **Correct Attitude:** correct attitude involves positive attitude and avoids negative attitude. Use the “You attitude” instead of the “I attitude”.



Example

Original version (Negative attitude)

We cannot send the purchase order unless we know more about the product.

Revised version (Positive attitude)

We would be glad if you could send us more information on this product so that we can send the purchase order.



Example

Original version (I attitude)

I will not be able to process your order because your business terms are too vague.

Revised version (You attitude)

Please send us your specific business terms so that we can process your order.

3. Report

A report is a **formal document** containing detailed discussion on a topic. The scope of a report determines the contents of the report. The report may contain general information, details of an investigation or provide recommendations about a topic. A report can be in a hard copy form delivered by hand or by post or sent electronically as an attachment to an email.

A report can be written to serve any of the following purposes:

- (i) Provide information to the reader
- (ii) Discuss and analyse problems and their solutions
- (iii) Suggest improvements
- (iv) Suggest actions to the reader

A business report usually contains several ‘Headings’ and ‘Sub-headings’ which divide the report into several parts. Business reports are usually written to provide detailed information about the subject of the report. The report can contain material from a combination of internal or external and technical or non-technical sources.

Parts of a business report

- (i) **Title page:** it contains the title of the report, name of the author, name of the receiver and the date on which the report was released.
- (ii) **Acknowledgement:** it mentions and thanks the persons and institutions which helped in the preparation of the report.
- (iii) **Abstract:** informs the reader about various parts of the report. It describes the report in one short paragraph.

- (iv) **Executive summary:** the executive summary acquaints the reader with the report. It briefly describes various parts of the report e.g. background information, description of problem, description of alternative solutions, and conclusion. The reader is able to obtain a good idea of main points of the report by reading the executive summary. It informs the reader what the report says. Executive summary is a **condensed version** of the report.
- (v) **Table of contents:** it shows the organisation and contents of the report. It contains a list of the Headings and Sub-headings of the report.
- (vi) **Introduction:** it prepares the reader for the contents in the report. The purpose and scope of the report is mentioned in this part.
- (vii) **Main body:** it is the **longest part** of the report. It is also the main part of the report and contains information, methodology, data and analysis of the topic of the report. It includes various sections (Headings and Sub-headings) and conveys the message to the reader in detail.
- (viii) **Conclusion:** it is a short section **summarising** the entire report.
- (ix) **Recommendation:** no new information is introduced in this part. It is used to indicate that further work needs to be done to solve the problem. It lists and briefly advocates various ways of solving a problem. Usually, the author suggests / points out the most suitable way of solving the problem.
- (x) **Signature:** just like a business letter, a signature is the name of the author handwritten in a distinctive style as a form of authorisation or identification.
- (xi) **Reference:** the material for the report is obtained from various sources. References mention the sources of material used for creating the report.
- (xii) **Bibliography:** it is a list of citations for books, periodicals, articles or other material related to the topic of the report.
- (xiii) **Appendix:** it contains information which is important but it is not the main information of the report e.g. questionnaire, map, table.

4. Email



Definition

Email is mail composed and exchanged through computers and computer networks.

Email is short for 'Electronic Mail', and is an **electronic medium** of exchanging information. It is a method of writing, sending, receiving and storing messages in an electronic form. Computer files can be sent as attachments with emails. For example, letters, reports, legal documents, memos etc. can be sent by email. The communication is instant, therefore the fastest among all methods.

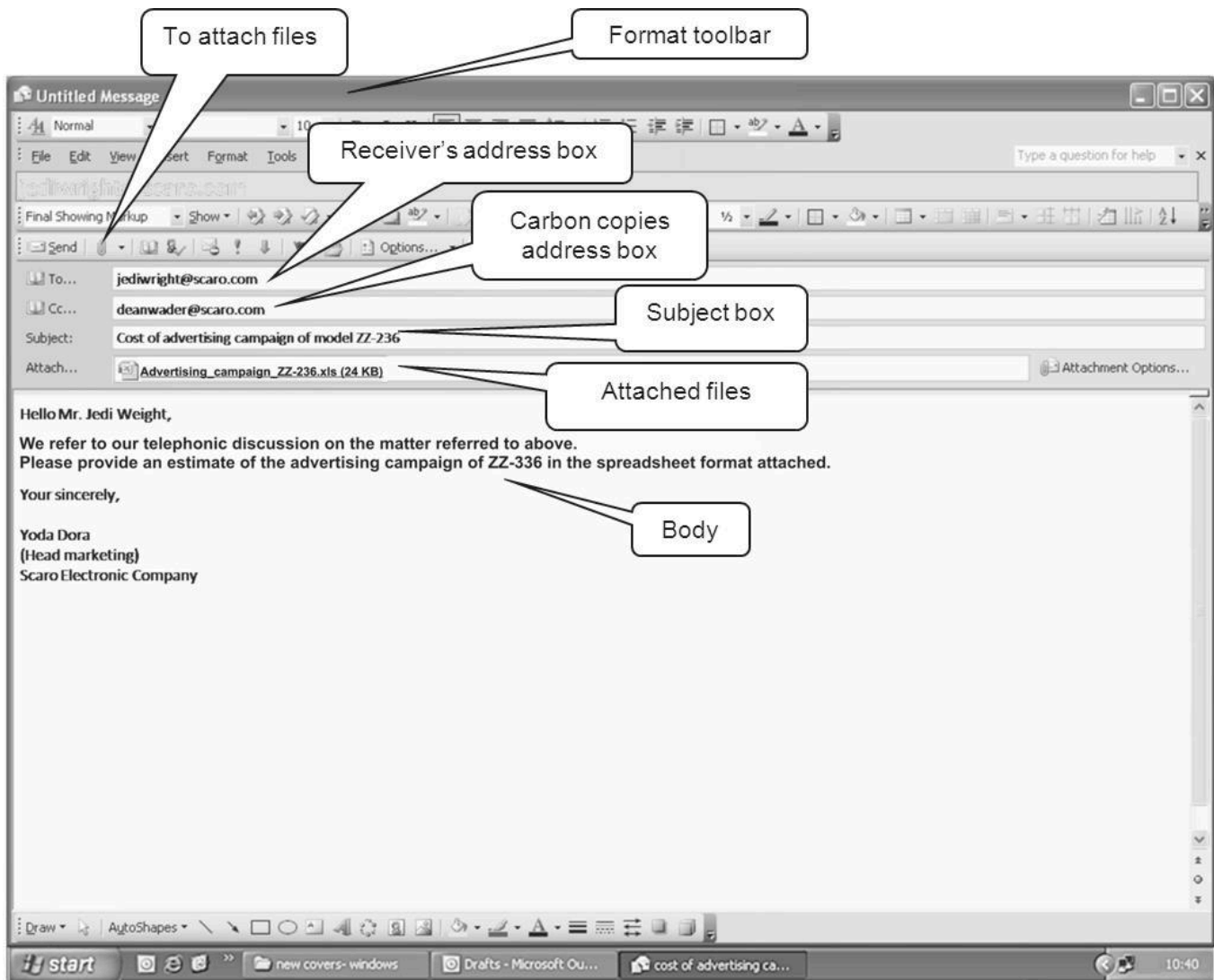
Parts of Email

- (i) **From:** it contains the email address of the sender.
- (ii) **To:** the email address of the receiver is typed here. The message can be sent to several people by including their names in this part. If an incorrect email address is typed in this part, the message will be returned to the sender.
- (iii) **CC:** the email addresses of the people receiving a copy of message are typed here.
- (iv) **Subject Line:** it contains the topic of the message. The recipient obtains an idea about the message from the subject line.
- (v) **Body:** it contains the actual message. This size of this part depends upon the message. The body also usually contains the name and contact details of the sender, often in the form of an 'email signature', which is a standard image that is inserted at the end of every communication.
- (vi) **Attachment:** it contains the computer files sent along with the message.

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Example



Email etiquette

There is a certain protocol to be followed when writing emails – which can be described as 'email manners'. These are, in fact, no different from the usual manners expected when interacting with others in a business setting.

Here are a few rules:

- Use polite language: say please, thank you & sorry

- Show respect: even to your subordinates

- Do not use capital letters: it is considered impolite to write all text in capital letters.

- If you receive an email and you cannot work on it right away, send an interim mail saying 'will get back to you soon'.

- Add email addresses after you have finalized the content of your email: to avoid mistakenly hitting the send button before your email is ready.

- Add attachments first: so that you do not send emails without the required attachments. Also do not send heavy attachments without informing beforehand, as this might block not only the recipient's inbox, but also the server.

Steps to follow in order to write good emails

It is important to write good emails because they create a favourable impression on the reader. Well-written, easy to understand emails also save time, because the receiver does not need to write back for clarification, and the sender does not waste time in explaining the matter again. Follow these steps to produce a good email:

1. Establishing the purpose of the email

Establishing the purpose of the email means understanding why it is necessary in the first place. A clearly defined objective, or purpose, has a number of important benefits - It helps you determine:

- what is important for the user
- what information to include - and what to leave out
- what action you want from the receiver

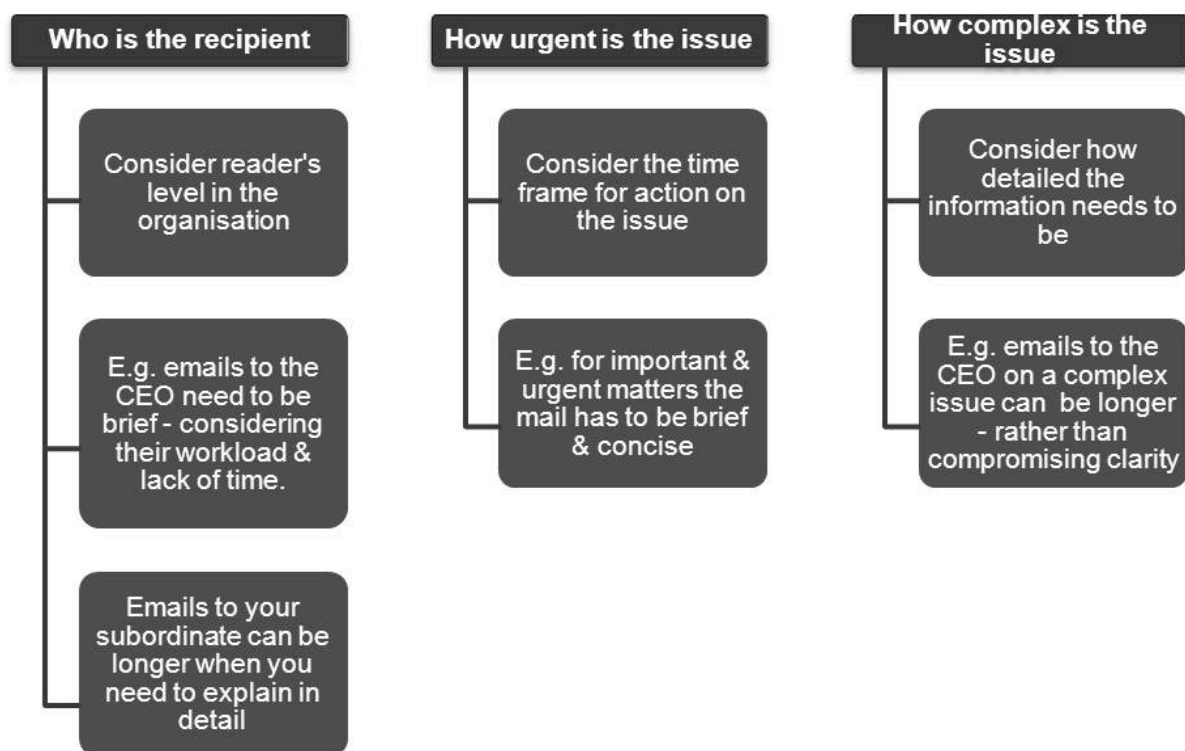
2. Preparing the skeletal framework

Once the purpose of the communication is determined clearly, we now have to work on the skeletal framework. Jot down points that you want to include, and establish a structure, i.e. a logical flow of thoughts and ideas.

3. Deciding the sensible length

This is a very important consideration because too short or too long emails for the purpose seriously undermine the mail's efficacy. The following diagram will help you decide the ideal email length:

Diagram 1: Deciding the ideal email length



Tip

As a rule, email messages need to be brief and concise. If you find that you cannot express all that you want to say in an email of sensible length, it often means you are combining two or more issues / points in one email. Consider splitting the message into two or more separate emails.

4. Writing the actual email

Now write out your entire email by elaborating the points from the framework. Use bullets to present multiple points. Provide all the necessary information to the reader. Add attachments, if any are required. Take care to stick to your decided email length. Add in the email signature and the To, CC, Subject fields.

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5. Mentioning the expected action

Clearly spell out what you want the recipient to do on reading your email. This should be compulsorily specified in the closing line of the email. Moreover, in a long email, even if you need to mention it somewhere in the middle, it is important to summarise all the action points at the end. If you are sending the email only for informational purposes, mention it in the email – e.g. by writing 'For your information only' at the start.

6. Reviewing your email

Before sending out your email, you need to re-read it to check for inconsistencies, grammatical errors, typos etc. This step is very important, as it helps you to spot mistakes before the email is sent out. Once the email is sent, the damage will be done; it cannot be reversed!

Here is an example of a well-written email:



Example

To: Ron, CEO

From: Delnaz, CFO

Subject: Checking on the cost-benefit analysis report

Dear Ron,

I had emailed you the cost-benefit analysis report last week. I just wanted to check whether you have received it, as I haven't heard back from you as yet.

We will need about half an hour to discuss the report. The following points would need to be discussed:

1. Whether you think this analysis is complete and gives the client the information they need
2. Any other points you want to address regarding the report.

Use of bullets

Can you please call me by Thursday so that we can set up a meeting?

Expected action mentioned at the end

Thank you,

Polite language

Delnaz Oberoi
Chief Financial Officer
98500028748

(a) Advantages of email

- (i) The **speed** of delivery of email is very high. An email gets delivered within a few seconds of sending to the recipient.
- (ii) The receiver can immediately reply to the message.
- (iii) Message can be delivered to several people easily.
- (iv) It is a low cost medium of communication. No paper or stamps are used to deliver email.
- (v) It is **eco-friendly**. Paper (which is made from trees) is not used for delivering email.
- (vi) Computer files can be exchanged as **attachment**.

(b) Disadvantages of Email

- (i) It is not a suitable format to confirm a **contract**.
- (ii) Time is wasted in deleting **spam** (unwanted emails containing advertisements).
- (iii) It is not a secure medium of communication. Hackers can guess email passwords and gain access to the Inbox. Confidential information cannot, therefore, be sent.
- (iv) Emails can introduce **viruses** into the computer.



Test Yourself 1

Memo is sent within the _____.

- A Department
- B Organisation
- C City
- D Country



Test Yourself 2

Which of the following is an electronic medium of exchanging messages?

- A Email
- B Letter
- C Report
- D Memorandum



Test Yourself 3

Which of the following statements are true and which are false?

- (i) A memo is an efficient means of communication within an organisation.
- (ii) Speed is the main advantage in using emails.
- (iii) You can send your e-mail message to as many people as you want.
- (iv) Reports never record events and happenings
- (v) Executive decisions in the professional world are usually based on reports

2. Describe how to write persuasive requests, proposals and sales letters correctly.

[Learning Outcome b]

1. Persuasive requests



Definition

A persuasive request is a request for action when you suppose the receiver may be biased, reluctant or unaware.

Persuasion is the art of influencing people to accept willingly an idea or a course of action. It is general a message one sends to try and change the receiver's opinion and views. Unlike direct requests, persuasive requests aim to influence those who are inclined to resist. The communications usually are longer, more detailed and often depend heavily on strategic planning.

Persuasive letters are based on the AIDA approach

Persuasive letters are different from direct requests because in persuasive letters, the reader intrinsically wants to refuse our request. We must persuade the reader to do what we're asking him to do. Therefore, the direct approach will not be effective.

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Instead, use the AIDA formula:

A for attention
I for Interest
D for desire
A for action

Let us see study them in detail.

A	Attract the reader's attention in the very first sentence. Convince the reader right in the beginning that you have something beneficial or interesting to say. Begin by grabbing their attention. Make the opening statement brief without making extravagant claims.
I	Arouse the reader's interest so that he will continue to read the request Explain the relevance of your message to the reader. Continue the theme you started with and add a more detailed picture with words.
D	Create the desire to help. Emphasize how the reader will benefit from doing what you ask. E.g. - in letters asking for donation, emphasize on doing good for the community, having his/her name connected with the writer or the event, or publicity.
A	Make clear what action the reader needs to take. This section gives a good opportunity for one last reminder of the main benefit the reader will get from the action you want. Tell the reader what formalities need to be done, such as contact details, reply forms, stamped envelope etc. End with appreciation, stating what you're thankful for.

An example of a persuasive request is as follows.



Example

May 18, 2006

To,
Mrs Mary Castle
87 Hampton Road
New York

Open with a compliment to attract the reader's attention

Dear Mrs Mary,

It was a pleasure meeting you and touring the building on your property last month. It gave a glimpse of the past. It must be convenient for you to use the building as a big "attic", storing all your canned goods and old farm implements over the years.

As the manager of the Tasty Food Restaurants, I am constantly looking for items to build and display in our restaurants. Our restaurants are constructed of weathered wood to create a rustic look.

Arouse the readers' interest and continue to appeal by acknowledging sentimental values

In your building, I couldn't help but notice some of the unique items inside. The wood from the building and its contents would enable us to build and furnish a new restaurant in Down Street and renovate our old New York restaurant. Mr Fleming, the owner of Tasty Food Restaurants, has asked me to extend you the offer.

Continued on the next page

Although no amount of money can compensate you for a building that is so precious to you and holds so many memories for you, we would be glad to buy the entire contents of the building, except any unique items of sentimental value that you may want to keep.

Create desire to help and tell the benefits of accepting your offer

Although the thought of selling the building may dishearten you, think of the 'new life' that the antiques would have in our restaurants. People who would otherwise never see such old culture will have the opportunity to learn a little about its rich past.

Request for action

After you have reviewed the proposal, please call me at 6663344 to discuss our offer to display your precious items in our premises.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick John
Manager
Tasty Food Restaurant

2. Proposals

A proposal is a method of persuading people to agree to the writer's view or accept his suggestions. It is written for a specific person for a specific purpose. The main goal of a proposal is to persuade the reader to accept the proposed course of action.



Definition

Proposals are written offers to pioneer a proposed course of action.



Example

A new sales manager of a company realises that the company is facing tough competition and the sales are going to decline in the coming months. He gets a great idea to boost sales and wants to share the idea with the sales director. The sales director would ask the sales manager to write a proposal. In other words, he wants the sales manager to write about his idea and provide reasoning for it.

(a) Importance of writing a proposal

Proposals are needed to be written for the following purposes:

- (i) To initiate new projects
- (ii) To provide fresh and brilliant ideas
- (iii) To solve problems
- (iv) To promote innovative strategies

(b) Parts of a proposal

- (i) **Title page:** it contains the title of the proposal, the name of the person or organisation to whom the proposal is being submitted, the name of the writer and the date.
- (ii) **Table of contents:** it provides the reader an **overall view** of the proposal by listing the main headings and the subheadings of the proposal with their page numbers.
- (iii) **List of figures:** it includes a list of figures, tables, graphs and charts.

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- (iv) **Abstract or summary:** it is a condensed version of the proposal as it summarises and highlights its major points.
- (v) **Methodology:** it summarises the proposed methods of data collection and the procedure for investigating the situation.
- (vi) **Introduction:** it introduces readers to the proposal. It gives the background, states the purpose and discusses the scope. It may also try to persuade the readers by highlighting the major benefits and justifying the proposed course of action.
- (vii) **Statement of the problem:** it contains an objective description of the problem or situation that the proposal intends to address.
- (viii) **Proposed plan and schedule:** it presents a schedule of activities highlighting the main course of action.
- (ix) **Advantages/disadvantages:** it reinforces that the proposal has more merits than demerits by making realistic comparisons. It matches benefits to the needs of the situation.
- (x) **Recommendations/proposed solutions:** it is the main section of a proposal as it discusses the plan to solve the problem. It is the **most persuasive** section of a proposal.
- (xi) **Conclusion:** it presents the final summary of the proposal and focuses on main points, and the key benefits and advantages. A final appeal is made to influence readers.
- (xii) **Appendices:** secondary material is put as appendices in a proposal.

Proposal Writing strategies

Apart from using the correct structure and format for the proposal, the proposal should be readable, attractive and convincing. This will help to get a positive reaction from the reader after reading it. To achieve this, systematic planning and good writing strategies need to be followed. A few tips are discussed below:

- (i) **Pre-writing:** it involves understanding the purpose of the project and analysing the audience, the project and the action desired. The writer should do research, collect relevant information, discuss relevant points, make a list of them and organise his points to help him write.
- (ii) **Writing:** it involves organising the collected data, outlining what will be presented in the proposal and writing the first draft. A good outline will help the writer to get a clear picture of his proposal and will help him prepare the first draft.
- (iii) **Post-writing:** once the first draft has been written, it needs to be revised, edited and evaluated to improve its content and structure. Lastly, the final draft is prepared.

It is important to be **persuasive** in order to write an effective proposal. The proposal may be accepted or rejected depending on how effectively it responds to the needs of the situation of the company for whom the proposal has been prepared. It is essential that the proposal persuades the reader that the proposed course of action will give future benefits by showing an understanding of the readers' needs and viable ways to fulfil these needs.

3. Sales letters



Definition

Sales letters are sale promotion instruments used by business houses to promote their sales.

Sales letters are persuasive messages that persuade the reader to believe what the sender wants them to believe. The purpose of every sales letter is to convert the reader into a customer. A good sales letter is like a good advertisement; it catches the attention of the reader, excites his interest and persuades him to buy the product.

Diagram 2: Objectives of a sales letter



Key elements of a sales letter

A sales letter needs to be organised tactfully as the reader has no obligation to read it. The followings points need to be considered to write them:

- (i) Catching the readers' attention
- (ii) Developing the readers' interest in the product
- (iii) Persuading the reader to believe that this product is the best in the market
- (iv) Motivating the reader to act

Parts of a sales letter

Sales letters can be structured into three main parts:

(i) Opening paragraph

The letter should open with an attention catching statement, as many times, only the opening sentence is read by the reader, based on which the reader decides whether it is worthwhile to read the entire letter. Hence, this statement has a vital role to play. It must captivate the readers and immediately appeal to their feelings and interests. The lines those follow should sustain the interest of the reader. How you write the first few lines of the letter will determine whether the whole letter would be read, or unceremoniously thrown into the dustbin.



Example

Few examples of opening sentences of sales letters are:

Making a striking statement

T-shirts are a breath of fresh air. Literally.
It does what no other car can. It talks.

Significant fact

Power energises India's economy. Invest in Win Solar Power Project.
Our new device helps you save 20 percent on your fuel consumption.

Stimulating Questions

You shop for perfect cooking ingredients. But do you cook in perfect conditions?
Are you nervous when you have to make a speech?

Continued on the next page

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Proverbs

Every cloud has a silver lining.

Rewards

Buy any Joy product and win prizes worth Tshs10,000,000.

Special offers

Good friends are rare to find and so are good books. Here we are with an offer of two books free if you buy 5 books together.

(ii) Body

The body of a sales letter should contain data that develops the interest of the reader in the product and convinces him that the product is worth buying. Main features of the product may be included and the selling points emphasized. Convincing the customer that the product is worth buying could be a difficult task due to the tough competition in the market. Therefore, all claims have to be substantiated by facts, testimonials, guarantees and logic.

Moreover, if you know thoroughly the virtues and faults of your product, you will be able to highlight the selling points and tell the reader how it meets his requirements. While explaining, give only the main points, tell him how it works, how it is made, and the effect it produces or the facilities it offers. If your product is a consumer article, make your appeal on an emotional or psychological platform.



Example

Some examples of sentences that would be appropriate to be included in the main body are given below.

Statistics

MAIN computers are available at over 200 outlets across the country. Also MAIN computer is UK's 3rd largest service network.

We've helped people with asthma live normal active lives for years. We pioneered inhalation therapy in Tanzania. Today, we are the manufacturers of the world's largest range of asthma inhalers.

Trial offers

Order this stationary cycle at our risk and expense. Try it for 10 days and if you do not see any loss in your weight, return it. This offer is absolutely free and there is no obligation on your part to buy.

Testimonials

My three close relatives were serious yet treated successfully in Clark Clinic.

Customer Lists

We are sending you a list of companies that are our recurring customers.

Please find enclosed the names of institutes that have been using our security systems for more than five years.

Free samples

We are sending you an asthma inhaler as a free sample. We are sure you will find the product more effective than the ones in the market.

Enclosed are some free samples for your assessment. We believe you will find the products better than our claim.

Continued on the next page

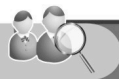
Guarantees

We do not give you a warranty for only 5 years. Crown is India's only handset with a lifetime warranty.

Our courses are designed for the best jobs in SAP with 100 per cent job guarantee.

(iii) Closing paragraph

This is the most essential part of the sales letter because it motivates the reader to act. It should tell the reader what he should do, giving specific instructions and providing some special inducements to get an early response. If your letter has made several points, it is better to recapitulate them before making the final appeal. On it will depend whether your letter is able to convert the reader into a customer. The letter should be closed with a goodwill expression.



Example

Examples of closing lines are given below.

Incentives for early birds

The first 200 subscribers will get three special gifts.

Deadline

Initial offer closes on May 2005.

You must book your apartment before July 1 to get a special rebate of 0.5 per cent.

Special bargain offers

If you respond by June 20, you will be eligible for a special bonus from the company.

Act immediately and take part in our special spring bonanza.

Limited offers

This is a limited offer for professionals only.



Example

Bright Financial Co
P.O.Box 8007
Dar es Salaam
8th June, 2008

Mr Roland Ross
Manager
Nolancorp
P.O.Box 8000
Dar es Salaam

Opening by catching readers' attention

Dear Mr Ross,

What do your employees want after retirement? Financial security, don't they?

Continued on the next page

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We know you already have contributory provident fund and gratuity schemes. Give one more benefit to them to show that special care is taken of them.

Developing readers' interest

We have a group insurance scheme to suit organisations like yours. Under this scheme, each employee will contribute a small sum from his monthly salary. The same will be collected by your office and sent to us. In return, an attractive sum is guaranteed to each member when he retires or to his family if he dies while in service. The main features of the scheme are its low premium and a convenient way for payment. Please go through the enclosed folder for details.

Persuading the reader

Presently, the scheme is being introduced in a few towns only. Please suggest a convenient date and time for our agent to call on you. He will be happy to explain further details and answer any questions you may have to ask. He will also assist you in going through the formalities.

Closing paragraph motivating the reader to act

To give us an opportunity to serve you, please fill in the enclosed reply card and mail it today. We are here to serve you.

Sincerely,

Tom Porter
Divisional Manager



Tip

A positive approach has been used in all the above sales letters. Negative endings can hurt the feelings and cause irritation to the prospective buyer and hence, **closing lines such as those shown below should be avoided:**

You will repent forever if you do not order now.
Please believe us; we speak the truth.



Test Yourself 4

Proposals areoffers to suggest solutions to problems.

- A Oral
- B Written



Test Yourself 5

What is the main difference between a proposal and a report?



Test Yourself 6

State which of these statements are true or false:

- (i) A sales letter starts with specific details of the product being marketed.
- (ii) Motivating tactics in a sales letter may include offering an incentive.
- (iii) The most important purpose of a proposal is to describe a situation as it is.

3. Describe the appropriate techniques in note taking (from lectures, speeches, books, newspapers, the internet, meetings, etc).

[Learning Outcome c]



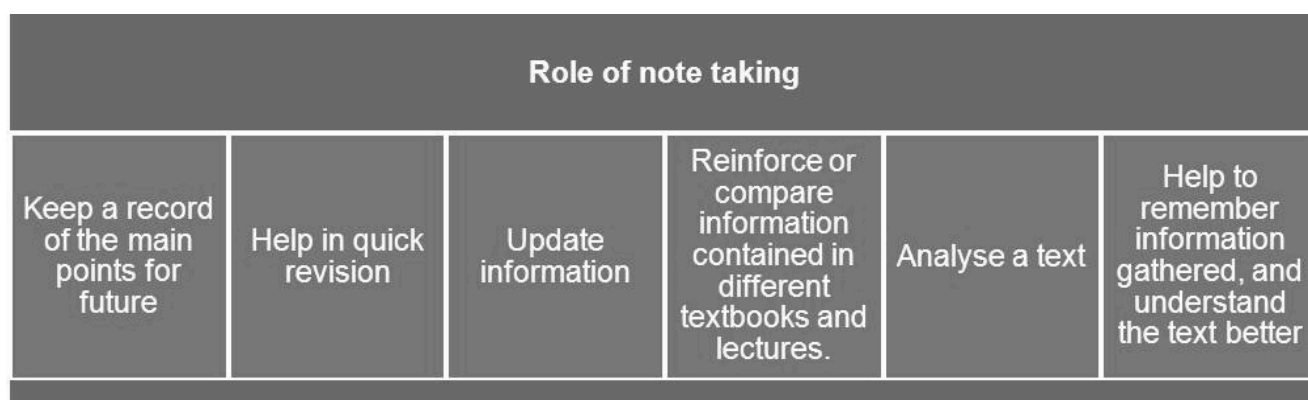
Definition

Note taking is the practice of recording information captured from many sources and pooling it towards a common objective.

Note taking is an important study skill that is required for various academic and professional purposes. It is also useful in business situations e.g. for taking notes during a meeting, a seminar, a training session etc.

The meaning of the word 'note' is 'a brief written record as an aid to memory'. The writer records the essence of the information, freeing his mind from having to recall everything. The main purpose of taking notes is to implant the material in the mind; the written notes being secondary in importance. Students prepare notes in order to help them remember the information they have received while reading a textbook. Therefore, note taking is a systematic method of writing down quickly, briefly, and clearly the important points from a text / meeting etc.

Diagram 3: Role of note taking



Properties of good notes

- Easily revisable
- Easily understandable
- Time saving: because you don't have to read the book again for learning
- Refresh key points of a lecture and book
- Increase interest
- Contains collective information of text books, guide books and lecture
- Written in your own handwriting, so the level of understanding is more

Appropriate techniques in taking notes

1. Reading strategy

Students must adopt a careful reading strategy that enables them to understand the text quickly and make appropriate notes

- Read the text quickly to get a general idea of the purpose and scope
- Read the text again to identify the main points and important details that support the main ideas
- Ignore irrelevant matters and concentrate on the important points
- Deduce meanings of words and phrases from their context and infer relationships
- Recognise key terms related to the topic of the text
- Interpret graphic aids used in the text

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2. Note writing techniques

There are two different techniques of writing notes, as discussed below:

(a) Topicalising

This refers to writing down a word or phrase to represent a section of the text. In the text, main ideas appear in full sentences, but while making notes, a word or phrase is used to represent an entire section of the text.



Example

Text	Notes
Petroleum is enormously important for the economy. It may occur in the form of gas, liquid, semi-solid or solid. There are various forms of petroleum like crude oil, asphalt and natural gas.	High importance of petroleum in economy Occurs as: gas, liquid, semi-solid or solid Forms: crude oil, natural gas and asphalt

(b) Schematising

It is the method of using visual tools to organize notes. It is sometimes more convenient and quicker to organize notes in the form of tables and diagrams for accurate and easy read-back.



Example

The following table can be created to note down the states of matter and their examples, rather than writing the information in sentences.

State of matter	Examples
Solids	Wood House Cake pudding
Liquids	Water Oil Fuel
Gases	Oxygen Methane Biogas

3. Reduction techniques

It involves the effective use of abbreviations and symbols to save time and to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. Abbreviations help in putting down the information briefly.

Some rules for creating abbreviations are discussed below:

(a) **Use the first letters of words:** words may be abbreviated by just using the first letters.



Example

Word	Abbreviation
East	E
North	N
South	S

- (b) **Use of first letters of the words in phrases:** a phrase or a group of words may be abbreviated by just using the first letters of the words used in the phrase.



Example

Word/phrase	Abbreviation
Per annum	pa
As soon as possible	asap

- (c) **Use the first few letters of words:** words may be abbreviated by just using the first few letters.



Example

Word	Abbreviation
Approximately	approx
Difference	diff
Minute	min
Computer	comp

- (d) **Use the first and other few letters of words:** words may be abbreviated by just using the first letter and some other defining letters of the word.



Example

Word	Abbreviation
Hour	hr
Month	month
Year	yr

- (e) **Use commonly used abbreviations:** a phrase or a group of words may be abbreviated by using the commonly accepted short forms (that are mostly the Latin abbreviations).



Example

Word	Abbreviation
That is	i.e.
For example	e.g.

- (f) **Use of symbols:** while making notes, you may use appropriate signs and symbols.



Example

@	at the rate of
\$	dollar
%	percentage
&	and
+	in addition
=	is equal to

4. Organisation techniques for notes

The organisation of notes depends largely on the type of text. As the notes have to be read and understood at a later stage, it is very important to organise them in such a manner that the essence of the text can be recalled later. The organisation of notes involves:

Providing a suitable title: it will help in understanding the main idea of the passage.

Providing headings and sub-headings: the notes may be organised in terms of headings, sub-headings, and so on.

5. Sequencing

Sequencing refers to the process of making a clear, fast and accurate interpretation of notes. It helps in accurate and easy read-back. Two standard practices for sequencing notes include the use of the following:

(a) **Numerals and Letters:** the letters and numerals in a formal pattern of notes show the writer's analysis of the flow.



Example

Types of plastic

(i) Thermo plastics

Polythene
PVC
Nylon
Perspex

(ii) Thermosetting plastics

Bakelite
Melamine

(b) **Decimalisation:** decimalisation may also be used for sequencing in note making.



Example

Types of plastic

(i) Thermo plastics

Polythene
PVC
Nylon
Perspex

(ii) Thermosetting plastics

Bakelite
Melamine



Important

The points are numbered in different ways as the author wants but remember that the numbering should be consistent throughout the notes.

Steps in note taking

Two steps in note taking are:

- (a) Writing the notes
- (b) Structuring the notes

(a) Writing the notes: in this step, simply jot down the important points.

Keep the following points in mind while taking notes during verbal communication:

- (i) Be alert and listen carefully.
- (ii) Write down the important points
- (iii) Write down the definitions, terms and essential information communicated
- (iv) Write the additional information about a topic

Keep the following points in mind while taking notes from written text:

- (i) Read the text to get a gist and to know what the central theme is
- (ii) Write down the key points from each paragraph / piece of material
- (iii) Add the sub points which supplement the main points
- (iv) Write down the main points from the tables, diagrams or charts used

(b) Structuring the notes

The points jotted down in step 1 above will be in a haphazard manner because you have tried to write down quickly all that has been communicated to you. However, the notes taken should have a proper structure so that it can be properly used in future. There are different ways to structure the notes:

- (i) Writing in points
- (ii) Writing in paragraphs
- (iii) Making diagram, tables or chart

Here are some additional points to be remembered while making notes:

- Use heading and sub-headings
- Use abbreviations and short words
- All the lines or paragraphs should be in proper sequence
- Skip unnecessary explanation
- Write page number on each page if you are using loose pages for making notes.



Example

Audit working papers should be sufficient, complete and detailed enabling an auditor to know what work was performed and to support the conclusions reached. All working papers should contain the name of the client, the subject and content of the working paper, the initials of the auditor and the date of preparation.

Working papers belong to the auditor and are his sole property. He should adopt appropriate procedures for ensuring their safe custody. The affairs of any client are purely confidential and in no event should working papers be shown to third parties.

The following notes can be taken from the text above:

Audit working papers

(a) Requisites

- Detailed and complete
- To know work performed and conclusions reached

Continued on the next page

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(b) Contents

Name of client
Subject and content
Initials of auditor
Date of preparation

(c) Custody

Belong to auditor
Affairs of client confidential; not to be shown to third parties



Test Yourself 7

What does note taking involve?



Test Yourself 8

Notes are brief written records as an aid to.....

- A Register
- B Memo
- C Memory

4. Explain how to write summaries correctly.

[Learning Outcome d]



Definition

Summarising is a process of condensing information without changing the original meaning and focus of a passage.

Writing a summary is one of the most important study skills needed by professional students. The meaning of the word summary is “summed up”, or “condensed”. Summary is a restatement in shortened form of the main ideas and points in a piece of writing.

It helps in comprehension as it forces us to focus on what we read. It encourages active reading and helps remember the material better. A clear understanding of the given passage is the first requirement in order to write a good summary. Next is the ability to reproduce the main ideas in the text effectively in your own language.

Features of a good summary

1. **Clarity:** a good summary should express the meaning of the original passage clearly and be free of all ambiguities. A good summary should be able to get the main message across to a reader, even if the reader does not read the original.
2. **Completeness:** a good summary should cover the essential content of the given passage and should not omit any important facts or ideas.
3. **Conciseness:** it must be brief and precise and present the argument logically.

Techniques involved in writing a summary

Summarising is a productive skill integrating both reading and writing skills. It involves the following:

1. Reading Strategy: a careful reading plan should be used to identify the central idea, the main points and important supporting details. The following reading methods may be used:

(a) Glance through the text quickly in order to understand its central idea.

(b) Then, read the text carefully in order to understand the details. You should be able to differentiate between:

Main versus secondary points
Facts versus opinions
Ideas versus examples
Essential versus less important points
Relevant versus irrelevant information

(c) While detailed reading of the text, you should:

Recognise key items and markers of cohesion to identify relationships among different units within the text
Identify all examples, repetitions and unnecessary details in order to remove them
Identify phrases and expressions that can be replaced by words or shorter phrases
Identify the logical organisation of the passage (logical order may be changed without changing the meaning of the passage)

2. Summarising Techniques

Mainly, three techniques are used in summarizing, that is, selection, rejection, substitution.

(a) Selection

In order to summarise a passage, the reader may select what is essential. This process of choosing the information that is essential to the meaning of the passage is known as 'selection'.

The following should be kept in mind:

the theme
the main ideas of each paragraph and a few phrases that support the main idea
special terms or new phrases needed to comprehend the theme.

(b) Rejection

Rejection is the process of discarding all that is not essential and is unnecessary. The following are generally not included in a summary:

repetitions
examples
unnecessary details

(c) Substitution

Substitution involves the following:

(i) **Synthesis:** combining several sentences into one sentence.



Example

Sentences	One Sentence Substitution
In order to computerize a factory, we may use distributed processing as an effective method. Frankly speaking, this seems to be the best way to go about computerizing a factory	Distributed processing is the best way to go about computerizing a factory.

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(ii) **Sentence Substitution:** short sentences may be used to substitute long sentences.



Example

Long sentence	Short sentence
The rain continued without intermission throughout the night and did not cease for a moment until after the day had dawned	The rain continued till dawn

(iii) **One Word Substitution:** one word should be used to substitute several words and phrases.



Example

Words/phrases	One word substitution
That which cannot be seen	invisible
That which cannot be dispensed with	indispensable
That which cannot be excused	inexcusable
A person who knows many languages	Linguist
One who is able to make an eloquent speech	Orator

Steps to write a good summary

Read the passage carefully. Put down the main theme in a sentence or phrase and also think of a suitable title for it. This will help you in choosing what is important and omitting what is unimportant in the passage.

Read through the passage again, and underline the key words, phrases, clauses and sentences.

Select the essential points, jot them down, and reject the rest.

Prepare your first draft on the basis of the underlined key words, phrases, etc. and essential points you have written down.

Compare your draft with the original to check for any omissions.

Go through the draft again and delete any unnecessary words or phrases.

Read the revised draft once more, this time paying particular attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar. Remember it is just important to write well in précis.

Prepare the final draft neatly.



Example

Let us see how to prepare a summary of the following passage:

“Computers are the most effective tools of communication and a boon to society. Computers are widely used in various fields namely offices, banks, universities, shops and homes. In fact, we are in a computer age which has changed our lives. There are many uses of a computer. They help in storing large information due to their advanced storing capacity. Computers can process data into meaningful information. They have the ability to perform accurate calculations. We can retrieve stored data whenever we require.”

Now what does the passage discuss? The writer is talking about the importance of computer. So, the title of the passage can be ‘Importance of computers’.

Continued on the next page

Now the main points are:

Computer is an effective communication tool and boon to society.
Computer has the ability to store, process and retrieve data and the ability to do accurate calculations.

Now if we put these points together, our summary would be as follows:

Computer is an effective communication tool and boon to society. It has the ability to store, process and retrieve data and the ability to do accurate calculations.



Test Yourself 9

Explain the term 'summarising' in one sentence.



Test Yourself 10

Does summarising include unimportant and irrelevant material?

5. Identify and write different types of essays effectively.

[Learning Outcome e]



Definition

'An essay is a series of paragraphs, each dealing with a distinct aspect and arranged so as to form a connected whole.'

An essay is a written composition giving expressions to one's own personal ideas or opinions. It means an attempt to write and express oneself.

1. Features of a good essay

- (a) **Brevity:** an essay should be a brief exercise, concisely expressed.
- (b) **Unity:** an essay should be a unity, developing one main idea with a definite purpose. The subject should be explicitly defined in the mind and kept in view throughout.
- (c) **Order:** an essay should follow an ordered line of thought and should not consist of haphazard reflections put down in a haphazard manner.
- (d) **Style:** the style of the essay must be dignified and literary. The language and sentences should be simple, direct and natural.
- (e) **Personal touch:** an essay should have individuality. It should reveal the personal feelings and opinions or the essay will be colourless and devoid of originality.

2. Kinds of essays

- (a) **Descriptive Essay:** it consists of a description of some place or thing such as animals, plants, countries, or description of an accident or a disaster, or even a story.
- (b) **Narrative Essay:** it contains in the narration of an event or series of events such as incidents like a fair, a festival or a carnival, a journey or a voyage.
- (c) **Imaginative essay:** in such types of essays, the writer is called to imagine himself in a position in which he has no experience; e.g. 'if I were an astronaut'.
- (d) **Reflective Essay:** it consists of reflections or thoughts on some topic such as social and political topics like democracy, liberty, joint family.

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(e) **Expository Essay:** it consists of explanation of some subject such as scientific topics like astronomy.

3. Parts of an essay

(a) **Introduction:** the introductory paragraph has the vital function of capturing the reader's interest and is important as it gives the first impression of your work. It must be brief but arresting and pertaining to the subject. It may consist of a quotation, proverb or a general remark.



Example

Suppose you are writing on the topic "Transport facilities in Tanzania". You can start directly – There are different kinds of transport facilities in Tanzania. How can you get your reader interested in what you have to say?

The better way to start is with an incident or some personal experience, something that catches the reader's attention – 'Last week I had to wait for three hours before I could get a taxi home'.

(b) **Body:** This is the essence of the essay. The paragraphs in the body should be well constructed and should be related to one another and as far as possible; the ideas should flow in a logical manner. The reader should be absorbed in your essay and his interest should not wither away. In arranging the body of the essay, each part should be given due weightage.

(c) **The Conclusion:** the concluding paragraph gives the final impression of your work. You should be able to sum up your main idea briefly. The best advice on writing an effective conclusion is to make the conclusion sound as final as the slam of the door. An effective conclusion does not repeat what has been said in the introduction but it restates the thesis in a new way.

It is essential to convince the reader that you have rounded off your essay with a good and firm conclusion and not merely stopped abruptly because you have nothing more to say. You can conclude your essay with an additional comment about your topic. Another effective way to sum up your essay is with an outstanding quote on the topic.



Example

An essay on the topic 'Positive Thinking' can be concluded with a quotation 'All is well that ends well'.

4. Steps in writing an essay

(a) Define your subject clearly in your mind.

(b) Read and think over it until ideas come to your mind.

(c) Note these ideas on paper and number them

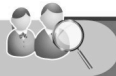
(d) Classify these points under suitable headings, rejecting the unnecessary ones.

(e) Arrange these ideas in a bare outline.

(f) Fill in with details, making a full outline.

(g) Begin writing an essay. Remember, it should consist of an impressive introduction, elaborate and logical body and effective and satisfying conclusion.

(h) After you have finished writing, review your work.



Example

Here is a short essay:

Introduction

'Importance of advertisements'

Topic of the essay

Modern civilisation is known for its advertisement machinery. When we look in the newspapers, more than half the columns are filled with advertisements. It seems that advertisements are part and parcel of a newspaper. Advertisement is a boon for marketing and can boost the sales of a product to a great extent.

Body

There are various types of advertisements, e.g. for vehicles, machines, properties and books. Buses have advertising placards and the inner walls of trains also have advertisements displayed on them. We can also find neon advertisements atop the roofs if we walk along the streets at night. The cinema is also a mode of advertisement. During the intermission between the shows, a lot of products are advertised through the cinematographic machinery.

Advertisement is the backbone of modern business. Large business companies have separate departments for advertisement. The success of today's businesses largely depends upon their advertisement budgets. The craze for advertisement only shows the competitive spirit of modern businesses. Companies want to make a profit at the expense of the purchasing public. The ability to shout more guarantees more success. Buyers think that the products most advertised are the best. They are influenced by reputation which can be created and enhanced through advertisement.

There are various methods employed to advertise products by the advertising agencies hired by the companies. The aim of advertisement is to catch the eye of the public. A pinch of humour adds to the advertising skill. Sometimes, they use small booklets giving details of the product.

Advertisements are very useful in introducing and promoting new products in the market. The sale of a product largely depends upon the quality of effective advertisement. It not only helps in selling things within a country, but also helps in export of products. The consumers are able to know of different products and make an intelligent choice from among them.

However, all advertisements do not tell the truth regarding the products. They exaggerate and self-praise, thereby misleading the consumers. The consumer feels cheated when the product does not match up to the advantages as told in the advertisements.

Conclusion

Despite these drawbacks, advertisements are the lifeline of modern business. There is no denial of the fact that they are here to stay in the long run.



Tip

The examiner looks for:

- the ability to express interesting ideas and the originality and variety of your ideas.
- the ability to write effectively in English.



Test Yourself 11

The parts of an essay are....., and

Answers to Test Yourself

Answer to TY 1

The correct option is **B**.

Memos are internal communication, exchanged within an organisation.

Answer to TY 2

The correct option is **A**.

Email is an electronic way of exchanging messages.

Answer to TY 3

- (i) True
- (ii) True
- (iii) True
- (iv) False
- (v) True

Answer to TY 4

The correct option is **B**.

Proposals are written offers to suggest solutions to problems.

Answer to TY 5

A proposal aims at getting the approval of what one wants to do whereas a report usually gives a detailed account of facts.

Answer to TY 6

- (i) False
- (ii) True
- (iii) False

Answer to TY 7

Note taking involves:

- Writing down most of what you hear or read without actually processing the information
- ii) Notes being copied from the original source and re-written according to the writer's requirements
- iii) Being unselective and covering almost all information

Answer to TY 8

The correct option is **C**.

Notes are brief written records as an aid to memory.

Answer to TY 9

The meaning of summarising is summing up or condensing.

Answer to TY 10

No, summarising does not include unimportant and irrelevant material. It is the gist of the important points in a passage.

Answer to TY 11

The parts of an essay are introduction, body and conclusion.

Self-Examination Questions

Question 1

Study the following message in the form of a short letter. It is written to the municipal corporation emphasizing on the need for rainwater harvesting in the neighbourhood.

Dear Sir,

We would like you to look at our need for rainwater harvesting in our neighbourhood. We expect that our work will be done.

Sincerely yours,

Patrick John

Chairman

Required:

- (a) Comment on the letter on the basis of its content, style and approach.
- (b) Rewrite the letter in such a way that it shows correct style and approach to the matter.

Question 2

Read the passage carefully:

Money laundering is illegal money put through a cycle of transactions so that it comes out as clean money. It is the conversion of profits of illegal activities into financial assets which look legitimate. Money laundering is a complex process and involves placement, layering and integration. Placement means physically placing bulk cash proceeds, and layering means separating the proceeds from criminal activity through layers of complex activities. Integration means providing an explanation for illegal proceeds.

The common sources of money laundering are tax evasion, drug trafficking, terrorism, smuggling and international trafficking. The range of illegal activity is extremely large including terrorist activities that are emerging in various parts of the world and these activities are backed by substantial money. An example of such disruptive activity is 9/11 crash into the World Trade Center, New York, which involved a lot of planning and a large amount of money.

Money laundering is a global problem. Persons behind these transactions are very clever. There is a big network of organisations involved in money laundering. It can have a range of macroeconomic consequences on countries. It can cause unexpected changes in money demand and can also pose risk to the soundness of financial institutions.

Required:

- (a) Give a suitable title to the passage.
- (b) Write a summary of the above given passage.

Question 3

What is the difference between taking notes from lectures and writing notes by reading from texts?

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Question 4

Read the passage and make notes

The art of metallurgy includes the derivation of metals from their ores, their purification and finally their manufacture into shapes and forms usable in industry. The science of metallurgy includes the study of these processes with a view to their control and improvement and the development of new metal mixtures.

The field of metallurgy may be segregated into two parts. The first part deals with melting and refining of metals and has been designed as Process or Chemical Metallurgy. The second deals with the physical and chemical behaviour of metals during shaping and treating operations and their behaviour in the service of man. This phase is called Physical Metallurgy.

Question 5

State whether the following statements are true or false:

- (i) It is not necessary to be courteous in writing any type of business letter.
- (ii) A sales letter is like an advertisement.
- (iii) The ability to write an effective sales letter is inborn; it cannot be cultivated.
- (iv) The style of a proposal is persuasive like that of a sales letter.

Question 6

Write four ways in which a business letter differs from a business memo.

Answers to Self Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

- (a) A good letter is characterised by appropriate style, content and approach. An effective style involves clear content, clarity, courtesy and attitude.

The given letter does not clarify the need for rainwater harvesting. Patrick should spell out his problem more vividly. He should be more courteous as the reader is under no obligation to listen to his demands. The tone of the letter is rigid. He can only suggest, not command. The message in the letter is not complete and requires better approach.

(b)

Mikocheni Apartments
P.O.Box 5128
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania

17 May, 2012

The Chairman,
Municipal Corporation,
P.O.Box 9661
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania

Dear Sir,

RE: Need for rainwater harvesting

It would be of great help to our neighbourhood if you could look into the matter concerning the water supply in our neighbourhood and provide proper facilities regarding water supply.

It has been a long time since water supply in our building has been running low. People in my building have been complaining about the water shortage. We are in a state of melancholy as we do not have adequate water for drinking and other domestic purposes. We have come up with a solution which would help us economically also. We have all decided to start rainwater harvesting in our locality.

Though primitive, rainwater harvesting is the most cost efficient and useful way of storing water. Water can be collected during rains and stored in an underground tank which can be connected through pipes to our houses enabling efficient and judicious use of surplus water. It will eradicate water shortage and also provide us with water all year round.

We would really appreciate your whole hearted cooperation if you could look into the matter and help us in our endeavour.

Faithfully Yours,

.....

Patrick John

The Chairman

Answer to SEQ 2

- (a) The title for the above passage is 'Money laundering'.
- (b) Conversion of illegal money to legitimate money by a complex series of transactions is called money laundering. It includes placement, layering and integration. Illegal money is profited from various illegal activities including terrorism, smuggling and tax evasion. Being a major detriment to the financial growth of a country, money laundering involves clever planning by a large secretive network of organisations which may shake the financial base of a country.

Answer to SEQ 3

While taking notes from verbal communication, you cannot compel the speaker to pause or slow down. If you have questions, you have to make a note and follow up later.

While taking notes from texts, you can easily stop and read again. You can make notes at your own pace. If you miss something, you can conveniently look up the text again for reference.

Answer to SEQ 4

The title of the notes is Metallurgy

1. Metallurgy

- (a) Art of metallurgy

Deriving of metals from their ores
Purification of metals
Manufacture of metals into shapes and forms

- (b) Science of Metallurgy

Study, control and improvement of the above processes
Development of new metal mixtures

2. Types of metallurgy

- (a) Process metallurgy

Melting of metals
Refining of metals

- (b) Physical metallurgy

Physical and chemical behaviour of metals

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Answer to SEQ 5

- (i) It is false because a business letter is a formal conversation and requires proper formal and courteous tone.
- (ii) It is true because a sales letter is used to promote sales similar to that of an advertisement.
- (iii) It is false because the art of writing a sales letter has to be learnt and is not inborn.
- (iv) It is true because proposal aims at persuading the reader to accept the project just like sales letter is used to persuade the buyer to buy the product.

Answer to SEQ 6

A business letter differs from a business memo in the following ways:

- (a) A business letter is a means to send information outside an organisation whereas a business memo is a means to reach out to people within an organisation.
- (b) Letters are more formal than memos.
- (c) The tone of memos is more conversational and informal compared to a letter.

DEMONSTRATE VISUAL AND ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

D1

STUDY GUIDE D1: VISUAL PRESENTATION

■ Get Through Intro

In a business environment, communication is a core activity wherein people share the required information or knowledge with each other. Business presentation is a very important mode of communication. This is done with the help of various tools and methods. In order to make the presentation more effective, it is important to know how the information needs to be presented so that it is understood clearly.

Visual presentation is one of the most effective methods of presenting a topic. An old saying “**a picture is worth a thousand words**” explains it all.

Visual presentations are in physical form, and to achieve communication, are made accessible to the viewers. Visual communication overcomes some of the limitations of oral communication such as lack of voice clarity, low volume; fast pace of speech or unclear pronunciation of the speaker. A well-presented data keeps the viewers engaged in the communication process. Moreover, visual presentation helps to break complex data into small parts with supporting pictures, diagrams etc., thereby making it easier to understand.

After you qualify and start working as an accountant, you might be called upon to make presentations in your course of work. This study guide will help you to present data using the appropriate visual tools and use various visual presentation methods to enhance the audience's understanding.

■ Learning Outcomes

- a) Apply appropriate visual presentation tools such as flip charts, PowerPoint.
- b) Apply appropriate visual presentation methods such as bar charts, pie charts, maps.

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1. Choose and use appropriate visual presentation tools such as flip charts, PowerPoint. [Learning Outcome, a]

The presentation tool depends on the situation. Sometimes, information / knowledge cannot be shared with the help of mere words but needs to be visually presented using pictorial data which will help to clearly understand what is being communicated.

While making a visual presentation, it is important to use an appropriate visual presentation tool to make the presentation more effective. Two visual presentation tools are explained below:

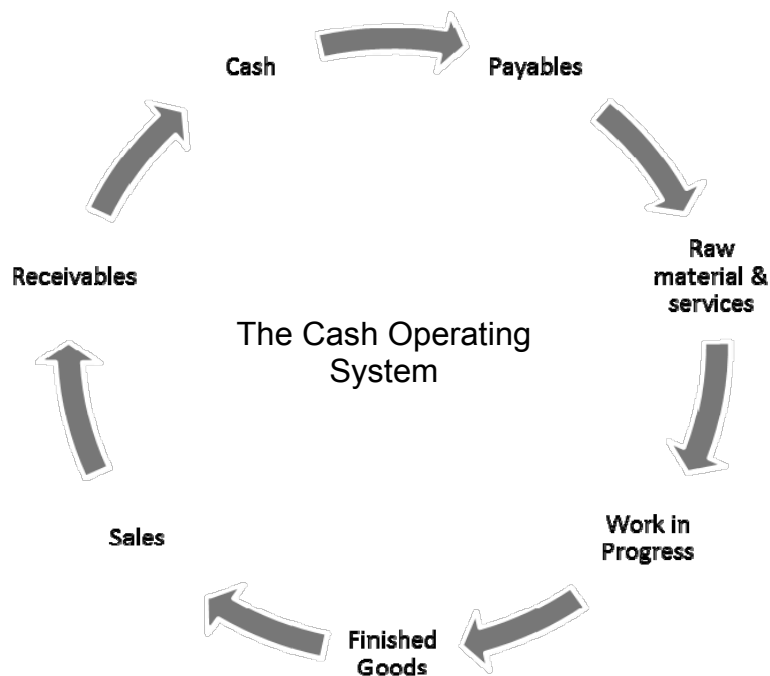
1.1 Flip Charts

Flip charts can be defined as a bunch of plain papers held together on a stand used for making presentations by writing or drawing on it. Numbers can be written on it or a quick picture/graph can be drawn presenting the data. Once a particular topic is discussed, that piece of paper/chart can be pulled and kept aside and a fresh paper can be used to present another topic or continue the previous one. This kind of presentation is often used while clarifying some points in a discussion with a small group, or in a training session to explain topics to the participants.



Example

In a training session, while explaining the cash operating cycle to the participants, the trainer draws a circle on a flip chart showing the various components of the cash operating cycle and presents how each component affects the working capital of an entity.



Characteristics of flip charts

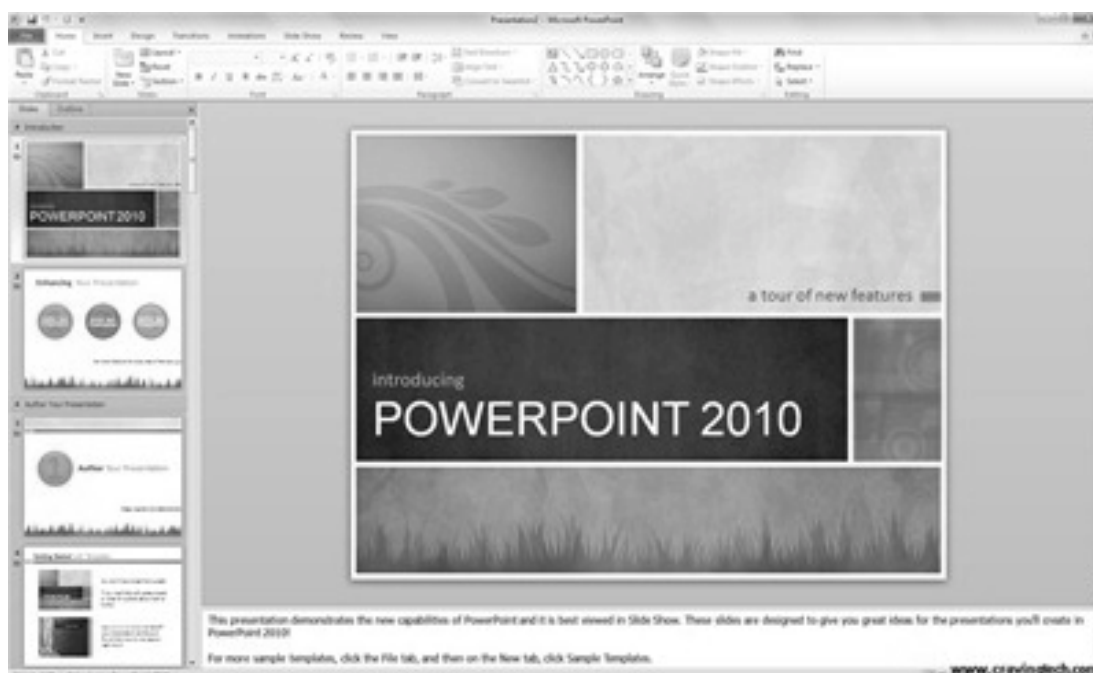
- (a) **Easy to use tool:** with the help of a bunch of papers, few markers and highlighters a flip chart presentation can be made, making it the easiest tool.
- (b) **The most cost economic tool:** costly electronic equipment is not required to make presentations using the flip chart tool.
- (c) **Useful to make quick and short presentations:** while discussing something, some remarks have to be made or some points have to be noted for discussion, which are to be referred to during the course of the discussion. Flip charts come handy in these situations. Also, during a quick, short presentation, the flip chart tool proves to be effective as there is no need to waste time in getting the equipment set up.
- (d) **Useful tool when electronic mode of presentation is not available (saving power):** in an event when electronic equipment is not available and a presentation has to be made, then flip charts can be used. This tool also saves power that would be needed to make the presentation using electrical equipment.

- (e) **Allows data to be presented in real time:** sometimes presentations have to be made on a need basis, wherein the data for presentation is not readily available beforehand, but has to be presented during the course of the presentation, based on the discussion taking place. For these kinds of real time presentations, flip charts are the most effective option.
- (f) **Colourful markers/pens used to highlight different topics:** being a complete manual process, the presentation made using a flip chart can be enhanced by using colour pens and markers. Different colours can be used to identify and highlight different points for easy understanding.

1.2 PowerPoint presentations

This is an electronic tool to visually present the data with the help of computers, slides, projectors, etc. With the help of PowerPoint, the presentation can be made more interesting and appealing by using colourful graphs, charts, pictures, comments, designs, etc. PowerPoint presentation is one of the most widely used and an effective form of visual presentation.

Diagram 1: Microsoft PowerPoint programme



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Characteristics of a good PowerPoint presentation

- (a) **Minimum error:** data can be presented with minimum error as it is done through a planned and thoughtfully made presentation.
- (b) **Better explanation style:** it allows presenting the data in slide form; wherein the presenter will be able to pause at each slide and can explain the data in the slide topic-wise.
- (c) **Flexibility:** the presenter, at any given point of time, can switch between slides to discuss or re-explain a particular topic.
- (d) **Ease:** Use of graph, chart and pictures is easy with this tool of presentation.
- (e) **Attractive presentation:** data can be presented using colours, making the presentation very interesting.
- (f) **Better accessibility:** being an electronic tool of presentation, the data can be stored for re-use.
- (g) **Limited rework:** the same data can be used several times; also, the data can be edited slightly and used for other allied purposes.

Factors to be considered in choosing appropriate visual presentation tools

If a visual presentation tool is not selected correctly, the objective of making the visual presentation might be defeated. The points mentioned below would enable you to choose an appropriate visual presentation tool.

1. Purpose

Any presentation made is with a purpose and the purpose would decide the tool to be selected to make that presentation. If a particular presentation is short, simple and quick then the flip chart tool can be used. However, if the presentation has complex information which has to be presented in a simple form with the help of images, pictures or charts then the PowerPoint tool is more effective.

2. Cost

The PowerPoint tool, being an electronic tool, requires equipment, making it more expensive compared to flip charts. The PowerPoint might be an effective tool overall, however; if reducing the cost of making a presentation is a factor, then using flip charts will be more appropriate as it would save on the cost of the hardware and software and also on power.

3. Audience

Audience are the sole reason for making any kind of presentation. However, choosing an appropriate tool would depend on the type of audience to whom the presentation is being made. If it is office staff or a colleague to whom a quick presentation is being made, then a flip chart tool would be adequate.

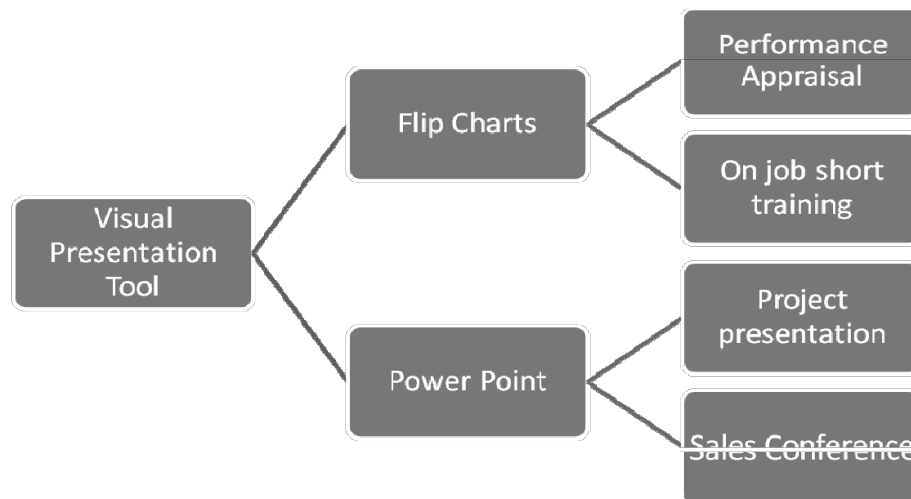
If the audience is external to the organisation such as a client then efforts are put in to make the presentation in the best possible manner to effectively impress the audience. In this case, a PowerPoint tool proves to be very effective as pictures, illustrations, diagrams and text can be included and presented in an eye-catching manner. Moreover, if the size of the audience is large, then the PowerPoint tool with the help of a projector would enable the presenter to make the presentation visible to the entire audience.

4. Data re-usability

Some visual presentations are made for a quick discussion or reference and a one-time illustration. The data is to be presented only for that instance and is not intended to be used again at a later stage. In such cases, a flip chart can be used. On the other hand, very often, there are presentations which need to be repeated multiple times to different audience at different places and times. PowerPoint is the appropriate tool for such presentations as the data can be stored and re-used multiple times effectively. Moreover, data in a PowerPoint presentation can be easily edited to suit a different situation.



Example



The above examples show how different presentation tools are used for different purposes.

In case of staff performance appraisals wherein there is a one-on-one discussion between the manager and a staff member, a flip chart presentation is handy as it is quick and easy. Also, during a short on-the-job training, while discussing some points, certain aspects can be elaborated, illustrated and explained using flip charts as no pre-preparation is needed to create a flip chart.

In the case of a project proposal or a sales presentation, a lot of complex data is involved. Pictorial and graphical information needs to be provided, which can be effectively done using the PowerPoint tool.



Test Yourself 1

For a new product launch, the appropriate tool of visual presentation is a Flip Chart. Is it true or false? Give reasons to support your answer.

2. Use appropriate visual presentation methods such as bar charts, pie charts, maps.

[Learning Outcome b]

In the previous learning outcome, we have discussed various tools of visual presentation such as flip charts and PowerPoint slides. In this learning outcome, we will understand the various methods of presenting information visually, like bar charts, pie charts and maps. We will also discuss the suitability of the presentation methods in different situations.

The purpose of visual presentation is to communicate in the most simplified manner, making the matter that is to be communicated easier to understand. The methods of visual presentation help to 'cut the long story short' effectively. There are various visual methods to enhance understanding and make a presentation more effective. Some of them are discussed below:

1. Bar Charts

In this method, a categorized set of data is presented using bars of different sizes/colours/textures to show relative differences between different data. The data is distributed between X and Y axis.

Features of a good bar chart

- (a) **Comparison of different sets of data:** rather the presenting data only in figures, you could use a set of bars which would be a pictorial representation of the data, making the comparison easily visible. The purpose of the bar chart is to make identification and comparison easy. Bar chart is a simplified form of presentation which enhances understanding of the information provided.

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- (b) **Different coloured or textured bars for easy differentiation:** bars represent data and if all the bars look alike then it would be difficult to identify the difference between the bars for comparison. Hence, a particular colour or texture would represent a particular variable. The contrast between different bars makes it easier for the audience to grasp a lot of information in a short time.
- (c) **Data presented using horizontal or vertical bars:** ideally bars are presented in vertical form, however; they can be also presented in horizontal form if required.



Example

Xeta Plc manufactures trucks in three different variants. There has been a lot of inconsistency in the information relating to the sales of the three products in the years 2005 to 2008. The VP-Sales wants to know the exact sales volume of each type of truck for this period and asks for the information so that he can compare and make a sales budget accordingly. The sales manager provides a bar chart as shown below reflecting the required information.



The bar chart shows the yearly sales volume for all the three types of trucks for the given period 2005 to 2008.

The X axis shows the years and the Y axis shows the sales volume (in units) achieved for all the products during the given period. Bars with different colours are assigned to different types of trucks to present the information pictorially.

At a glance, the following information can be gleaned from the above chart:

Year	Sale of truck type 1	Sale of truck type 2	Sale of truck type 3
2005	43200	24200	28390
2006	25100	43120	20188
2007	35132	15950	31124
2008	44901	28240	19249

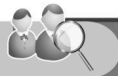
Here, the information required was comparison between three products over a period of time. Hence the bar chart method was the most appropriate wherein different coloured bars were used to represent different products, making it easier to compare them with each other and getting the needed information in an easy and effective way.

2. Pie Charts

In this method, the data is presented in a circular (pie) form wherein the data is divided into sectors illustrating proportions in numbers such as product-wise market share, budget allocation for different overheads, etc.

Features of a good pie chart

- (a) **Data presented in different colours to show proportions:** the purpose of this method of presentation is to easily interpret a set of data. Using colours helps the audience to grasp the information at a glance.
- (b) **Pie divided into different sections facilitating comparison between different variables:** in a pie chart, data is presented in a circular/pie form, wherein a set of data is represented by dividing it into different sections according to the share of each individual element. Different colours represent the shares of different elements in the whole pie.
- (c) **One of the easiest to understand methods of visual presentation:** when you cut a full pie (or pizza) into pieces to distribute to a group of people, it is very easy to know everyone's share from the entire pie. Likewise, in a visual presentation, making sectors is like cutting a pie into pieces where each piece/sector represents each variable. Moreover, using a different colour for each sector further makes it easier to understand.

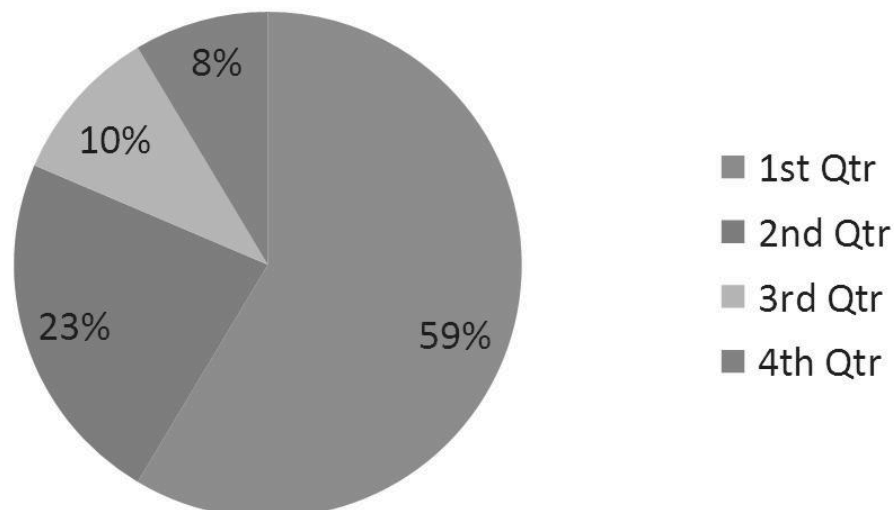


Example

Mr Williams, the Finance Director of a jacket manufacturing company, is in the process of allocating funds for raw material procurement on a quarterly basis. The company's main product is woollen jackets. As woollen jackets are a seasonal product, Mr Williams would need to refer to certain data before planning the allocation of funds.

He asks Mr. James Smith, the Finance Manager, to provide information on the percentage of units manufactured in each quarter of the year.

Quarterly manufacturing share of Woollen Jackets (in percentage)
for the current year



Mr. Smith provides a pie chart to the Director which shows the manufacturing share of each quarter for the product. Here, the whole pie depicts the whole year, and each part depicts each of the quarters of the year. We can see that the units manufactured in the first quarter are the highest and in the fourth quarter are the lowest.

This pie chart provides all the required data at a glance which will help Mr. Williams to plan the release of funds.

3. Maps

Maps are used to present information area-wise or geographically such as rail and road routes connecting different places, weather conditions at different places, etc. In a business environment, maps prove to be an ideal visual presentation method when information such as a company's branches, its global presence, locations of distributors etc. need to be shown.

Features of a good map

- (a) **Maps have sections with different colours, lines, signs and textures:** maps are presented using colours, lines (dotted or plain), signs, symbols and textures. The relation between them is defined on the side of a map; this area is known as the legend of the map. The legend helps the user to correctly read the map and get the required information.
- (b) **Maps help identify information area-wise:** maps mostly provide information about a particular area or a set of locations. As mentioned above, by using different colours, signs, lines and textures the information about the area is presented and hence by just looking at it you can grasp the information provided.
- (c) **Data does not change often:** presenting a map requires an in-depth study about the topic as the information presented in the map reflects exact details. Maps can provide geographical information relating to the company (e.g. the location of different manufacturing units of a company etc.) which does not change very often and can be used for a longer period.
- (d) **Maps are handy references:** most of the maps are as an information or study source. If a map is about a transport system of a particular location, then referring to the map before visiting that place becomes very helpful. Many such maps are readily available and act as a quick reference whenever needed.



Example

PassRite is a global provider of professional education in finance, management and accounting. Within this domain, the company specialises in International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), content creation and professional training.

Let us see the company's global presence with the help of a map.

PassRite Plc – Global Presence



- Worldwide distributors

As you can see, the above map provides information on the company's network through-out the globe. The locations of the company's distributors are depicted on the map using a symbol, and that symbol is explained in the legend on the lower right hand corner of the map. This map easily enables the viewer to know the company's reach through-out the globe, and that too, at a glance.

Choose appropriate visual presentation method

Making a visual presentation is usually preferred when there is large, elaborate and complex information that is to be communicated. Visual tools present such complex information in a simplified manner using various methods such as bar chart, pie chart, and map. However, choosing an appropriate method to make the visual presentation is an important task and selecting the most appropriate method would enable you to present the visual data in the most effective manner.

Let us see how to choose an appropriate method to make a visual presentation.

1. If a comparison of data has to be presented, then choosing **the bar chart** would be appropriate as bar charts have bars with different colours and textures which would represent the respective set of data, making comparison easy. For example, bar charts can be used to compare sales of a particular product or set of products over a period of time.
2. If data needs to be split to show how each element fits into the entire set of data, **the pie chart** method proves to be the most effective as it enables presentation of the proportion of the whole data, showing the contribution of each part towards the whole. For example, a pie chart can be used to identify the sales contribution for each product in the overall sales value.
3. Providing information regarding a particular place or location can be done effectively using a **map**. For making presentations which show the general or a specific set of information about a particular region or area, maps would be the ideal choice. For example, if you need to make a presentation introducing a company and displaying its presence with regards to its network (branches) including the manufacturing bases, corporate office, client locations etc., a map would be the most appropriate method. With the use of symbols, signs, colours and textures, you can present the regions separately, giving the needed information at a glance.



Test Yourself 2

An automobile tyre manufacturing company in their new product launch brochure has decided to present their geographical presence across locations. Which is the most appropriate method of visual presentation?

- A Map
- B Bar Chart
- C Pie Chart
- D All the above

Answers to Test Yourself

Answer to TY 1

The statement is false.

PowerPoint is the most effective tool to be used for product launch sessions as data can be put together and presented to explain the product specifications and benefits. Product pictures and colourful material can be included to make the presentation more attractive and eye catching. Also, the data can be re-used for other product launch sessions.

Answer to TY 2

The correct option is A.

As the information to be shared is about the company's presence at various locations, the best method to visually present the information is with the help of a map.

Self Examination Questions

Question 1

Mr. Taylor has been given the task of travelling and providing training to the new staff at various company branches. He needs to prepare a visual presentation which can be used at various locations. Which is the tool that Mr. Taylor would use to prepare the visual presentation? Give reasons to support your choice.

Question 2

Ms. Walker is in the office on an off-day for an urgent meeting with a client. During the meeting, she wants to make a presentation to the client. However, her laptop develops a snag and, being an organisational holiday, the system admin is not present to help her identify the problem. What tool would she use to make her visual presentation?

Question 3

A toy manufacturing company has decided to concentrate on minimising machinery breakdown time. In order to analyse the trend and the variation of the machinery breakdown over a period of 6 months, the manager has displayed the information on the shop floor notice board. The manager has used a bar chart to make this visual presentation. Has the manager selected the correct method of visual presentation to provide the needed information? Justify your answer.

Question 4

Mr. Rhodes owns a food court at a street corner that offers various menu options. He wants to know the contribution of every food item in the daily sales. Mr. Rhodes asks for a visual presentation from the Manager of his food court. What method of visual presentation would suffice Mr. Rhodes' requirement?

Answers to Self Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

Mr. Taylor will use a PowerPoint presentation because he will be making the same presentation but at different locations at different times and would be travelling with the presentation material. The PowerPoint tool is in electronic form and can be prepared once and easily stored for future use. Hence, Mr. Taylor will opt for the PowerPoint tool to make the visual presentation at various locations.

Answer to SEQ 2

Ms Walker will use a Flip Chart.

Since her laptop is not working, she cannot use any electronic mode of presentation. She can access the flip chart and can quickly use them to make her presentation to the client. As the flip chart is easy to handle and prepare, Ms. Walker can successfully make her visual presentation in no time.

Answer to SEQ 3

Yes, a bar chart will satisfy the requirements.

Comparison is easy when bar charts are used. Bar chart will help to easily and effectively compare the data month-wise, wherein each bar would represent each month and the length of each bar would depict the machine breakdown time for that month. Bars with different lengths would easily represent the variation in each month. Hence, by using the bar chart, the manager has opted for the most appropriate method to present the data.

Answer to SEQ 4

A pie chart will be the right choice among the visual presentation methods.

Mr. Rhodes wants to know the amount of contribution from each food item every day. The pie chart method breaks the data in sections and presents the percentage share of each section as against the whole. In this case, the pie chart method would effectively present the contribution of each item against the total orders every day.

DEMONSTRATE VISUAL AND ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

D2

STUDY GUIDE D2: ORAL PRESENTATION

■ Get Through Intro

We have studied in Study Guide C1: Visual Presentation that communication is a core activity by which information or knowledge is shared. However, the method to communicate may vary according to the situation. While visual presentations can be used to present data, sometimes, in some situations, oral presentations would be more appropriate because the presenter can make use of certain expressions, body language etc.

For example, when a sales manager conducts a presentation about the company's products to prospective customers, oral presentation would be more effective because the manager can do a better job of convincing/persuading the customers during an oral presentation (this may be aided by visual tools). However, it is important to note that oral presentation, combined with visual presentation, would be the most effective method in most of the situations.

Oral presentation helps the speaker to create a direct connection with the listeners. It is the most cost effective, the easiest and the quickest way to make a presentation, because it helps the speaker to alter the pace and the tone and use emotions to make the listeners understand what is being communicated. Oral presentation helps to keep the listeners involved and makes the presentation more interactive.

Presentation skills are very important in the business world. Whatever your area of work, at some point in the course of your work, you would be expected to present a topic orally. This study guide educates you on how to enhance and sharpen your oral presentation skills in order to make business presentations more effective.

■ Learning Outcomes

- a) Identify types of business presentations.
- b) Prepare presentation.
- c) Deliver the presentation following appropriate steps.



Tip

Business presentation is a process of sharing information related to the business with people within as well as outside the organisation. These are made orally or visually or as a combination of both. However, for the purpose of this study guide, we will be discussing only oral business presentations.

1. Identify types of business presentations

[Learning Outcome, a]

Business presentations are not limited to a specific type of audience. While the communication process takes place within the organisation, amongst the staff, managers, etc., it is also taking place outside the organisation, with audience such as clients, vendors, shareholders, etc. The most appropriate type of business presentation has to be selected considering the type of audience and the purpose of the presentation.

Types of business presentations

The first step in making an effective business presentation is to identify the appropriate type of business presentation based on the purpose of the presentation and the intended audience. There are various types of business presentations out of which a suitable one should be selected in order to make the business presentation effective. The types of business presentation are listed below:

1. Reports

One of the most common types of business presentations are reports. Here, documents are orally presented which provide reviews, analysis, performance, feedback, etc. supported with data for reference on a specific activity or topic. Reports can be short or long, confidential or public. Moreover, tools of visual presentation may be used to aid the oral presentation of the reports for better understanding of the audience.

A most common type of business reports is sales. In the report, the sales forecast presentations are made wherein the expected sales for a given time frame is planned and presented. The sales performance presentation shows the volume of sales over a period of time. The audience for these presentations is usually internal, i.e. management and employees. Other common types of reports are variance reports, budget presentations, audit committee reports.



Example

M/s. AV Tech is a tool manufacturing company. Like any other company, M/s. AV Tech requires information on various aspects of its working. Some of the reports that M/s. AV Tech generates are:

- Payroll report: report regarding salary and wages generated by the accounts department.
- Cash flow report: generated by the finance department to show the cash position of the company.
- Production report: to show the status of the various products under manufacture.
- Six-sigma report: report on the manufacturing quality standards.

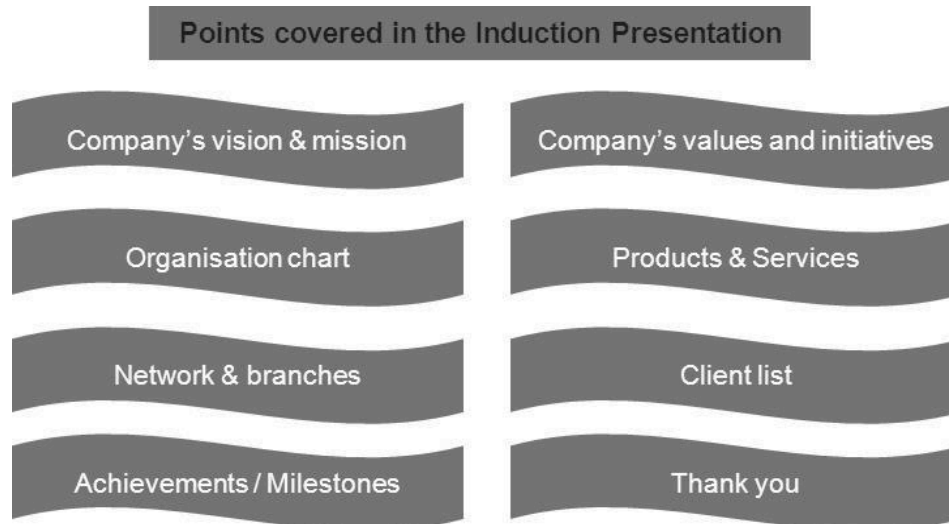
2. Induction

Inductions are presentations where a newly joined employee is introduced to the company. The history, culture, working style, principles, values and other details of the company are presented to the employee. These presentations help the new employee to get to know the ways of the company and its functions.



Example

Ms. Jane Faulkner, the HR head of an engineering company, needs to address newly joined employees and take them through an induction presentation. The points she would be covering in the induction presentation are shown in the diagram below:



3. Training

Training is another type of business presentation wherein knowledge is shared, and people are educated about a particular activity. The type of training may vary; it can be a one-time training programme or a continuous education series. Training is conducted on technical or on non-technical subjects. A company training involves educating employees on a particular subject related to their job profile. However, training conducted at an educational institution is mostly an educational course that enhances career prospects.



Example

Spencer and Spencer is a travel agency that is doing extremely well, as evidenced by the large number of loyal clients. The sales staff at Spencer & Spencer is very efficient in their work, but when it comes to managing huge amounts of data (such as the 1000+ customer list) using computer programs such as MS Excel, they lack the formal knowledge. They can use MS Excel but need professional training on how to get the work done efficiently and in the least amount of time. The managing director of the company decides to call in a professional trainer, Mark Stuart, who will show them how to filter or sort data, use formulae for different functions etc. to make their work easier and quicker.

4. Sales

Generally, when organisations solicit business, they make presentations to prospective clients. The presentation includes the company introduction wherein the history of the company, vision, products and services and performance of the company is presented to the client. It also discusses how the company can satisfy the needs of that particular client. New business or repeat business can be developed using a sales presentation.

5. New product/service launch

A company coming up with a new product or a service has to make a business presentation to promote the new product. This presentation is made to inform prospective customers about the product, its features, benefits, etc. Such presentations are usually made to an external audience and are usually allocated a generous budget to make the event a grand one so that the new product / service comes to the notice of a large number of consumers.

6. Project proposal

Companies work on various projects for different clients. While a company may be already working on a particular project, it also continues to look at acquiring new projects to keep the business running. Companies have to decide the feasibility of project they can work on, the type of clients for whom they can undertake the projects etc. and then make the project proposal accordingly.

New or existing clients are invited to attend the project proposal presentation. These presentations are prepared in advance and meticulously planned, providing all the details with regards to the proposed project. A well-presented project proposal is the first step to acquire a new project.



Example

A typical project proposal consists of:

- executive summary
- introduction
- project scope and organisation
- benefit and cost
- timelines
- conclusion

When the project proposal is presented, the executive summary, project benefits and costs are the sections that are usually discussed first.

The remainder of the presentation should discuss how the project will be delivered, the alternatives, risk factors etc.



Test Yourself 1

Unicorn Brakes is an automobile brake manufacturing company. There are some new recruits who have joined the company today and Laura, the HR manager, is attending to them. Laura has prepared a business presentation for the new recruits. Which type of business presentation will she be making? Give reasons to support your answer.

- A Sales
- B Induction
- C Project Proposal
- D Statutory Report

2. Prepare presentation

[Learning Outcome b]

We have already studied the different types of business presentations (Learning Outcome a). Once the type of business presentation is known (depending on the purpose of the presentation and the type of audience), the next step is to organize the presentation.

Preparing the presentation

A well-prepared presentation that includes all the available information/data enhances the confidence of the presenter so that she/he is able to deliver the presentation effectively. The topics might be different, the audience might be different but the steps to prepare for a presentation are more or less the same, which are listed below:

1. Know the purpose

The first step is to clearly identify the purpose of the presentation because unless the purpose is known, the presenter would not be able to determine the format, structure and content. Once the purpose is clear, the presenter should then design the presentation and accordingly include all the relevant topics in the appropriate format. The primary data collected can be filtered in such a way that it would suit the requirement of the presentation.

2. Identify the audience

The sole purpose of the presentation is to ensure that the audience would understand what is communicated clearly and get the required information from it. It is therefore important to know the type of audience attending the presentation. If the audience are internal to the organisation, then the presentation can be a bit informal. However, if the audience are external, then the presentation would need to be more formal. Also, a presentation to external audience should include brief information about the company, which is not needed for an internal audience.

3. Determine the type of presentation

Based on the purpose of the presentation and the type of audience, it is important to determine the presentation type (types of presentations are discussed in learning outcome 1 of this study guide). For example, if data analysis is to be presented to senior management, the presentation should be made in the form of a report, if new recruits are to be formally welcomed into the organisation then an induction session should be designed, etc.

4. Plan out the presentation

Planning is one of the most important steps in preparing a presentation. Planning includes the following:

- determining what information to include and what to exclude
- arranging for the equipment, set-up etc. required, booking the venue
- sending out invites to the audience in advance to enable them to keep time aside to attend

5. Collect the data

Now that the presenter has identified what is to be included, they need to assemble all the data from the various sources. The accuracy of the data is essential as incorrect data presented will not leave a good impression on the audience. Hence, to ensure accuracy, selecting a reliable source for collecting the data is very important. It would be essential more so because the audience might take down points and use them as reference.

6. Structure the data and decide the flow

The data collected now needs to be structured into points and put in a proper order to ensure a logical flow so that the audience can understand easily. Data has to be presented in such a way that it would make sense or else it would look like a mess and the audience would be confused and would end up misinterpreting the information. Every point should be followed up with sub points (if any) and all the points should flow in a logical sequence.

7. Prepare the actual presentation

This is the stage where the presenter actually prepares the material that is to be orally presented, makes notes and designs the visual tools if required, like charts, maps etc. The presenter will also prepare any hand-outs or other material to be given out to the audience. The points that were structured are now elaborated upon and the final presentation is made ready for rehearsal.

8. Rehearse

Even the best of the presenters might tend to fumble or panic in certain situations during a presentation. It is therefore necessary to rehearse the entire presentation using the tools and methods. You should not only practice the topic point wise but also practice with the tools being used so that you know how to use and operate at the time of actual presentation. Moreover, rehearsing the presentation will help the presenter to determine if they can finish their presentation within the time allotted for it. This will ensure that the presenter will be well prepared for the presentation and can deliver the presentation effectively.

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Example

Mark works for Zenith Plc, a construction company. Currently, he is busy preparing for a presentation to be made to a prospective customer wanting to build a commercial complex. Mark is a skilled presenter. He leads a team of 15 who work on various projects. Mark is expecting the clients after two days, and if they are satisfied with his presentation, they might offer the project to Mark's company. Let us see how Mark follows to steps to prepare an effective presentation.

Know the purpose	Mark first identifies the main objective of making the presentation – which is to convince the client that Zenith has the capability to deliver an excellent product that meets the client's expectations.
Identify the audience	Then Mark browses the client's website in order to know the client better and understand their mission and values. This is done so that he can tailor the presentation according to the expectations of his client.
Determine the type of presentation	Mark knows that in order to convince, influence or persuade a client, oral communication should be the preferred choice. However, to make the oral presentation more effective, he plans to use certain tools of visual presentation as well. He then identifies the type of presentation that he should make – this would be a project proposal presentation.
Plan out the presentation	<p>Now that Mark has identified the purpose and type of presentation, he can identify what all is to be included in order to convince the client that they can deliver. He jots down the points which are important to be included from his point of view, like information on earlier successful projects, list of vendors etc.</p> <p>He will also fix an appointment with the client regarding the day, time and venue, and make sure he has put out requirements to the IT staff for any equipment that he would need to make the presentation, such as projector etc.</p>
Collect data	<p>Based on the points to be included which were jotted down by him, Mark sets about collecting all the required data. Mark's staff have been interacting with the client's office to seek information on the building specifications, area of land available for the construction, number of floors required, etc.</p> <p>Mark collects information to showcase their previous projects and also works out the pricing for this new project. He compiles data on the quality of material which will be used in the construction and a list of safety instructions which they plan to implement during the construction work. He also prepares a vendor list so that he can give the information if the client asks.</p>
Structure the data & decide the flow	Mark has decided what points to include, and also collected information on them. He will now review all the points and structure them, i.e. rearrange them to give his presentation a proper flow/order. He will start with the most important points on his list that will win the client over, and then list other points that are on his list.
Prepare for the actual presentation	<p>Mark now actually prepares the entire presentation including the introduction, body, closing lines etc. He prepares hand-outs containing information on the past successful projects that will be circulated among the client's representatives.</p> <p>Mark also does not forget to ensure that the equipment he plans to use is working and ensures that the setup is organised according to his instructions.</p>
Rehearse	Mark knows the importance of rehearsal and so delivers the entire presentation, including displaying the visual charts that he has prepared. He realises that he is extending his presentation beyond the time allotted for it by a good half an hour. He then adjusts his speed and edits the data presented, and finally, fits his delivery well within the timelines allotted.



Test Yourself 2

Alan, a business development executive working with Ultratech Plc, is given the task of presenting a very important business proposal to a client. If he gives a successful presentation, it will mean a very good contract for the company. Alan is new to the role, but is intelligent and eager to learn.

Alan first identifies the purpose and audience, then does the planning, collection and structuring of the data and finally prepares the actual presentation together with excellent PowerPoint presentations.

However, on the day of the presentation, he fumbles and sometimes is not able to find the required slides quickly. At one stage, he even could not remember what he wanted to say on the point. Also, he discovered that he could not finish his presentation within the time limit.

What step did Alan overlook when preparing for the presentation?

3. Deliver the presentation following appropriate steps.

[Learning Outcome c]

In the earlier learning outcome, we have learnt that a presentation can be formal or informal, technical or non-technical, brief or detailed, or simple or complex. The audience can be either internal or external. The presenter should follow the steps to prepare the presentation in order for the presentation to be effective.

Once the presentation is prepared, the presenter should now concentrate on delivering the presentation.

Delivering a presentation

Certain steps need to be followed in order to deliver the presentation well, to fulfil the objective of making the presentation, and to get the most out of the exercise.

1. A positive mind-set and body language

Even before the presentation starts, it is important for the presenter to be mentally prepared for the presentation. A positive mind-set and a positive body language will boost the confidence of the presenter when making the presentation. A positive mind-set refers to feeling good about and believing in what you do. It enables you to think and do things in a better way. Being positive in your thinking gives you a feeling of being prepared to tackle whatever situations you face. It generates positive energy, boosting your confidence levels. The audience usually responds to a confident presenter better.

2. Audibility, tone, pace & clarity in voice

With all the tools and methods in place, the presenter has to present the topic and explain and discuss orally. Hence, the voice should be loud and clear. If required, a mike should be used. The tone should be varied to maintain the attention of the audience. The pace at which the presentation is conducted should be in line with the content (i.e. slow pace for complex topics and a faster pace for simple ones).



Example

When the finance minister of a country presents the finance bill, he will read out the income tax rates loudly, but at a very slow pace. However, he would present the proposal on a development scheme (which is not very complex) at a fast pace.

Also, the speech and pronunciation should be clear, so that the audience can understand what is being said. In cases where the accent of the presenter is different from the accent that the audience are used to, clear pronunciation by the speaker takes on an even greater importance.

3. Welcome / greetings

Greetings are always the beginning of any meeting (be it formal or informal). The audience should be greeted and welcomed at the beginning of the presentation.

4. Introduction

If the presentation is to be made to audience outside the company, the presenter should introduce himself/herself to the audience at the beginning of the presentation. Details such as the presenter's name, designation, content to be discussed in short, etc. should be included in the introduction so that the audience knows who is making the presentation and what do they want to communicate. Also, an introduction of the company and its vision can be included here. For internal company presentations, it is a good idea to start with a brief introduction of the topic of the presentation. Introductions create a positive connection between the audience and the presenter. There can even be a small 'ice-breaker' in the form of a small joke or a short story.

5. Present the topic

After the initial formalities, the presenter has to present the actual topic as it is the prime purpose for organising the presentation. The presenter has to provide all the material and present the topic using the available tools and methods of presentation. The data that has been compiled using text, graphs, charts, pictures and tables (if any) should be discussed. Also, while presenting the topic, the presenter should maintain eye contact with the audience at all times.

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6. Interaction

The presenter has to make sure that the listeners are connected with the presentation, and are understanding the topic which is being presented. The audience can be kept engaged by making the presentation interactive by asking topic-related questions so that the audience are more focused and actively listening to the presentation.

7. Minimise distractions

If the presentation is complex or long, at some point of time, the audience tends to get distracted or disconnected with the presenter. Some participants might be sleepy or bored, or distracted by other things. The presenter must make sure that the audience does not get off the track at any point of time by making use of humour or sharing some anecdote that would re-gain the attention of the audience. The presenter should however make sure that nothing is said at a personal level and people's sentiments should not be affected. Short breaks can be arranged so that the audience can refresh themselves by having some tea, coffee, snacks or a small walk.

8. Conclude

A well-made presentation cannot be ended abruptly. The topic should be summarised, and doubts / queries should be invited from the audience. Answering the audience's questions will ensure that they have understood the presentation. Also, if there are any hand-outs, they should be passed around for reference purpose.

9. Ask for feedback

The presenter would not know how well the presentation was received by the audience (i.e. whether the presentation was effective and the topic was understood) unless they ask for feedback. Points on which feedback can be invited include: were all the relevant topics covered, were all questions answered, is there any scope of improvement on the topic covered or the way it was presented etc. Seeking feedback from the audience will enable the presenter to improve his presentation by making changes in the scope of the topic and the presentation style. This will help to make the presentation more effective and worthwhile next time.



Example

Examples of situations where the presenter should ask for feedback from the audience are listed below:

At a corporate training session, the trainer should ask for feedback from the participants to gauge how much they understood and whether they felt attending the session was worthwhile.

At a performance appraisal, the appraiser should invite feedback on the appraisal process in order to gain an insight into what the employees expect from the company

At a business development presentation to clients, feedback should be solicited to learn what the client feels about the product and what the client expects from the company.

However, it is to be noted that certain presentations such as project proposals for prospective clients, induction sessions etc. do not call for feedback.

10. Vote of thanks

The participants would have taken time out from their schedules to attend the presentation and have been patient and attentive through-out the session. They would have provided their comments and feedback. The presenter should not forget to thank the audience for all this. A vote of thanks will make an appropriate ending to the presentation.



Test Yourself 3

Janet has been promoted as Outlet Manager at Allen's Burgers. Although she is very young for such a responsible role, the country manager thought her worthy of the promotion because she was hardworking and intelligent. As part of her new role, she has been assigned the task of delivering a presentation to staff explaining how to improve the Order Delivery Time. This would be the first presentation in her entire working life, but she is confident, and believes she can do well. On the day of the presentation, she is cool, calm and collected. After the presentation, she handles all the queries with poise. The audience is satisfied with her presentation.

What helped Janet deliver a successful presentation?

- A A positive mind-set and body language
- B Being too young for the role
- C Her designation as Outlet Manager
- D All the above

Answers to Test Yourself

Answer to TY 1

The correct option is **B**.

The recruits are new to the company and hence are unaware of the culture, policies etc. of the company. Before they take charge of their duties, they need to be introduced to the company and given some information on the company such as its mission, values, initiatives, product & services, clients, network, etc. Laura is attending to the new recruits and will be conducting an induction presentation for them which will enable the new recruits to understand the company.

Answer to TY 2

Alan had followed all the steps while preparing for the presentation, except for the last and the most important step of rehearsing. Therefore, despite having done everything correctly, he could not leave a positive impression on the audience. It seemed to the audience that Alan had not prepared the presentation well.

If he would have rehearsed before the actual presentation, he would have been thorough with the topic. He would have known how the data was organised and by efficiently using the visual aids he could have presented the topic effectively. By rehearsing, he could have also made sure that the presentation was completed within the time allotted for it. Rehearsing would have given him confidence in presenting the topic, which would ultimately have reflected while he was making the presentation.

Answer to TY 3

The correct option is **A**.

Janet could deliver the presentation successfully because she had maintained a positive mind-set and body language, without which, despite having prepared well, she would have come across as incompetent.

Self Examination Questions

Question 1

Visual presentation is the most effective method of presentation in every situation as compared to oral presentation. Is the statement true or false?

- A True
- B False

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Question 2

A rubber manufacturing company had appointed two interns for their sales department and two interns for their production department. A training programme was scheduled for them before they started their internship, in order to familiarise them with the workings of the department. On the said day and time, the sales interns reached the company premises on time and assembled in the company's training room no. 1, forgetting that they had been called to training room no. 2.

Mr. Smith, the Production Manager, who had scheduled a session for the production interns in training room no. 1, entered the training room 15 minutes before his session and was surprised to find two interns already present. Nevertheless, he greeted them and started a training session on how to control machine breakdown time. After 20 minutes into the presentation, the interns realised that they were attending a session which was not meant for them.

Required:

Identify what should the presenter (Mr Smith) have done that could have avoided this situation and the resultant waste of time?

Question 3

Preparing for a presentation is ideally required, but it is not essential. Is this statement correct?

Question 4

Knowing the audience is an un-necessary activity and can be eliminated from the steps to prepare a presentation. State whether the statement is true or false

Answers to Self-Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

The correct option is **B**.

Visual presentations are effective, but there are situations when visual methods do not provide the required results. Oral presentation enables direct connectivity with the audience. Moreover, oral presentation is the most cost effective and easy method of presentation. When it is about persuading, explaining or convincing the audience, oral presentation proves to be more effective because the presenter can alter / make changes to the content depending on the response from the audience.

Answer to SEQ 2

Mr Smith did not follow all the steps of delivering a presentation. Before starting his presentation, Mr. Smith should have introduced himself to the interns, and he should have attempted to know the participants. He should have also introduced the topic to them before starting the presentation. This would have enabled the interns to realise at the start itself that they were attending a session which was not meant for them.

Answer to SEQ 3

The statement is **false**.

If the preparation for the presentation is not made, then it would be difficult to gauge what the audience expects to get out of the presentation. It might lead to un-organised data for presentation. With inappropriate setup, and incomplete knowledge about the tools of presentation, it would be difficult for the presenter to effectively deliver the presentation. Hence, preparation of the presentation is an essential step.

Answer to SEQ 4

The statement is **false**.

While preparing for the presentation, it is important to have some relevant information about the audience for whom the presentation is to be made. Is the audience internal or external? If internal, what is the level of the audience in the organisation? If external, does the audience know about the company and its products and services related to the presentation? Does the audience have any knowledge about the topic of presentation? Is the audience from the same culture and background? Knowing all such details about the target audience will lead to an effective presentation which is suited to the audience.

STUDY GUIDE D3: DEMONSTRATE READING SKILLS

Get Through Intro

With the advent of technology in all fields, the art of reading seems to have taken a backseat. While it may seem that reading skills are not essential, they play an important role in understanding what you read. Reading a newspaper, a study text or a novel all need different types of reading skills.

Reading is to comprehend the text that is read and interpret its meaning correctly. It is all about getting involved in the written content and understanding it thoroughly. Broadly speaking, a person usually reads either for knowledge or for entertainment / recreation. Whatever the purpose might be, the reader needs to employ specific skills in order to make sense of the content. Consciously acquiring these reading skills will make reading more effective.

This Study Guide will enable you to effectively strategize your reading skills so that you can understand the different purposes and types of reading. It will enable you to apply reading techniques according to the need, in order to make reading more effective.

Learning Outcomes

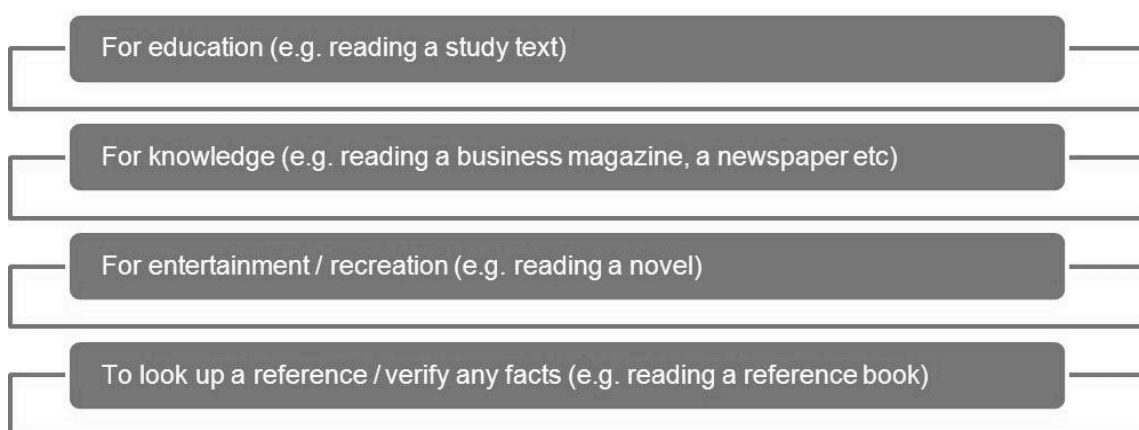
- a) Describe the different reading strategies.
- b) Identify features of an effective reader.
- c) Describe how to scan and skim read text (high reading speed, intensive reading).
- d) Identify factors which can affect reading speed.

1. Describe different reading strategies**[Learning Outcome a]**

Reading is not just running your eyes through some content. It is done to understand what has been written. You have to apply your mind in order to comprehend it. Otherwise, it would be as good as only just seeing what is being written.

Purposes of reading

The reading activity is always done with some purpose in mind. The way in which the text should be read usually depends upon this purpose. Some of the purposes are listed below:

Diagram 1: Purpose of reading**Reading strategy****Definition**

Reading strategy can be defined as specific techniques that can be used to gain the required information from the text.

Effective readers employ the various strategies, albeit sometimes without even realising it! For example, if a student reads a book while studying, he will read it carefully, with full concentration, therefore reading it slowly. However, if the same student reads the book (a second time) just a day before the exam, they would read the book very fast, sometimes only running their eyes over the text.

To become a good reader, you need to inculcate the habit of using the various reading strategies in order to effectively gain knowledge from a piece of text.

Reading strategies can be employed during three stages - before, during and after reading. Usually, when the reader is reading for entertainment or to look up a reference, each of these strategies might not be followed.

However, when one reads with the purpose of gaining knowledge or education, it will help to implement the following strategies to get the maximum benefit from reading.

(a) Before reading

- (i) **Preview:** Previewing involves reading the titles, notes, pictures, etc. to get an idea of what it is all about. It helps to know what you are about to read.
- (ii) **Purpose:** There has to be a purpose to read. You should know what can be learned from it? How useful it would be to read the material?
- (iii) **Connect:** You should try to connect yourself, your surroundings with the text. You should ask yourself if you already known something about what you are reading.

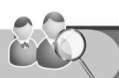


Example

Riyaan, the owner of a small manufacturing unit, is reading a business magazine. He is clear about the purpose of reading it – he would update himself on the latest business trends and learn about other businesses, which will help him to stay ahead in the business world. Before starting to actually read it, he will preview it, i.e. skim through the whole magazine first, taking in only the titles of different articles, pictures etc. He will then try to connect the contents of the magazine with his own business.

(b) During reading

- (i) **Predict:** During the process of reading you should pause and, using what has been read till now, try to predict what lies further. What is going to happen next? What would be written in the next half? What would be the outcome?
- (ii) **Visualise:** While reading, you should visualise what has been written. Visualising the characters, the situations would make reading more lively. Visualising the text would further help to relate with the text more easily.
- (iii) **Ask questions:** While reading you might come across certain text wherein you either might not understand it or disagree with what has been written. You need to then ask questions to yourself. You need to know why it has been written and in a particular manner. Asking questions will help you to get answers and obtain a sense of achievement and satisfaction regarding what has been read.



Example

Continuing the example of Riyaan above

Riyaan then starts to actually read the articles in the magazine. He reads about a company going bankrupt and the events that took place in the few months leading up to the bankruptcy. Riyaan visualises the events taking place; due to this, he can understand it better. When he reads about a few of the wrong decisions that the company took, he predicts that this would lead to investors losing faith in the company. He also questions the decisions of the company, as to what made the company take those decisions.

(c) After reading

- (i) **Compare:** There are similar topics which are written by different people. The ideology and the method of writing on the same issues are different. The reader may compare what he has read with another similar material he had read before to know the similarities or differences.
- (ii) **Summarise:** Once you finish reading, it is important to summarise what has been read. It might be difficult to remember the entire text which was written. Summarising the entire topic will help to easily remember what was read. Summarising the topic will help to re-fresh the entire text and remember the important and highlighted sentences, words, illustrations, pictures, etc., which would remind you about the details of the topic.
- (iii) **Evaluate:** After reading, you would always evaluate if you have achieved the purpose for which you had selected to read the text or topic. Try to understand how the writer is trying to conclude the topic. You need to form your opinion on what you read. You need to ask yourself if you were correct in your predictions. You should also evaluate if you have understood what the writer wanted to say. Evaluating what was read provides meaning to reading.



Example

Continuing the example of Riyaan above

After Riyaan finishes reading the article on bankruptcy, he will compare it to another case he had read a few months back about a similar company going bankrupt. He will compare the situations of the two companies and try to work out the similarities and differences to know the different situations when companies go bankrupt. He will then summarise what he has learnt, maybe make notes to himself in his diary about what went wrong for the two companies.

Finally, he will evaluate whether reading the article has been useful for him (here, it has been useful because he could understand what not to do to keep his own company away from bankruptcy issues). He will also form his own opinion about the article, whether the writer has written it well, what information was missing etc.



Test Yourself 1

Paula worked as a project manager with Rexnom Plc, and handles all the special projects that the company undertakes. Recently, a colleague told her about a new package available from Microsoft called MS Project, which can manage multiple projects and monitor them to ensure that each of the projects are on track. Paula wants to enrol for a short course on MS Project, and her boss approves it. On enrolling for the course, Paula gets the course material right away. She decides to study it on her own before the course starts.

- (i) Identify Paula's purpose of reading the material.
- (ii) During reading, which of the following strategies will Paula not employ?

- A Predict
- B Visualise
- C Ask questions
- D Evaluate

2. Identify features of an effective reader.

[Learning Outcome b]

Reading in a systematic manner enhances your ability to understand what has been written. An effective reader uses a strategic and a systematic approach, which saves time even while the message is correctly comprehended.

Features of an effective reader

The features of an effective reader are mentioned below:

(a) Identifying the context

A good reader can place the text in context. They can 'read between the lines', i.e. recognise the tone and underlying / hidden meaning, if any, in a piece of text. They can also understand how a particular piece of text fits in with the whole write-up.



Example

Dielle receives the following letter from her manager:

Dear Dielle,

We regret to inform you that you are not being offered any raise following your performance appraisal. The management has reached this decision due to a couple of reasons. Firstly, you have taken a number of days off, which way exceed your available leave balance. Consequently, you have not been able to meet most of the deadlines. Moreover, other members of staff feel that they always have to chip in and do the work that was assigned to you, which you were not able to do because you were not in the office.

Continued on the next page

Another issue is about your quality of work. There have been a lot of errors in the reports that you have submitted, a lot of which were completely avoidable by a simple rechecking of calculations using a calculator.

The printout of the letter was of poor quality, hence this text was unclear, and could not be read.

The management is _____ with your performance. We know that you have been a very hands-on employee in the past, and have never given anyone any reason to complain. Please take this in the right spirit and employ appropriate steps to ensure this is not repeated henceforth. We look forward to valuable output from you in the future.

Yours Sincerely,

John Doe

Laura, Dielle's colleague and very good friend, is an effective reader. Dielle gives the letter to Laura to read.

Laura will be able to identify the context clearly – that this relates to the recent performance appraisal of Dielle. She will recognise the tone – which is not very positive, and also be able to read between the lines – it seems that other members of the staff might have complained that they have to complete Dielle's responsibilities in addition to their own – which is implied by the sentence – "Moreover, other members of staff feel that they always have to chip in and do the work that was assigned to you, which you were not able to do because you were not in the office".

(b) Decoding the conventions

An effective reader will know the conventions of reading, and have a good grasp over the language in which they are reading, i.e. they have a good knowledge of grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and sentence structure. This means they do not need to spend time concentrating on the construction of sentences in order to figure out the meaning. It makes understanding the text easier.



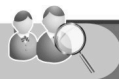
Example

Continuing the above example of Dielle

Laura is proficient in the language in which the letter is written (i.e. English) and understands the high level vocabulary used – such as words and phrases like consequently, hands on, chip in, henceforth, right spirit etc. She will not need to spend a lot of time figuring out the overall meaning.

(c) Comprehending

As an effective reader possesses the skills of identifying the context and decoding the conventions, they can fully understand what is written clearly. The reader can then summarise what has been read, and even paraphrase the content.



Example

Continuing the above example of Dielle

Laura can easily understand the contents of the letter. She can summarise that the management is not happy with Dielle's work, and this is because of two reasons – her excess holidays and her inaccurate reports.

(d) Interpreting

An effective reader can analyse the text and complete the missing gaps in the text based on signs and indications picked up from the overall meaning. The reader can also reach a conclusion on the text matter, as they have understood it properly.



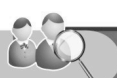
Example

Continuing the above example of Dielle

Laura will be able to guess what must be written in the missing gap in the last paragraph of the letter. It must be something like “The management is dissatisfied / disappointed with your performance.” She can also reach a conclusion after reading the whole letter – that the management is not satisfied with Dielle’s current performance at work, however, the management is positive that Dielle will improve.

(e) Synthesizing

This is a high level skill which enables good readers to synthesize the information from the text. They are able to conclude and blend the information in with information that they have gained in the past from other sources outside the text. With this advanced level skill, they can ‘put two and two together’ and synthesize, which leads to acquiring information beyond the content of the current text.



Example

Continuing the above example of Dielle

Laura knows that the management’s attitude is usually lenient and they have never, in the past, held a grudge against any employee based on only a year’s performance. Based on this past information, Laura can synthesize, and understands that Dielle will be given a second chance at the job.

(f) Evaluating

An effective reader can form an opinion on the text they have read. They can make a judgement on the text after evaluating it in their minds. Furthermore, if there are some flaws in the flow or logic in the written matter, they can evaluate and identify the anomalies and question the correctness of the matters expressed in the text.



Example

Continuing the above example of Dielle

Laura can form an opinion about the text. She feels that the letter starts off with a very harsh and accusing language, but ends on a softer, encouraging note. Laura also evaluates the letter and concludes that there are no logical flaws in it.



Test Yourself 2

Effective readers possess a skill that enables them to reach conclusions on a piece of text and blend the information in with information that they have gained in the past from other sources outside the text. They can ‘put two and two together’, which leads to acquiring information beyond the content of the current text.

From the options, identify which skill is described above.

- A Identifying context
 - B Decoding conventions
 - C Synthesizing
 - D Asking questions
-

3. Describe how to scan and skim read text (high reading speed, intensive reading).

[Learning Outcome c]

In learning outcome 1, we studied the different strategies of reading and saw that the purpose with which a text is read determines what strategy is to be employed for effective reading. In this learning outcome, we will look at the different techniques that can be used to glean the required information from a piece of text.

Techniques of reading

The four main reading techniques are explained below.

(a) Scanning



Definition

Scanning can be defined as rapidly going through the material with a view to finding a specific piece of information.

Scanning helps you to find information from a text without reading the whole text, and it is useful especially if you are in a hurry to get the information. Once the specific information is found, the reader stops reading the material. Following are the tips on how to scan a piece of text effectively:

Identify what it is exactly that you need to find, and keep it in mind at all times when reading.

Think about what place/form the information is likely to appear in the text, so that it will be easier to spot it.

Run your eyes rapidly over the text to try and find the information. If you feel you have missed out a certain part, go back and cover that part.

Remind yourself not to read the whole text line by line, and not try to focus on understanding the content until you come to the information you are looking for.

When you find the information, then read the whole sentences carefully and understand them.



Example

When you want to find a specific telephone number from a telephone directory or a specific word from a dictionary, you employ the scanning technique. You do not read each and every word from the directory / dictionary, and you do not go through each and every page either. You just turn to the appropriate page and scan the page for the required information.

(b) Skimming



Definition

Skimming can be defined as rapidly going through the whole material in order to get an overview.

While skimming, the reader is only trying to get a general idea of the content of the text, so understanding is reduced; i.e. the reader doesn't fully understand what is written. The purpose is to only ascertain what the text is all about and will it be worthwhile to read it. You can enhance your skimming skills if you follow these steps:

Read the title carefully

Read the introduction or first paragraph carefully.

Then read the headings and sub-headings, and also the first sentence of each paragraph, because the main idea in the paragraph is usually contained in the first line.

Read other sentences that may be bold or highlighted in some way.

Read the final paragraph carefully.



Example

Rashid is working for a multinational company, Torque Plc. At the workplace, he needs to communicate with colleagues from all parts of the world, and so wishes to improve his business communication skills. He goes to a bookstore looking for a book on business communication that specifically discusses the various techniques of reading as well as tips on how to improve written communication.

In order to ensure that the book discusses exactly those topics that he is interested in, he will not sit there and read every word from the entire book, but will only go through the title of the chapters, highlighted sentences, pictures, illustrations, diagrams, and maybe a sentence here and there. This will give him an idea of the content of the book and he can then decide whether it will be worth his while to read the book.

(c) High speed reading

High speed reading is also known as rapid reading. If you have been reading a lot and if you are well versed with the vocabulary, phrases, etc. you can acquire the skill to read fast. Knowing the topic and the material will help you to read fast even if few places are skipped in between while reading.

It is not about just increasing the pace of reading the words and gaining more speed than you had been doing before. It is a skill to read at an appropriate pace as per the purpose. This is an advanced skill which will be gained by constant reading. Increasing the comprehension rate will also assist in high speed reading.



Example

Sera is a recently qualified accountant employed with a global company, Fraser & Fraser, as accounts assistant at their Dar es Salaam branch. A new accounting standard has been issued by the NBAA that relates to the domain in which Fraser & Fraser works. Her boss has asked her to go through the new accounting standard and explain the key points to her colleagues.

When Sera reads the new standard, she will use the high speed reading technique because she is well-versed with the technical phrases and terms used, and knows the topic – i.e. has a knowledge base for that topic.

(d) Intensive reading

There are reading materials which require a lot of time and attention to be devoted to get the details out of it. Some material like analytical or complex text, unfamiliar words, etc., might require more concentration to understand what is written. There is certain material wherein each and every piece of data needs to be converted into valuable information. This is called intensive reading.

Intensive reading is used to read certain documents and articles having information or data which has to be understood thoroughly either to analyse it, approve it or provide feedback on it. Such documents are read in detail at a slow pace with lot more concentration and intensity so that the information is understood clearly.



Example

Mark, the legal advisor of Zenith Plc., is going through the draft of a big contract Zenith is signing with a supplier.

Here, Mark will employ intensive reading and go through each and every word of the contract carefully. If there are any unfamiliar words, he will look up their meaning in order to make sure he has understood the content of the contract clearly, because if he misses, the repercussions might be that the company incurs huge losses.



Test Yourself 3

Identify two differences between scanning and skimming.

4. Identify factors which can affect reading speed.**[Learning Outcome d]**

In the earlier learning outcomes, we have studied the different strategies and techniques of reading. In this learning outcome, we will talk about the speed of reading and the factors which have an impact on the speed.

Speed reading is not only about reading something with speed, but also understanding and remembering what is being read. It comes with practice, wherein the reader might be constantly reading on a particular topic, knows the topic well, is interested in the subject and well-versed with the technical terms used in the material being read.

Speed reading is a skill possessed by good readers. However, the average reader can also improve their reading speed by understanding and avoiding certain factors which not only hamper the speed of reading, but also affect reading efficiency. Let us now look at some of the factors that affect reading speed.

Factors affecting reading speed

- (a) **Body postures/habit:** some readers adopt odd or uncomfortable body postures while reading, such as slumping, drooping etc., which would distract them and affect comprehension of the text, thus affecting their reading speed. Some readers have the habit of tapping a pencil on the text material, eating something while reading, etc. which hamper the speed of comprehension due to distraction, which will lead to a slow reading speed.
- (b) **Word processing/decoding:** some readers who are not well-versed with the language find it difficult to understand the words and sentences. They need to read and re-read the text in order to work out the meaning. Moreover, the material might include jargon, technical terminology and complex words, which hampers reading speed.
- (c) **Poor memory:** while reading, the reader connects the text being read to knowledge that has been already gained. However, if the reader has a poor memory, they might tend to forget what was read and so, would not be able to link it with the previous knowledge. This would impact the speed of reading.
- (d) **Lack of interest and attention:** if the reader is not interested in the content or the subject being read, they will subconsciously tune out and not pay attention to what they are reading. Hence, the reader will not understand and comprehend the text. The speed of reading will be impeded because then they will have to re-read the text in order to understand it. Moreover, due to lack of interest, the reader would tend to skip certain parts of the text, defeating the purpose of reading.
- (e) **Sub-vocalising:** sub-vocalising means reading to yourself silently, without making any audible sounds. In other words, readers imagine pronouncing the words, as if they are reading out aloud. However, the human brain can understand/interpret words and meanings at a much faster pace compared to reading aloud or sub-vocalising. Hence, this practice hampers speed reading.
- (f) **Quality of reading material:** the quality of the material being read might affect reading speed to a great extent. If the data is not properly structured or the printing quality of the text is poor or the font size is not appropriate, it would impede the speed of reading.

150: Demonstrate Visual and oral Communication Skills



Example

In the first box, you would see that the font size is too small, making it difficult to read with speed. The second box contains text in which punctuation is missing, and so the reader will have to reduce the pace of reading to comprehend it. The third box contains text with various font types and sizes, which hinders reading speed.

A financial market is a market in which people and entities can trade financial securities, commodities, and other fungible items of value at low transaction costs and at prices that reflect supply and demand. Securities include stocks and bonds, and commodities include precious metals or agricultural goods.

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(g) **Distraction:** this is by large the most common factor affecting speed reading. Distraction can be internal or external.

Internal: internal issues are related to the reader alone such as stress, health issues such as fatigue, sore eyes etc.

External: in most of the cases, the reader is not responsible for the external distractions, for example TV/loud music being played, people talking loudly in the background etc.



Test Yourself 4

David runs a legal advisory firm which handles legal issues for various companies. He has 6 people working for him. While David is away on a business tour, he gets a call from one of his client on a particular case, as the hearing date is approaching fast. David calls his office and understands that Robert, the person handling that particular case, is on a long leave.

With no other choice, David asks Smith, the finance executive, to go through the case file and a few other documents as soon as possible and send him specific information, so that he can just make an appearance in the court on behalf of the client, and request for an extension. However, Smith is having a hard time going through the case file and other relevant documents, seems to be taking a lot of time. Within the given time, Smith might not be able to finish going through all the material and gleaning the specific information that David wants.

Required:

Explain the reasons due to which Smith cannot read with speed.

Answers to Test Yourself

Answer to TY 1

- (i) Paula will be reading the text for the purposes of education.
- (ii) The correct option is **D**.

Paula will not evaluate the text when she is in the process of reading, because unless and until the whole text is read, it cannot be evaluated. Therefore, evaluation is part of the reading strategy that is adopted after all the material is read.

Answer to TY 2

The correct option is **C**.

Synthesizing is a high level skill which enables good readers to synthesize the information from the text. They are able to conclude and blend the information in with information that they have gained in the past from other sources outside the text. With this advanced level skill, they can 'put two and two together' and synthesize, which leads to acquiring information beyond the content of the current text.

Answer to TY 3

The purpose of scanning is to find specific information from the text, such as finding a word in a dictionary or a phrase in a book or a chapter number in the index. On the other hand, the purpose of skimming is to get an overview of the contents of the entire text, and involves going through the titles, headings, pictures, and illustrations.

While scanning, once the reader gets the information being searched for, the reader does not continue reading the whole material. However, while skimming, the reader has to skim or glance through the entire book.

Answer to TY 4

The reasons that Smith is not able to read with speed are discussed below:

Lack of interest and attention: Smith works in finance, and therefore, would not have a great interest in other fields such as law. A lack of interest often results in a lack of attention, as a person tends to get distracted more while reading something they have no interest in.

Word processing / decoding: Smith is a finance executive, and so, may not be well versed with the legal language and terminologies. Hence, he would find it difficult to comprehend the material, and he would have to reread certain parts, or refer to a dictionary / other supporting material, which will impede his speed of reading.

Self Examination Questions

Question 1

Kearon is heading the marketing team of Just Fix Tyres Plc. The company enjoys a good business environment and monopoly in the market. Of late, Kearon is busy signing contract agreements with clients. On a similar occasion, Kearon and a client have met to sign a service agreement. After discussions and drafting the final version of the agreement, the contract is brought before Kearon for signing. Kearon employed the skimming technique for reading the agreement before signing it.

Discuss whether he has opted for a correct reading technique.

Question 2

Explain how is previewing an essential reading strategy.

152: Demonstrate Visual and oral Communication Skills

Question 3

Which of the following skills are demonstrated by an effective reader?

- A Comprehending
- B Interpreting
- C Evaluating
- D All the above

Question 4

James is a scientist at Get Well Pharma. He has made a breakthrough research and has completed his thesis on a particular finding. He has to make a presentation to the top management team on the next day and is busy reading the thesis and making notes for the presentation. His workstation is very close to the shop floor, and there is lot of constant machine noise coming through. This is taking a toll on his preparations for the presentation.

Required:

Identify the factor that is affecting his reading speed.

Answers to Self Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

No, Kearon has not employed the right technique. Skimming is a technique wherein the reader just glances through the text or material to get a gist of the written matter. Kearon should have gone through the agreement in detail, and critically studied all the clauses before signing it. Even though he was signing a lot of contracts recently, he should have realised that each contract has variations which might be critical and cannot be ignored. Kearon should have used the intensive reading technique before signing the agreement to make sure that whatever discussed and drafted has been clearly mentioned in the final agreement in order to avoid problems in future.

Answer to SEQ 2

Previewing the topic or subject before reading it entirely is important. It would help to know if the text being read is of use rather than wasting time in reading something which was not relevant. Previewing would also help to know beforehand what is being read.

Answer to SEQ 3

The correct option is **D**.

An effective reader will:

- Comprehend the content effectively
- Interpret the text and reach a conclusion
- Evaluate to form an opinion on the text

Answer to SEQ 4

James is being distracted from his work. With the loud noise of the machines at the shop floor, James is not able to concentrate on his reading, causing an obstacle, which tends to slow down the reading.

STUDY GUIDE D4: DEMONSTRATE SPEAKING SKILLS

Get Through Intro

Speaking is one of the most important components of the oral communication process. In oral communication, the sender uses speech, including the tone, pitch, pace etc., to communicate with others. Effective speaking is the art of imparting knowledge or expressing thoughts and feelings verbally with a view to making the listener understand.

Speaking can be for exchange of ideas between two individuals, or it can be a public speech, where the speaker communicates their ideas with a group of individuals.

From this study guide, you will be able to understand how speaking skills enable you to express your thoughts and ideas effectively. You will be able to recognise the importance of structure and a sequential approach to preparing a speech. Also, you will study how a well-prepared speech needs to be delivered effectively using appropriate methods to gain the maximum effect.

Learning Outcomes

- a) Express oneself effectively.
- b) Prepare speeches.
- c) Deliver speeches effectively.

1. Express oneself effectively.

[Learning Outcome, a]



Case Study

Ronald recently qualified with excellent grades and started working as a junior accountant with Traptron Plc for 4 months. In these four months, Ronald worked very hard and made a good impression on his superiors. The finance director felt Ronald was capable of a more senior role eventually because he was not only intelligent but also hard working. He decided to give Ronald an opportunity to work on a project with a highly important and prestigious client the company was helping set up a new branch for and included him on the project team.

The project team came up with an excellent project plan and roadmap, with intelligent inputs from Ronald. The finance director chose Ronald to communicate the financial aspects of the project plan to the client's representatives. A meeting was set up.

Ronald prepared for the meeting day and night. However, on the day of the meeting, he could not express his ideas effectively due to various reasons such as lack of experience in public speaking, nervousness etc., leading to a lack of clear pronunciation, not being able to engage the audience etc. And because he failed at expressing his ideas effectively:

- The client representatives were not impressed with the project plan.
- The company's reputation suffered because of this.
- The project team was discouraged because the whole team had put in a lot of effort into coming up with the project plan.
- The finance director was disappointed with Ronald.
- Ronald's efforts in preparing for the meeting were wasted.
- Ronald's chances for a promotion so early in his career were jeopardised.

Expressing effectively is to communicate your feelings, thoughts and ideas such that it is clearly understood by the recipient. The above case study shows us how important it is to be able to verbally express our thoughts and ideas in a clear manner. Let us now discuss this further.

Importance of expressing effectively

Speaking enables the sender to express ideas and thoughts by directly interacting with the listener with a required mix of expression and emotions, which creates direct and immediate impact on the listener. It is not only about your thoughts and emotions which has to be used but also the organs of the body such as hands, eye contact, facial expression, overall body language which has to be used appropriately to create the needed impact and effectively express yourself. Effective expression of your thoughts is very important to:

(i) Motivate

By selecting the correct words and appropriate statements and injecting emotions into the speech, a speaker can effectively motivate, persuade or convince the listener.

(ii) Encourage response

For communication to be effective, it needs to be a two-way process. Mere one sided communication would not assist in the progress of the interaction. Effective communication involves altering the approach if needed to catch the attention of the listeners. When you express effectively, it encourages the listener to take the effort to comprehend and also to respond, making the interaction more meaningful. For example, during communication, you can ask questions like "can I share my thoughts on this?" Such questions keep the momentum of the communication going and encourage interaction.

(iii) Avoid misinterpretation

Many a times the ideas and thoughts exchanged are not clear leading to misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Hence, using simple and words with appropriate body language and the needed expression makes the communication clear and the listener understand what thoughts or ideas are being exchanged. Expressing effectively will ensure that you are understood in the way you intended.

(iv) Create interest

Effective speaking enables the speaker to catch the listener's interest. If the listener is interested, they will respond better and make the effort to understand what you are talking about. They will also be interested to know what you are communicating next.

(v) Make a favourable impression

Effective speakers make a good impression on the audience; the audience likes to listen to them and are more open to receive the speaker's ideas. Making a good impression is very important for success in business.

(vi) Build trust

What you express and the way you express it would determine the impact on the listeners. Expressing your ideas effectively helps to build the listener's trust which is again very important in business.

Now that we know how important it is to express yourself effectively, the next logical step is to learn how to succeed at communicating orally.

Methods to improve speaking skills

Every one of us knows how to speak and express our thoughts and ideas. However, doing this effectively requires some skills that need to be developed. Having the required skills to speak effectively will enable you to connect with the listener, making communication meaningful. Let us discuss some of the ways to improve your speaking skills.

(i) Prepare

Before starting to speak, if you take a moment to gather your thoughts and think about what you are going to speak, you will be clear and can communicate better.

(ii) Be confident

Speaking is all about expressing yourself. If you are aware of what is to be spoken, and you are prepared, then you would be confident. Confidence is an attitude that every good speaker possesses. Being confident while speaking will enable you to express yourself without fear. If you are confident while speaking, it reflects in your speech and this will create a positive impact on the listener.

(iii) Be clear and concise

Do not ramble and do not repeat the same things again and again. The matter to be communicated should be clear and expressed in the minimum words possible.

(iv) Make eye contact

While you speak, you need to take efforts to engage the listener as well. If you do not look at the listener while speaking, the listener might feel disrespected or might be easily distracted by other thoughts. On the other hand, the listener will feel involved if you maintain eye contact while speaking. You will be able to gauge their reaction to what you are saying.

**Tip**

Remember, maintaining eye contact does not mean staring at the listener; it involves engaging the listener in the communication by looking at the listener most of the time.

(v) Pronounce clearly

The speaker needs to pronounce each and every word clearly in order to make the listener understand. Garbled speech or muddled pronunciation leads to confusion and might impede the transfer of ideas. Sometimes, due to cultural differences, the listener might be unfamiliar with the way you pronounce certain words, or with your way of speaking or pronunciation. In such situations, it becomes even more important to pronounce each word clearly so that the listener understands what is being spoken.

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(vi) Speak slowly and clearly

Apart from clear pronunciation of words, the speed of speech is also important. When you speak too fast, your speech might become garbled or you may not be able to pronounce each word clearly. However, do not pause too much between words (e.g. ummm, uhhh etc.) as it hampers the flow of ideas – both, for the speaker as well as for the listener.

(vii) Use proper voice modulation

This involves managing the tone and pitch of your voice. If a person speaks in a monotone, the listener will lose interest very quickly and subconsciously tend to tune out the speaker. In order to capture and maintain the attention of the listener, the speaker should vary the tone and also switch between a high-pitched voice and a low pitched voice.

(viii) Select appropriate words

Vocabulary is very important while speaking; hence speak in a simple language so that the other person will understand you. Avoid complex words and technical jargon, except in situations where the audience is used to, or expects such language. Use simple words and sentences which the listeners can comprehend. If the situation demands an unusual word, explain it so that the listeners would know what you are saying. Using appropriate words while speaking will enable the listeners to clearly understand you.



Example

As part of the induction session, Tom, the IT manager, is delivering a presentation to junior accountants from the finance and accounts department. Tom uses words like version control, phishing, boot disk, cache etc. to explain in short the functions of the IT department. Here, Tom is not expressing himself effectively, because his choice of words includes jargon, which the accountants cannot be reasonably expected to be familiar with.

However, if Tom restricts the use of such words to the minimum, and also explains the meanings of such technical words that he does use, he would be an effective speaker.

(ix) Use proper body language

The way you maintain your body language while speaking would reflect your attitude and hence it becomes vital to display appropriate hand gestures, posture etc. Improper body posture might not only make a negative impact on the listener but would also make you uncomfortable while speaking. Moving the arms and shoulders appropriately and using expressions and gestures would reflect your confidence while speaking.

The Do's and Don'ts while expressing yourself are mentioned below:

Do's

- Put forward points briefly and ask for responses from time to time to understand whether the listener is understanding the communication.
- Appreciate the listener for listening.
- Be specific and to the point.
- While expressing your ideas, use words such as "I feel..."
- While asking questions, start the sentence with request words such as "Can you please...?"
- If your request is declined, accept it graciously after explaining in brief why your request was important.

Don'ts

- Avoid blaming.
- Avoid words which do not ask for commitments such as "I would like you to ..."
- Avoid threatening words and statements.
- Avoid ordering or commanding words or sentences.



Test Yourself 1

Effective speakers are able to verbally express their thoughts and ideas clearly. Explain in brief any three characteristics of an effective speaker.

2. Prepare speeches.**[Learning Outcome b]**

In the earlier learning outcome, we studied the various methods on how a person can express himself effectively. Now, in this learning outcome, let us build the concept further and study how to prepare speeches.

**Definition**

A speech is a discourse orally delivered by the presenter to an audience (usually a lot of people), in order to communicate the presenter's thoughts and ideas.

Delivering good and memorable speeches is a skill that needs to be studied and perfected – it comes with practice. In order to prepare good speeches, it is very important to structure the content of the speech properly. Let us see how to structure a speech.

Structuring a speech

The topics of speeches may be very different from one another, but their general structure remains the same. A speech should be divided into three parts, as mentioned below.

(i) Opening/Introduction

It is said that the first impressions are usually the last impressions. Therefore, the first part of your speech is very important because the audience will subconsciously form an impression about you and the topic based on the first 10-15 minutes. Here are a few pointers on what makes an ideal introduction:

- Start with greeting the audience appropriately and introducing yourself. Include your achievements/experience in the topic of the speech. This will lend credibility to your speech.
- Introduce the topic of the speech, i.e. summarise in short what you are going to talk about. Take care not to go into too much detail at this stage.
- Include what the audience will get out of the speech, in order to pique their interest.
- Capture the audience's attention by making a thought-provoking, interesting, or even a controversial statement. You can even make use of light humour to achieve this!

(ii) Body

The introduction sets the stage for the main body of the speech, so that the audience will now be more receptive to your ideas. But remember - however powerful the opening might be, you need to follow it up with strong points in the main body, in order to make your speech successful. This part of the speech is the longest, as all the main points are discussed here. Keep the following pointers in mind when compiling the main body:

- Select the points that you would like to make. Choose the points wisely – include the strongest points, even if they are less in number, rather than discussing a large number of weak points.
- Organise the points into a logical order, such that the next point will build up on the preceding point. Identify and structure sub-points, if any.
- Take care to justify your points well, maybe with supporting evidence, examples, arguments in favour etc.

(iii) Closing/Conclusion

Once the topic has been delivered, you need to conclude the speech appropriately. Remember, a strong conclusion will enable the presenter to make the speech memorable and remembered by the audience. Here are a few tips for a good close:

- Summarising the points discussed in the main body.
- Re-iterate key points which you would want the audience to remember.
- Provide an avenue for the audience to think upon the points discussed even after the speech is over.
- End with a final thought/emotion.

A well concluded speech will leave a positive impact on the audience.



Example

Richard Geller is newly appointed as the CEO of Seahawk Technologies, an IT company with branches in more than 20 cities all over the world. At the global company meet that is held every three years, where all the company's employees from all the branches are invited to attend, Richard is making his first speech as the CEO of the company.

Opening

Good Morning!

Greeting

As many of you might already know, I have been appointed as the CEO of Seahawk Technologies, replacing Mr Cecil Green, who retired last month with an enviable track record of serving the company. I must say, it's going to be a tough job for me to take over from him!

Use of humour / interesting statement

Ours is a big company with over 2000 employees worldwide, so, for those who have not worked with me before, let me introduce myself briefly. I am Richard Geller, and I was heading the business development department of our company's California branch before I was promoted. I have been working for Seahawk for more than 10 years now, and rather than restricting myself to the business development activities, I took interest and carried out many other tasks within the company, which eventually led to quite a few successful projects, such as Xerion, RBT213, Poermat, to name a few. I am very much grateful to the board of directors for showing faith in me and thinking me worthy of the role of the CEO of the company.

Introduction, including achievements/experience

Today, through my speech, I hope to be able to connect with you all on a personal level, give you an opportunity to get to know me and my views, and share my vision for our company in the coming years.

Summarise the topics that will be discussed and say what the audience will get out of this

Main Body

Let me start with the most important part first, my vision for our company. In the next three years, I want to take our company to dizzying heights of success. I will now elaborate on how I plan to achieve this.

Point 1

Our main strength is our stronghold in the field of cloud computing. This is evidenced by our massive client base with regards to cloud computing. I plan to.....

Cite evidence/examples

Point 2, building up on point 1

However, we currently have only a few cloud computing experts working for us today. I plan to up skill members of our own staff. For this, I have a few ideas in mind.

Sub-point 1

Firstly, I plan to offer staff who have base knowledge in cloud computing comprehensive training on the subject. I also plan to recruit more people experienced in cloud computing.

Sub-point 2



Tip

Only a few points are included here by way of an example. In a real speech, the body of the speech will cover all the points the speaker wishes to make.

Continued on the next page

Closing

With this I will now end my speech. I will strive to deliver on all the promises I have made to you today, especially the one about taking the company to dizzying heights of success by investing in and enhancing our cloud computing capabilities.

Summarise points discussed in the main body

I also want to say that I am a team player, and even though I have a pretty clear picture of the path this company should take in the next three years, I am open to suggestions and discussions on your viewpoints. So I would welcome any one of you, irrespective of whether you are at a junior level or a senior level, to think about which areas you want your company to go into, and share your views with me. I can be contacted on richard_g@seahawktechnologies.com

Provide an avenue for thinking further

It is said that no great heights can be achieved without team work, and I look forward to a most rewarding and successful stint as CEO with support from this excellent team! Thank you all...

Final thought / emotion

Steps to prepare a speech

Let us now look at the steps that should be followed in order to prepare an effective speech.

(i) Select a topic

Selecting a topic to present is the first step in the preparation of a speech. The topic should relate with the audience so that they find it interesting and worthwhile.

(ii) Gather information

Once a topic is selected, you need to work on compiling information related to it. All the relevant information has to be gathered, together with the supporting evidence, if any. The data gathered should not be vague or out of date. It has to be accurate, reliable and relevant as the audience might use it for reference.

(iii) Write down the speech

It is not always possible to remember each and every point that you want to make. When you write a speech down, you can practise by reading it. Also, you can review the flow and edit the content accordingly. Just before the speech, it becomes easy to go through quickly to brush up. Writing a speech is recommended also because it enables you to keep a print-out handy as a reference during delivery, especially if visual aids are not available.

(iv) Know the audience

Understanding the audience to whom the speech is to be presented is essential. Know their age group, their demography and culture, their interest and knowledge of the topic. Cultural differences can be a challenge as something accepted in one culture can be offensive in another. If the audience is new to the topic then the presentation can be in a simplest form and if they are well aware of the topic then you can raise the bar of the speech accordingly. Knowing what is common among the audience will enable you to design the speech accordingly.

(v) Time limit

While preparing for a speech, ensure that the length of the message is well within the time allotted for it. You may have selected an interesting topic which provides scope to speak a lot about. However, you cannot speak endlessly. You need to know beforehand how much time has been allotted for your speech and accordingly how long the speech should be. Hence, organise your speech in such a way that it is delivered within the stipulated time frame.

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(vi) Support your ideas

Compile relevant and adequate information and evidence to support your ideas. If the information is complex, break it in simpler form so that every type of audience can understand and interpret your ideas. Share examples and case studies which the audience can relate with. Demonstrate illustrations and analysis supporting your idea to the audience.

(vii) Rehearse

Try to memorise the speech and practice it before the final delivery. You can practice in front of a mirror or in front of someone who agrees to help you. Now-a-days you can even record yourself giving the speech on your mobile and watch it to improve your delivery. Along with the topic, rehearse your body language, tone etc. as well. Rehearsing will enable you to understand if the flow of the speech is appropriate and whether it would be effective during actual delivery.



Test Yourself 2

Riyana, the CEO of Riyana's Gifting, a hugely successful company, is delivering a speech on women empowerment and place of women in the workplace at a women's club. Help her to understand how a proper opening/introduction should be.

2. Explain how speeches can be Delivered effectively.

[Learning Outcome c]

In the earlier learning outcomes, we learnt how to express thoughts and ideas effectively, and how to use the concepts to go on to prepare speeches. Let us now understand how to deliver a speech.

A speech might be prepared well and structured properly with appropriate opening, body and closing, but if not delivered effectively, it will not serve its purpose. Keep in mind the following rules for effective delivery.

Rules of delivering a speech

There are certain rules which, if followed, will result in delivering a highly effective speech.

(i) Be on Time

Being a speaker, you have the responsibility to be there on time. If you are late, it will make a bad impression on the audience as they would not like being kept waiting. This would result in a bad start to the speech.

(ii) Dress to impress

'First impression is the last impression'. Your dressing is among the first things about you that the audience will see, and the impression that it makes would be set then and there. Dress keeping the occasion in mind – it can be either casual or very formal. Your dressing should match the dress code of the event. Also, wear clothes that you are comfortable in - an uncomfortable dress would make you uncomfortable while delivering the speech, which might come across as bad body language.



Example

Continuing the example of Richard Geller, the CEO of Seahawk Technologies

Richard's dressing will be very formal, preferably a business suit and formal shoes. If Richard turns up in casual or even semi-formal clothes, it will make a really bad impression on the audience.

(iii) Body Language, expressions and gestures

This is explained in detail in learning outcome 1 of this Study Guide (refer to 'methods to improve speaking skills')

(iv) Eye Contact.

This is explained in detail in learning outcome 1 of this Study Guide (refer to 'methods to improve speaking skills')

(v) Voice modulation

This is explained in detail in learning outcome 1 of this Study Guide (refer to 'methods to improve speaking skills')

(vi) Speak slowly and pronounce clearly

This is explained in detail in learning outcome 1 of this Study Guide (refer to 'methods to improve speaking skills')

(vii) Believe in what you say

Show confidence in what you express. Once you have confidence in your thoughts, then you can influence the audience. You need to believe in what you say and speak with conviction so that it would reflect in your speech. Provide evidence and examples to further support your ideas. The audience will not be interested in the speech if the speaker itself does not seem to believe in what is being said.



Example

Continuing the example of Richard Geller, the CEO of Seahawk Technologies

Richard needs to convince the audience that he believes in what he is saying – that he would be successful in taking the company to heights of success. If he himself is not sure if he can do it, it will show through, and then he will not be able to inspire and motivate his staff to feel the same way.

(viii) Engage the audience

Some speeches might be elaborate or complex. The audience might either get bored or might have difficulty understanding the topic. Use humour, or make simple jokes to refresh the mood of the audience. Relate an interesting anecdote related to the topic of the speech to keep the interest of the audience alive.

(ix) Finish within time limit

Managing the time is important while delivering the speech. You need to finish your speech within the stipulated time frame. Do not overdo the speech as the audience will start getting bored and frustrated. Finishing the speech within the time limit will leave a positive impression on the audience. If you realise that the speech might exceed the time limit, then either shorten it appropriately or intimate the audience accordingly. They would respect you as a speaker if you show you value the importance of their time as well.

(x) Vote of thanks

Once you have finished your speech and are about to leave the stage, make sure you do not forget to thank the audience. Appreciate them for the time they devoted listening to your speech.



Test Yourself 3

Aspects such as body language, dressing style and eye contact are all superfluous; to impress the audience, only the content of a speech is important. State whether this statement is true or false, and justify your answer.

Answers to Test Yourself

Answer to TY 1



Tip

The above learning outcome does not discuss the characteristics of effective speakers. But that shouldn't stop you from being able to answer this question – the learning outcome discusses the ways to improve your speaking skills. You should be able to use the points discussed for improving speaking skills and **convert them** into characteristics of an effective speaker, as the skills that ordinary speakers need to improve on will obviously be the same skills that effective speakers already possess! Improvisation is the key!

Most people have a fear of speaking in front of an audience or a big group of people. Effective speakers conquer this fear and go on to express themselves successfully. These effective speakers display certain characteristics as mentioned below:

- **Being prepared:** effective speakers do not leave everything for the last hour. They are well equipped with the topic, evidence, supporting tools, etc. They rehearse and practice and are well prepared for the actual presentation. They know how to modulate the voice and control the pace of the speech. Being a verbal communication it is important to control the tone of the speech. They use the necessary visual tools to support their ideas and thought. However, they ensure that the visual supports do not take precedence over their verbal mode.
- **Selecting appropriate words:** vocabulary is very important while speaking; hence speak in a simple language so that the other person will understand you. Avoid complex words and technical jargon, except in situations where the audience is used to, or expects such language. Use simple words and sentences which the listeners can comprehend. If the situation demands an unusual word, explain it so that the listeners would know what you are saying. Using appropriate words while speaking will enable the listeners to clearly understand you.
- **Using proper body language, expressions and gestures:** the way you maintain your body language while speaking would reflect your attitude and hence it becomes vital to display appropriate hand gestures, posture etc. Improper body posture might not only make a negative impact on the listener but would also make you uncomfortable while speaking. Moving the arms and shoulders appropriately and using expressions and gestures would reflect your confidence while speaking.

Answer to TY 2

A speech is structured in three parts i.e. first the introduction, then the body and lastly the conclusion. An effective introduction creates a common ground and sets the tone of the speech.

Riyana's introduction should include the following points:

- Start with greeting the audience appropriately and introducing yourself. Include your achievements/experience in the topic of the speech. This will lend credibility to your speech.
- Introduce the topic of the speech, i.e. summarise in short what you are going to talk about. Take care not to go into too much detail at this stage.
- Include what the audience will get out of the speech, in order to pique their interest.
- Capture the audience's attention by making a thought-provoking, interesting, or even a controversial statement. You can even make use of light humour to achieve this!

A proper introduction will provide a perfect platform for the rest of the speech to follow.

Answer to TY 3

The statement is false.

While what is being said is the most important part, it is equally important to take care of other aspects such as body language, dressing style and eye contact, to name a few. A correct dressing style will reflect a sense of confidence. Dressing according to the occasion shows that the speaker cares enough to take efforts to make a good impression. Improper body language would make the speaker feel and look nervous. Preparedness would reflect the way the speaker expresses ideas and thoughts using appropriate body language and expressions. Maintaining eye contact with the audience will create a sense of connection and keep them engaged. The audience will feel they are being attended to and respected.

Self Examination Questions

Question 1

A speech is structured in three parts. The most elaborate and detailed part is the _____ of the speech.

Question 2

As part of her company's drive on environmental issues, Ms. Kate Wilson has to prepare a speech on global warming. List and briefly explain three steps that she needs to follow while preparing for the speech.

Question 3

During delivery of a speech, Anthony realises he has taken too long to communicate his ideas, and that he will, in all probability, exceed the time limit of the speech by half an hour. What should he do and why?

Answers to Self Examination Questions

Answer to SEQ 1

The correct answer is 'Body'.

The body of the speech includes all the points and sub points which are spoken in detail and even discussed with the audience if needed. In the body, the entire topic is covered and hence it is the most elaborate and detailed part of the speech.

Answer to SEQ 2

While preparing for the speech, Ms. Kate Wilson has to follow these steps:

Gather information: Ms. Wilson should gather relevant information on the selected topic. She has to ensure that the information collected is accurate and the source is reliable.

Write down the speech: if there is lot of information to be shared, it is recommended to write it down so that it can be checked and edited. Writing down will help Ms. Wilson to know what exactly she has to speak during the presentation.

Know the audience: knowing the audience will help her to prepare her speech accordingly. Knowing them would also enable her to tailor the contents of her speech accordingly.

Answer to SEQ 3

Finishing the speech within the time limit leaves a positive impression on the audience. When Anthony realises that the speech might exceed the time limit, he should either shorten it appropriately or intimate the audience accordingly. They would respect Anthony if he shows that he values the importance of their time as well.

