Business Communication

[Draft – Version 2

Preface to the first Edition

A business communication handbook is crucial for any corporate employee and more so for bankers. This book is written as a complete text book for banking professionals. In Bangladesh, the banking sector provides almost 90% of the total financing needs of the country servicing giant corporations, government entities, retail customers. Therefore, business communication play a key role in conducting smooth day-to-day business of any bank.

The books is comprised in a manner that will allow the readers to understand the concepts easily and apply them in real life. Suitable examples are provided wherever necessary. The books provides guidance on report writing and writing business letters such as inquiries, claims etc. Since report writing and business letters are two of the most common types of communication in the workplace, they have been combined into one book. Business correspondence is written communication between two individuals or organizations. It has evolved into a formal framework that is determined by the traditional necessity for respect and interpersonal relationships in business. The formal components of communication must thus be thoroughly explained to the student before introducing him to its professional and psychological facets.

Now is the era of social media and virtual communication. Employees must adapt to this new modality of business communication and be effective. The book provides guidance on how to utilize social media efficiently to enhance communication. It’s really crucial to maintain social media etiquette for professional life. Using Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn effectively will contribute positively in achieving organizational ultimate goal which is profitability.

The book provides practical guidance on CV writing & preparing for interviews. If strategies in job search process is followed carefully, a candidate should be able to get his or her desired roles. Students will come across a variety of new communication tools and tactics throughout their job searches and in the workplace because to the digital change that is sweeping across industry. They need to prepare themselves in adapting to these technological advancements.

Overall I believe the book will help any student as well as professionals to understand and apply business communication tools and techniques in their professional lives.

Reefat Zaman Shourov

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Brief Contents

Contents

Module A: Theory & Process of Communication

Topic – 1: Meaning & Importance of Communication

Communication

Communication means to transfer information from one place to another, from one person to another or to multiple people, from a group of people to another. Every form of communication requires a sender, a message and at least one receiver. It is the most used skill in any job in the world. Clear communication can improve one's chances of success in one's professional and personal life. The most common form of communication is verbal communication or speaking. A person learns to speak from a very young age and communicates with his/her parents from childhood. When a person is speaking, he or she is the sender. The speech or words he/she says are the messages. The person who is listening to the speech or words, is the recipient of the communication. If this process goes smoothly, the recipient will receive the message properly and will understand the message. The recipient can then response to the message correctly and reciprocate in the conversation.

Importance of Communication

Communication is very important for every person in the world. Whether it's to succeed in a career or in a relationship, whether to negotiate a promotion with a boss or to convince one's spouse of a particular decision, communication can make or break deals. Here are some aspects where communication plays very important roles:

- Corporate Perspective: Effective communication is essential for corporate jobholders. Clear communication in the work-place can eradicate confusion and save time and money for the company. The customers of a company expect clear communication when they are buying or subscribing to a product or service of a company. Ambiguous communication can damage a company's reputation and cause losses in sales revenue and decline profits.
- Personal Perspective: Effective communication is essential for a successful and happy personal and family life. One must use the proper language and careful choice of words when communicating to a child. The tone, the language and the delivery of communication will be very different when that same person is talking to his driver or his employees. When communicating with anyone, the person must remain observant and respectful of the recipient. If he/she doesn't follow these simple rules, he/she will not be able to communicate effectively which will lead to miscommunication. Miscommunication can break relationships, deals and create chaos in a stable system or life.

- National Perspective: Effective communication is of paramount importance for public servants and politicians. While for people in the private sector, communication can be said to be of supplementary function, for public servants and politicians, communication is their key function. They must be able to craft their messages correctly and communicate them effectively. The public will not take it kindly if the politicians make unclear communication or miscommunicate.

Therefore, it can be seen that, communication is very important for all spheres of life and for everyone in a societal setting.

Topic - 2: Business & Banking Communication

Business Communication

As mentioned before, communication is a very important aspect of any business. Whether it's a proprietary business, a partnership or a private or public limited company, communication is essential and inevitable among the stakeholders of the business. Any business must coordinate the various tasks of various stakeholders, including workers, clients, attorneys, public relations agents, regulatory bodies, and governmental organizations, in order to manufacture and sell goods and services. Business communication entails both internal communication across the company and external communication with suppliers, distributers, customers, clients, regulatory authorities etc. Maintaining and enhancing employee motivation, issuing directives to staff, communicating policies and changes, and keeping management informed of daily activities of the company are all examples of effective internal communication. Selling and purchasing products and services, informing authorities and shareholders of financial information, and fostering an environment that is conducive to company operations are all examples of effective external communication. Every action taken by the company, whether internal or external, yields outcomes. Therefore, the main goal of every business communication is to achieve a certain outcome from a specific audience or recipient.

Importance of business Communication

Communication is essential for any employee because three key business areas require precise and impactful communication between the stakeholders. These areas are:

1. **Operations Management:** Fast and effective communication between managers and employees is essential for successful day-today operations of any business. But the

communication is not limited to these two stakeholders only. Effect communication must be done between departments in a company and also with its external stakeholders and partners. Any bottlenecks or malfunctions might reduce operational effectiveness and result in problems with quality or safety. The employees must convey everything from top level strategic goals down to very small technical details adequately.

2. **Information Management:** A company must be aware of new information and have a mechanism to extract the information efficiently from the sources. The information can be related to new business opportunities, new market share, new threats in the market, competitive rivalry, important industry events, risks, internal and external problems that may occur.
3. **Relationship Management:** Business relationships rely on communication just like social and personal relationships do. Effective communication strengthens a company's connections with all of its stakeholders—people or organizations who are significantly influenced by the company's business decisions and activities. Employees, clients, investors, creditors, suppliers, and local communities are examples of stakeholder groups. Communication is also essential for fostering the emotional ties that create a healthy work environment among employees inside businesses.

Effective Business Communication

As you have already learned about the importance of effective communication, now it's time to look into how you may communicate successfully in an organization. Here are some tips that you can follow:

1. Give Useful Information: Provide the recipients practical information so that the information may lead to solution of a particular problem, to pursuit of new business ideas and to actions that translate into profitability.
2. Provide clear objectives: Craft messages to create a specific and precise answer or response from the recipients. When doing so, make sure not to over-promise or under-deliver. You must clarify what you want, what you need and what the audience should expect from you.
3. Do Not Waste Time: Be concise with your message. Do not sugarcoat a bad message. Say what you have to say directly and to the point. This shows that you respect the recipient's time and the recipient is more likely to respond to your message positively.

4. Do Not Obfuscate: Use precise language, pertinent details, correct and ethical information. Do not try to confuse the recipient by including irrelevant and misleading information in the communication. This will immediately antagonize the recipient.
5. Make Convincing Arguments and Suggestions: Persuasion is a great skill for any employee. You need to explain to your audience how responding the way you want them to would be advantageous for them.

Elements of Professionalism

It's very important to be professional in the workplace and effective communicating depends significantly on professionalism. Professionalism entails producing high-caliber work, acting with intention, and taking pride in one's accomplishments. The illustration below shows the elements of professionalism:

Figure 2.1: Elements of Professionalism

Source: Business Communication Today, Bovee & Thill

The elements are described below for better understanding:

- Work Ethic: A professional person always tries to perform the best to his/her abilities, knowledge and skillsets. He/she doesn't compromise on quality of work. The person always tries to excel at every level.
- Integrity: A professional person always protects his/her integrity. The person keeps his/her promises and delivers on the promises within the required time period. He/she

takes responsibility for the mistakes and learn from them to avoid doing the same mistakes in the future.

- Team Spirit: A professional person doesn't become narrow-minded. Rather he/she tries to see the larger view of the company and acts accordingly to achieve that goal collectively. He/she helps the people around him/her and uplifts them.
- Humbleness: A professional person is always respectful and performs good business etiquette. He/she not only shows respect to the superiors, but also to colleagues and subordinates.
- Positivity: A professional person always keeps a positive outlook no matter how dire the situation is. The positivity uplifts the mood of the people surrounding and keeps the overall motivation high in the workforce.
- Ethics: A professional person has to be ethical and be conscious about business decision making that may involve ethical dilemmas. The person must not fall into ethical lapses and must carefully evaluate the options available to him/her.

Communication in Banks

Effective business communication is very crucial for banks for the successful functioning and survival. Bankers must be able to communicate effectively with their colleagues, subordinates, superiors, clients, customers and with government agencies such as The Central Bank. Below, communication in different banking departments are provided:

Department	Role of Communication
Retail Banking	• Providing customers with teller services • Convincing depositors to pursue different term deposits • Talking to borrowers about their loans • Providing customer service 24/7 via telephone or chat services • Communicating debit and credit card services
Commercial Banking	• Taking meetings with business professionals, corporations and commercial borrowers • Managing relationship with key business owners and corporates • Convincing businesses to keep cash account and deposits with the bank • Understanding the financing needs of the corporate clients • Providing the best financing solution from the understanding

Private Banking	• Providing signature services to high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) • Communicating the banking services to HNWIs • Advise the HNWIs on different products offered by the bank • Provide proposals on how to manage HNWI accounts

Importance of Communication in Banking

Banks carry out important tasks every day and smooth running of bank operations depend largely on effective communication flow among the different parts of the bank. Some of the most important functions of the bank where communication play key role:

Marketing of Products: Banks has to market their products effectively to potential customers. Whether it's an attractive opportunity for home loan or a special rate for long term deposits, the bank needs to communicate the message to the target market and acquire customers. To do so, the bank needs to establish its brand image and communicate the unique value the bank is providing through their services to their clients and customers. For example: if a bank provides refinancing home loan for an extra amount provided to the borrower, the bank should prepare its sales force to communicate that option to the home loan borrowers. If the bank doesn't provide refinancing, it should also communicate that to the borrower effectively. The Bank also must provide adequate communication training to its sales & marketing team on how to handle customers, how to monetize relationships, how to approach a target market and prepare the team to answer customer questions in a competent and honest manner.

Customer Service: Customer service plays a crucial role in any business but especially in retail banking. As retail demand for banking services are always prevailing in the market, the customer service must also provide effective service. Communication is the main tool for the customer service agents to service the customers of a bank. The customer may contact the agent via phone, text or in-person and the agent must be ready to answer the customer's questions. The most important aspect of customer service is to understand the customer's query or problem correctly. This is one of the fundamental building blocks of communication: to understand the sender's message. Apart from that, the customer service agent must know how to utilize different modes of communication most efficiently and effectively and choose the medium correctly basing on the needs of the customer. For example: the customer service agent may not waste time answering a general query to a customer that the agent can simply communicate to the customer by sending an email or a website information link to the customer.

Client Relationship Management: In corporate, commercial & institutional banking, (CCIB), client relationship management is a core function of the bank. The high-profile clients of CCIB usually constitutes multi-million or even billion-dollar multi-national companies, local conglomerates, financial institutions, manufacturing companies, government entities etc. The bankers who work in CCIB in the client relationship department, have elite communication training and business etiquette. They must be very efficient in dealing with their clients and must uphold the elements of professionalism in their communication. For example: a relationship manager must always be on standby to respond to client query or call to clarify any issues from the business.

Internal Communication: Finally, for bank's day to day operation, communication plays a big role. The flow of information from credit analysis department to client management department, from retail banking to treasury must be smooth. Miscommunication not only can create losses for the banks but also can create legal liabilities. The internal communication is important for the bank's integrity, employee retention, reputation, performance assessment, delegation of tasks, supervision of day to day activities and communicating the daily reports to the upper management for effective decision making.

Therefore, banking communication is a vital function for any bank and must be considered seriously.

Topic – 3: Principals of Business Communication

The principals of communication in business are very simple and intuitive. A person should be able to grasp them in the first try. The most important business communication principals are:

Clarity

- Message must be clear & relevant
- No unnecessary information to obscure or distract the recipient
- Choose the message, the method of delivery and the audience carefully

Brevity

- Messages must be as concise as possible to avoid wasting of recipient's time
- Do not put too much content in one message. Assign contents according to the context of the message
- Do not use jargon or words that will require the reader additional resources for understanding

Purposefulness

- The message must have clear objectives and its purpose must be apparent.
- The goal from sending the message must be determined before creating the message.

Consistency

- The communication must be consistent, coherent and relevant to the recipient
- Change in contents must be backed by logical explanations

Correctness

- The message must be correct to the best knowledge of the sender.
- Any grammatical mistake will significantly reduce the credibility and the gravity of the sender.
- The facts must be checked properly before including them in the message

Audience Consideration

- Before creating the message, the sender must think in the shoes of the recipients
- The message must be written such that the recipient may recognize and understand it in the same manner that the sender would.

Feedback

- The sender should consider seeking the recipient's feedback.
- The feedback will help the sender better understand the recipient and use that knowledge for future communication purposes

These are the most important principals of business decision making. An effective communicator always keeps them in mind and uses them effectively in verbal, written and electronic communication methods.

Topic – 4: Process of Effective Communication Model

To conduct effect business communications, one needs to know the process of it. The ten-step process of effective communication model has both parts for sender and receiver.

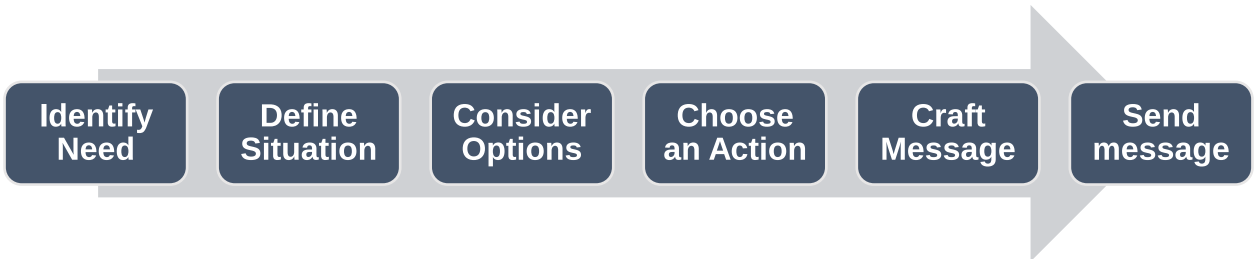


Figure 4.1: Communication Process (Sender)

Source: Business Communication Today, Bovee & Thill

As it can be seen from the illustration, the sender has to follow six steps in conducting effective business communication. At first, he/she must correctly identify the need for communication. The need may arise from a problem, an opportunity, in a form of feedback or report etc. Once the need is correctly identified, the sender must realize the context and the current situation he/she is in. This requires the sender to be mindful about the receiver and how the receiver may respond to the communication. This step will lead the sender to consider options for the communication. The options may be between choosing verbal and email communication or between providing the recipient with specific answers versus providing general answers to the recipient's queries. The sender must think about their goals and the goals of the recipients to formulate viable and effective communication strategies. Once the sender has formulated all the viable options, he/she has to choose one. The sender must evaluate the cost-benefit of each option and choose the option that provides the best benefit-to-cost. Preliminary decisions will be made on the message's type, contents, structure, lingo, visual presentation, as well as the channel through which it will be sent.

Once the best option for communication is chosen, the sender has to start crafting the message. The sender must cautiously work out the details of the chosen communication. This includes working on the structure, the verbal style, graphical format (if it's a written communication or a presentation) and the strategy that will be discussed with the recipient. Finally, the sender needs to deliver the message through the predetermined channel. The message must be sent considering the recipient's time and emotional condition. A good message at a wrong time can damage the value of the communication and undermine its gravity.

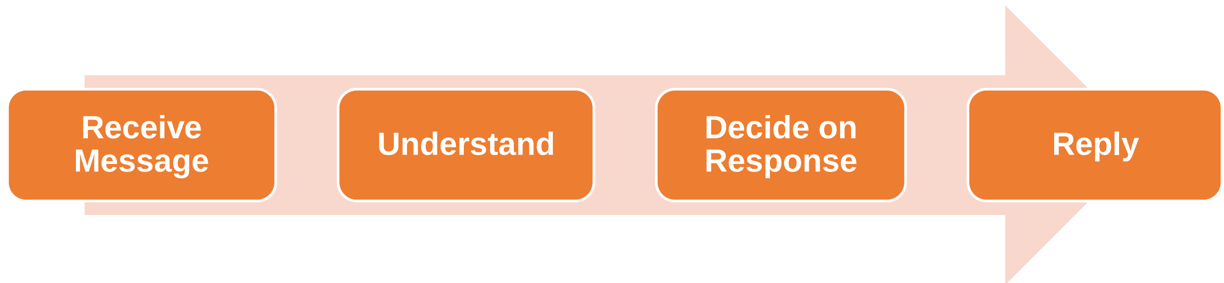


Figure 4.2: Communication Process (Receiver)

Source: Business Communication Today, Bovee & Thill

Once the message is sent to the receiver, the sender's part in the communication process will conclude and the receiver's part will begin. If the delivery is successful, the recipient will receive the message in its intended form and in the time the message was intended to be received. Upon receiving the communication, the recipient will try to interpret the message. He/she will extract information from the communication and may try to understand the underlying purposes and motivations behind the message. The needs to predict the specific contexts and interests properly. If he/she successfully do so, his/her audience will understand the communication as intended by the sender. The audience may need the sender's help in understanding the communication during a live conversation.

Once understood, the receiver will then be able to craft a reply. The receiver will become the sender now and follow the six steps to reply to the originator of the communication. But this time, there will a clearly defined purpose of the communication which is to provide response to the initial communication send by the originator. The response should have the desired elements if the initial message was well received and interpreted by the initial recipient. Finally, the reply will be sent to the originator often times in the same form of the initial communication. For example: an email will have a reply by mail.

Following this process is essential for successful business communication in any organization at any level and between anyone. The business communication process ensures smooth communication and eradicates the possibility of miscommunication and wastage of time.

Overall Communication Process:

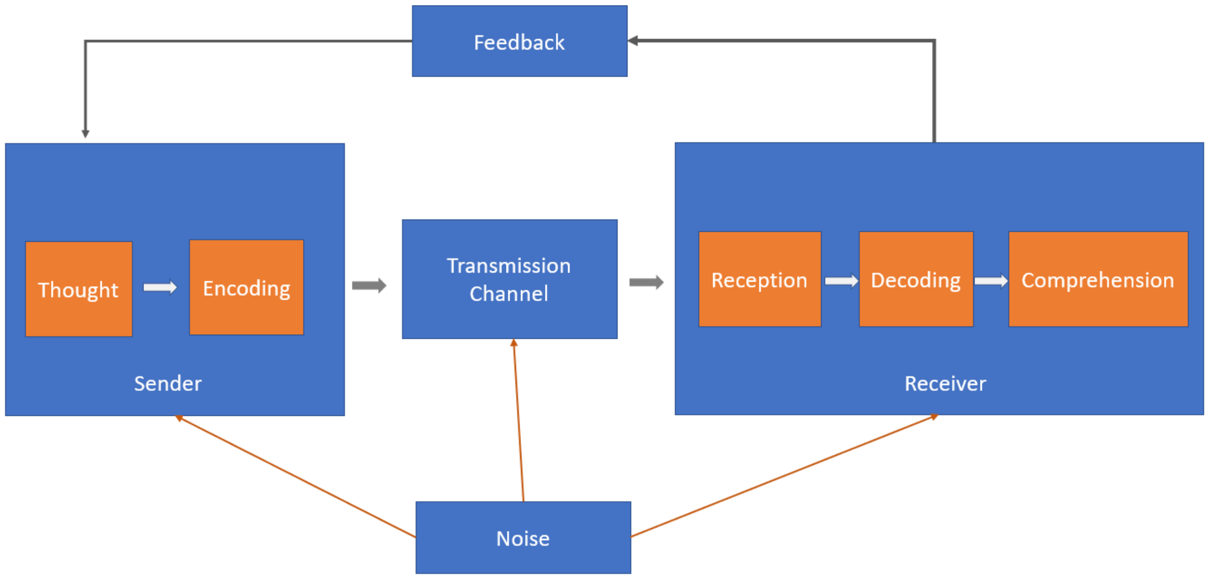


Figure 4.3: Overall Communication Process

As we can see from the chart above that the overall communication is a cycle where sender thinks of the message and then encodes in. The message is then transferred to the receiver through a transmission channel which can be verbal or simple through a text message. The receiver upon receiving the message decodes it and then tries to understand the senders message. But the sender cannot assume that the receiver has received the message in the intended way and understood the meaning the way the sender planned. Therefore, feedback is a crucial step of the overall communication process. The sender must confirm that the receiver has understood the message as intended. Finally, the entire process can be affected by various sorts of noise. The noises can be literal as well as metaphorical. The factors that affect the communication process is discussed in the next section. Being mindful about these noises is very important.

Topic – 5: Factors Affecting Communication

There are 8 critical factors that influences communication in an organization. The factors are: culture, EQ, past experiences, understanding of the message, educational background, group affiliations, position and functional relationship.

1. Culture: Messages are more likely to be misunderstood or misinterpreted in workplaces when employees come from diverse cultural backgrounds. This is a result of our failure to relate to and fully comprehend those from backgrounds different from our own. When assumptions and speculative thinking are allowed to continue, they fuel larger organizational issues. The first step in addressing this issue is to become aware of it.
2. EQ (Emotional Quotient): The significance of communication is most surely impacted by emotions and how individuals are feeling at the time. recognizing once more that despite best efforts to compartmentalize, people frequently bring personal matters to work.
3. Past Experiences: The efficacy of future communications between the sender and recipient is significantly influenced by earlier communications. Further contact between the parties is probably going to be futile if one had a bad experience.
4. Understanding of the message: When people interpret the same term differently, communication in business may become problematic. For instance, when technical terms or jargon are used, misunderstandings happen. Additionally, individuals may misinterpret a word's deeper meaning. This problem is highly prevalent in the communication process, but if it is not addressed, it might cause larger issues for businesses. Messages need to be well-prepared, precise, and include a feedback mechanism.
5. Educational Background: The meaning of communication is also impacted by the education levels of the sender and the audience. Communication will be successful if their educational backgrounds are similar. This is frequently accurate since they share comparable perspectives, ways of thinking, and levels of understanding.
6. Group Affiliations: People may be a part of several groups. If the sender and the recipient are members of different official or informal organizations, communication will be less successful. For instance, management and labor union leaders may find it difficult to communicate because of their mutual hostility. Similar to how formal group

affiliations based on gender, geography, age, and other factors can influence corporate communication.

7. Position: If the sender and receiver are at dissimilar places in the hierarchy, there is a probability that their communication will break down. We occasionally witness people going too far in an effort to uphold the formality of the organization. For instance, managers could disregard any communication from their employees. In order to escape the workload and duties, personnel will also strive to avoid any management instructions.
8. Functional Relationship: The purpose of communication in business is substantially influenced by the functional connection between the sender and recipient. The recipient could not grasp the sender's message if they are from different functional departments or sectors. For instance, the message from the product manager may not be understood properly by the operations manager, and the message from the internal counsel may not be understood by the quality control manager.

Topic – 6: Ethics in Communication

Being ethical is very important while communicating, especially in a business organization. The established rules of right and wrong that guide conduct and judgment in a community are known as ethics.[3] All the information that a reader needs to decide or take a position on a matter is included in ethical communication.[3] There are some ways communication can become unethical.

Withholding Information: Withholding information in any communication fundamentally corrupts the communication. For example: social media ads are sometimes designed to look like normal posts which can distort the consumer perception and reduce credibility. The ads must provide explicit information that shows that this communication is an advertisement of a product or service of a company.

Distorting Information: Taking information out of context can significantly undermine the integrity of the message and compromise the entire communication process. It is possible for words, figures, or pictures to be distorted. It would be unethical, for instance, to selectively misquote someone in order to convey a different meaning than what was meant. It is also possible to display statistics and other numerical data in a way that misrepresents their consequences. For example: managers may forecast over optimistic sales growth disregarding the decreasing competitive advantage and loss of market share. Distorting statistical data and fabricating charts, the managers may arrive in rosy sales revenue numbers which are in real life unrealistic and improbable.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the act of representing someone else's words or another creative effort as your own. Remember that plagiarism is illegal if it violates a copyright, a legal protection for those who developed original works. Copyright law protects a variety of creative expressions, including writing, graphic design, computer programming, and sound and video recording. For example: when writing a research paper, if a person takes an idea from another author but does not give credit or reference, he/she is committing plagiarism which is a great academic offensive.

Ensuring Ethical Communication

Clear standards for ethical conduct, including ethical business communication, must be established by employers. As part of their declared ethics policy, many businesses develop a written code of ethics to help employees decide what is ethical. A code of conduct is typically a part of a larger program of employee education and channels for communication that allow employees to report instances of questionable ethical behavior and pose questions. A variety of fundamental ideas are related to ethical communication, beginning with the fundamental concept of honesty, to which all other values are tied. The importance of emotional intelligence and empathy, which are the foundation of all soft skills and enable all employees to be understood and to interact with others successfully, can be said to underlie honesty (with regard to ethical communication). When used in the context of ethical communication, emotional intelligence enables one to effectively address the needs of others by seeing yourself in their position.

Here are some generic steps to ensure ethical communication:

- Be sincere and truthful.
- Listen Actively
- Do not judge while conversing
- Speak from past experiences
- Be empathetic
- Do not use negative tone
- Do not interrupt others
- Respect Privacy & Confidentiality
- Accept Responsibilities

Case Studies:

Case -1

Mr. Ashmark is one of 10 employees in the credit analysis department of Bank of Antarctica. He has strong leadership qualities, and all his colleagues goes to him for guidance. He dominates their discussions and offers intense opinions on the majority of topics. Despite the fact that he does an excellent job, you have had issues with his aggressive nature. You have been named the department's new manager of credit risk. Today, you gave instructions to your colleagues to modify a certain customer credit score criterion.The new credit scoring criteria has increased accuracy of credit scoring and therefore, minimized the bank’s exposure to credit risk. Soon after giving the order, you saw the workers talking in a group, with Mr. Ashmark. Soon he appeared in your office and told you, “We’ve thought it over. Your new credit scoring criteria is not going to work.”

1. Explain what is happening. How will you handle the situation?

Case – 2

Times are hard for Credit XYZ Bank, a multinational bank that specializes in investment banking and commercial banking. Lately, the bank has been losing revenue due to the sheer amount of non-performing loans in its balance sheet. But some individual high net worth clients do receive the bank’s financial services and do business with the bank. One of these clients, Mr. Sharp, president of a food processing company, has inquired about the possibility of taking a loan from the bank. The problem is that Mr. Sharp is known to favor working with males, and it's Sarah Barnes' time to attempt and get his business and the commission.

1. Do you, as head of corporate banking, send Sarah anyway, or do you send in one of your male salespeople to get Mr. Sharp’s business, giving Sarah a shot at the next potential client?
2. How would you solve this communication—and ethics—problem?

MCQ Questions

1. Which of the following is not an element of professionalism?
   a. Ethics b. Team Spirit c. Humbleness d. Leadership
2. What is Brevity of Communications?
   a. Conciseness b. Correctness c. Criticalness d. Creativeness
3. Communication is key tool for which of the following departments of a bank?
   a. Credit rating b. Client Evaluation c. Customer Service d. Retail Trade
4. Which of the following is a factor effecting communication?
   a. Group Think b. Cultural Affinity c. Biodiversity d. Emotional Quotient
5. Which of the following is an example of effective business communication?
   a. Providing superiors with a lot of information to make the report look informative and intelligent
   b. Writing a physical letter to customers who has FAQs
   c. Showing over optimistic sales report to uplift the motivation of employees
   d. Talking to a High-Net-Worth Customer with respect and without wasting time

Short questions

1. What is business communication?
2. What is external and internal communication?
3. What is the role of communication is commercial banking?
4. What is the impact of EQ in business communication?
5. How can distorting information create unethical communication?
6. How can you ensure ethical communication?

Broad questions

1. Discuss the importance of communication.
2. Describe the importance of business communication in an organization.
3. What are the steps of effective business communication? Describe each step very briefly.
4. What are the elements of professionalism? Describe each element briefly.

5. Why communication is important for banks? Describe the important functions where communication plays key role in a bank.
6. Briefly describe the process of effective communication.
7. Describe some of the ways, communication can become unethical.

Module B: Classification & Methods of Communication

Topic – 7: Major Types of Communication: Verbal, Non-Verbal & Visual

To communicate effectively, one must be aware of the major types of communication, mastering which will enable the person to excel at life and work. The three major types of communication are: verbal communication, non-verbal communication and visual communication.

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication means communicating a message by speaking or writing the message to the recipients. Before engaging in verbal communication, the sender must understand the language in context properly and be able to articulate his/her ideas in that language as precisely as possible. Verbal communication entails listening, speaking, writing and reading.

Listening

The most important part of verbal communication is to listen actively to properly understand the messages of the speaker and to reciprocate effectively in the conversation. A person must give conscious effort to listen actively. It's difficult to listen actively as conversations are real time and the human brain have to interact to the new information constantly. Also, spoken words are not visible and background noises can make it difficult for the brain to process sounds of speech to language. Therefore, to listen actively, a person should communicate with another in a low distraction environment. Also, the person may summarize the speaker's key points to confirm the messages. If he/she is having difficulty hearing, the person should tell that to the speaker and try to listen carefully. However, these are all external factors. There are internal factors as well which may make it hard to listen actively. The internal barriers are the actions, attitudes, and feelings of the listener that prevent them from understanding, interpreting, or accepting what the speaker is saying. Therefore, the listener should follow the following steps for active listening

1. Positive Mindset: Its crucial to open oneself and keep a positive mindset while listening to others. Making a conscious commitment to the other person and the time you will be spending with them is the key to setting yourself up for successful listening. Making a conscious commitment to the other person and the time you will be spending with them is the key to setting yourself up for successful listening.
2. Active Participation: Engaging with the speaker provides a great help in active listening. This can be done by summarizing the key points frequently and speak the summary to the other person.

3. Respect Silence: If the speaker pauses, its best not to speak at that moment. The listener must give the speaker chance to recollect or articulate his/her thoughts. Stepping in that silence will interrupt the communication process and may make the speaker uncomfortable.
4. Be Attentive to Non-Verbal Cues: The listener must be mindful about non-verbal cues like hand gestures, facial expressions, eye contact etc.
5. Make Notes: If the conversation is important, its best to take notes. The memory may not store the key points correctly for a long time. Writing them down allows the listener to revisit the conversation as accurately as possible.

Speaking

Speaking is the most common form of verbal communication. Effective speaking enables clear delivery of oral communication which allows the recipient to understand the message and reciprocate easily. The words used in speaking has to be appropriate for the audience. In business meetings or professional settings, some native company jargons may be used but not encouraged. Overuse of complex and unknown vocabulary can create discontent between two people. Using shorter and simple sentences will make it easy for the recipient to process and understand the key points. The voice tone is an essential component of speaking, and it may convey confidence to the listener in a favorable or bad way. One should get used to the sound of his/her own voice and talk confidently in any setting before any level of audience whether it’s a colleague, a subordinate or a superior. The volume, speed of speech and clarity of sound are important aspects of effective speaking. These must be adjusted according to the surroundings and the context. For example, in one-to-one a client meeting, a relationship manager will use a smooth tone with low voice and moderate speed.

Writing

Written communication is an inevitable part of any organization and therefore, the writing skills of the employees must be sufficient to conduct day to day business of a company. Business writing must have clear purpose, accurate information, concrete writing and coherence. Whether its an application to the boss or a reply to an email, business professionals must maintain consistency and brevity. Using jargons in business writing is considered unprofessional and may create confusion in the communication process. Writing style would differ in different types of documents. For example: a sales report will be factual and include statistics and market data whereas, a product description will include objective facts about a particular product in a storytelling context.

Reading

Effective reading is very important for any employee to succeed in his/her job. Effective reading enables the reader to comprehend the core message from the writing and understand the actions deemed necessary in response to the messages. To improve business reading skills, the reader must first understand the official language of the organization which is commonly English. So the reader has to be have basic vocabulary knowledge, common grammar knowledge and familiarity with professional correspondence. To read effectively, the reader must engage with the content and try to relate the message with the organizational context. For example, when reading a customer credit score report to provide that customer bank loan, the credit analyst must look for potential red flags in the report that may go against the bank's credit lending policies.

Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication means to communicate using behavioral cues such as body language, appearance, gestures etc. The non-verbal cues are very important for any person's day-to-day life. Here are 8 top most non-verbal communication ways:

1. Facial Expression: Facial expression is the most important of all the non-verbal cues because it becomes most apparent when talking or interacting with another person. The face can project distinctive moods depending on the emotional state of the person: happy, sad, confused, disgusted, shocked etc. Understanding the facial expression of the counterpart is crucial to understand the situation and the context of the communication.
2. Gestures: Often used by traffic police, gestures are ways to communicate meaning without words. Common gestures are waving, pointing, and giving a "thumbs up" sign. During conversations, gestures may be used to smooth the flow of information and ease the recipient's mind. If the speaker just keeps on saying in a robotic voice, the listener will get uncomfortable.
3. Vocal Tone: The sound of the voice can indicate a great deal about the person who is taking. These are not technically verbal communication. A strong voice can convey support and excitement for a statement. The same words might express contempt and lack of interest when used in a hesitant manner.
4. Posture: Good posture can indicate effort from a person in a business environment. When someone sits straight or stands firm, that signals that the person is serious and dedicated

to his role. On the other hand, a relaxed posture and being cozy will indicate lack of effort and may even signal laziness.

5. Personal Space: A person must respect the person space of another in personal and professional setting. Invading the personal space of another person will signal disrespect towards that person. Numerous factors affect how much space a person feels they require and how much they need to feel like it belongs to them. Social conventions, cultural expectations, environmental conditions, personality traits, and degree of acquaintance are a few of these factors.
6. Eye Contact: In nonverbal communication, eye contact is crucial. Important cues include gazing, blinking, and looking. Eyes may convey a variety of feelings, such as hatred, attention, and attraction. A person may sense if someone is being honest by looking into their eyes. Normal, steady eye contact is frequently interpreted as an indication of honesty and reliability. On the other side, unsteady eyes and an inability to sustain eye contact are commonly seen as signs of dishonesty or deception.
7. Appropriate Touch: Another crucial nonverbal communication strategy is touch-based communication. Affection, familiarity, sympathy, and other emotions may be expressed through touch. A firm handshake may communicate confidence and enthusiasm from a person. A pat on the back may communicate appreciation and support from a person.
8. Appearance: A person’s dress up can communicate significantly about that person’s personality and character. In an office environment, it is expected to wear formal attire and formal shoes. If a person is not paying attention to the dress code, it signals that the person is not mindful or dedicated to the job and he/she is possibly distracted. Poor dress up may also indicate poor job performance.

These are the 8 main non-verbal communication cues. These cues play very important roles in business communication. A person must be careful about these cues and maintain these cues according to his/her social setting.

Visual Communication

Visual communication means to use visual media such as pictures, signs, graphics etc. to communicate a specific message to a target audience. The most common form of visual media that a person sees every day is road signs. In a business, visual graphics may be used to describe the nature of a product. Here are some of the visual communication methods that a person needs to know for day-to-day business communication:

1. Using Graphs & Charts: Graphs and charts are powerful tools in business, especially in banking industry. Trend analysis is done mostly on accurate representation of historical data plotted in bar charts, scatter diagrams and line charts. Proper understanding of these visuals is of paramount importance. When making graphs and charts, data must be illustrated in the most accurate and honest way. Both a line chart and a bar chart may be used to compare two sets of data, illustrate trends in one or more variables, or demonstrate the connection between those variables through time. Pie charts are used to display the frequency or distribution of individual components within a whole. For example: in a loan portfolio, how much is in good loans and how much in bad loans, can be showed in a pie chart.
2. Process Diagrams: Process diagrams are used to show the steps in a process to achieve a desired outcome. Business process diagrams include flow charts, mind maps, process infographics, workflow diagrams etc. The main purpose of process diagrams is to quickly inform a person on what to do in a certain process. The steps are shown serial-wise and the serial must be apparent from the process diagram.
3. Signs: Signs are used to indicate a certain situation, nature of product or to signal a particular activity in a context. The most common signs are those that are used on roads. Signs help drivers to maintain discipline on the roads and avoid accidents. In business, sign is mostly used to illustrate business etiquette in a setting. For example: a sign may be used to signal the employees to remain quiet in a particular room. Signs are also used as labels on a product that a company sells. If the product contains hazardous material, appropriate chemical signs must be labelled on the packaging. If the product is brittle, another sign must be labelled that states that the product needs to be handled delicately.
4. Infographics: A special type of diagram known as an infographic conveys facts as well as ideas or thoughts. Infographics are stand-alone publications with sufficient textual and visual content to function on their own. It is an excellent technique to display facts and explain complicated situations in a way that may rapidly provide insight and better understanding by combining parts of text, picture, chart, diagram, and, more recently, video. A good infographic tells the story in a convincing way and keeps the whole process simple. The viewer understands the story easily and comprehend the underlying message quickly from it.

Topic – 8: Other Types of Communication

Upward Communication

Upward communication is the method through which lower-level employees of a firm can speak with senior management directly to offer comments, complaints, or recommendations regarding the regular business operations of the organization. Upward communication is very important for a business because it enables the top management to get insights from lower-level employees. Upward communication increases mutual trust between managers and employees, improves workplace procedures, helps managers identify their shortcomings and increases employee motivation. The following shows some examples of upward communication:

- Performance Reports: Performance reports enable lower-level employees to evaluate the performance of their immediate supervisors and other corporate executives in upward communication.
- Focus Groups: Employees from the organization will often participate in focus groups together with an HR professional or corporate representative. Employees might address recurring problems at the departmental level during focus groups, or corporate representatives can utilize these meetings to gauge employee opinion on a proposed policy change.
- Meetings: Company meetings are also a way of upward communication. One-on-one meetings between staff members and their immediate managers fall under this category, as do company-wide events when all staff members and executives get together to celebrate a significant achievement or discuss significant changes.

Downward Communication

The flow of information or messages from the top level of the organizational hierarchy to the bottom of the organizational level is known as downward communication. When information moves down the hierarchical structure from supervisors to subordinates, downward communication happens. Businesses frequently utilize this sort of communication to explain policy changes, assign crucial tasks, or notify staff about changes in duties or responsibilities and the reasons behind them. The productivity and success of an organization are often directly influenced by the effectiveness of downward communication and the interpretation of the information transmitted by employees.

One of the most common ways of downward communication is to talk directly to the employees. This allows a person to send information and to be available to answer any questions that an employee may have. The message can come from managers, senior managers, CXOs or even from the board of directors of a company. Downward communication can also take place via emails, newsletters, memos, staff meetings and policy changes.

To make downward communication effective these steps are needed to be followed:

1. Understand the information completely: Before communicating new information to employees, it's critical for managers to understand it completely, whether they are the ones initiating the changes or information or are just relaying it from executives and the board of directors. It might be useful to ask clarifying questions a manager anticipates the employees may have for him if the executives make the decisions.
2. Choose the best medium of communication: Sometimes different news or instructions call for different communication strategies. Examining the intricacy of the material might be useful when determining which mode of communication is optimal. For example: a simple change in process of doing a task can be easily relayed down through a group chat or group mail. But a major policy or sales strategy change requires an in-depth meeting with all key frontline employees so that the employees can understand the changes better and ask questions for further clarification.
3. Reflecting true facts: Employee commitment to the expansion of the company may be increased by being open and honest about the complexity or difficulty of corporate changes or directions. A manager should list the main problems or challenges with the news, how staff members may work to solve them, and how he/she can assist with the shift when employing downward communication.
4. Set aside time for clarification and questions: It’s very important to set aside time for answering questions that an employee may have. This shows that a manager is willing to help the employee understand the downward communication. If no one asks any questions straight away, it would be helpful to check back in with everyone later to see if any new issues have come up.

Horizontal Communication

Horizontal communication means to communicate with individuals at the same level of a company. It’s a lateral communication between employees, departments or teams of same level. When done well, horizontal communication promotes accountability, visibility, and collaboration among workers at the same level of the hierarchy. A sense of unity should be created via effective horizontal communication, which ensures that everyone is cooperating to achieve the same objectives rather than competing with superiors.

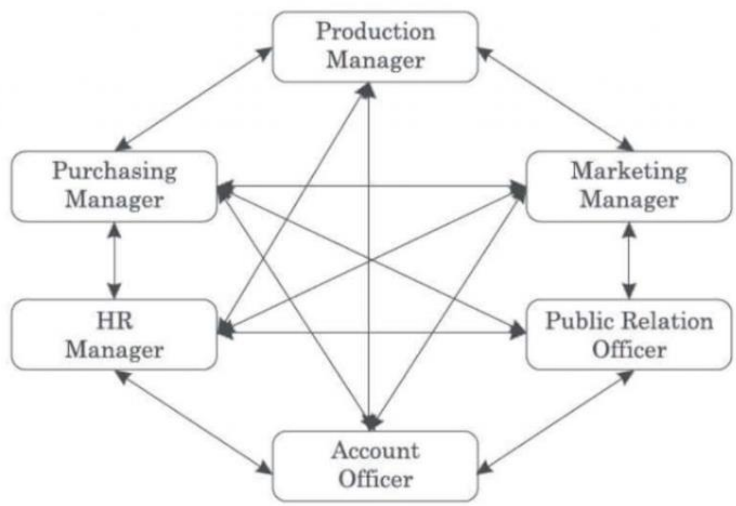


Figure 8.3: Horizontal Flow of Communication, Source: geektonight.com

The main goal of horizontal communication is to coordinate the activities of different units and business areas of the company. Figure 8.1 shows how different managers in a company engage in horizontal communication. The coordination creates a bigger picture of the daily operations of the organization and helps immensely in developing business strategy. To make horizontal communication effective the following elements are required:

- Recognition of the effectiveness of the horizontal communication
- A way of quick resolution to an immediate problem
- A better way of direct supervision
- Strict Discipline in the lines of communication
- Clear Meaning & Objectives
- Smooth mediums of Interdepartmental Communication

There are many collaboration apps that can streamline horizontal communication process. Apps like Slack, MS Teams, Notion etc. provides a common virtual platform to the managers and employees to communicate with each other on different problems in a structure way. These platforms eradicate the need for frequent meetings for solving minor problems and the complexity of sending mails from many-to-many by providing a sort of group instant texting platform.

External Communication

External Business Communication means to communicate with entities outside the organization of a business. The outsiders are clients, customers, suppliers, distributors, auditors, regulatory agencies, government entities, law enforcement entities, other business organizations, competitors etc. Every business needs to communicate with external entities on a regular basis. The most common communication happens between a company and its customers or consumers. The company needs to send relevant messages regarding its products to the target customers through different communication channels like tv advertisements, Facebook posts, email newsletters, newspaper ads etc.

The purpose of External Communication:

1. Maintaining good relationships with existing customers
2. Sharing news and developments about the business
3. Building & maintain brand image
4. Communicating with Stakeholders

Methods of External Communication:

Depending on the goal, the context, the degree of complexity and the audience, methods of external communication vary significantly. A person must understand clearly on the usage of specific method in specific situations.

Method	Audience	Purpose
Direct Meeting	Government Entities, Supply Chain entities, Auditors & Regulatory Authorities	• Formal Discussion • Reporting • Negotiations
Audio Visuals & Ads	General Public	• Describe Products • Acquire Customers • Communicate Changes • Improve Sales
Email Newsletters	General Public	• Provide offers • Inform on new products
Company Website	All	• General Knowledge of the Company

		• Communicating mission, vision & goals
Social Media	General Public, Retained Customers	• Promote Products • Provide Customer Service
Phone Call & SMS	Key Clients, Stakeholders & Customers	• Provide Information • Answer Customer Queries • Connect with Stakeholders directly
Billboards & Posters	General Public	• Promotion
Sponsorship	Target Market	• Promoting the Company • Introducing new products • CSR

External Communication in Banks

In banking, different department needs to do external communication. The client relationship department communicates with different corporate & institutional clients to provide banking services. The retail banking department provides retail depositors and borrowers banking services and ensures smooth transactional services. The compliance department talks to regulatory authorities when called upon and necessary. All banks have dedicated customer service department and 24/7 call center. They solve problems and queries of the bank’s customers and provides banking services via call, text and chat services. The banks also need to keep their website updated to ensure true factual information on cards, deposit rates, lending opportunities, treasury service etc. In fine, external communication is part of the day-to-day core operation of any bank anywhere in the world.

Internal Communication

Internal Business communication is all communication that occurs inside the business organization among the employees, managers and insiders of the business. This includes sales meeting, inter departmental coordination, performance reports etc. This is the kind of communication that takes place between employees of a company in order to develop, carry out, and evaluate the effectiveness of the business plan. Its really important to carry out internal business communication as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Methods of Internal Business Communication

Depending on the task, the situation, the degree of intricacy and the recipient, methods of internal communication differ significantly. An employee must understand clearly on the usage of specific method in specific situations.

Method	Purpose
One-on-one talking	• Performance Review • Specific Problem solving • Specific Queries
Group Meeting	• Strategy Discussion • Policy Change Discussion • Daily Pre-market preparation meeting • Process Change Discussion • Planning Projects
Group call	• Multi-regional Group meeting
Text Message	• Small Information Dissemination • Daily updates • Informal Communication
Email	• Formal Communication • Daily progress updates • Official Channel
Social Media Chats	• Informal Communication
Official Letters	• Official Communication
Video Calls	• Multi-regional Group meeting

Internal Communication in Banks

Internal communication in banks is crucial for the successful operation of the banks. Every department needs to ensure effective communication among the employees. The managers need to talk to employees to understand how the operations are going. For example: in the retail banking department, the branch manager will need to talk to the checkers to understand any anomalies in the reconciliation of accounts and transactions of the day. The credit analysis department will need to communicate findings of a particular borrower to the risk management department so that the decision to provide loan comes from cross-checked facts.

Formal Communication

Formal communication means to communicate with managers, employees, workers and other business personnel using the official channel under proper business etiquette. Meetings are major way of communicating formally. Whatever is discussed in a meeting, is considered official and therefore recorded for future purposes. Reports are also formal communication medium. Reports contain valuable insights on business operations, specific projects, sales, financial situation etc. Memos are also part of formal communication. A memo, which is short for memorandum, is a written communication pertaining to various processes or business operations that is distributed to several individuals inside a department or company. They are a typical example of downward communication since they often outline how specific workers should carry out organizational change. Letters and email are also formal methods of communication.

Informal Communication (Grapevine)

Informal business communications are unstructured discussions that take place within a company but don't follow any set rules. This type of communication is also known as Grapevine Communication. Grapevine communication can happen between managers, employees, clients, and everyone else in a company. The absence of predetermined rules or criteria is what distinguishes informal business conversations from formal ones. An employee asking another a question is an illustration of informal business communication. For instance, it's frequently desirable to make a formal statement to let people know when a professional receives a promotion. Grapevine communication occurs when a professional shares news of a promotion with a close friend or colleague, who then tells others, resulting in further grapevine communication. There are four different types of informal communication:

- Single Strand: One person communicates with a person. Then they communicate with another person. Here, communication is traveling from person to person and there is a flow of information.
- Gossip Chain: A group interaction in which everyone is speaking casually to one another. If an employee encounters this kind of information at work, he or she may wish to check that the professional initiating conversation is knowledgeable. Access to this professional's peers is also beneficial so that everyone may share the same knowledge.
- Probability Chain: Information spreads randomly in this sort of grapevine communication from one source. This might imply that one or more coworkers receive information from the primary point of contact. The information can then be shared by each person with one or more employees.

- Cluster Chain: One person chooses a small number of people to share knowledge with, and then each of those people shares it with others. It's crucial to consider the information's dissemination carefully while utilizing cluster chain communication. This assures that the news finally reaches every employee in the firm.

Advantages of Grapevine

1. Information travels quickly through grapevine routes. As soon as a worker learns any sensitive information, he becomes curious and shares it with his best friend, who subsequently shares it with others. It spreads quickly as a result.
2. The management learn how their employees feel about their rules. As a result, compared to official channels of communication, feedback is quickly acquired.
3. The personnel become more cohesive as a result of the grapevine as they communicate and debate their opinions with one another. Therefore, grapevine aids in strengthening social cohesion.
4. The grapevine offers assistance on an emotional level.
5. When official communication fails, the grapevine can be used as a backup.

Disadvantages of grapevine

1. Due to its greater reliance on rumors, the grapevine occasionally only conveys partial information. As a result, it does not accurately reflect the current situation.
2. The grapevine is not always reliable since it does not follow the established channels of communication and is more frequently transmitted by rumors and unverified information.
3. Employee productivity may suffer as a result of their increased time spent chatting rather than working.
4. The rumor mill fosters animosity toward the executives.
5. The rumor mill might damage the reputation of the company by spreading untrue, damaging information about the top executives.

Case Questions

Case 1

AMXZ is a multi-national bank with branches in 63 countries. It has been operating in Bangladesh for 30 years and has provided excellent trade finance services to its clients. Till now, AMXZ has only been conducting corporate and commercial banking. But now, AMXZ wants to go into retail banking targeting small depositors and retail borrowers. You have been hired to lead the newly formed retail department. You are tasked to formulate a communication strategy that'll get AMXZ retail customers. The strategy must also communicate the new financial products the bank is offering, home loan, auto loan and personal credit.

1. What communication medium would you choose to get the maximum customer outreach? Why you would choose this?
2. Suppose, you need advice from another manager in another country who has recently launched retail banking in that country. Develop a communication strategy to contact the manager.

Case 2

You work in the client relations department in Prettybank Dhaka. You have been tasked with contacting a client who hasn't done business with the bank for months. Your line manager has asked you to find out whether the client will continue doing business with Prettybank. This client owns a local manufacturing business and took industrial loans in the past and kept the current account with Prettybank. The client also used the bank's treasury solutions and global markets solutions for importing and exporting purposes. You want to make sure the client returns to Prettybank and restarts the accounts the client holds.

1. Formulate a communication strategy to approach the client. Discuss the mediums you will use to contact the client and manage the relationship.

Case 3

You are working with a team in the corporate banking department on Dhaka Purr Bank. Your team is consisting of two employees from risk department, one credit analyst, one relationship manager, one global markets specialist and two product managers. Your team has been tasked to formulate a complex financing solution for a private limited company who needs 400 crore in financing to start its new oil refining division. Upon request, the Head of Financing Solutions has provided you with an expert in energy industry. But the expert doesn't come to office and provides services remotely.

1. How would you keep everyone updated on the daily progress of the project?
2. What mediums of communication would you use for this purpose?
3. Suppose you need to establish an informal network among some team members. How would you do that effectively?

MCQ

1. Which of the following is not an example of verbal communication?
   a. Speaking in a meeting
   b. Writing a mail
   c. Talking to a friend
   d. Reacting to a sign
2. Which of the following is a requirement for active listening?
   a. Talking when the speaker pauses
   b. Only listening and not participating
   c. Memorizing the conversation
   d. Giving attention to gestures, facial expression etc.
3. Which of the following is the most important part of non-verbal communication?
   a. Speed of Speech
   b. Expression of face
   c. Tone of Voice
   d. Movement of hands
4. What should you use to illustrate the performance of a bank's revenue?
   a. Pie chart
   b. Line Chart
   c. Process diagrams
   d. Infographics
5. You need to illustrate the budget allocation in different areas of your desk for the quarter. What should you use?
   a. Pie Chart

b. Line Chart
c. Process Diagrams
d. Infographics

6. Performance reports are an example of –
    a. Upward communication
    b. Downward communication
    c. Horizontal communication
    d. None of the above
7. Which of the following is not a step of effective downward communication?
    a. Talk to the employees
    b. Understand the information
    c. Provide true facts
    d. Don’t waste time answering queries
8. Which of the following apps provide a collaboration platform for horizontal communication?
    a. MS Office
    b. Google Meet
    c. Slack
    d. Tinder
9. Which of the following is an external entity of the business?
    a. Marketing Manager
    b. Supply Chain Officer
    c. Raw Material Provider
    d. HR Business Partner
10. In single strand informal communication –
    a. Employees are talking to each other in groups
    b. Each individual randomly tells another the same message
    c. Word travels from one person to another.
    d. None of the above.

Short Questions

1. What are infographics? Write briefly.
2. What is horizontal communication?
3. How does external communication occur in banks?
4. What is the difference between formal and informal communication?
5. How to listen actively in a business conversation?

Broad Questions

1. What are the four fundamental functions of verbal communication?
2. Discuss the ways we can do non-verbal communication.
3. What is downward communication? Discuss the steps of effective downward communication.
4. What are methods of external communication? Discuss the audiences and purposes of each method.
5. What is the difference between upward and downward communication? Discuss briefly.
6. What are the pros and cons of gra

Module C: Applications to Specific Letter Situations

Topic – 9: Directness in Good-News Messages & Neutral Messages

Conveying messages around the organization is a common function of any business. The majority of organizations communicate both positive and neutral messages directly. Directness in preferred because it provides the recipient the key point without wasting his/her time. Before sending the message, a preliminary assessment is required. The sender must determine the reader's likely response to what they have to say in this evaluation.

The Generic Plan for Direct Communication

- Objective of the Communication: The sender must begin with the objective. If he/she requires information from the receiver, the sender must start the message by asking for information. If the sender needs to relay information, he/she should start by providing information. The objective of the message will lead the content of the message. But, sometimes, the sender may have to provide some context or brief background before the objectives. This will happen if the recipient is unaware of the sender's circumstances or is not hoping to hear from them. However, the sender must keep the context short and arrive to the main point quickly. The first paragraph will comprise of brief prefatory remarks and the real message.
- Completing the Objective: The rest of the message will contain details of the main message if required. For example: in an inquiry, if there are additional questions, the sender will have to put them in the remainder of the message. The sender must systematically address each one, either by naming them or organizing them into paragraphs. The sender will provide any necessary clarifications for these sections if they have any. Everything will be covered in the message.
- Finishing with Goodwill: Ending the message with goodwill signals friendly and cooperation in the future. It's a social norm to provide sentences like "Much Obliged", "Thank You for your time", "Your reply is much appreciated" etc. In a normal conversation, a person would end the conversation with goodwill. There is no reason to do otherwise in writing a message.

These are the generic steps in composing any direct business communication messages. However, these steps must be adapted for different types of messages and must be tailored to the context of the message and mindset of the reader.

Inquiries

Select from two ways to Begin the message

The primary objective of the inquiry is to ask questions from another employee or business entity. The sender has to ways to begin the inquiry. First, he/she can ask the one of the specific questions and then move on to the other questions. The primary question may set up context for the next questions. For example, if the goal is to get information on pertinent questions about the financial performance of a borrower, the sender may begin with these words:

Will you please send me the credit score document for Mr. X, the senior VP of Co. Y?

In the body of the message the sender may ask specific questions about the past credit history of the borrower.

The second way to begin an inquiry is to ask for a general request for information. The specific questions will come later in the body. This beginning sentence illustrates a general request:

Will you please answer the following questions about Mr. X's personal credit rating?

The questions are structured in a way that conveys respect and appreciation for the reader to put his/her time and effort in replying the inquiry.

Explain Adequately

The sender might need to provide clarification or information to assist the reader respond to his/her questions. The sender can make the reader's work challenging if he/she doesn't provide enough explanation or if he/she assumes that the reader already knows something. For example: in the example above, the receiver of the message may not know about Mr. X. The sender must also provide a way to identify Mr. X in the bank's data base. The sender can send additional information such as:

Mr. X's account no. is AMXZ1234556 and his unique ID is: 0912345678.

This is additional clarification that is not directly a part of the inquiry but may save the receiver's time significantly and make the task of the receiver easy. Depending on the nature of the message, the sender should choose where and how to provide the required explanatory information. Usually, the broad explanatory information that suits the overall message should come before or after the direct request in the first paragraph. If supplementary information is relevant to a specific question, then the information should be near the that specific question.

Structure the Queries

If the inquiry contains more than one question, the questions will have to be organized properly. Key ways to structure the Queries:

- Use bullet points to separately ask each question. This will emphasize each question separately.
- Use separate paragraphs for each question. This is suggested when the sender needs to provide additional information with each question to clarify. The reader will be able to grasp each question better if he/she reads those information.
- The questions will stand out if they are ranked using number sequences (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 etc.) or letters (a, b, c, d, e etc.). It will also give the reader a practical method to refer back to the particular questions when responding.
- Using different sentence forms can emphasize the importance of the questions. Simply implying a need for information in a sentence does not get much attention. The "It would be nice if you would tell me . . ." and "I would like to know . . ." types are really not questions. They do not ask—they merely suggest. The questions that standout are those written in question form: "Will you please tell me . . . ?" "How much would one be able to save . . . ?" "How many contract problems have you had . . . ?"

Finish with Goodwill

The general goodwill conclusion is suitable in this situation, as it is in the majority of corporate correspondence. The closing words matter most in creating goodwill if the words fit the context.

Example Inquiry

Here is an example of bad business query:

Context: You work in AMXZ bank who is looking to open a branch in Mirpur, Dhaka. You have found a place in newspaper advertisement and want to know more about the place.

Dear Mr. Roy,

We have seen your advertisement for 6,400 square feet of commercial space in the Daily 'A' Newspaper. As we are interested, we would like additional information.

Specifically, we would like to know the interior layout, annual cost, availability of transportation, length of lease agreement, escalation provisions, and any other information you think pertinent.

If the information you give us is favourable, we will inspect the property. Please send your reply.

Sincerely

ABC
Assistant Vice President,
AMXZ Bank

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

This inquiry is a bad one because it is vague and indirect. There are no specific question for the recipient and the proper structure or layout. Its highly likely that this message will not generate a proper response that will be useful for the bank to open the branch. Here is an example of good business inquiry:

Dear Mr. Roy,

Will you please answer the following questions about the 6400 square-foot commercial space advertised in the March 2 issue of the Daily 'A' Newspaper? We think this space may be suitable for the new branch we are opening in Mirpur this April.

• Is the layout of these offices suitable for a work force for a bank? (If possible, please send us a diagram of the space.)

• What is the annual rental charge?

• Are housekeeping, maintenance, and utilities included?

• What is the nature of the walls and flooring?

• Does the location provide easy access to mass transportation?

• What escalation provisions are included in the lease agreement?

If your answers meet our needs, we would like to arrange a tour of the commercial space as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

ABC

AVP, AMXZ Bank

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

The second example starts out by explicitly requesting information. The explanation is short yet thorough. To make it simpler for the receiver to identify the answers, the questions are designed to stand out and offer clarifications where appropriate. A polite and reasonable request for prompt action concludes the communication.

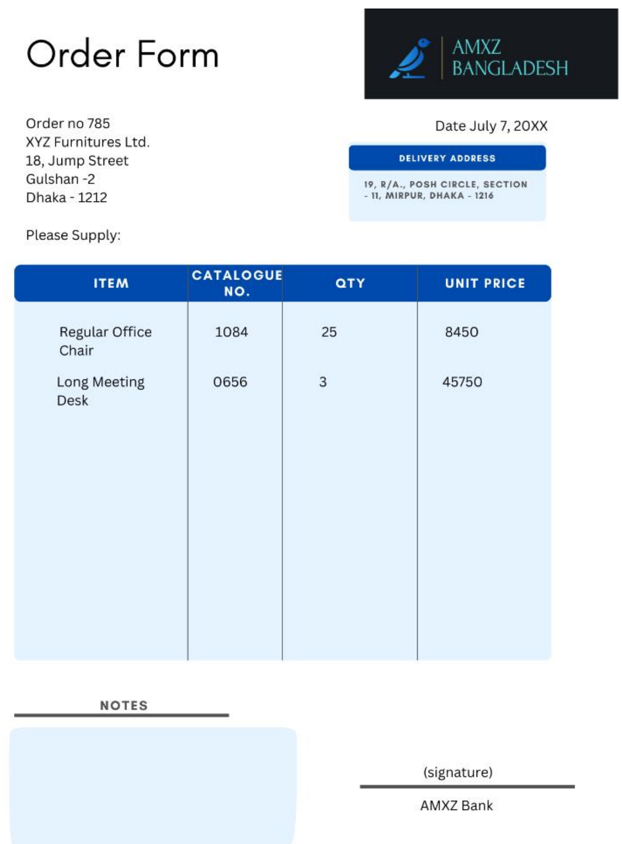
Orders

Many companies have printed order forms. These forms ensure easy reference to orders and no omission of any information. A good order includes:

1. Order Letter
2. Order Forms

The form should include the following

- Accurate description of goods required
- Catalogue numbers
- Quantities
- Unit Prices
- Delivery requirements (place, time, mode of transportation etc.)
- Terms of payment
- Delivery Address
- Special Packaging if necessary



Order Form

AMXZ BANGLADESH

Order no 785
XYZ Furnitures Ltd.
18, Jump Street
Gulshan -2
Dhaka - 1212

Date July 7, 20XX

DELIVERY ADDRESS

19, R/A., POSH CIRCLE, SECTION - 11, MIRPUR, DHAKA - 1216

Please Supply:

ITEM	CATALOGUE NO.	QTY	UNIT PRICE
Regular Office Chair	1084	25	8450
Long Meeting Desk	0656	3	45750

NOTES

(signature)

AMXZ Bank

In figure 9.1, an order form for office furniture supplies for AMXZ Bank is presented. As the bank is opening its new branch, it'll need some furniture. The items are stated clearly with catalogue numbers, quantity of each item and a predetermined unit price.

There is clear mention of the furniture company from which AMXZ will source the furniture. The date is also provided.

Useful Expressions

Openings

- Thank you for you quotation of …
- We have received your quotation of … and enclose our official order form
- Please Supply the following items as soon as possible:

Closings

- As these goods are needed urgently, we look forward to prompt delivery.
- We hope to receive the delivery within this week.

Sample Order Letter

Inviting Quotation

Dear Sir,

We wish to buy the following items of office furniture for our new branch. We should be grateful if you would kindly quote your lowest rates for these items, giving full particulars and technical details. The quantity we propose to buy is mentioned against each item. Since the processing of the purchase proposal takes quite some time, it would be helpful if you could quote rates which may remain valid for at least three months.

Item	QTY
Office Chair	25
Meeting Desk	3

We want to set up the branch within August. We would, therefore, like the items to be delivered to us latest by 15 July. Please let us know whether you will be able to arrange the supply by this date. Please let us also know the guarantee period and any after-sales facility offered by you. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely

ABC

Purchase Officer

AMXZ BANK

Source: Business Correspondence and Report Writing, Sharma & Mohan

Claims & Adjustment Letters

No matter how efficient a business is, mistakes happen due to human error or misunderstanding. Important services are occasionally delivered in an unsatisfactory manner, and goods are occasionally sent to the incorrect locations, too late, damaged, or insufficiently. Letters written to bring these mistakes to attention of those responsible for the mistakes are called claims or complaint letters. And letters written to take action on the mistakes are called adjustment letters.

Making Claims:

Before writing a claim letter, the writer must remain calm, courteous and rational. The writer should not write claim letters in an angry and frustrative mood since he/she has to pay for someone else's mistake. In this state of mind, he or she could write a letter that contains sarcasm, accusations, and threats.

The claim letter should generally contain the four following elements:

1. A detailed explanation of the problem is needed to be given clarifying what went wrong. If the product or service was faulty, full information must be given to identify the defects.
2. A statement outlining the inconvenience or loss brought on by the error or defect, is required to be provided.
3. In order to persuade the receiver to act swiftly to correct the issue, the sender must make an appeal to the recipient's fairness, honesty, and reputation.
4. The sender needs to say what adjustments he/she would consider fair.

To get prompt response in a satisfactory manner, a claim letter should be sent directly to the head of the department responsible for the mistake.

Example of Claim Letters:

Dear Sir,

We had ordered 25 regular office chairs under our order no. 785 dated July 7, 20XX. Today when the consignment arrived, we checked the items and found 5 chairs damaged in transit. It seems one unit of the compartments containing the chairs weren't prepared properly or some heavy load had been placed over it in transit.

Under this circumstance, we want you to replace the chairs that were damaged. The only other alternative would be a full refund for the chairs damaged. But we prefer the first option.

We would very much appreciate an early reply.

Sincerely

ABC

Purchasing Officer

Source: Business Correspondence and Report Writing, Sharma & Mohan

Adjustment letters

Upon receiving claims or complaint letters, good business organizations decide on fair responses and write adjustment letters. Handling claims efficiently and effectively enables an organization to protect its pristine reputation from allegations of supplying defective products. Therefore, to satisfy the customer and protect the reputation, great care is required in writing an adjustment letter.

Writing Effective Adjustment Letters:

1. Answer the claim letter promptly.
2. Thank the consumer for making the effort to point out the problem, flaw, harm, or error.
3. Apologize for the inconvenience and provide logical explanations if possible.
4. If the claim is valid, give the adjustment in a kind manner.
5. If the claim is unfair, provide concrete reasons behind refusal or partial acceptance of the claim. The letter must clearly signal that the claims are understood accurately. Try to justify a solution that you think is fair.
6. Do not engage in sarcasm or impulsive behavior if the claim letter is such.

Example of Adjustment Letter:

> Dear Mr. ABC,
>
> Thank you for your letter no. … of …
>
> Please accept our sincere apology for the damaged chairs.
>
> Upon inspection, we have found that the chairs were indeed damaged due to mismanagement of transportation. Your suggestion for replacing the chairs is fair and we have dispatched them today by express delivery service. We hope the chairs will reach you in time for you to furnish your new branch before the opening ceremony.
>
> We thank you for drawing our attention to this mistake because we have carefully investigated the transportation of all our products and initiated preventive measures to avoid such mismanagements in the future. Rest assured that you will not be put to any such inconvenience in the future.
>
> Sincerely Yours
>
> MNO
>
> Sales Manager
>
> XYZ Furniture LTD.

Source: Business Correspondence and Report Writing, Sharma & Mohan

Useful Expressions:

Openings:

- Please accept our sincere apology for …
- We are really sorry for causing ….
- Thank you for bringing ... in our attention and we are very sorry for the inconvenience.
- It was really thoughtful of you to have written to us directly.

Closings:

- We would be glad to hear from you after the shipment of new product.
- Please let us know if we can do anything else.
- Direct communication with our consumers is very important to us. Please reply to this email with your thoughts on the replacements.

These are the four major types of messages where direct communication is required. Communicating them effectively will improve an organization’s business performance immensely. Miscommunicating them will create chaos in the business and ultimately hurt long term credibility and therefore, profitability. And thus, literacy on effective communication is a must for the employees in an organization.

Topic – 10: Indirectness in Bad-News Messages

When Indirectness Is Appropriate

All business professionals have to occasionally convey bad information, whether it's declining a request, giving unpleasant or unpleasant facts, or apologizing in public. When you have to refuse a request or deliver other unfavorable news, the indirect order works extremely well. The main argument for this approach is that explanations before negative messages improve their reception. Even convincing the reader that the writer's stance is legitimate would require a rationale. Additionally, a justification softens the blow of the terrible news, which might occasionally shock the reader.

<u>The Generic Plan for Indirect Communication</u>

- Use a Strategic Buffer: The buffer opens the message and sets the context and identifies the subject of the message. But it doesn't explicitly tell the reader about the bad news or negative message. A buffer can be positive or neutral depending on the gravity of the situation. The neutral buffer just portrays an introduction and the positive buffer may even thank the reader for bringing something to the writer's attention or for being a valued employee.
- Plan the Bad News: Starting with a clear aim and keeping the recipient's needs in mind can help to limit additional harm to business relationships and promote acceptance of the sender's message. The message sender should consider what details the audience will require to comprehend and accept the message. Recipients of negative messages may take them very personally, thus they frequently have a right to seek a comprehensive justification of the response. The plan can be to justify the fairness of a particular course of action. It may be to give information that adequately supports the need for the decision. The sender may make reference to the professional opinion of authorities that both the sender and the recipient respect. It could even be sufficient to show how the reader would ultimately profit in the long term.
- Present the Negative News Positively: When the plan is done, the sender will present the bad news according to the plan with adequate facts or explanations. But the sender should keep the bad news as concise as possible without corrupting the facts inside the bad news. This will decrease the reader's time and attention span focusing on the bad news which will reduce his exposure to the bad news. Its best not to use second person in stating the bad news and to use compound sentences to reduce focus on the main

negative point. However, the sender should always keep in mind to not manipulate the facts or withhold information under any circumstances to make the bad news positive and acceptable.

- Close Respectfully: The ending of the message needs to be carefully crafted. The sender must remain respectful and rational. The sender should provide his/her best wishes without concluding in a too optimistic manner. By all means, the writer must think about including a positive aspect in the conclusion if he/she can identify one that is relevant to the audience. The writer can also offer an alternative solution to the problem or another opportunity for making up the losses. The writer must carefully consider the cost-benefit analysis of maintaining the relationship with the reader and keep in mind what he/she can offer realistically.

Refused Requests

For the sake of clarity, assume ‘A’ has asked something of ‘B’ but ‘B’ has to say no to the request. The refusal of a request is certainly a negative message and requires thoughtful considerations before replying the message. The reply should be courteous and show goodwill even though it contains negative message. Therefore, along with the refusal, fair and just explanations should be given.

Steps in Refused Requests:

1. Plan the message: It takes thorough consideration of the situation's aspects to arrive at a fair and just explanation. ‘B’ must think about her reasons for refusing first. If her justifications are sound, she should then seek to determine how to best communicate them to ‘A’. She may very easily put herself in the A’s position by doing this. ‘B’ also needs to consider how the explanation will be perceived. This way of thinking leads to the approach for crafting the message. ‘B’ has to show that the request was denied due to valid reasons such as company policy.
2. Set up the explanations in the opening: Once the reason behind refusal is determined, ‘B’ will have to start the message with phrases that set up the discussion about it. ‘B’ can start by saying something neutral that’ll neither imply a yes nor a no but will set the context for the rest of the message. This is a good way to start the refusal.
3. Craft the refusal positively: The refusal should be the most negative part of the message and therefore should be clear, short and B should not put too much emphasis on it. After

delivering the bad news, the refusal has be to explained. To do so, ‘B’ should use positive wording, specific emphasis, convincing logic and relevant details. The goal here is to make ‘A’ support the refusal and empathize with B’s position. The message should be crafted in a way that the refusal comes as a conclusion and not as a surprise to ‘A’.

4. Compromise if possible: ‘B’ can provide some compromises to ‘A’ instead of a full refusal of A’s request. In that case, ‘B’ must clearly state what is possible and what’s not.
5. End with goodwill: The message should end with a suitable positive comment what shows goodwill. Its best if B doesn’t apologize or reiterate the refusal in the ending as it may trigger an additional negative emotion in A.

<u>Illustrations:</u>

Example of bad Refused Requests:

> Subject: Your request for Sports Team Sponsorship
>
> Mr. A,
>
> We regret to inform you that we cannot grant your request for a title sponsorship to the ABC cricket team of Dhaka under 19.
>
> So many requests for contributions are made of us that we have found it necessary to budget a definite amount each year for CSR activities. Our budgeted funds for this year have been exhausted, so we simply cannot consider additional requests. However, we will be able to consider your request next year.
>
> We deeply regret that we could not to help you now and trust that you understand our position.
>
> ‘B’

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

This illustration immediately conveys the unpleasant news. This harsh treatment renders "A" unwilling to receive information. As a result, "A" is less inclined to accept the following explanation. Although the reasoning is obvious, there is needless use of negative terms. And last, "A" is strongly reminded of the awful news by the concluding lines.

Example of Proper Refused Requests:

> Subject: Your request for Sports Team Sponsorship
>
> Mr. 'A'
>
> It's admirable that you're working to promote sports for underprivileged kids. We wish you success as you strive to further this important cause.
>
> We at AMXZ Bank are always willing to help worthy causes whenever we can. That is why every January we budget for the year the maximum amount we believe we are able to contribute to such causes. Then we distribute that amount among the various deserving groups as far as it will go. Since our budgeted contributions for this year have already been made, we are placing your organization on our list for consideration next year.
>
> We wish you the best of luck in your efforts to help providing the deserving children with an opportunity in sports.
>
> 'B'

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

The second illustration handles the negative message effectively. The initial sentences are relevant and neutral. They set the stage for the subsequent explanation. The explanation makes sense and connects to the introduction. The explanation flows naturally into the rejection without using any negative language. Additionally, the rejection is handled in an amiable manner with no offensive words. The cordial conclusion corresponds to the situation.

Negative Adjustment Letters

Assume, B has supplied A with some goods. A was not satisfied with the condition of the supplied goods. Therefore, A sent B a claim asking for remedial measures. B finds A's claims unjust and can't grant the remedies. B needs to write a negative adjustment letter and must say no to A. These kinds of adjustment letters are very sensitive and bears great reputational risk if not handled properly.

Steps in Negative Adjustment Letters:

1. Plan the Strategy: Unlike other negative messages where the reasons may be hard to articulate, negative adjustment letters are written mostly on the basis on specific company policy. Therefore, it's easy to plan the strategy as there are legitimate reasons. However, B will need to use finesse to make sure her relationship with A doesn't break.

2. Set up Reasons: Best way to start the message is to begin the detailing out the common facts or findings that are verified and then move towards the disagreements. While doing so, B must provide A how A's case is an exception and exactly what company policies bars B from granting A his claims. If the claims are simply beyond what's reasonable, that should also be communicated in an objective and rational manner. B must not make the letter personal for A and should refrain from pointing out A's faults in judging the shipment and making claims. In short, B needs to make her case without accusing A of unjust claiming.
3. Refuse Clearly: The refusal should be brief, clear and concrete. It should not be unnecessarily complex or overloaded with information.
4. End with Courteousness: B should conclude the negative adjustment letter with a suitable remark. She may emphasize how much she values A's business or the quality of her products. The situation does not call for negative apologies or language that brings up the issue.

Illustrations

Negative Adjustment Letters: (Bad Example)

Subject: Your July 15 claim for damages

Mr. 'A',

I regret to inform that we must reject your request for money back on the damaged regular premium office chairs.

We must refuse because transportation of the chairs is not our responsibility. It is difficult for me to understand how you failed to notice this limitation. It was clearly stated in the terms of agreement & payment. Every chair packaging showed how to transport them. Since we have been more than reasonable in trying to inform you, we cannot possibly be responsible.

We trust that you will understand our position. We regret very much the damage and inconvenience our product has caused you.

'B',
Customer Relations

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

The terrible email starts out by outlining the rejection right away. Derogatory language and reasoning are both present. It is also insulting since it criticizes "A." There is not much tact or "you-viewpoint" employed. Even the closing is terrible since it reiterates the negative news.

Negative Adjustment Letters: (Good Example)

Subject: Your July 15 claim for damages

Mr. 'A',

Certainly, you have a right to expect the best possible service from Rubi Furniture. Every Rubi Furniture product is the result of years of experimentation. And we manufacture each furniture under the most careful controls. We are determined that our products will remain undamaged for a long time.

Because we do want our chairs to please, we carefully inspected the photos of the regular premium office chairs you sent us. It is apparent that each sample has been subjected to faulty transportation. Since we have known from the beginning that the chairs require delicate transportation, we have clearly noted this in all our advertising, in the catalog from which you ordered, and in the terms of purchase agreement.

Under the circumstances, all we can do concerning your request is suggest that you return us the chair and let us fix the damages for a small additional fee.

You may also be interested in the new super luxury boss chair listed in our premium series. These chairs are really comfortable and less susceptible to damages in transport. If we can help you further in your selection, please contact us at service@rubif.com.

'B',
Customer Relations

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

The good message is introduced with cordial conversation on a common interest that also outlines the explanation. It examines the case's facts, absolving the corporation of responsibility, without making any charges or expressing anger or negative sentiments. Even if the refusal is implied rather than spoken explicitly, it is nevertheless obvious. It is handled expertly. It doesn't utilize any bad words, and it isn't overemphasized. The focus then changes to practical advice that applies to just one case—advice that may in fact lead to a future sale.

Credit Refusals

Credit denial messages are more negative than typical rejections. Personal traits like diligence, stability, and dependability are related to credit. Therefore, if not handled carefully, a credit refusal can be perceived as a personal insult. Such a denial necessitates the indirect order and a strategy that exhibits meticulous respect for the best outcomes. Even those who are denied credit still need products. They'll probably find somewhere to fulfill their needs. They could be required to pay cash. If a seller is friendly with them, they may decide to do business with that person.

Steps in Credit Refusal:

- Plan the Strategy: Working out the strategy—in this example, the justification for refusing credit—is the first step, just as in other bad news situations. If credit is declined because the applicant has a high risk of dishonesty, the seller faces a very difficult challenge. He or she cannot simply state that the credit request was denied due to poor character. Anyone would object to this strategy. In such circumstances, the seller can opt for a roundabout route. The seller could hint to the cause, for instance. Since the applicant is aware of their credit history, just a suggestion should convey that you are as well.
- Adapt the general Plan: The credit-refusal message is a clear example of how bad-news communications are often structured. The introduction lays out the plan and is uninformed of the choice. A popular and suitable strategy is to start off by expressing appreciation for the credit application before politely explaining the decision and refusing it. It’s sufficient to hint the bad credit history for specific applicants. More transparent financial talks of the case can serve as justification to applicants with good character but insufficient finances. However, one should use caution while choosing their words to prevent any unintentional bad consequences. It could be a good idea to demonstrate concern for the reader's credit issue in some situations. Whatever justification you present, your remarks must lead to a definite, affirmative rejection. One should conclude the credit refusal message with words of kindness, just as with the other bad news messages. A recommendation for cash purchases or remarks regarding goods or services might be useful. The same goes for looking ahead to whatever potential relationships seem acceptable.

Example of Bad Credit Refusal Message:

Mr. B,

We have received your July 15 order and accompanying request for credit.

After carefully reviewing the financial information you submitted, we regret to report that you do not meet our requirements for credit. It is our considered judgment that firms with your weak assets-to-liabilities ratio would be better off buying with cash. Thus, we encourage you to do so.

We would, of course, be pleased to serve you on a cash basis. In closing, let me assure you that we sincerely regret that we must deny you credit at this time.

ABC

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Although this communication starts out in an indirect way, the opening message does little to soften the unpleasant news. The start barely justifies the focus it places on such an obvious subject. The refusal follows without any prior justification. It utilizes derogatory language. The explanation that follows is brief. The argument in favor of a cash sale is weak. The reader gets the wrong notion after reading the final sentences.

Example of Good Credit Refusal Message:

Mr. B,

Your July 15 order for Rubi Furniture and supplies suggests that your company is continuing to make good progress.

To assure yourself of continued progress, we feel certain that you will want to follow the soundest business practices possible. As you may know, most financial experts say that maintaining a reasonable indebtedness is a must for sound growth. About a 2-to-1 ratio of current assets to liabilities is a good minimum, they say. In the belief that this minimum ratio is best for all concerned, we extend credit only when it is met. As soon as you reach this ratio, we would like to review your application again. Meanwhile, we will strive to meet your needs on a cash basis.

We appreciate your interest in Rubi Furniture and look forward to serving you.

ABC

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

This communication typically adheres to the strategy described. Its relevant, impartial beginning frames the justification. The explanation is courteous and comprehensive. There is a constant sense of sincere care for the reader. In some circumstances, it might not be appropriate to explain the benefits of paying with cash. However, in this instance, the reader and writer's prior relationship merits it. The speech is concluded with encouraging words that address the future.

Topic – 11: Persuasive Written Messages

Persuasion means to convince someone to modify his/her behaviors, belief or actions. Because persuasive messages encourage audiences to provide something of value (money in exchange for a product, for example), or to take significant action, creating persuasive communications is more challenging than producing ordinary messages. Successful people understand that persuasion isn't about utilizing trickery or coercing people into behaving contrary to their own interests; rather, it's about educating audiences about their alternatives and positioning your offering in the most advantageous perspective. Persuasive messages are often written in indirect manner. Therefore, this requires careful consideration and a meticulous approach.

General Rules of Persuasive Messages

- Understand the Recipients: You must learn everything you can about your readers' values, wants, desires and needs in order to determine what appeals will be effective with them. Gathering demographic information such as age, gender, religion etc. and psychological information such as social, political views etc. will help you understand your target audience. You can research the company's client database, speak with individuals online, talk to customer service representatives about the kind of calls they receive, and run ideas by your coworkers. Effective persuasion requires knowledge in addition to creativity and reason.
- Develop the benefits: The benefits of your offering must be clear in the persuasive message. The benefits should answer why the audience will choose your way instead of their way. The benefits can be tangible rewards such as cost savings, better quality of product, monetary benefits, saving time etc. But you should not underestimate the intangible benefits such as helping others, identifying your offering with a larger cause or doing the right thing. The best persuasion message incorporates both tangible and intangible benefits. Make sure your readers can clearly understand how the features will benefit them when you are presenting these to them. The selling literature distinguishes between reader advantages and product characteristics, which is helpful.
- Balance the use of Three Kinds of Appeal: Three different sorts of appeals are used in persuasive communication: pathos (emotional appeals), logos (rational appeals), and ethos (the ethical component). These are strong instruments that, when utilized sensibly and morally, may be advantageous to both senders and recipients. Your credibility as a writer will need to be established through brand image, past product performance and word of mouth. If you are a new player in the market, you may need to emphasize more

on the other two appeals as it will be difficult for the reader to appeal to your credibility for lack of past history. An emotional appeal appeals to the emotions or sympathies of the audience. For instance, you can employ the feelings produced by phrases like comfort, success, prestige, freedom, and success. Such expressions assist your audience embrace your message by helping them adopt a particular mindset. A logical appeal makes use of reasoning and factual support. This is where you tell the audience on the tangible and intangible benefits of your offering. But you have to portray the facts honestly and must not resort to overoptimistic descriptions.

- Make reader compliance easy: Sometimes while writing persuasive arguments, writers don't give enough attention to making the desired action as easy and simple to carry out. If you want them to give money or purchase your product, let them know where and how, and if necessary, provide a pre-addressed mailing address or a website link. The key to getting your readers to comply with your request is to make the required action clear and simple to carry out.

Example of A Persuasive Business Message:

Dear A:

More than 20 percent of adults in this country cannot read at a third-grade level. Each year, more than a million students leave high school functionally illiterate (some with diplomas).

As you know, the National Campaign for Literacy has spent 14 years helping millions of citizens learn to read. We work with more than 300 schools, neighborhood groups, and government agencies to combat illiteracy. Yet, illiteracy remains an enormous problem. To address this need, we plan to fund 29 new programs this year, as well as to expand existing ones.

We appreciate your past generosity and hope we can count on your continued support. In addition, to enable us to help more people, we are asking that you please consider raising your donation level.

Of course, your gift will bring you recognition, including a personal acknowledgment of your generosity in more than 100,000 promotional brochures. However, the greatest benefit comes as you help millions of people get better jobs and earn personal dignity.

Please continue supporting our effort to promote adult reading. You may make out your check to National Campaign for Literacy and return it to me, or you may call me at 431-555-9000, ext. 0786.

Sincerely,

B
Associate Director

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Common mistakes in persuasive communication

Due to your own conviction and enthusiasm, it is easy to lose sight of the audience's point of view when you are advocating for an idea or a project that you believe in. Avoid these frequent errors while creating compelling arguments. Here are the common traps to avoid:

- Selling Too Hard: Do not pressure your audience. This will portray selfishness and ultimately cast a doubt on your credibility. Use calm, rational persuasion and stay objective.
- Leaving no room for compromise: Successful persuasion is sometimes a give-and-take process. It is more so with compelling business communications. Here one doesn't always receive all they asked for in terms of finances, investments, or other commitments.
- Relying only on arguments: While having strong ideas is necessary, it's also crucial to emotionally connect with your audience and use vivid language while speaking. Dry logic may not always be more appealing than a well-written narrative.
- Not Thinking about future communication: Do not assume that persuasion is a one-shot offer. It's a procedure, not a single thing. Instead of trying to persuade your audience to say "yes" in one big step, you often need to bring them along one modest step at a time.
- Being Deceptive: The combination of logical and emotional arguments, strengthened by the audience's confidence in the speaker, may be a potent persuasion tool. To ensure that you utilize this drive in a positive and ethical way, keep the audience's wants in mind at all times.

Ethics is Persuasion

The following must be maintained when sending persuasive communication. Unethical communication bears huge reputational risk and may even be subject to legal prosecution.

1. Be truthful. Do not hide facts. Don't be manipulative.
2. Back up claims with evidence.
3. Do not talk about a product you are not offering.
4. Be careful when you're target audience is children.
5. Disclose products reviewed by paying influencers for promotion.
6. The message must be responsible and public welfare must not be disrupted.

Topic – 12: Persuasion in Sales & Collections

Developing Marketing & Sales messages

Marketing and sales messages use the same underlying techniques as other persuasive messages, with the additional goal of influencing someone to make a purchase. Marketing communications guide prospective customers through the buying process without pressuring them to decide right away. Sales communications take control, prompting potential customers to decide to buy right away. Sales communications make a direct appeal to individuals to purchase a certain product. Marketing communications, on the other hand, focus on presenting new brands to the public and attracting customers to websites for further information.

Planning Persuasive Sales Messages

- Assess audience needs: Successful sales communications, like all other business messages, begin with an awareness of the audience's needs. These requirements might be as straightforward as a set of practical considerations like size, weight, and finish or as intricate as a complicated mixture of emotional and logical considerations. It will depend on the product and the market. For example, when a person buys a car, all the factors mentioned above comes into play.
- Analyze competition: Sales communications frequently face competition from those of other businesses attempting to reach the same audience. Mercedes-Benz understands its audience has been exposed to messaging from BMW, Audi, Jaguar, and many other automakers when it develops a communication to introduce a new car model to its buyers. Finding a distinctive message might be quite difficult.
- Determine key selling points: The next stage is to choose the features and advantages to emphasize after gathering some knowledge about audience wants and the alternatives provided by your rivals. Benefits are the advantages customers may obtain from a product's most alluring qualities, whereas selling points are the attributes themselves. In other words, selling points emphasize the functions of the product. Benefits emphasize the experiences or advantages that the user has. Benefits might be either practical or emotional, or they can be both. For example, the feature of sports driving mode in a super luxury car will provide car owner with thrill of fast driving combining luxury. However, the car's aesthetic elements give the emotional reward of driving a luxurious vehicle while providing no functional benefits..

- Predict purchase objections: Sales messages frequently face opposition. The easiest method to deal with them is to identify these concerns up front and address as many of them as you can, much like with persuasive business communications. The product may be criticized for its high price, poor quality, incompatibility with other items, or perceived risk. Naturally, any efforts to reduce perceptions of price or other possible disadvantages must be made responsibly.

Steps in Writing Persuasive Sales Messages

- Get the reader's attention: All sales pitches must meet one fundamental need from the start. They need to attract attention. A headline could, for instance, highlight a compelling product advantage, fascinating news, make an emotional or financial value appeal, or propose a unique solution to a well-known problem. Of course, attention-grabbing techniques don't just use words. Marketers can utilize stirring pictures, music, animation, or video, depending on the media.
- Build interest: The following stage is to pique the reader's curiosity about the service, enterprise, or concept you are advocating. One common strategy is to "pay off" the promise made in the headline by showing how you may obtain those benefits. For example, if the headline says a way to "Listen to your favourite music for BDT 50 a Day," the first paragraph could explain that the other options are more expensive.
- Increase desire: After you've given the audience some introductory information to start piquing their curiosity, the next step is to raise desire for the product by expanding on your explanation of its advantages. You need to use all relevant information about your product in a manner that will induce curiosity in the reader and prompt him/her in getting to know your product offering. This is a crucial step in building reader's desire. You may use a range of strategies to counter potential concerns and reduce skepticism. Some useful strategies are customer reviews, articles written by industry insiders, comparative analyses, free demos, sample usage & tasting, unbiased & objective test results, and money-back guarantees.
- Drive Sales: Once you've piqued your reader's interest in your product or service, the next step is to push for the sale. After all, this is what your efforts have been focused on. It is a logical conclusion to your sales efforts. Your plan will determine how you should phrase your sales pitch. Your motivation to take action could be strong if your selling effort is powerful. It could even be phrased as an order, "Order your copy right away, while you're thinking about it." If you prefer to make a more modest sales pitch, you may ask directly,

"May we send you your copy today?" In every case, there should be a specific and obvious reason for taking action. It should not even somewhat resemble a hint. It should guide the reader through the steps of whatever needs to be done for maximum impact.

Example of Bad Persuasive Sales Message:

Subject: A plan to increase profits

Mrs. Roy,

You have probably heard in the trade about the services I provide to restaurant management. I am now pleased to be able to offer these services to you.

From 28 years of experience, I have learned the details of restaurant management. I know what food costs should be. I know how to find other cost problems, be they the buying end or the selling end. I know how to design menu offerings for the most profitability. I have studied kitchen operations and organization. And I know how the service must be conducted for best results.

From all this knowledge, I have perfected a simple system for analyzing a restaurant and finding its weaknesses. This I do primarily from guest checks, invoices, and a few other records. As explained on my website (<http://www.restaurantconsulting4747.com>), my system finds the trouble spots. It shows exactly where to correct all problems.

I can provide you with the benefits of my system for only BDT 1,50,000—3,00,00 now and 4,50,000 BDT when you receive my final report on your operations. If you will fill out and return by email the information requested below, I will show you how to make more money.

Bishal Royce
Consultant

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Although the major appeal is stated in the subject line of this sales letter, it is uninteresting and imprecise. The introductory statement hardly says much more than what the consultant performs. The reader is then offered the services as a continuation of the opener. Such introductions do little to spark interest or inspire desire. The consultant's services are then routinely reviewed from his point of view. The description of the individual services provided is just somewhat more clear. The message is uninteresting even if it describes the consultant's capabilities. The urge to take action is more of a suggestion than a demand. The final sentences certainly refer to the reader's advantage, but they come far too little, far too late.

Example of Good Persuasive Sales Message

Subject: A proven plan that guarantees you more profits

Ms. Collins,

"Killshaw is adding $15,000 a year to my restaurant's profits!"

With these words, Bill Summers, owner of Boston's famed Pirate's Cove, joined the hundreds of restaurant owners who will point to proof in dollars in assuring you that I

have a plan that can add to your profits.

My time-proven plan to help you add to your profits is a product of 28 years of intensive research, study, and consulting work with restaurants all over the nation. I found that where food costs exceed 40 percent, staggering amounts slip through restaurant managers' fingers. Then I tracked down the causes of these losses. I can find these trouble spots in your business—and I'll prove this to you in extra income dollars!

To make these extra profits, all you do is send me, for a 30-day period, your guest checks, bills, and a few other items. After analyzing these items using my proven method, I will write you an eye-opening report that will tell you how much money your restaurant should make and how to make it.

From the report, you will learn in detail just what items are causing your higher food costs. And you will learn how to correct them. Even your menu will receive thorough treatment. You will know what "best-sellers" are paying their way—what "poor movers" are eating into your profits. All in all, you'll get practical suggestions that will show you how to cut costs, build volume, and pocket a net 10 to 20 percent of sales.

For a more detailed explanation of this service, review the information presented at my website (<http://www.restaurantconsulting4747.com/>). Then let me prove to you, as I have to so many others, that I can add money to your income this year. This added profit can be yours for the modest investment of BDT 7,50,000 (BDT 3,00,000 now and the other 4,50,000 when our profit plan report is submitted). Just email the information requested below and I'll do the rest.

That extra BDT 25,00,000 or more will make you glad you did!

Bishal Rorce

Consultant

You were sent this message because of your status in the restaurant field. If you wish to be removed from our list, please send an email with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

This message follows the conventional sales communication strategy. Its primary appeal is reasonable, which is acceptable in this situation. The assertion that the primary message is given in you-viewpoint language in the subject line of the email attracts attention. This appeal is continued in the first sentence with a compelling testimony. The reader is then informed of the benefits they will receive from the service in effective you-viewpoint writing. The message then calls for action when the sale is over. The action's primary benefit—earning money—is connected to it in the final phrase. A post note explaining how to "unsubscribe" conforms with all legal requirements and is composed politely.

Collections

A corporate organization's ability to operate successfully depends on the prompt collection of funds. The quantity of capital turnover would decrease if the creditors do not settle their bills within the allotted time period. This might negatively impact the company's profit that had provided the items on credit. As a result, several businesses have developed an efficient gathering method or system. The system's primary goal is to preserve the contractual contact with the clients while also collecting the outstanding debts. You should keep the following in mind in order to accomplish both these goals:

1. In your interactions with the borrower, exercise patience, tact, and courtesy. Never ascribe any reasons. Always think he is serious and will make the payment.
2. Determine the extent of the communication gap based on the credit risk category and the urgency of the collection. You might make a choice based on the assets, amount of business, and history of debt repayment of the consumer.
3. Send a statement on a monthly basis to begin. Add a regular reminder after that. The next step is to send a private letter and email to the concerned officer, and if you don't hear back, call them. As a last option, send a letter providing legal action notice.
4. Use the customer's feeling of justice, goodwill, or self-interest to elicit a reaction. You might also try to arouse in him feelings of dread and pity.

Illustration of Collection Procedure:

First Mail

Dear Sir,

I am sending a copy of the statement of account dispatched to you on 30 July, 20XX. The draft for BDT 1,55,000 for the supply of 5 premium office chairs has not yet been received.

Please expedite payment.

Yours faithfully
ABC
Credit Manager

Source: Business Correspondence and Report Writing, Sharma & Mohan

Second Reminder: Formal Letter

Dear Sir,

This is our third attempt to collect BDT 1,55,000 that you owe for the supply of 5 premium office chairs to you on 15 July 20XX. No action seems to have been taken on our statement of account sent to you on 30 July and our remainder of 15 July.

We had readily agreed to your terms of credit and it is only fair that you honor them. If perchance our earlier communications have escaped your attention, I am sure this one will reach you and evoke a prompt response.

Yours faithfully
ABC
Credit Manager

Source: Business Correspondence and Report Writing, Sharma & Mohan

Third Reminder: Personal Email & Letter

Dear Mr. XYZ,

Greetings. We hope you are doing well.

As you know, we supplied 5 premium office chairs to you.to your firm on 15 July 20XX, and for this supply a sum of BDT 1,55,000 was to be remitted to us in early August. But despite three communications, we have not so far received the payment. We do not in any way wish to damage your credit reputation. I am aware that you value yours just as we do ours. But any more delay on your part may force us to a still avoidable course of action.

I should therefore be grateful if you could kindly send the amount by demand draft immediately on receipt of this letter.

Yours faithfully
ABC
Credit Manager

Source: Business Correspondence and Report Writing, Sharma & Mohan

Final reminder: Formal Letter

Dear Mr. XYZ,

This is to inform you that unless the demand draft for BDT 1,55,000 is received by 15 November, 20XX, we shall place the matter in the hands of our legal adviser for necessary action.

Yours faithfully
ABC
Credit Manager

Source: Business Correspondence and Report Writing, Sharma & Mohan

Topic – 13: Job Search Process Strategies

The job search process is one that almost everyone has to conduct at some point in their life regardless of their background, social status and skillsets. Finding a job is crucial to one's success and happiness, whether it's for his/her first job or one that comes later in the career. It is crucial that one carries out the job hunt effectively, plans carefully and moves forward attentively.

Steps in Job Search Process

Step 1: Find the Right Jobs

- Build Network: Its important to have a strong network who can help you finding a job. One should broaden his circle of friends who can help him/her in future for a career move. A good relationship with university professors can be helpful as they can vouch for you for companies. Meeting key business people is also crucial in getting a job. These people can be met through LinkedIn, business events or through family and friends. These people can help one navigate the process of getting his/her desired jobs.
- Identify Appropriate Jobs: Identifying the right job requires one to analyze internal factors such as his/her values, short-term & long-term goals, skillsets, his/her wants, needs & desires as well as external factors such as salary, annual benefits, vacation time, provident fund, health insurance, perks, office environment, nature of work etc. Another important factor is work experience which will filter the jobs that'll match the candidate. The candidate needs to honestly assess these factors and then search the jobs that'll suit him/her best.
- Find the Employer: For a fresh grad, career center can provide a good medium to connect with potential employers. The career center maintains databases on registrants with educational records, resumes, and recommendations for potential employers to check. The centers provide outstanding job search assistance. Most provide directories with contact names and addresses for the big corporations. And the majority provide chances for interviews. One can also utilize his/her personal connections to find opportunities. He/she can also look into classified ads, online sources like LinkedIn Jobs, Glass Door, Indeed etc. Finally, there are employment agencies and headhunters who manages hiring for top companies. A candidate can contact these agencies and expect to get into the hiring process for a job that matches his/her profile.

Step 2: Preparing the application documents

The applicant documents play crucial part in getting a job. Proper management of the documents will lead to more jobs. These documents include mainly a resume, a cover letter, your grade/ marks sheet, HSC, SSC & graduation certificates, NID, copies of other relevant certificates etc. But the main two documents that needs your attention are resume and cover letter. The next module will cover these two topics in details. These documents need selling, thus creating them is similar to creating a sales document. Your capacity to perform work is the product or service you are offering. The reference sheet and resume resemble the supporting documentation that goes with the sales pitch. The sales message and the cover message are quite similar.

You start writing your written job application by researching what you are selling, which is you. You then examine the work. Performing a self-evaluation, or self-analysis, is a necessary part of studying oneself. List every detail about yourself that you think a potential employer would want to know before anything else. Learning as much as you can about the business, its strategies, rules, and operations is part of studying the task. The firm's website, annual report, and other publications, as well as several corporate databases, may all be studied. You can also look up any recent news items about the company there.

Proper construction of resume and cover letter is essential to get to the interview stage of any job. As there are many other candidates like you who is competing for the job, your resume and cover letter needs to stand out to get the attention of the person in charge of hiring. To do that you need to correctly structure the CV and write a persuasive cover letter. You also need to put an extra effort in tailoring these documents to the overall theme of the company. For example: banks want CVs that are very professional, brief and key points highlighted. Therefore, you should focus greatly on making your CV as streamlined as possible while emphasizing your strengths and accomplishments that align with the needs of the business.

Step 3: The Interview

In a job interview, you and a potential employer communicate and exchange questions and information. Your aim is to discover the ideal fit for your objectives and talents. The employer wants to hire the best candidates for available positions. The following steps will ensure a smooth interview process:

- Gather Information about the Company: Before going to the interview, you need to learn about the company. Learn about the company's management, people, business procedures, present activities, and goods or services it offers. Such information will enable you to converse intelligently with the interviewer. And maybe more importantly, the fact that you took the effort to research the organization will probably make the interviewer impressed. You could even get a competitive edge from that effort.

- Wear Appropriate Attire: The way a candidate looks speaks volumes about their personality, professionalism, and ability to discern the unspoken laws of a given scenario. Therefore, clothing and grooming are crucial components of preparation. Your study into various professions and sectors should give you an understanding of what is expected of business dress. A conservative business suit in a dark solid color or a mild pattern, such as pinstripes, is appropriate for many professional or management professions. Men should wear an unobtrusive tie, and women should wear a shirt that matches their outfit. Traditional wear like saree, salwar-kameez can be worn if they are not too colorful or ornamental.
- Prepare Answers in Anticipation of Questions: Some of the interviewer's questions should be easy for you to predict. Typically, questions concerning your academic history (courses, grades, awards, etc.) are asked. Questions regarding hobbies, aspirations for your career, preferred locations, and involvement in organizations are also relevant. These questions should have answers ready in beforehand. Then, your answers will be thorough and correct, and you'll speak with grace and assurance. Planning will also demonstrate how enthusiastic you are.
- Keep Calm: You should appear calm and composed while being examined by the interviewer. Keep your body and facial motions under control. Self-discipline is needed to develop these controls, therefore work at it. Trying to convince yourself that the tension you feel during an interview is normal may be useful. To create the greatest possible impression to the interviewer, you must learn to regulate your emotions.
- Help Controlling the Dialogue: It's not always enough to just respond to questions. You are not the only one being assessed; you are also assessing others. What you want the interviewer to learn about you should come up in the questions you ask and the remarks you make in response to them. Your self-analysis highlighted your background's strong qualities. Make sure those things are mentioned in the interview now.

Typical Interview Questions:

1. What can you do for us?
2. Would you be willing to relocate? To travel?
3. Do you prefer to work with people or alone?
4. How well has your performance in the classroom prepared you for this job?
5. What do you expect to be doing in 10 years? In 20 years?
6. What income goals do you have for those years (10 and 20 years ahead)?
7. Why should I rank you above the others I am interviewing?
8. Why did you choose _______ for your career?
9. How do you feel about working overtime? Nights? Weekends?
10. Did you do the best work you are capable of in college?
11. Is your college record a good measure of how you will perform on the job?
12. What are the qualities of the ideal boss?
13. What have you done that shows leadership potential? Teamwork potential?
14. What is your greatest weakness?
15. With hindsight, how could you have improved your progress?
16. What kind of decisions are most difficult for you
17. What are your beginning salary expectations?

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Step 4: Follow up and Finish the Application

You might need to send a quick thank-you note through letter, email, or phone after the interview. It is acceptable to contact the potential employer by phone, email, or letter to find out the status of your application if you haven't heard back from them after a fair amount of time has passed. If the offer from another firm has a time constraint, you should definitely take advantage of it.

Job Resignation Letter:

You will probably leave one job at some time in your career in order to accept another. As far as the situation allows, your resignation should be positive. Even if your work experiences have not been pleasant, you should decide to quit without having one last angry outburst. For negative communications like resignations, the indirect order is typically the best course of action. It has a greater chance of cultivating the goodwill and positive perception you wish to leave behind.

Example of Job Resignation Letter:

Dear Mr. XYZ,

Working a financial analyst for the past two years has been a genuinely rewarding experience. Under your direction I have grown as a finance professional. And I know you have given me a practical education in analyzing companies.

As you may recall from our past discussions, I have been pursuing the same career goals that you held early in your career. So, you will understand why I am now resigning to accept an investment banking position with AMXZ Bank. I would like my employment to end on the 31st, but I could stay a week or two longer if needed to help train my replacement.

I leave with only good memories of you and the other people with whom I worked. Thanks to all of you for a valuable contribution to my career.

Yours faithfully
ABC

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Cases

Case – 1

Suppose that you are a senior credit analyst for PXX Bank. You have been conducting research for a client's business loan request. The client is in oil and gas business and to know whether he will be able to pay back the loan properly, you need to understand how the business will perform in the next 5 years. You know a professor from your university who has been consulting for energy industry for almost a decade in Bangladesh. You want to know how the industry is performing, whether there will be volatility in energy prices, who are the current major players, what government regulation will impact the industry and want to set up a meeting to discuss the client.

1. Write an inquiry email to your professor to get the answers to your questions.

Case – 2

You are in charge of procuring office supply for your new branch in Zatrabari. You have placed and order to SMP Wholesalers for 10 chairs, 5 desks, 2 long tables. Upon arrival, you have seen that some of the desks are worn out and not up to the standards mentioned in the brochure. Your boss has asked you to resolve this situation quickly and without any additional budget. You are disappointed and decided to write a claim letter to SMP. Upon receiving the claim letter, SMP decided that the claims were just and valid. They also recognized that their warehouse crew have been responsible for the poor handling of the products which resulted in diminished quality. They want to rectify the situation and protect the client relation.

1. Write the claim letter to SMP.
2. Imagine you are the senior sales manager of SMP. Write an adjustment letter to your client.

Case – 3

You are the senior relationship manager of Starks & Co. Bank. You have been servicing a medium enterprise for over 3 years now. Your client has taken business loans from you and have repaid the loans with interests properly in the past. You provided the client with working capital loan, term loan and land lease financing. The client has employee pay accounts with your bank and also the business's current account. This week, the client has asked you to provide him a personal loan. He wants to buy some gadgets for his home. Although the client's business credit history is acceptable, his personal credit score in not. He had run into credit card arrears before and failed to pay his card bills several times within the stipulated time. From your history with the client, you also know that he has a gambling problem and has lost money in the past. You fear this time he is lying and just wants to gamble away the personal loan provided to him. Therefore, you decided not to provide him with the personal loan.

1. Given the importance of retaining the client's business, write a refusal to the client's loan request.
2. The client is furious you denied his request. He feels betrayed. In the reply, he threatened to move his business to your competition X&Y Bank. You know this will negatively impact your P&L and you need to ease the client. Write a persuasive message to the client to not switch banks.

Case -4

You are a junior marketing manager for Global Credit Corp. which is a preeminent bank worldwide. You are a launching a new credit card next month which will be very cheap to use and with attractive rates on credit. The credit card will enable the users to do international transactions and borrow credit up to BDT 7,50,000. You think your bank's credit card will gain popularity because of the simplicity on use, reduced fees and having no hidden charges. You are put in charge of communicating this message through a sales letter to potential clients of the bank who already have a bank account with you and but not using any credit card service.

1. Write a sales letter on availing the credit card.

Case – 5

You have just graduated from your university majoring in finance & banking. You are currently looking for a job for Management Trainee positions within the banking industry. As a fresh graduate, you want to impress potential employers and secure as many interviews as possible. Upon sending your CV & cover letter to several banks, you are asked for an interview at X&Y bank. You know X&Y Bank is one of the top banks in the country. You need to prepare well for the interview.

1. How would you prepare for the interview?
2. Suppose during the interview, you are asked the following questions
    - What can you do for us?
    - Why should we hire you?

- What do you expect from this job?

Prepare the answers to these questions.

MCQ Questions

1. Which method is best for asking your client for additional information?
   a. Direct Method
   b. Indirect Method
   c. Combined Method
   d. Persuasion
2. Which of the following is not a part of order form?
   a. A note to reduce the prices
   b. Preferred Mode of transportation
   c. Agreed upon Unit Price
   d. Catalogue Numbers
3. Which of the following is not an example of using indirectness:
   a. Refused Requests
   b. Negative Adjustment Letters
   c. Collection Letters
   d. Sales letter
4. What is the common objective of all persuasion message?
   a. Convince someone to take your desired action
   b. Sell a product to a new customer
   c. Make a request to get additional funding
   d. None of the above.
5. Which of the following is a common mistake in persuasive communication?
   a. Selling too hard
   b. Compromising
   c. Appealing emotionally to the audience
   d. Thinking persuasion as not a one-time approach
6. What is the first step in writing a sales message?
   a. Assess audience needs
   b. Get the reader's attention
   c. Plan the sales message

d. None of the above

7. What is a collection letter?
   a. A document of collecting goods
   b. An agreement of collecting information
   c. A message asking for payment
   d. A letter for sending collection
8. Which of the following is not a way to find potential employer?
   a. Contacting the career center
   b. Browsing people in LinkedIn
   c. Contacting a headhunter
   d. All of the above

Short Questions

1. What is a claims letter?
2. What is direct & indirect method in business communication?
3. What are steps in writing effective adjustment letters?
4. How do you plan the bad news in indirect communication?
5. Give an example of refused request.
6. What is credit refusal?
7. How would you balance the three kinds of appeal in writing a persuasive message?
8. State the ethics in persuasion.
9. How do you get the reader's attention in writing a persuasive sales message?

Broad Questions

1. Write the generic plan for direct communication.
2. Write the generic plan for bad news messages.
3. What are steps in writing refused requests?
4. What are the general rules of persuasive messages?
5. What are the common mistakes in persuasive communication?
6. Describe the steps in planning sales messages.
7. How would you find the right job? Describe the steps.
8. How would you prepare for an interview at a bank? Briefly describe the steps.

Module D: Fundamentals of Business Letters and Report Writing

Topic – 14: Application Letter, Effective CV Writing, Thank you letter

Application Writing (Cover Letter)

The application or cover letter for job is the first impression that is made to the person who is hiring. When writing the cover letter, you should start by logically ordering and fitting the facts from your experience to the position you are seeking. Then you carefully manage the appeal as you deliver them in a manner similar to how a sales writer would explain the attributes of a commodity or service. You adjust your points as much as feasible to the reader's demands. The organizing strategies for cover letter differ depending on whether the print or digital media is chosen, just as those for sales letters.

Strategies in Writing a Cover Letter

- Gaining attention in the opening: The cover letter's introduction must both grab readers' attention and set the stage for the information review that will come next. When choosing the right start for your case, you should consider whether you are writing a prospecting or an invited letter. If the message has been welcomed, your opening remark should start by describing your qualifications for the job at hand. There are several techniques to draw attention at the introduction. One strategy is to choose a subject that demonstrates knowledge of the reader's behavior or of the job to be completed. Candidates that have made the effort to research the organization are likely to impress employers.
- Selecting Content: As a follow-up to your introduction, you should discuss your suitability for the job. Review the prerequisites for the work before starting this assignment. Then decide which aspects of your background best suit the position. You should present facts from four background areas: education, experience, and skills and personal details. Keep in mind that the cover letter sells, while the résumé highlights the key points. Therefore, the key facts you utilize to defend your perspective should be included in the message. These aspects should be mentioned in the resume together with any information that substantiates them..
- Organizing for Persuasion: You should offer your self-information in the manner that works best for you. The strategy you choose is generally likely to adhere to one of three main orders. The most frequent arrangement of the data is a logical grouping, such as education, experience, skills, and personal information. A chronological order is a different order. For instance, you may display the data to demonstrate how you prepared for the

job over the years. An order depending on the requirements of the job is a third option. For instance, a job advertisement may specify the prerequisites as selling, communicating, and managing. Simply stating the facts does not guarantee conviction. Additionally, you must provide the information in a way that highlights your strengths. Overall, you are presenting yourself in the best possible way—as a candidate for employment and as a person. Your cover message will be more successful if you carefully craft the character you are portraying as well as use convincing reasons.

- Driving for action in the close: Once you've demonstrated your qualifications, your resume should naturally come to an end with a plan of action. Drive yourself to take the essential action in your circumstance. It can be an offer to speak more (perhaps to address the reader's questions), a request for an interview, or a request for contact information for references. Your requests should be concise and precise. The call to action might be made more persuasive, just as in a sales pitch, by recalling a benefit the reader would experience if they heed the call to action.

<u>Example of a Good Cover Letter</u>

The cover starts with an engaging question that prepares the audience for the presentation that follows. By demonstrating how the experience would be useful in carrying out the position sought, the cover letter perfectly emphasizes the experience part. Observe how the explanations demonstrate that the applicant is familiar with the demands of the position. Also take note of the emphasis placed throughout on reader perspective. The last call to action is a polite, straightforward, and unambiguous request. The concluding lines bring to mind the letter's major point.

Dear Mr. Rahman,

Is there a place in your marketing department for someone who is well trained in the field and can talk easily and competently with clients? My background, experience, and education have given me these special qualifications.

All my life I have lived and worked with a wide variety of people. I was born and reared by working parents in a poor section of Dhaka City. While in high school, I worked mornings and evenings in Dhaka's garment district, primarily as a host and food server. For two years, between high school and college, I worked full time as a pollster for a university. Throughout my four years of college, I worked half time as a part-time sales associate for The XYZ. From these experiences, I have learned to understand marketing. I speak marketing's language and listen carefully to people.

My studies at MNO University were specially planned to prepare me for a career in banking. I studied courses in credit analysis, financial modelling, company research, and valuation. In addition, I studied a wide variety of supplementary subjects: economics, business communication, information systems, psychology, interpersonal communication, and operations management. My studies have given me the foundation to learn an even more challenging practical side of banking work. I plan to begin working in June after I receive the Bachelor of Business Administration degree with honors (3.55 grade point average on a basis of 4.0).

These brief facts and the information in my résumé describe my dedicated efforts to prepare for a position in banking. May I now talk with you about beginning that position? You can reach me at +880123456789 to arrange an interview to talk about how I could help in your marketing department.

Sincerely,

ABC

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Effective CV Writing

Your CV will be the most crucial document in this process, despite the fact that you will write several messages during your job hunt. You may frequently use it directly, edit it for a variety of purposes, including an e-portfolio, and reuse parts of it in social networking profiles and online application forms. Creating your CV will prepare you for pre-employment tests and interviews, even if you apply to a company that doesn't need them.

There are three step writing process in a resume:

- Planning the resume
- Writing the resume
- Completing the resume

The Main items on a CV:

- Name & Contact Information
- Introductory Statement
- Educational Background
- Work Experience, Skills, Accomplishments
- Activities & Achievements
- References

<u>Four Steps in Crafting an Effective CV</u>

- **Planning:** Before starting to work on the CV, you need to understand the end goal of the situation for which you need the CV. It's often to get an interview, not a job. You need to gather as much information you can on the particular industry you are applying to. For example, for a job in a bank, it will be wise to know key regulations, banking ratios and recent activities in the sector. This will help you understand what the recruiters are looking for. Finally, you need to choose a method to organize your information. The organization should put enough emphasize on your skill & work-experience. Using chronological order is not advised unless its necessary.
- **Writing:** In writing the CV, you must plan your sentences with sufficient consideration for the recruiters. You have to make your skills, experience and educational qualifications valuable in the eyes of your employer. You must write in active voice and be precise in your language. Do not obfuscate information. The recruiters will not appreciate it if they have to put too much effort to find key information in your CV. Keep this in mind when you are writing the CV. You must use appropriate language that reflects the traditions of the industry and the companies. Professional tone is a must throughout the CV.
- **Finishing:** Choose suitable design elements and an effective layout for a clean, professional looking CV. Banking industry prefers CVs that have less of graphic ornamentation and more of concrete information in a formal manner.
- **Reviewing:** Revise the content and assess readability of your CV. You may need to modify certain parts or rewrite them to enhance clarity. Review for mistakes in spelling, sentence constructions and in the layout. When the CV is complete, submit it in accordance with the employer's instruction. You may need to mail your CV or upload it in a particular website.

Items in a CV:

Name & Contact Information:

Your name and contact information constitute the heading of your résumé; include the following: name, address (both permanent and temporary, if you're likely to move during the job search process), email address (Personal), phone number(s) and the URL of your LinkedIn profile

Introductory Statement:

The statement can be from the three following options:

- Career Goals: A career aim specifies the type of job you are trying to get or the overall professional path you intend to take. Employers are placing less focus on this in recent years. However, if you have little to no work experience in your preferred industry, a professional goal can be your best alternative. If you decide to use an aim, make sure the wording you choose connects your goals to the requirements of the company.
- Qualifications Summary: Qualifications summary offers a brief view of your key qualifications. The objective is to quickly convey to the reader what you can provide. Use a qualifications summary if you have one or more important qualifications but a lack of relevant work experience. Additionally, if you haven't had a job for very long but your undergraduate degree has given you a strong professional "theme," like statistical analysis or multimedia design, you may create a qualities summary that emphasizes your academic readiness.
- Career Summary: A career summary provides a concise overview of your professional history with the aim of showcasing your progression in responsibilities and performance. A career summary is highly helpful for those who have demonstrated they can manage escalating levels of responsibility in their chosen field and want to continue in that industry.

Educational Background:

This section will include the names of the educational institutes you went to, passing year, subject of study, GPA/CGPA and special awards or mentions if applicable. It may also contain relevant courses and contributions in academics such as research paper names etc.

Work Experience, Skills, Accomplishments:

The focus of the job experience section should be on your overall message and how it may help an employer in the future. Use keywords to highlight your job experience, responsibility level, and other relevant skills. Highlight your accomplishments in each role rather than just the general duties of the job. Starting with the most recent, list your occupations in reverse-chronological sequence. Include any volunteer work, internships, part-time employment, or temporary positions that are connected to your professional objective. Include the employer's name, address, and, if you think the readers won't know the business, a quick summary of what it does. You can only identify the company by industry when you don’t want to disclose the identity of your present employer. The jobs that are the most recent or that are most closely related to your desired role should receive the most consideration. Make sure to highlight everything for which you were directly responsible. The most crucial information you can provide to a potential employer is facts about your abilities and accomplishments, therefore quantify them whenever you can.

Activities & Achievements:

If your extracurricular activities and academic accomplishments make you a more desirable job applicant, you can utilize this optional area to emphasize them. For instance, you can demonstrate your leadership qualities by putting your experience as a member of your university or local club. Your skills in art, music or other creative areas may signal that you have a life outside your work. This is a plus point for the employers. If you actively play in a sports team, you can use that information to show that you are a team player. This is highly appreciated by the employers. If you are a debater, you can use this information to show that you are good at crafting arguments and in negotiating with counter party. It’s a much valued skill in the corporate.

References:

For professional and managerial positions, nearly all employers ask for and check references, so you need to be prepared with a list of people who are willing to speak on your behalf. People who have had the chance to assess your knowledge and abilities for the positions you are seeking for are considered to be professional references. Approaching professors and instructors, managers, coworkers, and even clients is a fantastic idea if you need professional references. Some candidates can use personal references such as coaches, volunteer coordinators etc. LinkedIn recommendations may also be necessary. You must get consent before providing references, both personal and professional. Create your reference sheet using the same structure and style as your resume, including your name and contact information at the top. The strongest three or four references you could obtain should then be listed. Include each person's name, job title, employer, workplace address, contact information, phone number, email address, etc. Here is an example of a CV:

ABC XYZ (Your Name)

4/19, battery Road, 65 park lane, Nazira Bazar, Dhaka – 1100
Phone: +880123456789, Email: abcxyz@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE

A senior executive position in a commercial bank where both technical financial knowledge and interpersonal skills are valued.

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration
University of XYZ
December 2022
CGPA : 3.50/4.00
Major: Finance, Minor: Accounting

Bachelor of Business Administration
DHK INTL Commerce University
December 2018
CGPA: 3.25/4.00
Major: Finance, Minor: Economics

SKILLSET

Technical Skills

- Financial Analysis
- Company Valuation
- Credit Analysis

Software Skills

- Microsoft Office Suite
- SPSS, Tableau
- Google Analytics

Interpersonal Skills

- Business Communication
- Negotiation & Sales
- Relationship Management
- Presentations

WORK EXPERIENCE

Junior Officer, AMXZ Bank (March 2019 – December 2022)

- Worked on assessing client credit scoring
- Assisted on loan approval process
- Worked on various project financing works with big telecom, energy and retail clients.
- Worked on developing a creative financing solution for a tech company

Intern, AFC DHK Commercial Bank (December 2018 – March 2019)

- Worked on financial reporting procedures
- Assisted the senior manager with technical issues of reporting
- Worked in ensuring compliance with IFRS & GAAP standards

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Captain, HFC Football Team

- Lead my team to championship on two regional football cups.
- I coach the under 18 team from my area

General Secretary, NZ Club

- Oversee the day to day operations of local cultural club
- Organize events on special occasions

REFERENCES

- Mr. ASDF Khan
  Head of Financial Reporting
  AFC DHK Commercial Bank
  Cell: +88014785236936
  Mail: asdf@adcb.com
- Mrs. NBVM Khatun
  Senior Relationship Manager
  AMXZ Bank
  Cell: +96325874101235
  Mail: nkhatun@amxzbd@gmail.com

Figure 13.4: Sample of a resume

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Writing a Thank you Message

The Thank-You message is sent after completing the interview. It is regarded as a courteous task. The message may be beneficial to your case if you are interested. It distinguishes you from the competitors and demonstrates your enthusiasm for the position. Usually, these communications are brief. They start by expressing their gratitude. They talk about the job, the interview, or anything similar. They conclude on a positive note, maybe with an optimistic eye toward the talks' next phase.

Example Thank – you Message

> Dear Mr. Woods:
> I genuinely appreciate the time you gave me yesterday. You were most helpful. Andyou did a good job of selling me on AMXZ Bank.
>
> As you requested, I have enclosed samples of the financial analysis I developed as a class project. If you need anything more, please let me know.
>
> I look forward to the possibility of discussing employment with you soon.
>
> Sincerely,
> ABC

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Follow-up Message:

These messages are construct if the potential employers hasn't replied to your application or called for an interview. It's best to send these messages within 1-2 weeks of the application.

> Dear Mr. Woods:
>
> Because the time is approaching when I must make a job decision, will you please tell me the status of my application with you?
>
> You may recall that you interviewed me in your office November 7. You wrote me November 12 indicating that I was among those you had selected for further consideration.
>
> AMXZ Bank remains one of the organizations I would like to consider in making my career decision. I will very much appreciate hearing from you by December 3.
>
> Sincerely,
> ABC

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Job acceptance letter:

Written job acceptances are essentially positive response messages with added goodwill. Considering that the communication should be started right away, the first response should be yes. The rest of the communication should include confirmation of the start time and location as well as remarks on the job, the business, and the interview—or anything else you would mention in person to the reader. A little message will do.

Example of Job Acceptance Message:

> Dear Mr. XYZ,
>
> Yes, I accept your offer of employment. After my first interview with you, I was convinced that AMXZ Bank was the perfect organization for me. It is good to know that you think I am right for Allison-Caldwell.
> Following your instructions, I will be in your Toronto headquarters on May 28 at 8:30 AM ready to work for you.
> Yours faithfully
> ABC

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Writing a Job Refusal Message

The indirect refusal pattern is used in messages that reject a job offer. One effective strategy is to start by making a nice remark, possibly regarding previous interactions with the organization. Next, provide a clear but encouraging case for your refusal. then conclude with a kinder remark.

Example of Job Rejection Letter:

> Dear Mr. XYZ,
>
> Meeting you and the other people at Northern was a genuine pleasure. All that I saw and heard impressed me most favorably. I was especially impressed to receive the generous job offer that followed.
>
> In considering the offer, I naturally gave some weight to these favorable impressions. Even though I have accepted a job with another fi rm, they remain strong in my mind.
>
> Thank you for the time and the courteous treatment you gave me.
>
> Sincerely,
> ABC

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Topic – 15: Formal Letter Formats

Writing formal letters is an integral part of routine activities any business organization. The appropriate language, impeccable grammar and proper structure are essential for writing professional letters. The recipients of these letters are business professionals, government entities, regulatory authorities etc. Therefore, one must be careful in writing formal letters and not to make any mistakes.

Components of the Letter Structure:

The following elements usually constitutes the structure of a business letter:

- <u>Heading:</u> For correspondence, most businesses utilize printed letterheads. Name, address, phone number, and telegraphic address, if any, are all listed on the letterhead. The type of business conducted is occasionally specified, unless it is obvious from the name of the organization itself. The name and address are typically placed in the top centre of the page, with any other information being specified in the margins. The letterhead should typically take up no more than one-fifth of the overall area in order to give the letter a balanced appearance.
- <u>Date:</u> On some letterheads, a printed line indicates where to type the date; on others, the typist determines where it should go. It has to be typed two spaces after the letterhead's final line. In the upper right-hand corner, write the day, the month, and the year.
- <u>Reference:</u> Two lines are sometimes used on letterheads as references. Give the correspondent's reference number next to the first line if your letter is a reply, and your reference number next to the second. Some businesses like to include the correspondent's reference number in the body of letters. The first approach is preferable since it saves time by allowing the receiving organization to swiftly file your letter in the appropriate folder for action thanks to the number at the top. You must write the reference number precisely as it appears in the organization's letter if you are writing to them. Punctuation marks, both capital and tiny, should be replicated accurately.
- <u>Inside Address:</u> If there is no attention line or line above the salutation, the entire address of the person or organization you are writing to should be placed two spaces above the salutation and two spaces below the date in the left margin. The names of people, businesses, streets, roads, etc., should be typed exactly as they are in the source from which you obtained the address. These specifics shouldn't be condensed. The name of the addressee should be spelled accurately with extra care. If you spell someone’s name

incorrectly, it can come off as disrespectful to them. What you type as the inner address in this part will be replicated on the envelope.

- Attention Line: A letter that is sent to a corporation or company may occasionally be designated to a specific official (either by designation or name) in that organization to guarantee timely attention. Write an attention line two spaces beneath the inner address and two spaces above the greeting to accomplish this.
- Greetings: A letter's greeting, which is a crucial component, is similar to how you welcome someone you meet. The shape of the inner address and the writer's and reader's personal relationship influence the greeting decision. Use "Dear Sirs" when writing to a business, corporation, board, club, society, or organization. You can also use it when writing to a post office or newspaper box number. Keep in mind that the greeting is unaffected by the attention line. When addressing an official by designation, use the appropriate salutation: "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam," as required. If the officer you are addressing holds a senior position within the company or is a well-respected member of society, you should address him as "Sir".
- Subject: The purpose of the subject line is to let the reader know immediately what the message is about. Like attention and reference lines, it saves time. If the letter has to be passed on to some other officer or department, it can be done quickly. The usual practice is to type this line in a double space between the salutation and the first line of the body of the letter.
- Body: A letter's primary function is to deliver a message, and that message's principal objective is to generate the desired response from the reader. This is mostly accomplished in the letter's body. Therefore, it is crucial to organize and arrange the information correctly. Reference to any prior correspondence should be made in the first paragraph, and the primary point should be presented in the second. Additional information should be included in the paragraphs that follow, if necessary. You must make it clear in the concluding paragraph what action you anticipate the reader to take. Alternatively, you might close the letter by expressing your hopes, desires, or objectives. Unless the letter is quite lengthy and covers a number of significant topics, no headers are required for the paragraphs.
- Goodwill: Goodwill is a polite way of ending the letter that makes it courteous and kind. It is written two spaces below the final line of the letter's body.
- Signature: The signature is the signed name of the writer. It is placed below the goodwill closing sentence. The writer's name is included in the signature. It is inserted after the

kind last phrase. In order to provide room for the signature, the writer's name is often typed four spaces below the final line..

- Identification Marks: One or two spaces below the signature, these markings are placed in the left margin of the message to show who typed it. Typically, the officer whose letter was dictated is identified by their initials.
- Enclosures: The enclosure line is typed two spaces below the identifying marks. This is where you must designate any attachments to the message.

Example Formal Letter:

AMXZ Bank Bangladesh
43, Lower Manhattan Road, Dhaka

11 Septermber, 20XX

XYZ Furnishers
1133, CPC Road, Gulshan
Dhaka – 1010

Dear Mr. Roy,

Will you please answer the following questions about the 6400 square-foot commercial space advertised in the March 2 issue of the Daily 'A' Newspaper? We think this space may be suitable for the new branch we are opening in Mirpur this April.

• Is the layout of these offices suitable for a work force for a bank? (If possible, please send us a diagram of the space.)

• What is the annual rental charge?

• Are housekeeping, maintenance, and utilities included?

• What is the nature of the walls and flooring?

• Does the location provide easy access to mass transportation?

• What escalation provisions are included in the lease agreement?

If your answers meet our needs, we would like to arrange a tour of the commercial space as soon as possible.

Sincerely,
ABC

AVP, AMXZ Bank

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Topic – 16: Business Proposals

The purpose of writing business proposals is to encourage the reader to take an action. They typically provide a resolution for an issue. The goal, scope, and manner of proposals can all be very different. Their goal might be anything, such as acquiring a significant customer or purchasing a new printer for a division. They might be as little as one page or as many as hundreds. Although they are often written, they can also be delivered verbally and in writing. The precise characteristics of a given proposal will depend on the situation, just like in other forms of business communication. However, all proposals may be divided into two categories: internal and external, as well as solicited and unsolicited.

Internal & External Proposals

Internal proposals are a key method by which an employee will obtain the resources required to accomplish the job, improve business performance, or bring about a significant change inside the company. These proposals include funding proposals, general business proposals, proposals for resources like additional manpower, equipment, software etc. If resources are limited, you will need to convince your superiors to give you the money rather than give it to another person or department. Even if his/her suggestion is meant to improve business operations in some way, such as by making a method, He or she might need to encourage someone to be productive or efficient.

External proposals ask for decisions or actions from organizations outside the company. Although there are many reasons why external proposals are made, the main goal is to win business for a firm or funding from an offer institution. External proposals include investment proposals, sales proposals, grant proposals etc. For example: every consulting company, regardless of its field of expertise—training, financial services, information technology, or pretty much any other business specialty—depends on outside bids to make a living. Such businesses won't last long if they can't convince businesses to use their services. Companies that provide raw materials, clothes, computers, and other necessities to other businesses would also need to produce bids in order to get business. Selling between businesses is a significant area for outside initiatives.

Unsolicited & Solicited Proposals

A solicited proposal is a proposal that has been filed in response to a formal request made by a company, foundation, or governmental entity with specifications to follow or goals to accomplish.

In general, solicitations are indirect, accessible to the public, and publicly publicized for everyone to view. However, the solicitation may take the form of a direct verbal or written request. Requests for proposals (RFPs), requests for quotes (RFQs), and invitations to bid (IFBs) are often used in business, industry, and government to obtain business proposals. RFPs generally include information on the product or service, submission requirements, and assessment standards. Although service and maintenance may be included in the proposal, RFQs place an emphasis on pricing. IRBs are frequently task-specific in the sense that they cover a project requiring a schedule, labor, and resources.

An unsolicited proposal is one that is submitted without any invitation. In business writing, unsolicited proposals are similar to "cold calls." They need a deep awareness of the industry, the product, and/or the service, and often present in a generic rather than client-specific manner. However, with time and effort, they may be customized for certain firms, and the ability to demonstrate an understanding of particular requirements or desires can turn an otherwise generic, brochure-like proposal into a persuasive sales pitch. But if it hasn't been explicitly or indirectly requested, it might be difficult to convey a customized message to your target audience. Unsolicited proposals are sometimes seen as marketing documents that are more designed to pique interest for a subsequent contact than to close deals.

Writing A Proposal

Format

There are vast variations in proposal structure and formality. The most basic ideas look like official email reports. Though there are few exceptions, internal proposals generally fit into this category. The longer, full-dress reports that contain prefatory pages (title pages, letters of transmittal, tables of contents, and executive summaries), text, and a variety of additional elements may be used for the more sophisticated proposals. Most proposals have agreements that lie in the middle of these two possibilities. Before creating a specific proposal, it would be wise to conduct comprehensive research due to the broad differences in the composition of proposals. Try to determine from your study what format is prevalent among the intended audience. Examine what other individuals have done in similar situations. If the proposal is one that has been invited, carefully read the request and seek for any indications of the inviting organization's preferences. If none of these courses are available to you, create your own format based on your audience analysis and your understanding of formatting techniques. You should use the design that, in your opinion, works best in that specific circumstance.

Proposal Formalities

The same guideline also applies to formality selections. Allow the reader and the situation to serve as your guides. Due to the parties' frequent familiarity with one another and the fact that internal documents are often less formal than external ones, internal proposals are more informal than external ones. A formal presentation—either oral, written, or both—might be necessary if you are proposing a substantial project or change. External proposals, on the other hand, can be rather informal if they are brief and the individuals involved know each other well, despite the fact that they tend to be formal. Successful business proposals frequently take the form of letters. Knowing your reader and tailoring your message to them are crucial, just as with any other type of message.

Proposal’s Content

The core elements of the proposal are below

Introduction: Decide which issue you want to tackle or which opportunity you want to pursue.

- Background: Review the current situation succinctly, emphasize the necessity for action, and describe how it may be made better. Persuade readers that an issue or an opportunity exists in unsolicited proposals.
- Solution: Write a precise summary of the solution you propose, emphasizing its main selling points and advantages to demonstrate how it would address the reader's issue.
- Scope: Specify the parameters of the plan, including what you will and won't do.
- Proposal Organization: Draw the reader's attention to the primary issues of discussion and introduce them to the remainder of the proposal.

Body: Describe the suggested solution in full detail and provide expected outcomes.

- Facts: Provide facts that support your proposed solution and show evidence if required.
- Proposed Solution: Tell the reader about your idea, product, or service. Benefits to the reader should be emphasized, as should any competitive advantages.
- Plan: Describe how you'll carry out the necessary tasks. Explain the steps you'll take, when you'll take them, the tools or procedures you'll use, and who will be in control. Please provide the start date, the number of stages, the completion date, and whether any more work is anticipated.

- Statement of Qualifications: Describe the capabilities, expertise, and resources of your firm while tying them to the demands of the readers. Specify a list of recommendations from clients.
- Costs: Show the reader that your costs are reasonable by breaking them down so they may understand the costs associated with labor, supplies, transportation, travel, training, and other areas.

Conclusion

Summarize the most important aspects, highlight the advantages of your suggested solution, and invite the reader to make a decision.

- Review of argument: Briefly summarize the key points.
- Review of reader benefits: Briefly describe how your proposal will benefit the reader.
- Review of the merits of your approach: Give a concise description of why your plan will be more successful than alternatives.
- Restatement of qualifications: Reiterate briefly in external proposals why you and your company should complete the assignment.
- Request: Ask for a decision from the reader.

Supplementary Elements

- Appendix: Additional information that is essential but not included in the primary text is included here. The information may be too long or may not directly relate to the report. Your table of contents should include an appendix.
- Resumes of Key Players: For external proposals, resumes can persuade the reader that you have the skills necessary to accomplish the proposal's goals.

Example of Short Internal Proposal

This straightforward proposal is for the author to join an organization. It begins with a brief introduction that refers to the reader's invitation for the proposal. Then it makes its argument, methodically moving from background information through membership benefits to expenses. The suggestion to sponsor membership comes at the conclusion.

To... Helen_Hobson@sprint.com

Cc...

Subject: Sponsored members in the Association for Business Communication

As you requested May 17, following is my proposal for Sprint to sponsor my membership in the Association for Business Communication (ABC).

Description of ABC

The primary professional organization in business communication, ABC is dedicated to keeping its members informed of the latest developments in business communication theory and practice. It informs its members through two quarterly publications: (research and theory) and (practice).

In addition, the Association holds an annual meeting as well as regional meetings throughout the United States and Canada. The Southwest Region meets with the Federation of Business Disciplines Organization [FBD], the largest cross-discipline business meeting (13 divisions) in the nation. Papers presented at these meetings cover both the current theoretical and practical topics in business communication.

Recently, the Association added three international regions: Europe (including Africa and the Middle East); Caribbean, Central, and South America; and Asia and the Pacific. With representatives from these regions on the Board of Directors, ABC holds regional meetings in these new geographical regions regularly. This expansion in the organization gives ABC a truly global perspective. Moreover, ABC provides a listserve (BizCom) that serves as a discussion network for ABC members on current research and practice in the field.

Founded in 1936, ABC now has 2,213 members, including 829 institutions. Of the individual memberships, most (1,236) are academics from the United States and Canada. But 148 are business professionals. Companies represented include IBM, AT&T, Exxon, Imperial Oil, State Farm Insurance, McDonnell Douglas, and Aetna Insurance. ABC's diverse membership provides an effective exchange of experience and knowledge.

Benefits of Membership

Membership in ABC would benefit Sprint as well as me personally. The meetings and the publications would enable me to bring the latest communication knowledge to my editorial work. ABC would be especially helpful in my assignments involving teaching communication to our employees, for much of its emphasis is on teaching techniques. Also, membership in ABC would enhance Sprint's image. ABC is a prestigious organization, and its members include the corporate elite. In addition, meeting with the members of other companies would help me to do a better job of directing Sprint's communication activities.

Costs of Memberhip

ABC annual dues are $80, which includes subscriptions to the and The costs of attending the meetings would vary with the meeting sites. For this year, the approximate costs of the international meeting in New Orleans would be $905 (registration, $85; transportation, $320; hotel, $320; meals, $140; miscellaneous, $40). For the regional meeting in Houston it would be $710 (registration, $70; transportation, $250; hotel, $240; means, $120; miscellaneous, $30). The total cost for this year would be $1,695.

Recommended Action

Because of the high quality of the organization, the benefits of membership, and the reasonable costs, I recommend that Sprint sponsor my membership on a one-year trial basis. At the end of this year, I would review actual benefits received and recommend whether to continue membership.

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

As we can see from the illustration, the writer's purpose begins with proposal. Descriptions provide background information, create trustworthiness, and indicate a need. The proposal outlines the benefits of membership for both businesses and individuals. The precise information strengthens the argument. Finally, the specified action completes the plan.

Example of Solicited External Proposal

An enterprise resource planning (ERP) system—information technology that integrates all business functions, from job orders to delivery and from accounting to customer management—has been implemented by a design and manufacturing company. The company has invited research firms to propose plans for tracking its implementation. Given the relative briefness of the proposal and the previous meeting between the two parties, the level of formality of this response to the RFP is adequate.

February 3, 2007

Lobster Royco
Chief Operations Officer
RT Industries
101 Mirpur Road
Dhaka – 1200

Dear Lob,

Thank you for inviting WHITFIELD Organizational Research to bid on RFP 046, "Study of InfoStream Implementation at RT Industries." Attached is our response. We enjoyed meeting with you to learn about your goals for this research. All expert advice supports the wisdom of your decision to track InfoStream's implementation. As you know, the road of ERP adoption is littered with failed, chaotic, or financially bloated implementations. Accurate and timely research will help make yours a success story.

WHITFIELD Organizational Research is well qualified to assist you with this project. Our experienced staff can draw upon a variety of minimally invasive, cost-effective research techniques to acquire reliable information on your employees' reception and use of InfoStream. We are also well acquainted with ERP systems and can get a fast start on collecting the data you need. And, because WHITFIELD is a local firm, we will save you travel and lodging costs.

RT's culture of employee involvement has earned you a persistent presence on the list of the Best Dhaka Workplaces. The research we propose, performed by WHITFIELD's knowledgeable and respectful researchers, will help you maintain your productive culture through this period of dramatic change. It will also help you reap the full benefits of your investment.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with RT Industries on this exciting initiative.

Sincerely yours,

ABC
Vice President, Account Management

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

As we can see from the sample, it specifies the proposal's context and expresses gratitude for the invitation to submit. The proposal highlights the importance of the study and brings up the past pleasant meeting for the reader. It also lists the benefits of the firm making the proposal. The last section of the proposal compliments the recipient, demonstrates the writer's familiarity with the business, and lists the advantages of picking the writer's organization. The author then subtly requests the reader to take the desired action in the final sentence.

Response to RFP 046:
Study of InfoStream Implementation at RT Industries

Proposed by
Whitfield Organizational Research
February 3, 2007

I. Executive Summary

RT Industries has begun a major organizational change with its purchase of InfoStream enterprise resource planning (ERP) software. To track the effect of this change on personnel attitudes and work processes in the company, RT seeks the assistance of a research firm with expertise in organizational studies. Whitfield Organizational Research has extensive experience with personnel-based research and familiarity with ERP software. We propose a four-part plan that will take place across the first year of implementation. It will yield three major deliverables: an initial, a midyear, and a year-end report. Our methodology will be multifaceted, minimally disruptive, and cost effective. The results will yield a reliable picture of how InfoStream is being received and used among RT's workforce. Whitfield can also advise RT management on appropriate interventions during the process to enhance the success of this companywide innovation.

II. Project Goals

RT Industries has so far invested over $1.6 million and over 1,000 employee hours in the purchase of and management's training on InfoStream's ERP system. As RT integrates the system fully into its company of 800+ employees over the next 12 months, it will invest many additional dollars and hours in the project, with the total investment likely to top $2 million. Adopting such a system is one of the most wide-ranging and expensive changes a company can make.

As Jeri Dunn, Chief Information Officer of Nestle USA, commented in about her company's well-publicized troubles with their ERP software, "No major software implementation is really about the software. It's about change management." An ERP system affects the daily work of virtually everyone in the company. The most common theme in ERP-adoption failure stories—of which there are many—is lack of attention to the employees' experience of the transition. Keeping a finger on the pulse of the organization during this profound organizational change is critical to maximizing the return on your investment.

Our research will determine

- How well employees are integrating InfoStream into their jobs.
- How the new system is changing employees' work processes.
- How the system is affecting the general environment or "culture" in the company.

Whitfield has designed a four-part, multimethod research plan to gather these data. Through our periodic reports, you will be able to see how InfoStream is being integrated into the working life of the company. As a result, you will be

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz.

The proposal gives a concise description of the problem, goal, and advantages.

It demonstrates the company's expertise and serves to remind readers of the investment they want to safeguard.

The project goals reinforce the need for the study. The statement of benefits is supported by clear logic

Whitfield Organizational Research

able to make, and budget for, such interventions as strategic communications and additional training. You will also find out where employee work processes need to be adjusted to accommodate the new system.

Instituting a change of this magnitude generate feedback, whether it is employee grumbling or constructive criticism. Whitfield associates will gather this feedback in a positive, orderly way and compile it into a usable format. The findings will enable RT's management to address initial problems and ward off future problems. The research itself will also contribute to the change management efforts of the company by giving RT's employee stakeholders a voice in the process and allowing their feedback to contribute to the initiative's success.

III. Deliverables

The information you need will be delivered as shown below. All dates assume a project start date of July 1, 2007.

Approximate Date:	Deliverable:
October 1, 2007	Written report on **initial** study of 12–14 employees' work processes and attitudes and on companywide survey.
February 1, 2008	Written report at **midyear** on employees' work processes and attitudes and on companywide survey.
June 30, 2008	**Year-end** report (written and oral) on employees' work processes and attitudes and on companywide survey.

IV. Anticipated Schedule/Methods

The research will take place from July 1, 2007, the anticipated go-live date for InfoStream at RT, to approximately June 30, 2008, a year later. As shown below, there will be four main components to this research, with Part III forming the major part of the project.

Research Part and Time Frame	Purpose	Methods
Part I (July '07)	Gather background information; recruit research participants	Gather data on RT (history, products/ mission, organizational structure/ culture, etc.). Interview personnel at RT and at InfoStream about why RT considered adopting an ERP system, why RT bought InfoStream, and how employees at RT have been informed about InfoStream. During this period we will also work with the COO's staff to recruit participants for the main part of the study (Part III).

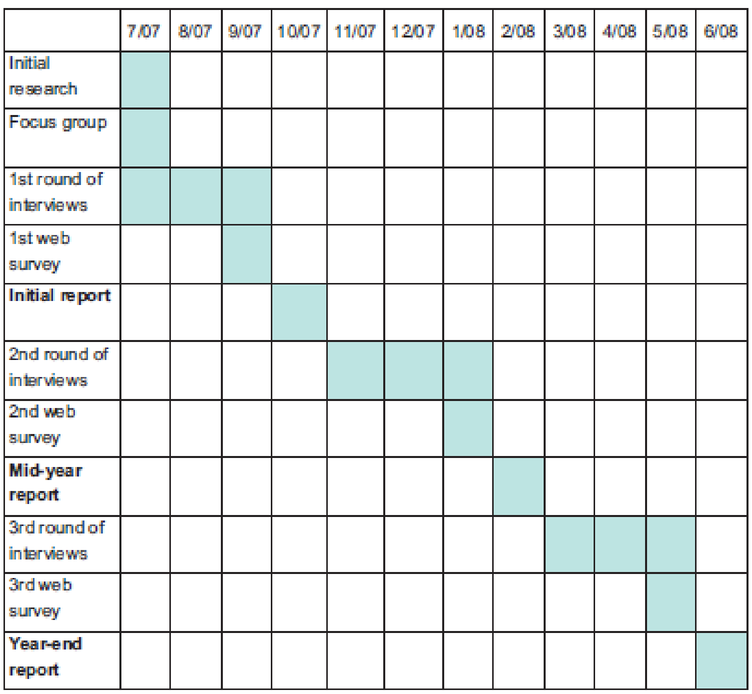
The reader can immediately view the results of the suggested study. The proposal presents project information in an easily understandable style.

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Whitfield Organizational Research

Research Part and Time Frame	**Purpose**	**Methods**
Part II (July '07):	Obtain the perspective of the launch team on InfoStream	Focus-group interview with RT's launch team for InfoStream, with particular emphasis on their goals for and concerns about the implementation. Anticipated duration of this interview would be one hour, with participants invited to share any additional feedback afterward in person or by email.
Part III (July–Sept. '07; Nov. '07–Jan. '08; Mar.–June '08):	Assess the impact of InfoStream on employee work processes and attitudes	Conduct three rounds of 1–2 hour interviews with approximately 12–14 RT employees to track their use of InfoStream. Ideally, we will have one or two participants from each main functional area of the company, with multiple levels of the company represented.
Part IV (September '07, January '08, May '08)	Assess companywide reception of InfoStream	Conduct three web-based surveys during the year to track general attitudes about the implementation of InfoStream.

This plan yields the following time line:



It is simple to see what will happen at each stage owing to the timetable.

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

V. Interview Structure and Benefits

While Parts I, II, and IV will provide essential information about the project and its reception, the most valuable data will come from Part III, the periodic on-site interviews with selected RT employees. Gathering data in and about the subject's own work context is the only reliable way to learn what is really happening in terms of the employees' daily experience. Following is a description of our methodology for gathering these kinds of data:

Initial interview:

- Gather background information about the participants (how long they have worked at RT, what their jobs consist of, what kind of computer experience they've had, how they were trained on InfoStream).
- Ask them to show us, by walking us through sample tasks, how they use InfoStream.
- Ask them to fill out a questionnaire pertaining to their use of InfoStream.
- Go back over their answers, asking them to explain orally why they chose the answers they did.
- Ask them either to keep notes on or email us about any notable experiences they have with InfoStream.
- Take notes on any interruption, interactions, and other activities that occur during the interview.

From data gained in these interviews, we will assess how well the participants' current work processes are meshing with InfoStream. We will also document how use of InfoStream is affecting the participants' attitudes and their interactions with other employees and departments. We will check our findings with the participants for accuracy before including these data in the initial report.

Midyear interview:

- Ask the participants if they have any notable experiences to relate about InfoStream and/or if any changes have occurred in the tasks they perform using InfoStream.
- Have the participants fill out the same questionnaire as in the first interviews.
- Discuss with participants the reasons for any changes in their answers since the first questionnaire.
- Observe any interactions or other activities that occur during the interview.
- Check our findings with the participants for accuracy before including these data in the midyear report.

Year-end interviews:

- Will be conducted in the same fashion as the second interviews.
- Will also include questions allowing participants to debrief about the project and about InfoStream in general.

Benefits of this interview method:

- Because researchers will be physically present in the employees' work contexts, they **can gather a great deal of information,** whether observed or reported by the employee, **in a short amount of time.**
- Because employees will be asked to elaborate on their written answers, the researcher **can learn the true meaning of the employee's responses.**

The most expensive portion of the plan is justified by a special section that describes the company's distinctive process.

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

- Asking employees to verify the researcher's findings **will add another validity check and encourage honest, thorough answers.**

VI. Specific Knowledge Goals

We will design the interviews and the companywide surveys to find out the extent to which

- InfoStream is making participants' jobs easier or harder, or easier in some ways and harder in others.
- InfoStream is making their work more or less efficient.
- InfoStream is making their work more or less effective.
- They believe InfoStream is helping the company overall.
- They are satisfied with the instruction they have received about the system.
- InfoStream is changing their interactions with other employees.
- InfoStream is changing their relations with their supervisors.
- InfoStream is affecting their overall attitude toward their work.

The result will be a detailed, reliable picture of how InfoStream is playing out at multiple levels and in every functional area of RT Industries, enabling timely intervention by RT management.

VII. Cost

Because we are a local firm, no travel or lodging expenses will be involved.

Research Component	Estimated Hours	Cost
Part I (background fact finding)	6 hours	$300
Part II (focus group with launch team)	3 hours (includes preparation and analysis)	$300
Part III (3 rounds of on-site interviews)	474 hours	$18,960
Part IV (3 rounds of web-based surveys)	48 hours	$1,920
Preparation of Reports	90 hours	$3,600
		Total: $25,080

VIII. Credentials

Whitfield Organizational Research has been recognized by the American Society for Training and Development as a regional leader in organizational consulting. We have extensive education and experience in change management, organizational psychology, quantitative and qualitative research methods, and team building. Our familiarity with ERP software, developed through projects with such clients as Orsys and PRX Manufacturing, makes us well suited to serve RT's needs. Résumés and references will be mailed upon request or can be downloaded from <www.whitfieldorganizationalresearch.com>.

The proposed goals provide the reader with exactly what he/she wants to know. This inspires a desire to hire the company.

Although not detailed enough for the reader to pick out particular costs, the cost breakdown justifies the outlay.

The section on effective credentials concentrates on the credentials that apply in this case.

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Topic – 17: Short Report Structure

An official document that includes factual information, statistical data, research findings, or any other type of material pertinent to the responsibilities of the job is referred to as a business report. This report is a formal document that is short and to the point in order to convey information. Business reports are mostly utilized within a business for internal communication. Reports can be of several types. Without offering analysis or recommendations, informational reports convey information in the form of statistics, facts, feedback, and other types of information. Analytical reports include information, analysis, and sometimes suggestions.

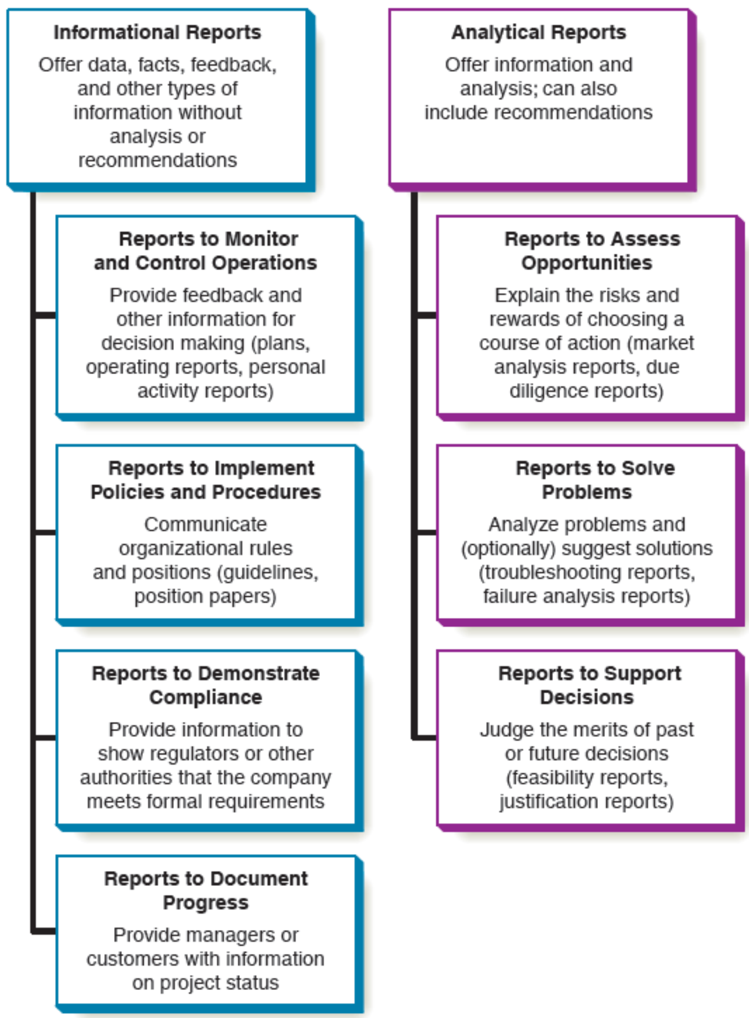


Figure 17.1: Common Types of Business Reports, Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Short Report Characteristics

- Low need for introduction: Most of the shorter, more casual reports just need little (or no) introduction information. These reports often focus on everyday issues. Their brief existences make it unlikely that they will be preserved for use by readers in the future. They are only meant for a select group of readers who are already aware of the issue. They probably won't require much of an introduction. “What does my audience need to know before receiving the info in this report?” is the only question that has to be answered in order to determine what introductory material is required. In extremely brief reports, a passing mention of the issue, the approval of the study, or something similar serves as adequate introduction material.
- Preferred Direct Order: The shorter reports are more likely to be written in direct order because they often address day-to-day issues. By direct order, it is intended that the report's most significant information—typically the conclusion and maybe a recommendation—comes first. Because they are aware that their readers want to obtain the knowledge necessary to make a choice, business writers employ this arrangement. So, they immediately offer this knowledge. It is best to base your decision on how your readers will most likely utilize the report before deciding whether to use the direct order. Directness will help your readers work more efficiently by enabling them to quickly find the most important information if they need the report's conclusion or suggestion as the basis for an action they need to take. On the other hand, if you have good reason to believe that your readers would want to reach the conclusion or proposal only after a logical assessment of the analysis, you should structure your report in the indirect order. The primary message is presented first in the direct order. The remainder of the report includes the introduction (if applicable), results and analysis, conclusions, and suggestions. Introduction, facts and analyses, findings, and suggestions make up the indirect order.
- Personal Writing Style: The short reports are mostly written in personal style. The reasons of this tendency for shorter reports to write in a more personal style should be clear. First and foremost, short-report scenarios frequently entail interpersonal interactions. These reports often come from and are addressed to persons who are familiar with one another and who converse casually when they are together. Additionally, shorter papers are more likely to incorporate personal research and to include the observations, assessments, and analyses of the authors. Finally, shorter papers typically address common, everyday issues. These issues are by definition informal. It makes sense to report things informally, and writing from the heart often has this informal result.

- Less Need for Structural Coherence Plan: Short reports do not need coherence plans. An arrangement of summary, anticipatory, and retroactive components that ties together the report presentation is referred to as a structured coherence plan. You'll see why this strategy isn't very useful for short reports once you examine it.

Forms of Shorter Reports

The Short Report

The title page and report content make up the short report. Typically, it is done in direct order, starting with the conclusion. The findings and analysis are discussed next, followed by the conclusions. The brief report can be arranged in either the direct or indirect order, much like the majority of less formal report formats. However, the straight order is far more typical. In a typical report, the conclusions and suggestions are highlighted in a brief summary of the research's findings. An introduction like this performs a similar role to an executive summary in a lengthy, formal report. Any necessary opening remarks are made after the summary. This portion is not always necessary. However, often, the essential facts are included in a single paragraph together with a succinct description of the issue and its dimensions. The investigation's results follow the opening sentences.

The Letter Report

The second most common shorter report type is the letter report, sometimes known as a report in letter form. Especially when sending information by mail or fax, letter reports are largely used to provide information to those outside the company. Letter reports often come in at three to four pages or fewer. They often start in indirect order and are written in a personal style. Subject lines must be appropriate and concrete to begin with them.

Example of a letter Report:

In this direct-order letter report, two hotels for a meeting location are compared. It organizes the relevant information according to the criteria required to make the decision, assesses it, and makes a choice. The personal style is acceptable. The subject line is in direct order and emphasizes decision. The overall report addresses the options effectively and justifies the recommendation in the beginning.

16 Nov, 20XX

CXZZ
Board of Directors
International Association
XYZ Corp
65, Park Road
Gulshan Circle, Dhaka - 1010

Dear Sir,

Subject: Recommendation of Convention Hotel for the 20XX Meeting

The PQRT Hotel is my recommendation for the International Association meeting next October. The PQRT has significant advantages over the Marriott, the other potential site for the meeting.

First, the PQRT has a definite downtown location advantage, and this is important to convention goers and their spouses. Second, accommodations, including meeting rooms, are adequate in both places, although the MRTS's rooms are more modern. Third, PQRT room costs are approximately 15 percent lower than those at the MRTS. The PQRT, however, would charge $500 for a room for the opening session. Although both hotels are adequate, because of location and cost advantages the PQRT appears to be the better choice from the members' viewpoint.

ORIGIN AND PLAN OF THE INVESTIGATION

In investigating these two hotels, as was my charge from you at our October 7 board meeting, I collected information on what I believed to be the three major factors of consideration in the problem. First is location. Second is adequacy of accommodations. And third is cost. The following findings and evaluations form the basis of my recommendation.

THE PQRTS FAVORABLE DOWNTOWN LOCATION

The older of the two hotels, the PQRT is located in the heart of the downtown business district. Thus, it is convenient to the area's major mall as well as the other downtown shops. The Marriott, on the other hand, is approximately nine blocks from the major shopping area. Located in the periphery of the business and residential area, it provides little location advantage for those wanting to shop. It does, however, have shops within its walls that provide for virtually all of the guests' normal needs. Because many members will bring spouses, however, the downtown location does give the PQRT an advantage.

ADEQUATE ACCOMMODATIONS AT BOTH HOTELS

Both hotels can guarantee the 600 rooms we will require. Because the MRTS is newer (built 2004), its rooms are more modern and, therefore, more appealing. The 9-year-old PQRT, however, is well preserved and comfortable. Its rooms are all in good condition, and the equipment is up-to-date. The MRTS has 11 small meeting rooms and the PQRT has 13. All are adequate for our purposes. Both hotels can provide the 10 we need. For our opening session, the PQRT would make available its Capri Ballroom, which can easily seat our membership. It would also serve as the site of our presidential luncheon. The assembly facilities at the MRTS appear to be somewhat crowded, although the management assures me that their largest meeting room can hold 600. Pillars in the room, however, would make some seats undesirable. In spite of the limitations mentioned, both hotels appear to have adequate facilities for our meeting.

LOWER COSTS AT THE PQRT

Both the PQRT and the MRTS would provide nine rooms for meetings on a complimentary basis. Both would provide complimentary suites for our president and our executive director. The PQRT, however, would charge $500 for use of the room for the opening session. The MRTS would provide this room without charge. Convention rates at the PQRT are $169 for singles, $179 for double-bedded rooms, and $229 for suites. Comparable rates of the MRTS are $189, $199, and $350. Thus, the savings at the PQRT would be approximately 15 percent per member. Cost of the dinner selected would be $35 per person, including gratuities, at the PQRT. The MRTS would meet this price if we would guarantee 600 plates. Otherwise, they would charge $38. Considering all of these figures, the total cost picture at the PQRT is the more favorable one.

Sincerely
ABC
Executive Assistant

Source: Business Communication Today, Bovee & Thill

Topic – 18: Long Report Format

Long, formal reports are very essential in business even though they are not many. They are frequently lengthy since they deal with significant investigations. They are formal since they are often prepared for high-level executives. These reports provide crucial insight for both day-to-day performance of the business and important insights on the survival of the business in the future.

Structure & Content of Long Report

The Prefatory parts

There are mainly 6 parts in this phase. It's really crucial for the report writer to construct these parts as clearly and precisely as possible. These parts give off the first impression of the report and therefore warrant careful considerations.

Title Fly

The title Fly contains only the report title and an appropriate background. Writing a title is can be somewhat difficult and needs to be precisely worded. The reader should be able to quickly determine what the report covers and what it does not. In our example report, fig. 18.1, we can see the title fly consists of a very brief title which portrays the overall scope of the report. It's a marketing report on XYZ Trading. The title immediately satisfies the questions who, what, when (2017) and why (obviously for sales purposes).

Title Page

The title page will contain the title and subtitle if necessary. It will have the identifications of the writer and the receiver. The submission date or issuing date must be included. In our example, fig 18.2, the title page clearly identifies the recipient, her position in the company (CEO) and some details (address) of the company. The writer's details are also there with his position (marketing consultant) and his company address (Point ADX Marketing).

Authorization Message

If the report was authorized to write, this section will also contain the authorization message. It is a straightforward order message that clearly states the issue, the time and budget restrictions, any specific instructions, and the deadline. The message is concluded with a suitable expression of goodwill.

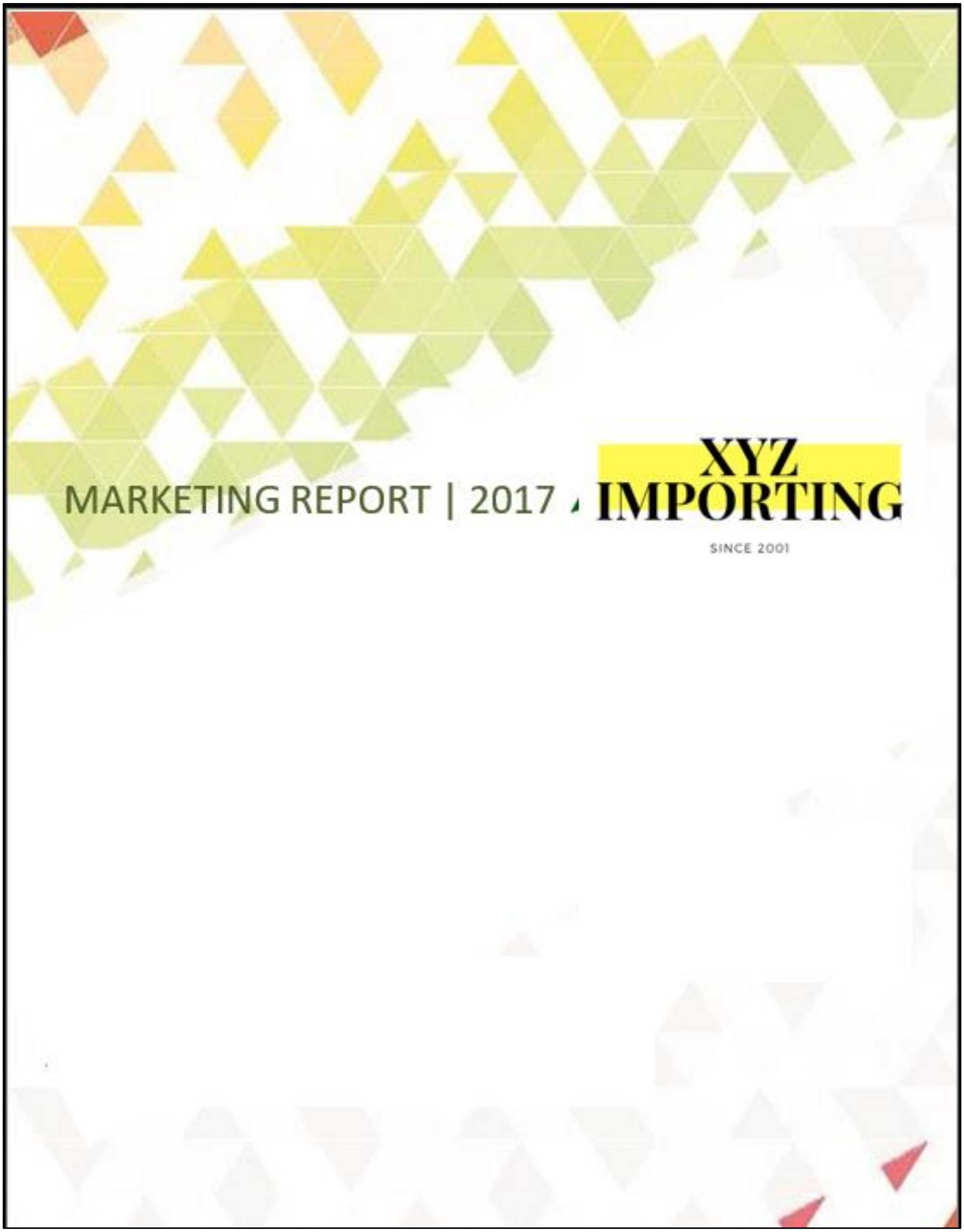


Figure 18.1 Illustration of a Title Fly

Marketing Report on XYZ IMPORTING

Prepared for:

Ms. Epsilon Royco

Chief Executive Officer

XYZ IMPORTING Co.

19, Park Street Drive,

Motijheel C/A, Dhaka - 1000

Prepared by:

Mr. Sherazad Chang

Marketing Consultant

Point ADX Marketing

109/F, Circle Road,

Gulshan - 2, Dhaka - 1000

Date of Submission: December 4, 20XX

Figure 18.2 Title Page Contents

Letter of Transmittal

Most official reports include some sort of personal remark from the author to the reader. The transmittal message serves as this purpose in the majority of business reports. Since sending the report has a favourable outcome in mind, you should start the transmittal message right away without providing any justification or further holding information. In essence, your introductory sentence should read, "Here is the report." Before or after the report is delivered, you should briefly explain its objective, and you can utilize the authority (who assigned the report, when, why). The transmittal letter will include information about the report itself -how to comprehend, utilize, or value it. You might offer advice regarding more research, point out the report's flaws, or mention side issues. You may include anything that would help the reader comprehend and value the report. The letter of transmittal often closes with a suitable expression of goodwill. In our example, figure 18.4 illustrates the letter of transmittal for the report. For the reader to comprehend and appreciate the underlying research, the letter of transmittal starts off directly and is followed by a quick overview of the report. The goodwill comment ends the report.

Table of Contents & Lists of Illustrations

A table of contents is generally required as a guide to the contents. This table contains a finished report outline complete with page numbers. It aids readers in locating the information they want to read by providing a preview of the report's format and content. There may be many readers who simply wish to read a few selected sections of a report or proposal, in which case this is extremely beneficial. The table of content should be constructed as we can see for our example, figure 18.5. The table has main parts as headings and sub-headings for contents under each part. There is also a list of figures to take the viewer directly to the relevant charts, graphs and other illustrations inside the report.

Executive Summary

An executive summary is a simplified part of a longer document, such as a business strategy, investment proposal, or project proposal. It primarily serves to quickly summarize key elements of a business plan for stakeholders and investors, such as the company description, market analysis, and financial data. It concisely summarizes all of the report's key points. For certain readers, the executive summary could serve as a preview of the report. However, it is primarily written for executives who may not have the time to read the complete report since they are busy. It comprises the goal of the study, the key information, analysis, findings, and recommendations—all proportionately. The executive summary often lasts less than an eighth of the text it summarizes. The report's introduction, main body, and conclusion are provided in the indirect order of the standard executive summary. The direct order has, nevertheless, been more well-liked recently. The findings and/or recommendations (if applicable) now stand out at the beginning of the text. In our example, figure 18.6 represents the executive summary. It follows the indirect order and briefly states the whole report in a concise manner.

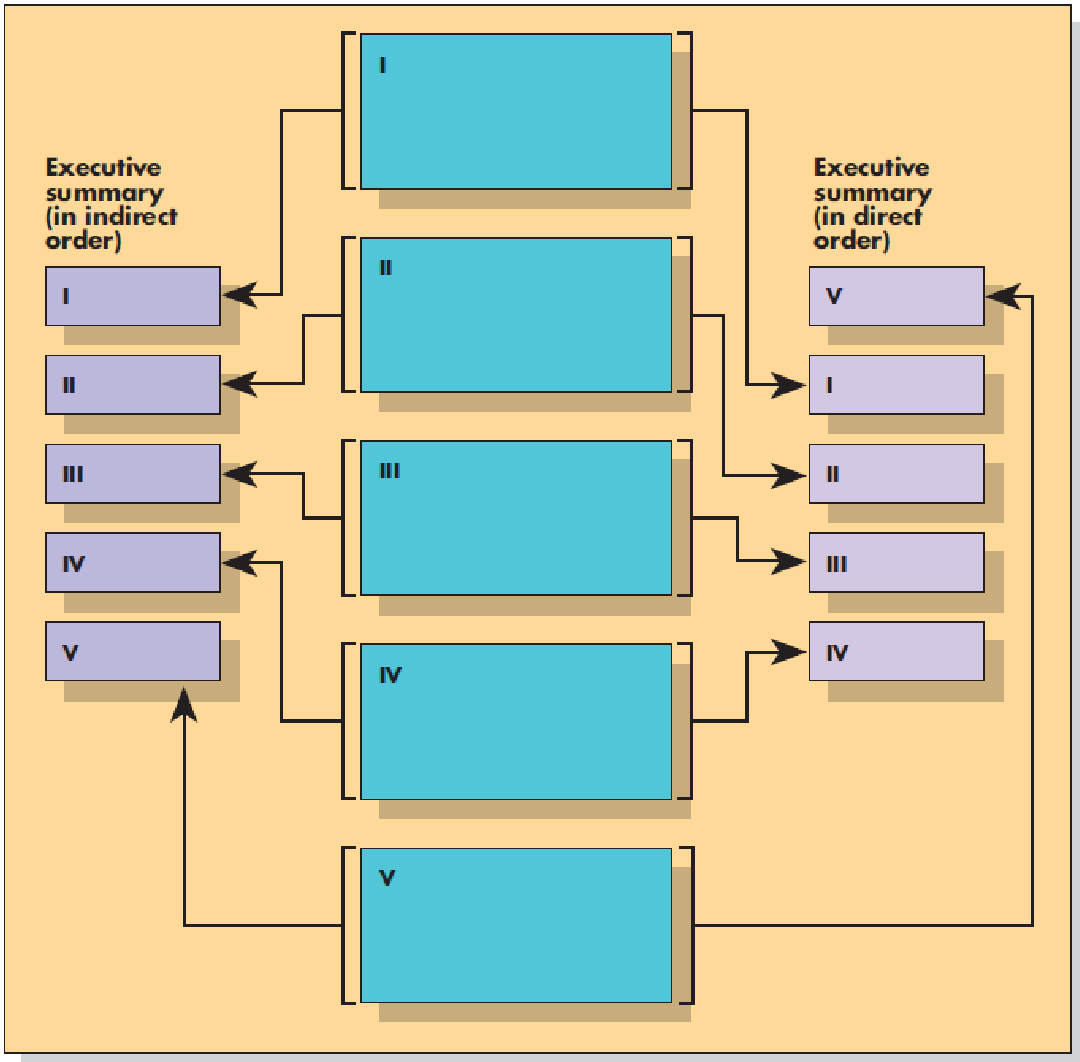


Figure18.3: Diagram of the Executive Summary in Direct & Indirect Order, Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

XYZ IMPORTING

SINCE 2001

POINT ADX MARKETING SOLUTION
Deluxe Tower
109/F, Circle Road,
Gulshan - 2, Dhaka - 1000

4th December, 2017

Chief Executive Officer
XYZ IMPORTING Co.
19, Park Street Drive,
Motijheel C/A, Dhaka – 1000

Dear Sir,

Here is the report on the marketing study of your organization that you asked us to conduct on August 28.

We have prepared this report on **XYZ IMPORTING.** We have studied on different marketing aspects of XYZ IMPORTING. For this project, we conducted a face-to-face interview of Mr. Lobstar Khan, Director of Marketing at XYZ IMPORTING and an online survey on XYZ IMPORTING of its users. The resulting recommendations for your organization should help you enhance your marketing strategy and take your business to next level.

We appreciate your choosing Point ADX for this report. If you should need any additional research or assistance in implementing our recommendations, please contact us at schang@pointadxm.com or 012-345-XXXX.

Yours sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Mr. Sherazad Chang
Marketing Consultant

Figure 18.4: Letter of Transmittal

XYZ IMPORTING

SINCE 2001

Contents

Figure 18.5: Table of Contents (Long Report)

XYZ
IMPORTING
SINCE 2001

Executive Summary

E- Commerce industry has been blooming since the past decade in Bangladesh. Most low-budget startups choose this industry, with XYZ IMPORTING being an exception. It has been funded by renowned venture capitalists, operates on a large scale, and is highly innovative, which is why it was chosen for the research.

XYZ IMPORTING is a company which provides a bridge between travelers and shoppers and aspires to give people access to products across markets from all around the world. It currently just gives Bangladeshi users to make purchases from US e-commerce sites. Both the travelers and shoppers go through a simple four step process to save money through their XYZ IMPORTING experience.

Shoppers find items from their preferred websites, place order as "XYZ IMPORTING request" and get items delivered within days. Travelers' role is to share their itinerary and personal details to get verified as XYZ IMPORTING traveler. Shopper's items get delivered to travelers' addresses abroad; travelers deliver items and earn money.

XYZ IMPORTING, for choosing their target market, opt for geographic, demographic, behavioral and psychographic segmentation. It is a customer-centered company and targets using a blend of differentiated and micromarketing strategies. We conducted primary research through an online customer survey and an interview of Mr. Lobstar Khan, the director of the company. From the research, it was found that majority preferred XYZ IMPORTING over other e-commerce sites due to its low prices, packaging and delivery. However, as the survey was done through convenience sampling and on a smaller portion of the vast majority of online shoppers, it limits the result of our assessments.

XYZ IMPORTING's unique referral system and engineered take on marketing makes it stand out from other retail businesses. Major KPIs include Acquisition, Activation, Revenue, Retention and Referral.

Variables like customer payment, customer engagement, interest on the product etc. are targeted to generate maximum revenue with least effort. Promotional tactics include sales promotion, online promotion, leaflet distribution etc. but customers' word of mouth influences work the best for them. They bank on referral of customers to increase their client base and their strong team of talented employees to compete with other f-commerce and e-commerce businesses. One major threat that could cripple down the business is the possibility of Amazon, eBay and the likes to start delivering directly to Bangladesh. The advent of PayPal in Bangladesh can be threatening as well because it will ease online payments to foreign sites further.

XYZ IMPORTING's suppliers and buyers have greater power and due to low barriers to entry, new entrants can easily penetrate the market. In the future, they plan to expand in other countries and reap the benefits of globalization, starting with India. SWOT analysis revealed rooms for improvement.

Pricing methods can be altered a bit too make products more competitive, brand awareness campaigns can be strengthened by above the line promotional activities. Depending too much on quantified information to make marketing decisions is always not the answer and all functional issues cannot be tackled with equations.

XYZ IMPORTING's future looks bright with plans of expansion into more countries which could give them better reputation and enable them to establish themselves as one of the best brands in the e commerce industry.

Figure 18.6: Executive Summary

The Main Report

Introduction

This is the first part of the report that prepares readers for the report. The introduction needs to written according to the needs and expectations of the readers. Many of these reports are written with a broad audience of readers—some of whom are unfamiliar with the issue—in mind. These reports frequently have lengthy shelf life and are retained on file to be studied in subsequent years. They obviously need some background information to acquaint the reader. The introduction usually contains the following elements:

- Background of the report: In this portion of the report, the context of the report is set. This part usually gives some basic facts about the industry, the company and the product or services that the company is offering. This part also includes problems that are prevalent in the industry. The background portrays a history of the subject matter of the report that helps reader understand how the report is relevant.
- Objectives: The main objective of the report portrays the core underlying problem that the report is aiming to solve or address. The problem is commonly stated in infinitive, question, or declarative form. The objects must be clear and depict the purpose of the report. In our report example, figure 18.7, the objectives are laid out concisely and precisely. This will provide Ms. Epsilon with adequate information on the goals this report is set out to achieve.
- Scope: The scope represents the boundaries of the report. It clearly says what's included in the report. In our report example, the scope of the report is laid out precisely.
- Limitations: Anything that limits how the report solves the problem is a limitation. The most common limitations to any problem in the real word are cost constraints and time limitations. Due to these two factors, most problems are explored to the full extent of their scope and is tried to tackle as precisely as possible instead of 100% precision. The limitations must be communicated clearly and explained logically.
- Methodology: This explains the readers how the writer has gathered the data for the report. In other words, the writer needs to describe and defend the research process. He/she must make it clear if they reviewed published research, surveys, or other methods and outline the actions they took. In general, the writer provides the readers enough information to evaluate the work. He/she conveys just enough information to persuade the readers that your task was done competently. Detailed descriptions are typically necessary for complex research. For instance, if one performed a poll, he or she would

likely need to describe every aspect of the inquiry. He/she would go through sample selection, questionnaire design, interview methodologies, and checking methods.

Main Report Body

This is the main part of the report where all the data, the facts, the analysis are shown. This part needs to be well organized, coherent, readable, logically ordered and self-explanatory. The body will include all the relevant information in a flow. The flow will ensure overall co-ordination among the contents. The body must have the following general components:

- Explanations: Describe the issue, undertaking, or notion in full detail.
- Factual data, statistical proof, and trends: Describe the outcomes of your research or study.
- Action analysis: Talk about possible courses of action.
- Cons and benefits: Describe the benefits, expenses, and drawbacks of a course of action.
- Procedures: Describe the steps of a process.
- Techniques and strategies: Describe the process you used to research a topic (or gather information) and come up with a solution (or collected your data).
- Criteria: Describe the criteria used to compare options and alternatives..

Important Aspects of the report body

- Objectivity: A good report summarizes the facts and gives a logical interpretation of them. It stays away from expressing the writer's prejudices, ideas, and attitudes. It keeps the report believable and not biased.
- Consistency in Time Viewpoint: Maintain a constant sense of time throughout the report. The past and the present are the two temporal perspectives. Choose one and stick with it. According to the historical perspective, the study and its results are in the past, while the dominant ideas and established discoveries are in the present.
- Transitions: A well-written report reads like a single, continuous narrative. The connections are seamless. This fluidity is mostly the product of logically sound structure. Use transitions to link the report's sections together. When it's necessary to link the sections of the report together, transitions should be employed. Transitions shouldn't be used in a robotic manner. Only use them when necessary—when omitting them would result in abruptness. Transitional phrases can be used to link lengthy passages. Transitional phrases depict connections between smaller components.

Table of transition Words:

Relationship	Words	Relationships	Words
Listing or enumeration of subjects	In addition	Likeness	Likewise
	Firstly, secondly		Similarly
	Besides		In a likely manner
	Moreover	Cause-effect	Thus
Contrast	On the Contrary		Because
	Despite		Therefore
	However		Consequently
	In Spite of		For this reason
	On the Other Hand	Explanation	For example
	In Contrast		To illustrate
			For instance
			Also
			Too

- Maintaining Interest: Report writing need to be engaging. A competent writer is essential to effective communication. Careful word choice, rhythm, concreteness, and all other effective writing strategies lead to interesting writing. However, making writing engaging may often be overdone. Never let the writing style distract readers from the content.

For example, in our report an industry review was required to understand the Bangladeshi context of e-commerce and importing products. Since the report is an analytical report, it has reports to assess opportunities like SWOT analysis & Porter's 5 forces model. These models clearly state the opportunities and the vulnerabilities of the industry which is essential for the report. Then the report delves into 4Ps of marketing and other company specific analysis. The overall theme is the marketing aspect of the company and it's prevailed throughout the report. It talks about the marketing strategies and future prospects. The writer has manged to keep the reader's interest throughout the report by ensuring objectivity and organizing the report body in a rhythmic way that flows through like a story. The report is set in a flow that leads to the conclusion and recommendation properly.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Objectives

The main aim of this term paper is to find out the different aspects and outcomes of XYZ IMPORTING's marketing from the perspective of both the company personnel's and its customers and to recommend ways to increase marketing effectiveness.
More specifically, the objectives of the paper are:

- To shed light on XYZ IMPORTING- its current situation and future plans.
- To draw a comparative analysis of XYZ IMPORTING and its competitors
- To find out XYZ IMPORTING's marketing strategies and tactics and recommend alternative methods based on their effectiveness.

1.2 Scope

XYZ IMPORTING operates in the tertiary sector of the economy and only offers one service- bringing products from USA via Bangladeshi travelers; hence the research does not look at the product and the company separately. The report focuses mainly on the marketing aspect of XYZ IMPORTING and compares it with other e-commerce websites. Other departments of the business have been ignored completely and do not form a part of our study. The conclusions drawn are not based on available information about XYZ IMPORTING and its Marketing Director's perspectives but customers' insights have been included as well. However, findings may not give a holistic view of the organization's operations because it focuses too much on the shoppers of the e-commerce industry and do not include perspectives of the travelers of the travel industry (XYZ IMPORTING operates in both the industries).

1.3 Methodology

The methods employed and sources from which findings have been established are mentioned below:

1.3.1 Data sources

Both primary and secondary data sources have been used to give an unbiased conclusion on the marketing activities of XYZ IMPORTING. Firstly, a face-to face interview of Mr. Lobstar Khan, Director of Engineering of XYZ IMPORTING, was carried out. Secondly, a questionnaire survey was carried out of the users of XYZ IMPORTING to gather customer insights. Various websites were used to collect secondary data.

1.3.2 Sampling frame and method

Due to time constraint, convenience sampling has been used to gather customer data. Users of XYZ IMPORTING were first found out through a Facebook post. They were then contacted individually and asked to fill up an online questionnaire. 20 responses have been collated and published in appendix A along with the questionnaire used to interview Mr. Lobstar Khan.

Customer insights gathered through the survey have been mentioned in blue throughout the report.

1.4 Limitations

Company confidentiality restricted free flow of information and some necessary data were also unavailable on the internet. Ease of opening up a Facebook page or a website for e-commerce has resulted in no statistics being published on their number, market share, etc. Hence, conclusions are based primarily on qualitative data. The firm also operates in two industries at once- travel and e-commerce, and does not have direct competitors to allow a careful comparative analysis.
Convenience sampling has been used and subjects are our acquaintances, leaving room for sampling bias.

Figure 18.7: Introduction Part

2.0 INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

2.1 E-commerce in Bangladesh

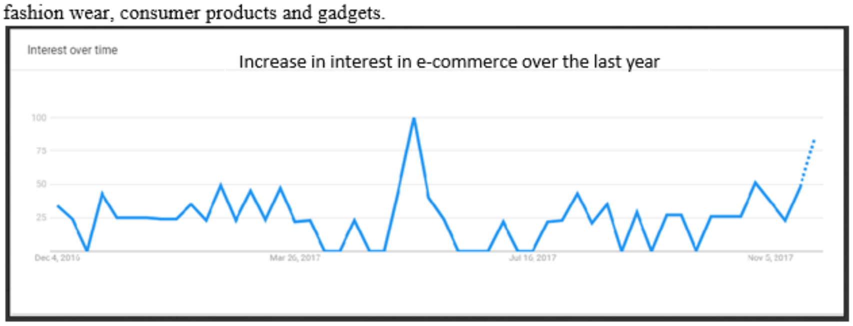
Electronic Commerce, is the buying and selling of goods and services, or the transmitting of funds or data, over an electronic network, primarily the internet. These business transactions occur either as business-to-business, business-to-consumer, consumer-to-consumer or consumer-to-business.

E-commerce emerged in Bangladesh in the late 90s. The earlier E-commerce sites were gift sites targeted towards the non-resident Bangladeshis living abroad. It was during the period from 2000 to 2008 that E-commerce observed slow growth. Currently there are about 1000 e-commerce entrepreneurs who run their businesses through websites and approximately 8000 f-commerce entrepreneurs who run their businesses through Facebook pages.

This segment grew through the growth of home-delivery of food, companies like FoodPanda, HungryNaki. There are other companies based in Facebook which allow people in Bangladesh to buy products from USA, UK, India etc. The majority of the transactions are carried out through bKash, Rocket or Cash on Delivery as a significant portion of the people of Bangladesh do not have access to or are reluctant to pay through mediums such as credit cards and PayPal. These had also acted as inhibitors to the growth of E-commerce.

The real change came in 2009 when Bangladesh Bank allowed online payment in the country- thus officially opening up the E-commerce sector.

The youth, especially males, make up the majority (75%) of shoppers. Young professionals (44%) and students (33%) dominate the customer segments and the products they mostly seek are popular fashion wear, consumer products and gadgets.



XYZ IMPORTING

SINCE 2001

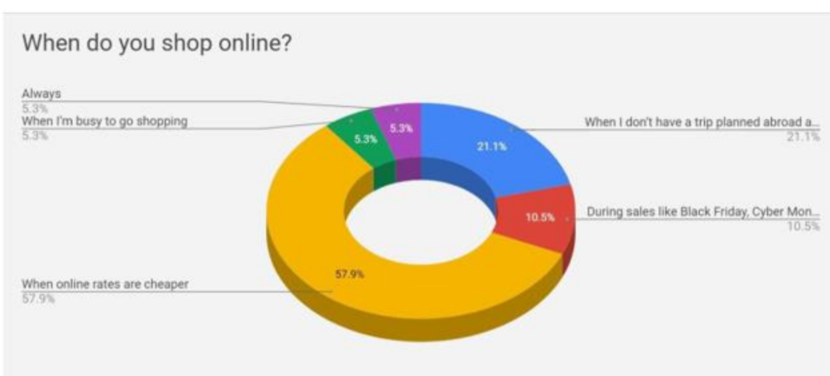


Figure: Reasons for shopping online

Figure 18.8: Parts of report body

XYZ IMPORTING

SINCE 2001

4.0 Company Overview

Funded by renowned startup incubator, Y Combinator, and reputed venture capitalists and angels, XYZ IMPORTING started its journey in Carton Ave, Gulshan in 2014. It is the brainchild of two Bangladeshis. Within two days of making the site live, XYZ IMPORTING received 47580 hits from over 50 countries in the world. XYZ IMPORTING has a culture that encourages employees to take risks and allows them to fail. Employees have learning goals and they innovate their processes continuously. Initially, it aimed to facilitate the movement of goods between the US and Bangladesh but currently it is focusing only on getting merchandises delivered to Bangladesh. The company blends travel and commerce- Travelers get paid for their luggage spaces to carry items ordered from US e-commerce sites through XYZ IMPORTING back to Bangladesh. By connecting shoppers and travelers, XYZ IMPORTING aims to minimize costs for both.

4.1 SWOT Analysis

Strengths

1. Operates on a large scale, benefiting from economies of scale.
2. Customers are given full support (free returns, replacement, warranty etc.)
3. Culture promotes creativity and they continuously innovate their processes.
4. Marketing strategies involve scientific equations, making them easy to measure and improve.

Weaknesses

1. Many products become too expensive and uncompetitive due to the pricing policy.
2. Delivery charge is high and their pick- up point can be inconvenient for many.
3. The company does not have full control over how the products reach the country.

Opportunities

1. Bangladeshis' growing interest in Indian products.
2. Smaller online shops refusing to bring fragile and liquid items like foundation, perfumes etc.

Threats

1. Bangladesh customs are backdated and the process is unnecessarily extended.
2. When flights are delayed and luggage stay overnight at the airport, products get stolen and customers have to be compensated.
3. Natural calamities, like hurricanes in the U.S. disrupt flight schedules and products do not reach Bangladesh within the customer's' expected dates.
4. Not enough government support

Figure 18.9: Parts of report body (Continued)

XYZ IMPORTING
SINCE 2001

7.0 Marketing Strategies and Effectiveness

XYZ IMPORTING is strongly customer-focused and treats Marketing issues as an engineer's problem and devises equations accordingly. Variables in their equations are customer payment, customer engagement, interest on the product etc. These act as their key performance indicators (KPIs) and management gives most importance to the variables that require least effort to be expended on them to give the highest return. A great part of XYZ IMPORTING's marketing focuses on increasing customer traffic in their websites, increasing brand awareness and most importantly, turning target customers into buyers.

Other major KPIs are:

Acquisition- Number of customers visiting the site and signing up
Activation- Number of customers adding products to their carts
Revenue- Number of customers purchasing and
Retention- Number of customers repurchasing from the site
Referral- Number of customers referring XYZ IMPORTING to others

How did you come to know about XYZ EXPRESS IMPORT?

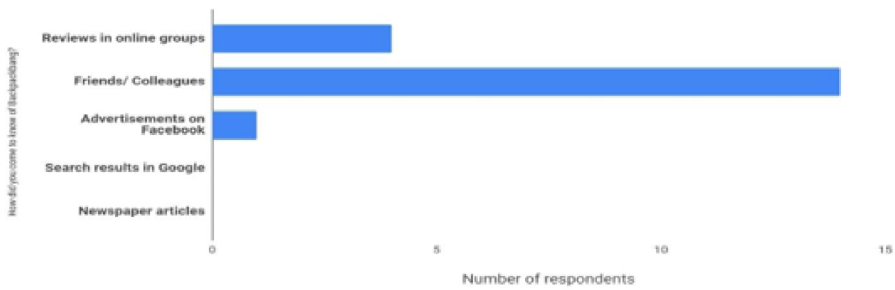


Figure: How respondents became aware of XYZ IMPORTING

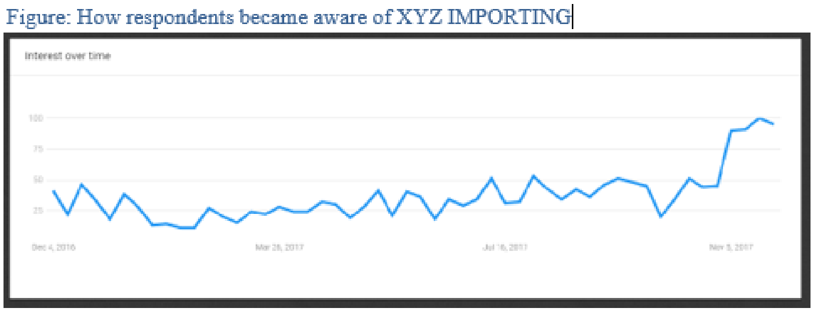


Figure: Interest of Bangladeshis in XYZ IMPORTING over the past year, Source: Google Trends

Figure 18.10: Parts of report body (Continued)

The Ending

The ending can be a summary, a conclusion, a solution or recommendation. Or it can be a combination of these. The conclusion is the result of conducting the report and should persuade the reader of the effectiveness of the report. The different ending is discussed below:

- Findings: The important findings are often summarized at the end of informational reports. The executive summary is more thorough than the closing summary. There should not be any explanation here only the findings.
- Conclusions: Reports that seek a solution come to an end with a conclusion. Every problem has a different conclusion structure. When there is just one solution to an issue, the conclusion section often analyses the earlier data and analysis and derives the solution from this review. The report plan may handle each objective in a separate part and make findings in each area when problems have more than one goal. Such a report's conclusion section may potentially include a summary of the findings reached earlier.
- Recommendations: A recommendation is required when the report's objective is to both outline a course of action and make conclusions. It might be arranged as a distinct part that comes after the concluding section. Alternately, you might add it in the final paragraph. In certain cases, the solution, or at least a logical interpretation of it, is the advice. If the readers want or anticipate a suggestion, you should consider whether to include one.

In our example report, figure 18.11, the conclusion only consists of recommendation as Ms. Epsilon will be expecting what was the outcome of getting the report. So, Mr. Sherajad has provided some recommendations on how XYZ Importing can better improve their marketing strategies, increase market share and become more profitable.

XYZ IMPORTING

SINCE 2001

9.0 Conclusion

9.1 Recommendations

1. Retailers selling through Facebook pages and websites charge a maximum of Tk. 80 for delivering products in Dhaka city whereas XYZ IMPORTING charges an exorbitant amount of Tk. 200. The only other option available to customers is to pick up from XYZ IMPORTING's office in Gulshan, which can be inconvenient for many. Instead of charging a flat rate of Tk. 200 for delivery all over Bangladesh, it can partner with delivery services like Pathao, Rapido Deliveries etc.to keep the fees up to a maximum of Tk. 80 and charge up to Tk. 120 for courier services of sending products outside Dhaka.
2. The Facebook page of XYZ IMPORTING is underutilized and not used for customer engagement. Getting people to talk about the products in comments, review their services etc. can generate a lot of new customers.
3. Around 50% of respondents said that the site was somewhat easy to use, meaning there is room for improvement. The site does not allow more than one manual request to be placed at once. Shoppers request for products when they are ready to purchase or want to know the price but XYZ IMPORTING takes up to 24 hours to inform the shopper of the price. Time is crucial and with so many alternatives available, a customer can be lost easily. Like all other marketing activities engineered, XYZ IMPORTING should devise an automatic mechanism to display prices as soon as a customer requests a product.
4. Even though they promise to provide services at the least price, there have been complaints from its customers that they tend to charge high prices and this leads to a difference between customer's expectation and their perceived value. Hence, we would recommend them to reduce this difference by either lowering their price or reducing high customer expectations made through marketing.
5. XYZ IMPORTING puts emphasis on quantitative data while analysing their marketing efforts. They could focus on basing certain judgements on qualitative data and intuition to further add to their marketing analysis.

Figure 18.11: Ending part (Conclusion)

Append Parts

- Appendix: Information in the appendix is used to indirectly support the report. The text of the report should only contain information that directly supports it. Questionnaires, working papers, summary tables, extra references, and other reports are examples of possible appendix material. In our example, figure 18.12, we have included the questionnaire, the data collected from it and a few other items that are not directly used in the report.
- References: If the research heavily relies on published sources, it is necessary to provide a bibliography (a list of the publications used). Figure 18.14 shows the list of references used for our example report.

XYZ IMPORTING

SINCE 2001

11.0 Appendix

11.1 Interview Questionnaire:

1. Tell us about your company
2. How did you segment your market when you first started off? (Geographically, age group, gender, behavioral, social class, income group etc.)
3. How did you then target the segments? Who are your target consumers/customers?
4. How do you differentiate your product from your competitors'?
5. How did you position your product in the minds of you target customers? (e.g., through a positioning statement that swears by to provide the customers something that the competitors cannot, product quality, features, packaging, branding etc.)
6. Are there any advertising or promotional programs for the product?
7. Which advertising agents (if any) are you associated with?
8. Which advertising media do you choose for delivering your advertisements or promotions?
9. What are your advertising objectives and strategies?
10. What are your marketing strategies? What plans and actions are undertaken to implement them?
11. Tell us about the prospect of XYZ IMPORTING in the next 4-5 years.

11.2 Survey Findings

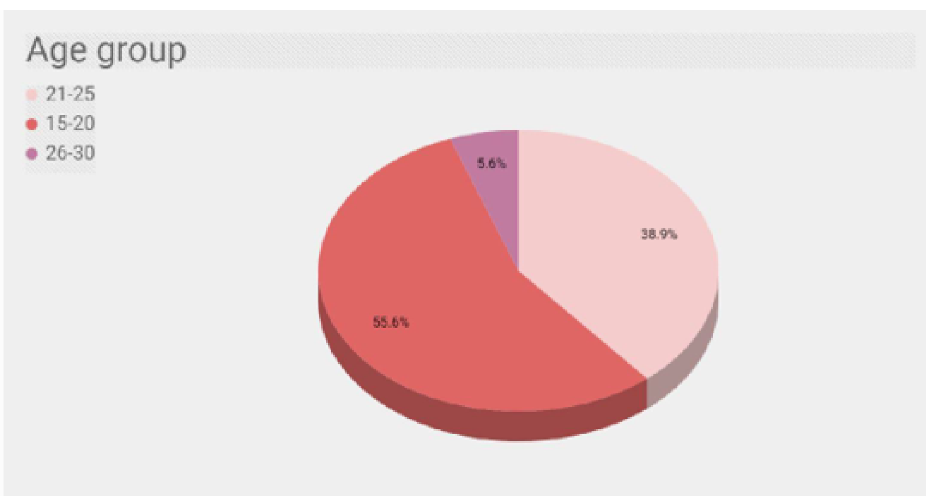


Figure 18.12: Appendix

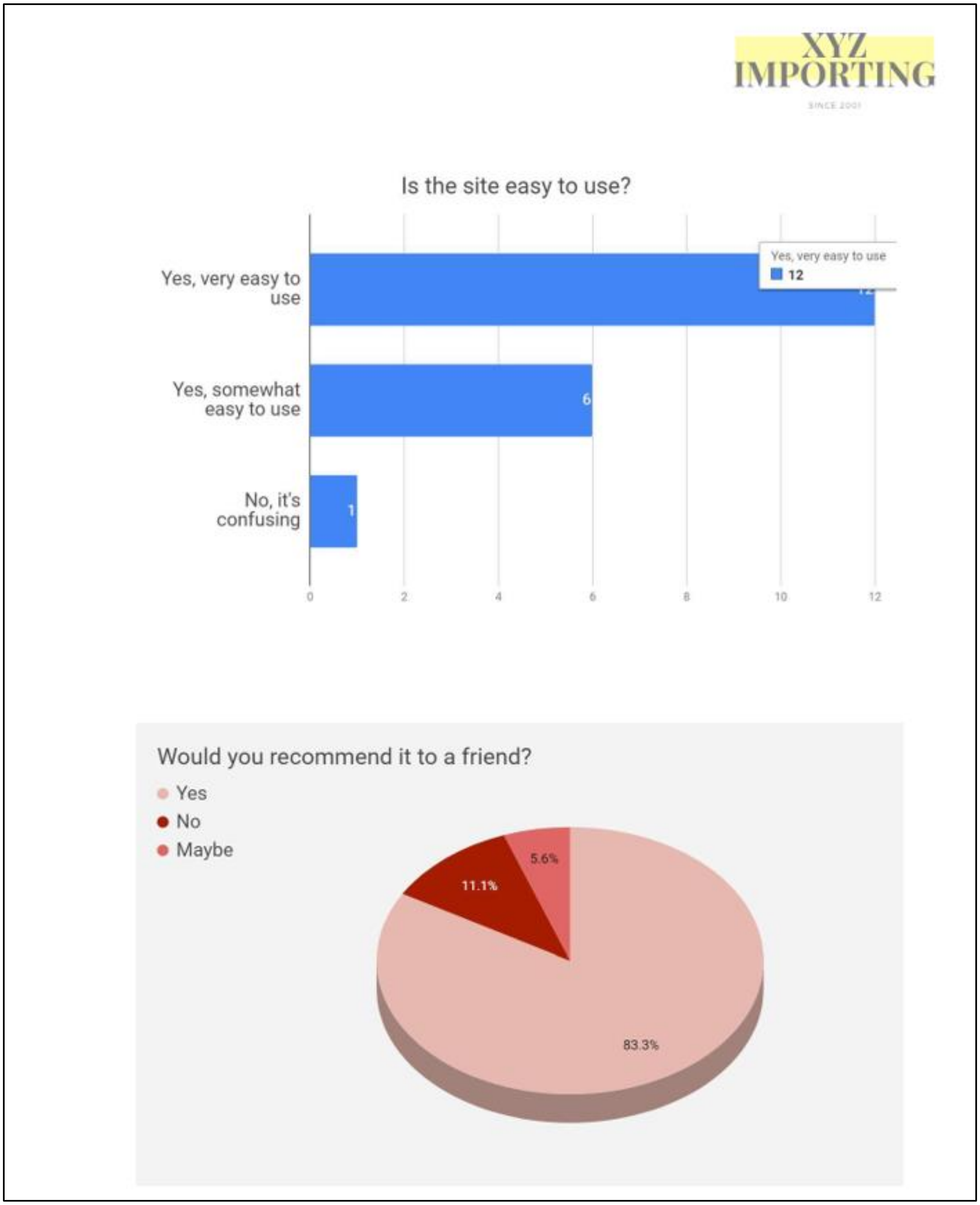


Figure 18.13: Appendix (Continued)

XYZ IMPORTING

SINCE 2001

10.0 References

1. 'Luggage party' goods take over cosmetics market. (2017, June 12). Dhaka Tribune. Retrieved December 4, 2017, from 'Luggage party' goods take over cosmetics market
2. Mahbub, I. (2016, August 19). Bangladeshis Travelling Overseas On The Rise. Future Startup. Retrieved December 4, 2017.
3. Bangladesh e-commerce sector. (n.d.). Retrieved December 4, 2017, from http://e-cab.net/resource-center/bangladesh-e-commerce-sector/
4. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.XYZ IMPORTINGbang.com

Figure 18.14: References

The Structural Coherence Plan

Extra structural coherence devices are required for longer reports. These comprise a web of justifications, prefaces, summaries, and conclusions. The preview, which outlines the future course, is where the coherence plan starts. Readers are kept up to date on where they are in the report by the introductions and summaries of the various sections. The material presented before is compiled and applied to the aim in the report's last major part.

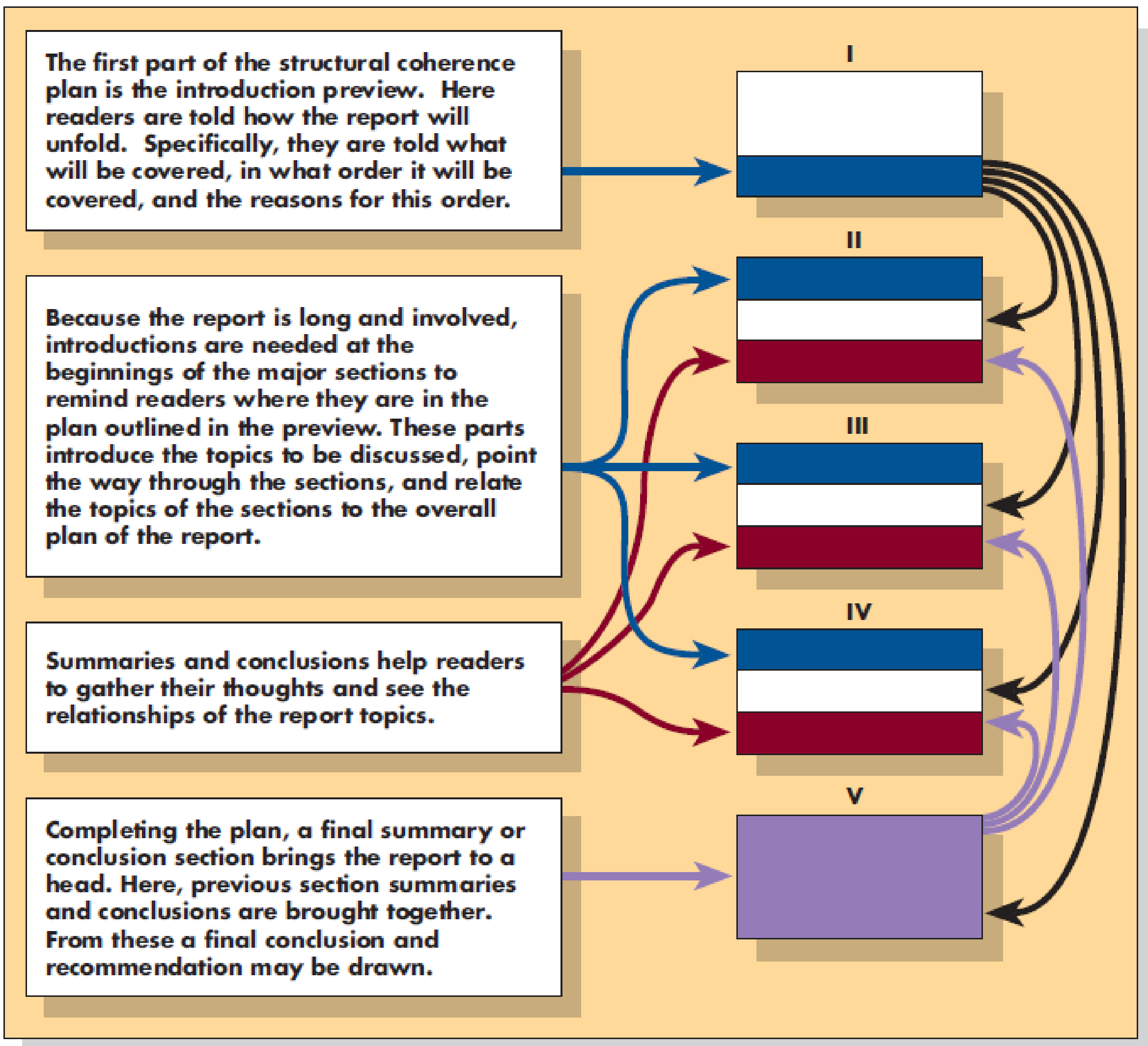


Figure 18.15: Diagram of the Structural Coherence Plan of a Long, Formal Report,

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Cases

Case – 1

You have just graduated from your university majoring in finance & banking. You are currently looking for a job for Management Trainee positions within the banking industry. As a fresh graduate, you want to impress potential employers and secure as many interviews as possible. Upon sending your CV & cover letter to several banks, you are asked for an interview at X&Y bank. You know X&Y Bank is one of the top banks in the country. You need to prepare well for the interview.

1. Construct A CV and a cover letter for the bank job

Case – 2

You are asked to find out why AMXZ bank's new branch is not turning any profit. You decided to conduct an in-depth analysis of day-to-day operation and formulate a short report on this. You have hired an outside industry analyst to conduct the research and find out the main problem which is why the bank is performing poorly.

1. Your boss has asked you to write a proposal on how to write the report. Which type of proposal will you choose (letter or email)? Provide reasons.
2. You are thinking the report should be a short report. State the reasons why. Also provide a structure of the proposal.

MCQ

1. Your CV should not include –
    a. Your father's name
    b. Your father's occupation
    c. Your marital Status
    d. All of the above.
2. Who among the following is not a valid reference –
    a. Your university professor
    b. Your ex-boss
    c. Your uncle in the desired organization
    d. Your co-worker
3. What is unsolicited Proposal?
    a. A proposal submitted in response to an official request
    b. A proposal submitted without any invitation
    c. A proposal submitted internally to the management
    d. None of the above
4. Which of following is not a part of the proposal body?
    a. Facts
    b. Analysis
    c. Proposed Solution
    d. Statement of Qualification
5. Which of the following is an informational report?
    a. Reports to Monitor & Control Operations
    b. Reports to solve problems
    c. Reports to support decisions
    d. None of the above
6. Which of the following is not a necessary characteristic of short report?
    a. Structural Coherence Plan
    b. Direct Order
    c. Personal writing style
    d. All of them are characteristics of Short report
7. Which of the following is part of prefatory parts in long report?
    a. Introduction
    b. Appendix

c. Authorization message

d. References

Short Questions

1. How should you write the ‘work experience’ section of your resume?
2. How will you gain attention in writing a cover letter?
3. Write a thank you message post job interview.
4. What is external & internal business proposal?
5. What is a letter report?
6. What is a title fly?

Broad Questions

1. Write a CV for applying to the credit analysis department of a bank.
2. Write a CV for applying to the investment banking analyst of a bank.
3. Write a cover letter for the credit analyst position.
4. Describe the strategies in writing a cover letter.
5. Briefly describe the characteristics of the short report.
6. Discuss the main components of the ‘introduction’ part of long reports.

Module E: Fundamentals of Presentations and Electronic Media

Topic – 19: Presentation Structure & Conducting Presentations

Business presentations provide you the chance to demonstrate both your business expertise and your full range of communication skills, including nonverbal communication and research. It might take several days to produce a top-notch presentation for a significant occasion, so be sure to allot adequate time. Most corporate presentations are intended to enlighten or convince; however, you can also conduct presentations that are primarily intended to foster teamwork.

Planning the Presentation

Planning presentations is similar to planning any other business message: You assess the problem, acquire data, decide on the best media, and arrange the data. The process of gathering data for presentations is quite similar to that used for written communication initiatives. Planning involves these essential steps:

- Analysing the Situation: Given the time limits of most presentations and the live nature of the event, be sure your goal is crystal clear to make the most of the opportunity and respect your audiences' time and attention. Your goals must be clear, and you must develop a profile of your audience that includes details like their preferred languages and anticipated emotional states.
- Gathering Information: Identify the information needed to meet the information requirements of the audience. Do as much research as possible on the venue and circumstances surrounding your presentation.
- Selecting the Best Combination of Media & Channels: Most business presentations are required to be done in-person. Its best to be in-person if the subject matter of the presentation is getting a project, a business or persuading highly important stakeholders. Presentations can be also done online and is done when the content is for general employees.

Organizing the Presentation

It's crucial to organize the presentation according to the audience's needs and context. Usually, formal business presentations are linear. Linear presentations are similar to printed texts in that they have an outline similar to traditional messages and follow a predetermined flow from beginning to end. The linear model is appropriate for speeches, technical and financial presentations, as well as other presentations where you want to convey your information step-by-step or make a logical transition from an introduction to a conclusion. Here are the steps in organizing a presentation:

1. Define Main Idea: A clear understanding of the core concept you wish to convey to your audience is the foundation of every effective presentation. Write a one-sentence synopsis to introduce your topic and objective and connect them to your audience's context. As with any communication attempt, be sure your aim and audience interests are in line with your purpose.
2. Limit the Scope: Any communication should have a limited scope, but presentations require it even more for two reasons. First, you must adhere to strict time constraints for the majority of presentations. Second, it gets harder to keep the audience's attention and harder for your listeners to remember your main ideas the longer you talk. You need to practice giving presentation beforehand and time your delivery properly.
3. Choose Order: If the presentation is of small duration (equal or less than 10 mins), use the direct approach. The audiences are usually aware of the context of these presentations. Therefore, you should begin with findings and recommendation and then go into the presentation body to explain and justify. If the presentation is of longer duration, using the indirect approach is more appropriate. Start by giving an introduction to the context and then move on to the body. Finish with findings and recommendations as if it’s a learning from a story that you have told all along the delivery.
4. Prepare Outline: Preparing the outline is important in delivering a coherent and interesting presentation that holds the audiences’ attention throughout the presentation. The following steps are to followed:
    - Declare your principal concept and objective, and then utilize this information to direct the remainder of your planning.
    - Arrange your main ideas and supporting details in a logical sequence, giving each idea its own sentence-length expression.
    - Outline the introduction and conclude once you've identified the main points in the body.
    - Then, compose these transitions in full sentences. Identify the transitions between the main ideas or parts.
    - Before your lecture, assemble your source notes or bibliography. The sources you want to cite by name should be highlighted.

Structuring the Presentation

A carefully constructed presentation may motivate customers, influence decision-makers, and even advance your career by demonstrating your managerial abilities. On the other hand, a single bad presentation might damage a company, a person's reputation, or even your own career prospects. Therefore, structuring the presentation properly is of utmost importance.

Presentation Introduction

By showing a few slides that cover their past knowledge or the status quo, you may now get your audience warmed up. Always keep the information on these slides straightforward or even familiar to your audience. This enables you to gradually lead your audience to the presentation's main point. All points must be accepted by the audience prior to the emergence of any objections or complications, along with any related queries.

- Getting your Audience’s Attention: The introduction must encourage the audience to unite around a purposeful business goal. Your audience may already be concerned about this issue, or they may not have given it much attention, but you think they should. Therefore, you must create an engaging narrative that highlights a crucial and pertinent topic. The attention of your listeners may frequently be captured by an interesting, unexpected, or startling element. Naturally, this information must be pertinent to the main point of your presentation.
- Building Credibility: Your introduction should not only catch the audience's interest but also demonstrate your trustworthiness. However, if you don't already know your audience well enough or if you're speaking on a subject outside of your known area of expertise, you must establish credibility. To avoid coming across as arrogant, ask a colleague to introduce you and provide your credentials. Keep your remarks brief if you're going to introduce yourself, but never be afraid to highlight your relevant experience and accomplishments. Tell your audience simply who you are and why you are the best person to be making this presentation since they will be interested in learning more about your credentials.
- Previewing Message: Previewing your message is important because it aids the audience in comprehending the design and information of your presentation. The key topics of your presentation should be summarized in your preview, together with the key supporting arguments and the progression of those arguments. Your preview might explore the essence of your primary topic without revealing it if you are using an indirect approach.

Main Body of the Presentation:

The objectives outlined in the opening must be accomplished throughout the presentation's main body. The audience needs everything to be organized rationally for them to grasp, therefore depending on the presentation's nature, you may need to clearly segregate the many subjects that will be covered before moving through them one at a time. Your major points can be arranged in a variety of ways, including chronologically, by subject, or according to priority. You must use spoken words to connect diverse elements and concepts when giving presentations. Use one or two transitional words, such as consequently, since, also, in comparison, moreover, for instance, consequently, nonetheless, or ultimately, to connect sentences and paragraphs. Every time you change subjects, make sure to emphasize how the concepts are connected by summarizing what was said previously and indicating what will follow next. Your transitions become more crucial as your presentation becomes longer. To lead your listeners to the most crucial ideas, you must use precise transitions. Additionally, they will value concise intermediate summaries to catch any concepts they might have missed.

Keeping you Audience Interested

You must strive to maintain your audience's interest throughout the remainder of your presentation after you have successfully attracted them in with your introduction. Follow these steps:

1. Continue connecting your topic to your audience's requirements.
2. Predict & prepare for your audience’s questions.
3. Use clear, simple and appropriate language.
4. Obtain feedback and periodically pause for questions or comments.
5. Use visuals to illustrate your ideas.

Presentation Close

The conclusion of a presentation must do two crucial things: ensure that your audience is in the right emotional state and that they remember the main ideas of your lecture. Make sure to thoroughly plan your conclusion so that your audience departs understanding your key point. In your conclusion, briefly reiterate your major ideas while stressing what you want the audience to do or think. Consider your presentation's conclusion so that you may make a strong, encouraging statement. Make sure the obligations for taking action are clear if you require the audience to decide or consent to doing so. Make sure the emotional tone of your closing statements is appropriate and memorable.

Usage of Graphic Aids in Presentation

By generating interest, illuminating ideas that are challenging to express via words alone, providing diversity, and enhancing the audience's capacity to absorb and recall information, visuals may enhance the quality and impact of any presentation. Because people perceive images considerably more quickly than they do words, visuals can enhance learning. Keep in mind that your presentation is your message; the purpose of the graphics is to complement and enhance your message.

Lists

Many of your presentation slides may require you to list ideas, steps or processes. Visuals can be a great way to list them without boring your audience. If your overall slide background with light for example: white, the background of the list should be dark colored and the text light colored. The following example shows how visuals can be used to list in a presentation slide:

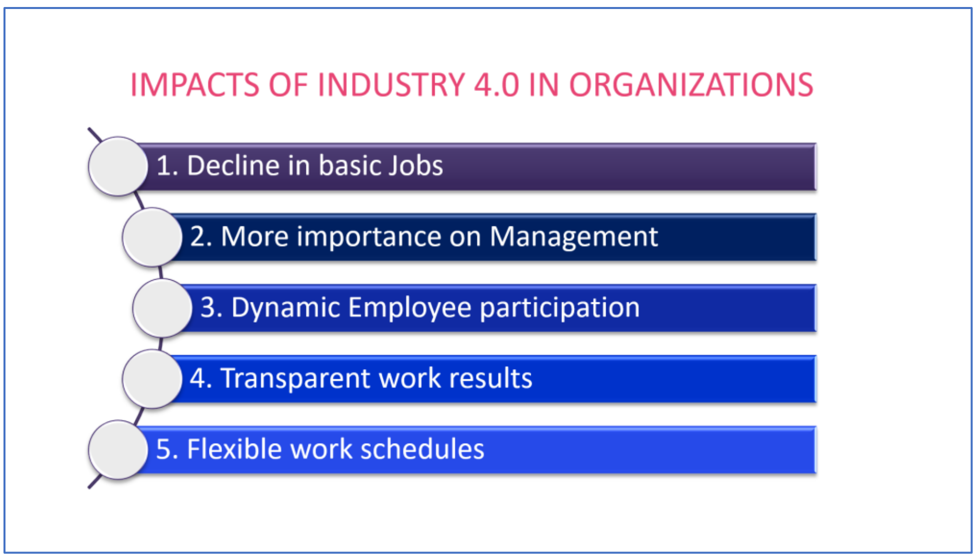


Figure 59.1: Illustration of Using Graphics for Listing

If your lists contain sub lists or steps, its better to use the lists as heading for each sub list and structure them horizontally instead of vertically. The following shows how visuals can be used to make lists and sub lists in a presentation slide:

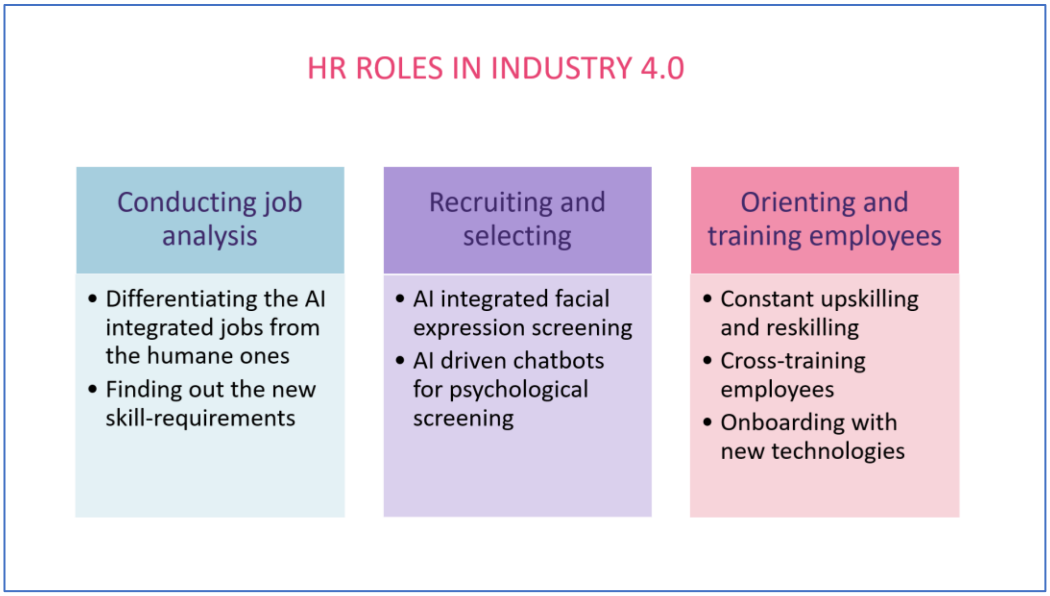


Figure 19.6.1: Illustration of Lists with Sub lists

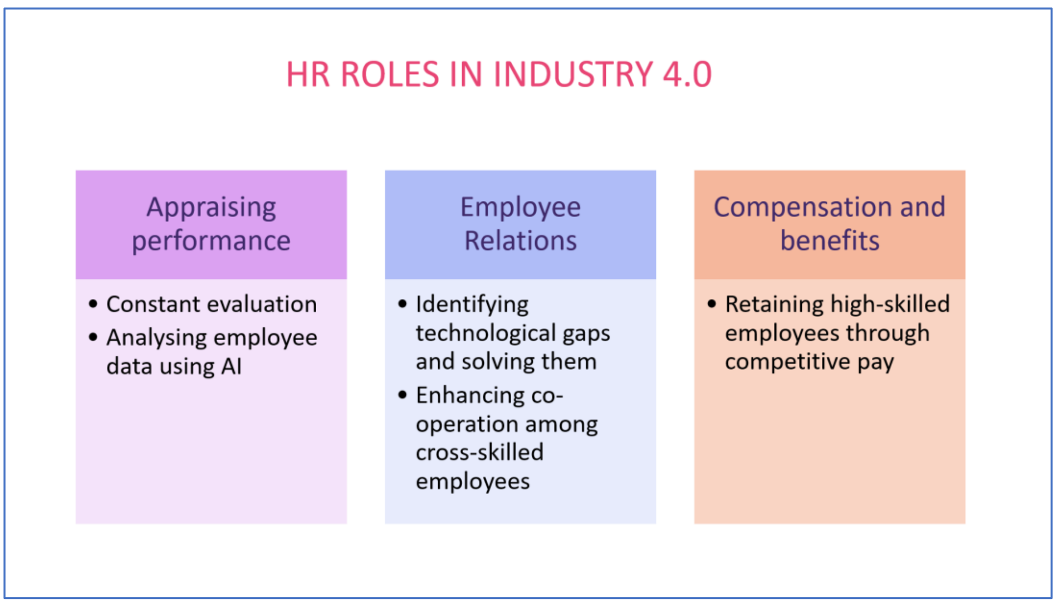


Figure 19.2.2: Illustration of Lists with Sub lists (Continued)

Processes

To illustrate processes, a special structure of listing is required. Here each point will come after the other in a sequential order and must maintain the true order. Illustrating processes can be done horizontally, vertically or in staircase manner. All three are shown below:

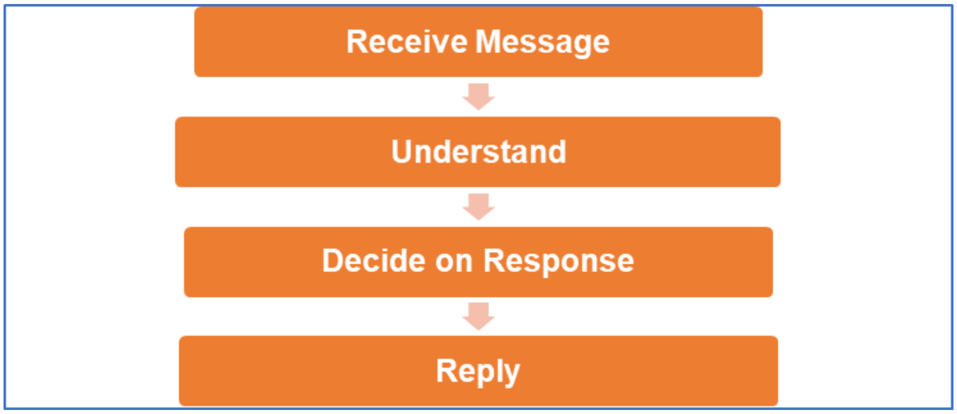


Figure 19.3.1: Example of Vertical Process List

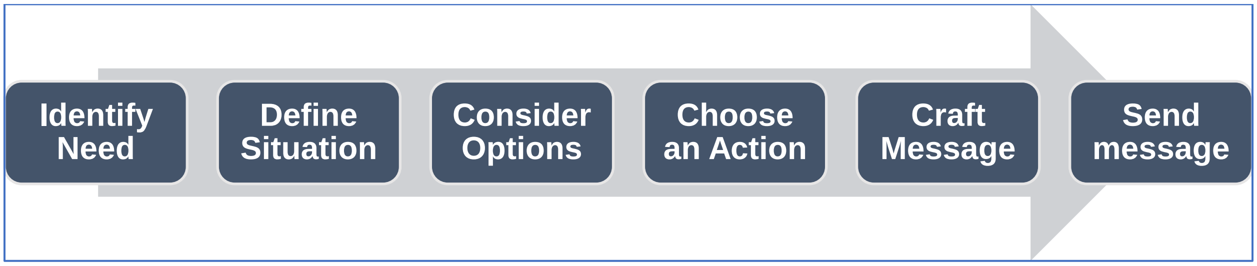


Figure 19.3.2: Example of horizontal Process List

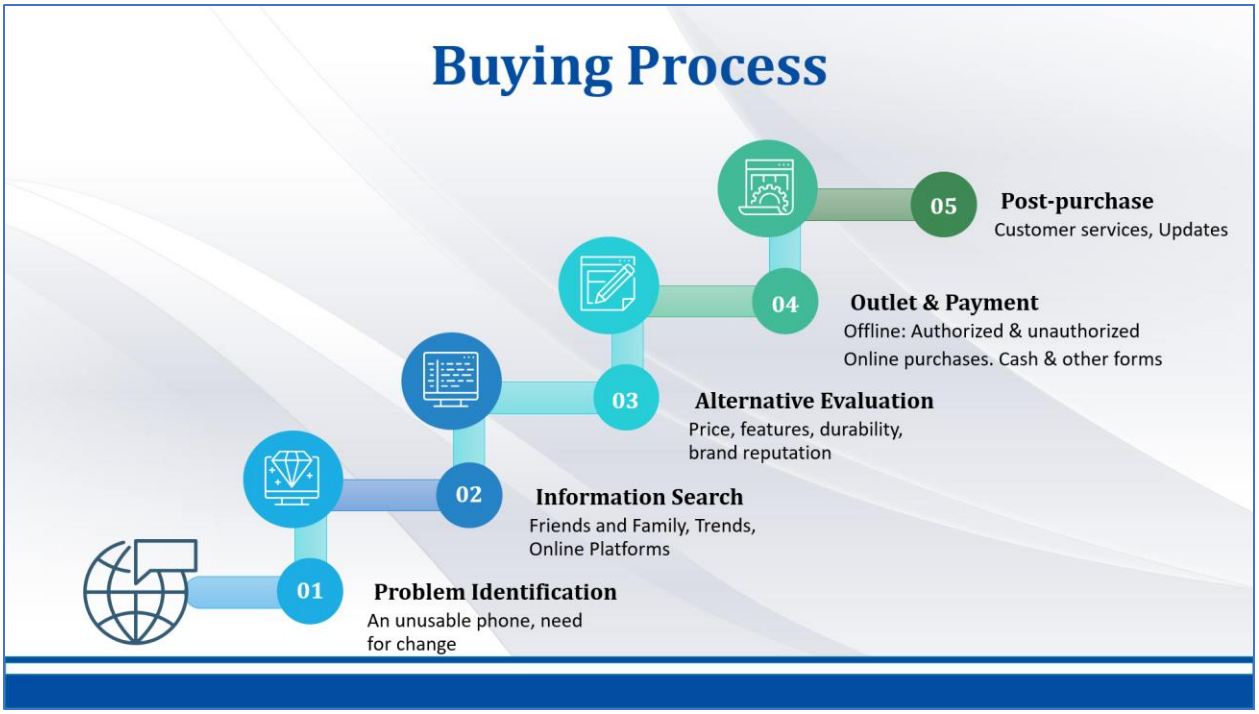


Figure 19.3.3: Example of a Staircase Style Process List

Data Visualization

Showcasing relevant data is an important part of any business presentation. The findings and recommendations often rely on the proper presentation of the data found in conducting the research. These can be presented insightfully using, bar charts, pie charts, scatter plots etc.

The following are some examples of data visualization

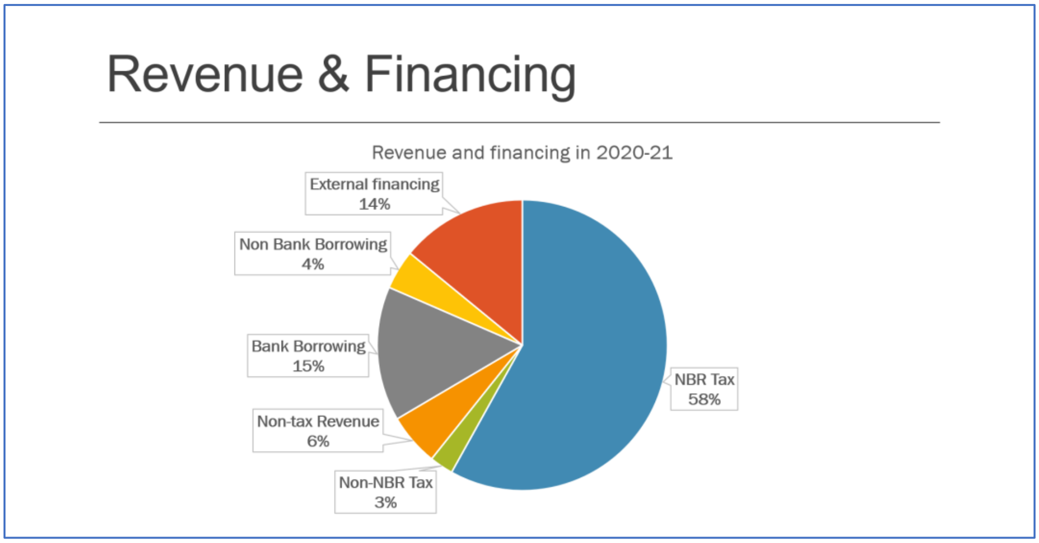


Figure 18.4.1: Illustration of Data Visualization (Pie Chart)

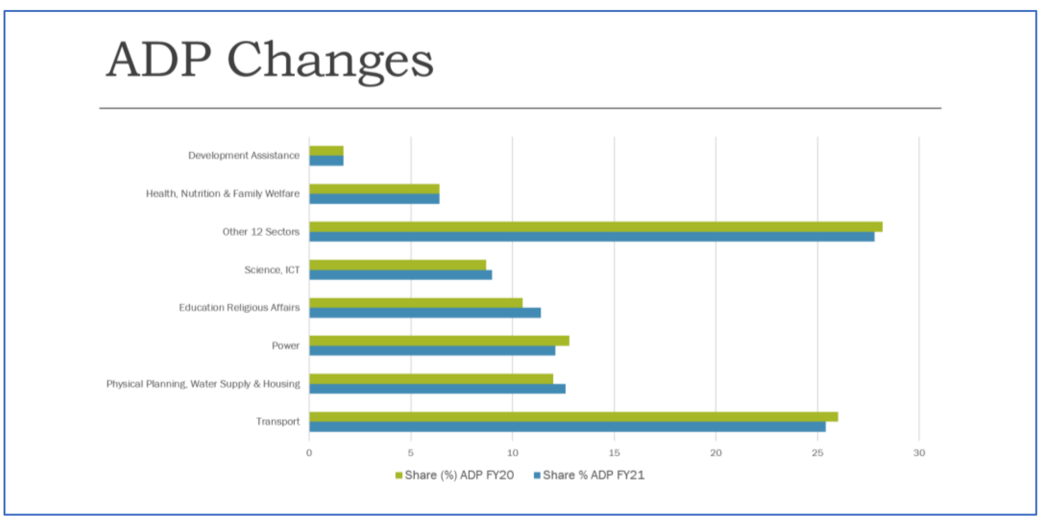


Figure 18.4.2: Illustration of Data Visualization (Bar Chart)

Timelines:

Timelines are an important part of presentations especially if it's a business plan or a project proposal. Gantt Charts and simple timeline charts can be used to clarify what task, event or situation has happened when or will take place when. The following examples show timelines in a presentation:

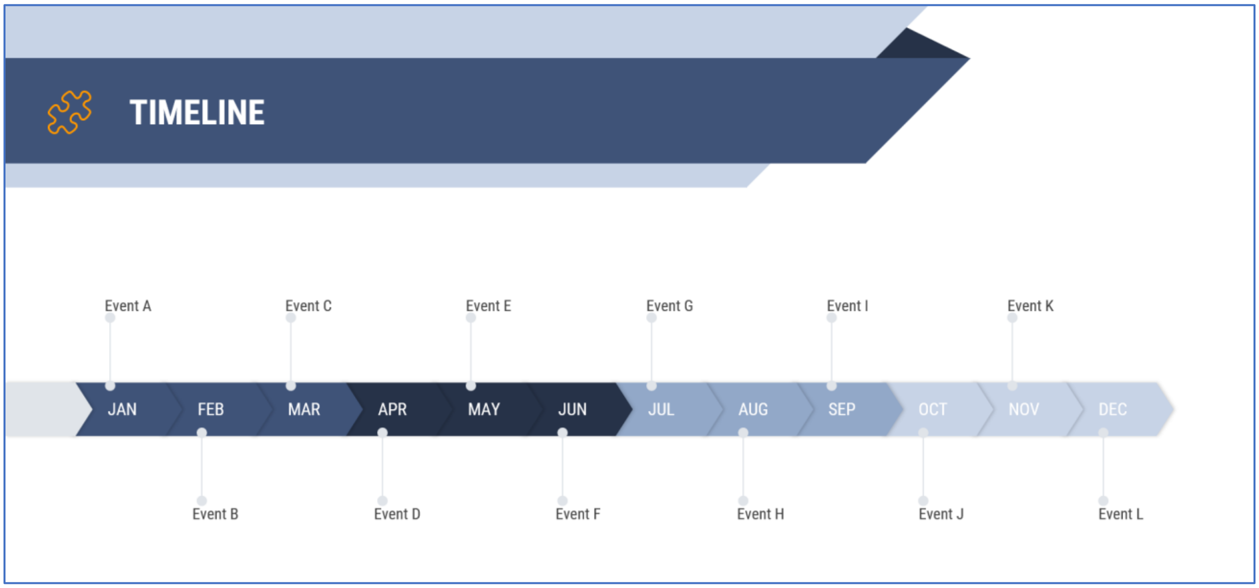


Figure 18.5.1: Simple Timeline Example, Source: Slides Carnival

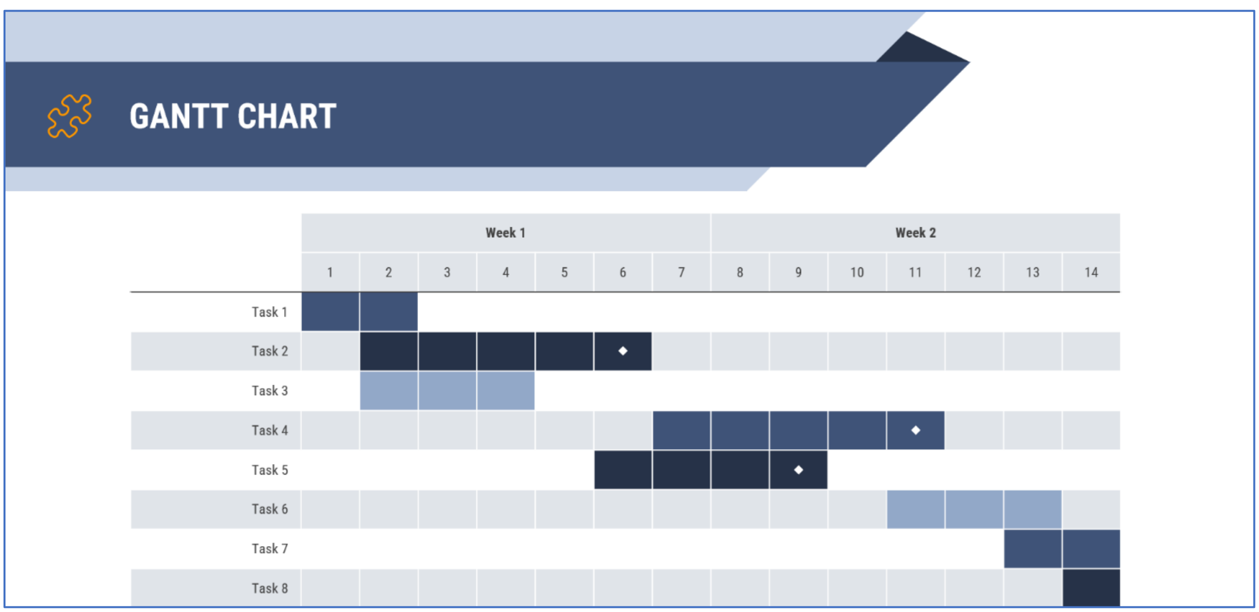


Figure 18.5.2: Gantt Chart, Source: Slides Carnival

Miscellaneous Graphics in Presentation Slides

Other types of graphics include roadmaps, business value canvases, SWOT canvases, planners etc. These are not part of every presentation slide but mostly in business plans, marketing analysis and specific problem identification slides. The following shows examples of these:

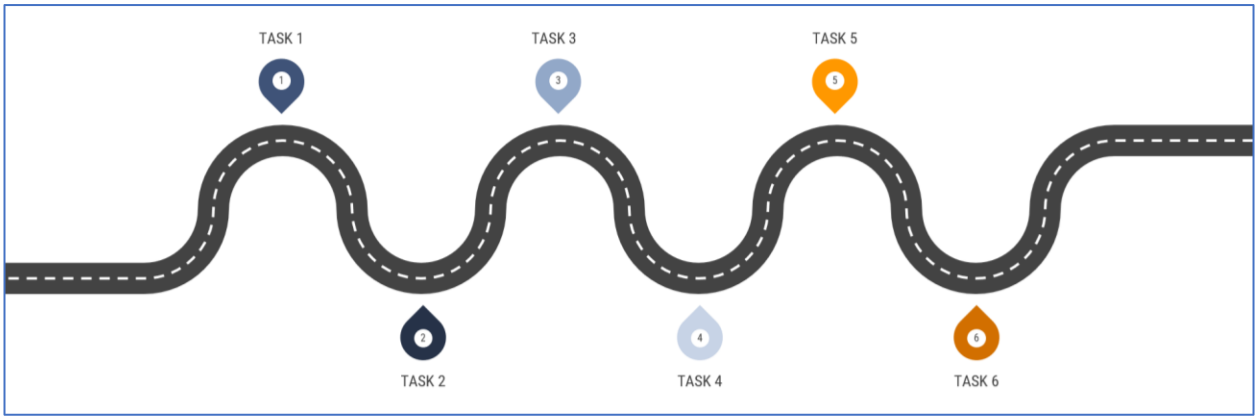


Figure 18.6: Illustration of Roadmap, Source: Slides Carnival

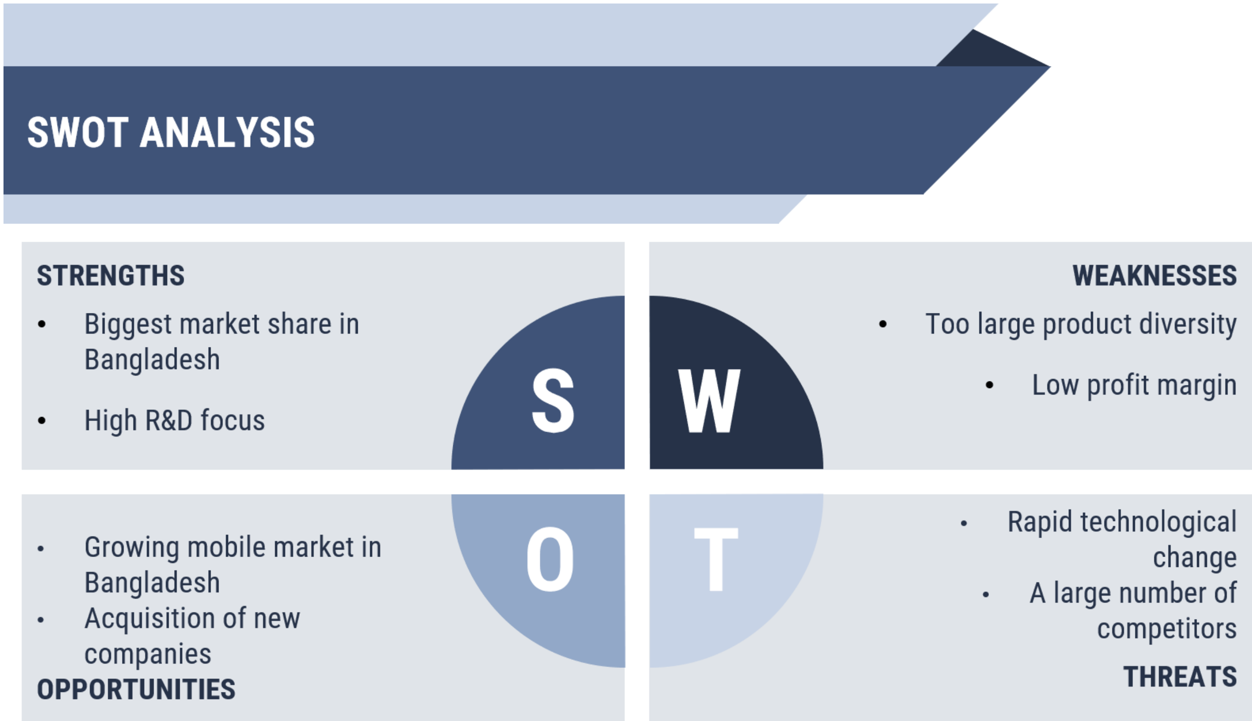


Figure 18.7: SWOT CANVAS, Source: Slides Carnival

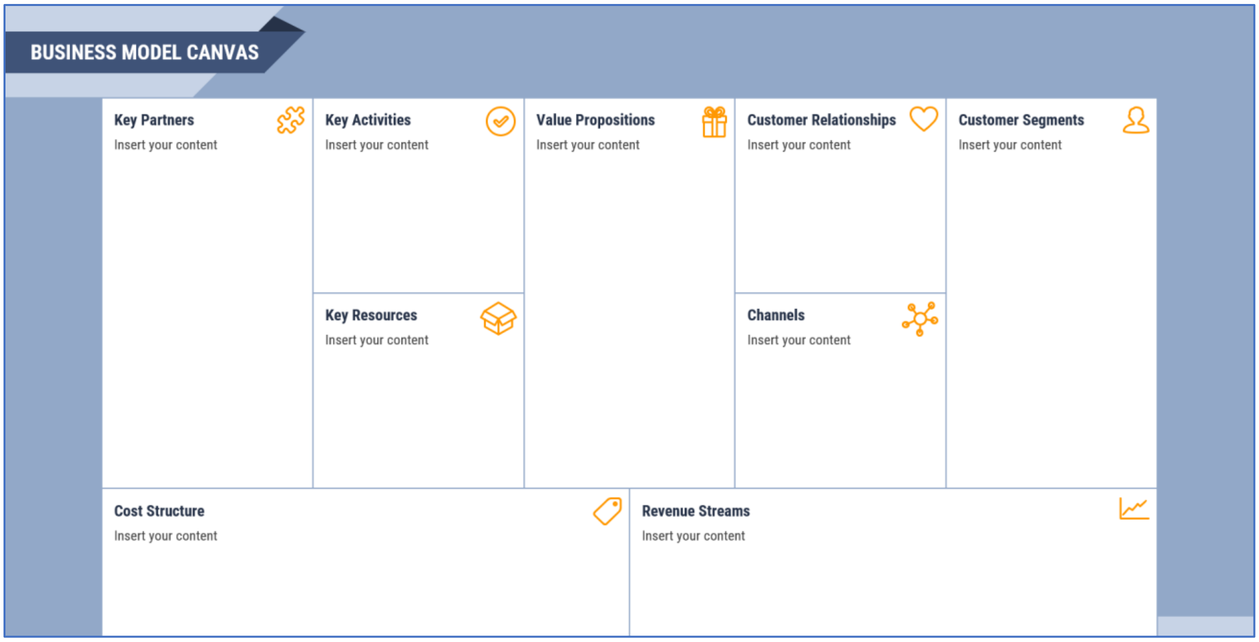


Figure 18.8: Business Value Canvas, Source: Slides Carnival

WEEKLY PLANNER

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9:00 - 9:45	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task
10:00 - 10:45	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task
11:00 - 11:45	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task
12:00 - 13:15	✓ Free time	✓ Free time	✓ Free time	✓ Free time	✓ Free time	✓ Free time	✓ Free time
13:30 - 14:15	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task
14:30 - 15:15	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task
15:30 - 16:15	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task

Figure 18.9: Planner, Source: Slides Carnival

Sample Presentation

The following is a sample presentation of a business plan. The presentation uses adequate graphics. The presentation directly goes into the idea and describes the idea in a short but precise manner. After that, some relevant findings are presented which leads to the problem the idea is solving. and how the idea solving it. The presentation ends with an analysis of why the idea is a good one. It showcases revenue model and competition analysis.

Figure 18.10.1: Introduction to The idea

Figure 18.10.2: The Core Idea

Figure 18.10.3: Illustration of Findings

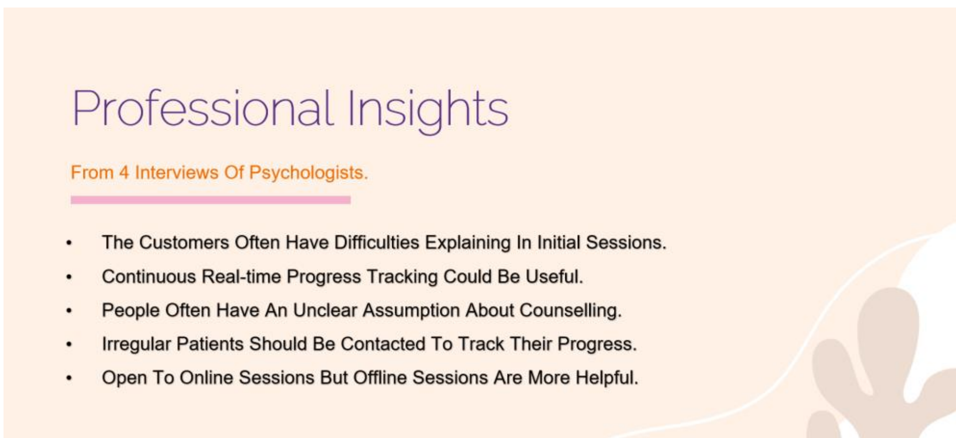


Figure 18.10.4: Illustration of Findings (Cont.)

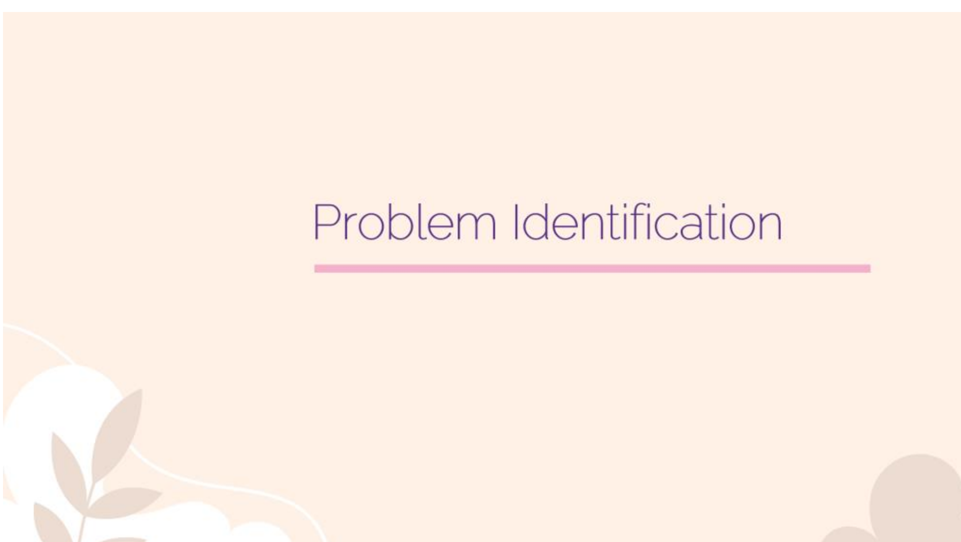


Figure 18.10.5: Transition Slide to the Main Problem

Figure 18.10.6: Problem Identification

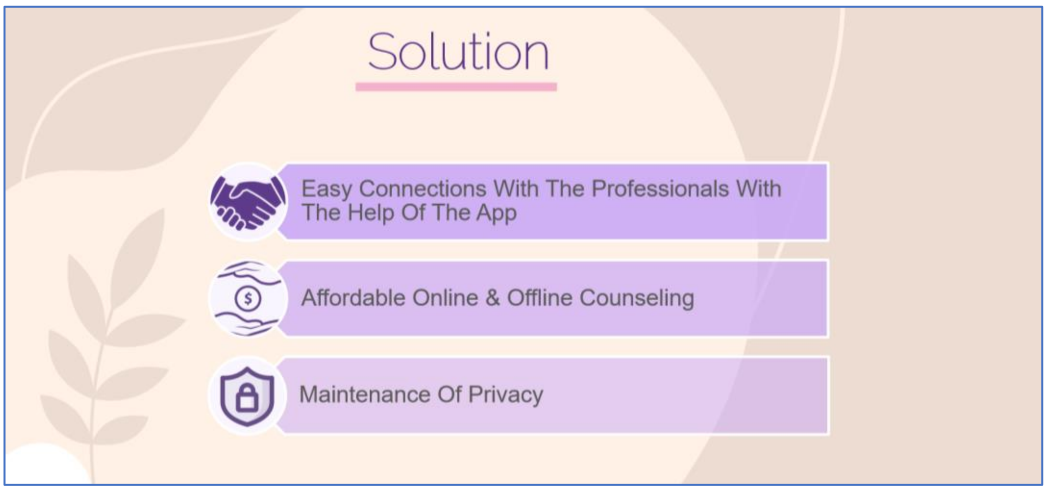


Figure 18.10.7: Solution to the Problems

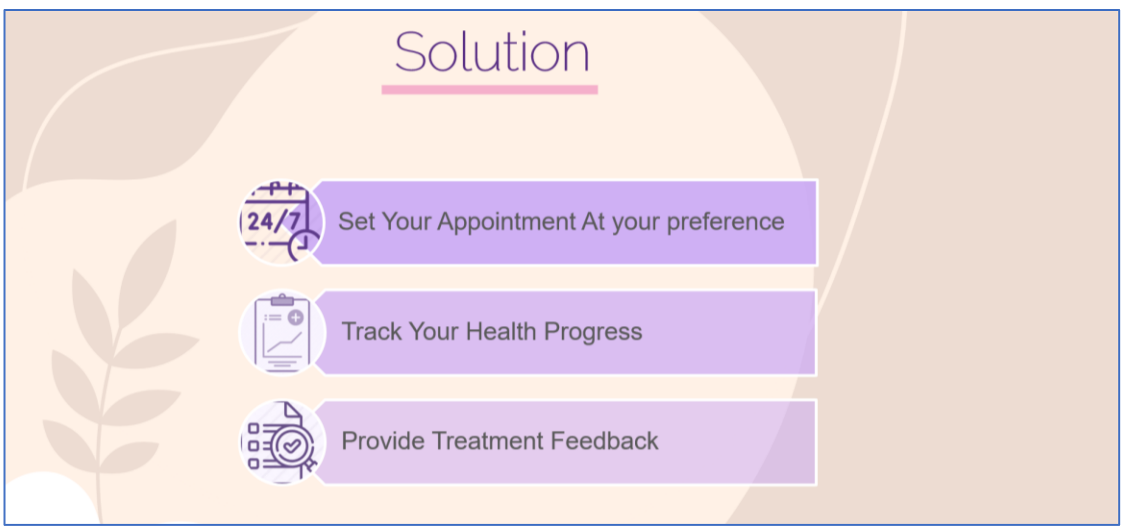


Figure 18.10.8: Solution to the Problems (Cont.)

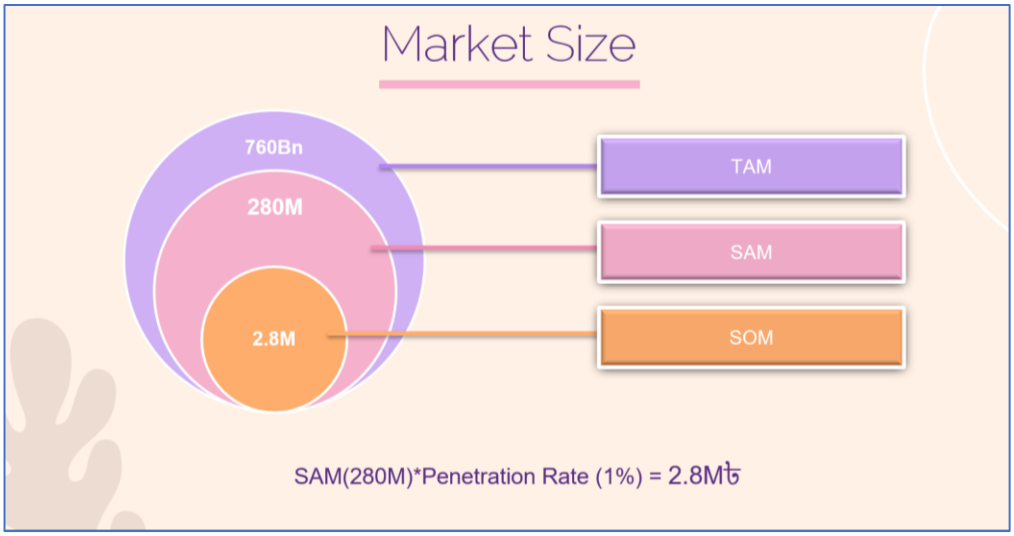


Figure 18.10.9: Analytical Slides for Persuading the Audience

Figure 18.10.10: Analytical Slides for Persuading the Audience

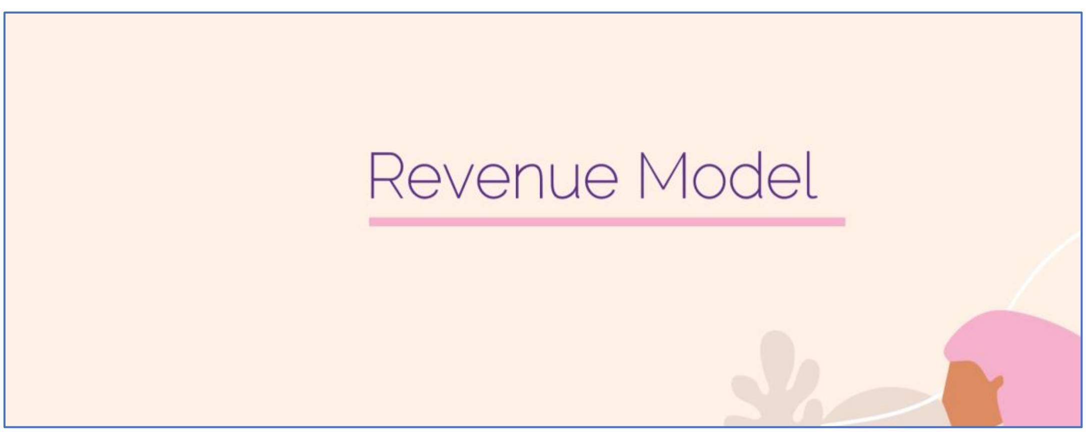


Figure 18.10.11: Transition Slide

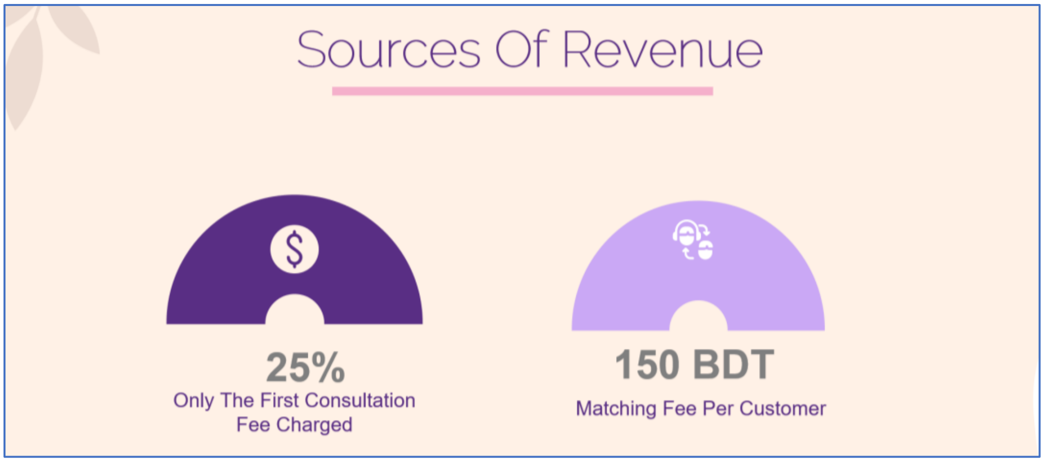


Figure 18.10.12: Business Core Model

Figure 18.10.13: Competition Analysis

	MNV	CXZ	VVZ
Services	Counselling, Workshops & Training	Counselling, Workshops & Training	Counselling
Medium	Online and Offline	Online and Offline	Online
Consultants	Psychologists and Psychiatrists	Psychologists	Psychologists
Platforms	Website	Website	Website
Additional Value	Blogs and Video Content	Free Course & Monthly Newsletter	Blogs
Client Type	Individual, Corporate, Student and Home	Individual and Corporate	Individual

Figure 18.10.14: Competitor Analysis

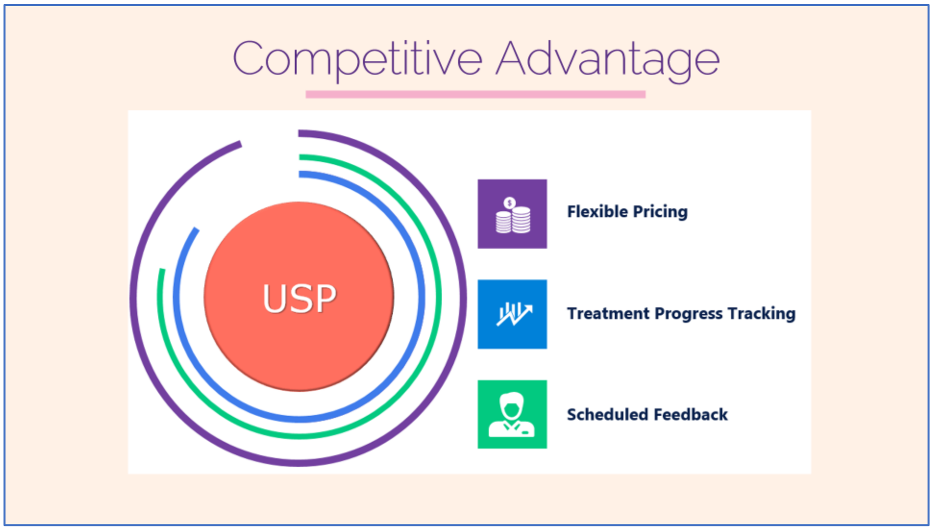


Figure 18.10.15: Persuasion using Competitive Advantage

Figure 18.10.16: End Slide showcasing goodwill

Topic – 20: Email Writing

Email has been a crucial tool for corporate communication for many years, and at first it provided a significant speed and efficiency advantage over the media it often replaced (printed and faxed messages). Here are a few uses of email in business –

- To give regular updates and communication
- To distribute newsletters to clients and consumers
- To transport papers, images, or videos
- To monitor social media usage
- To provide formal communications with dates

Dos and Don'ts of Email Communication

These are things to do in writing an email:

1. Respond to important and relevant business messages promptly.
2. Using SMART (specific, meaningful, appropriate, relevant, Thoughtful) subject line
3. Keep Caps Lock Off
4. Start with greetings and end with Goodwill
5. Send a cc to those who need to know and not to people who are irrelevant for the subject matter.
6. Proofread the mail correctly the first time so that you don't have to resend that again.
7. Keep other modes of communication (for example: phone call) close to you, in case something goes wrong.

These are the Don'ts of email communication:

1. Selecting an unclear or dated topic line
2. Opening the email without a salutation.
3. Failing to proofread
4. Using acronyms or abbreviations
5. Using the wrong case
6. Ignoring the intended audience
7. Consolidating everything into a single paragraph

Constructing A Persuasive & Appropriate Subject Line

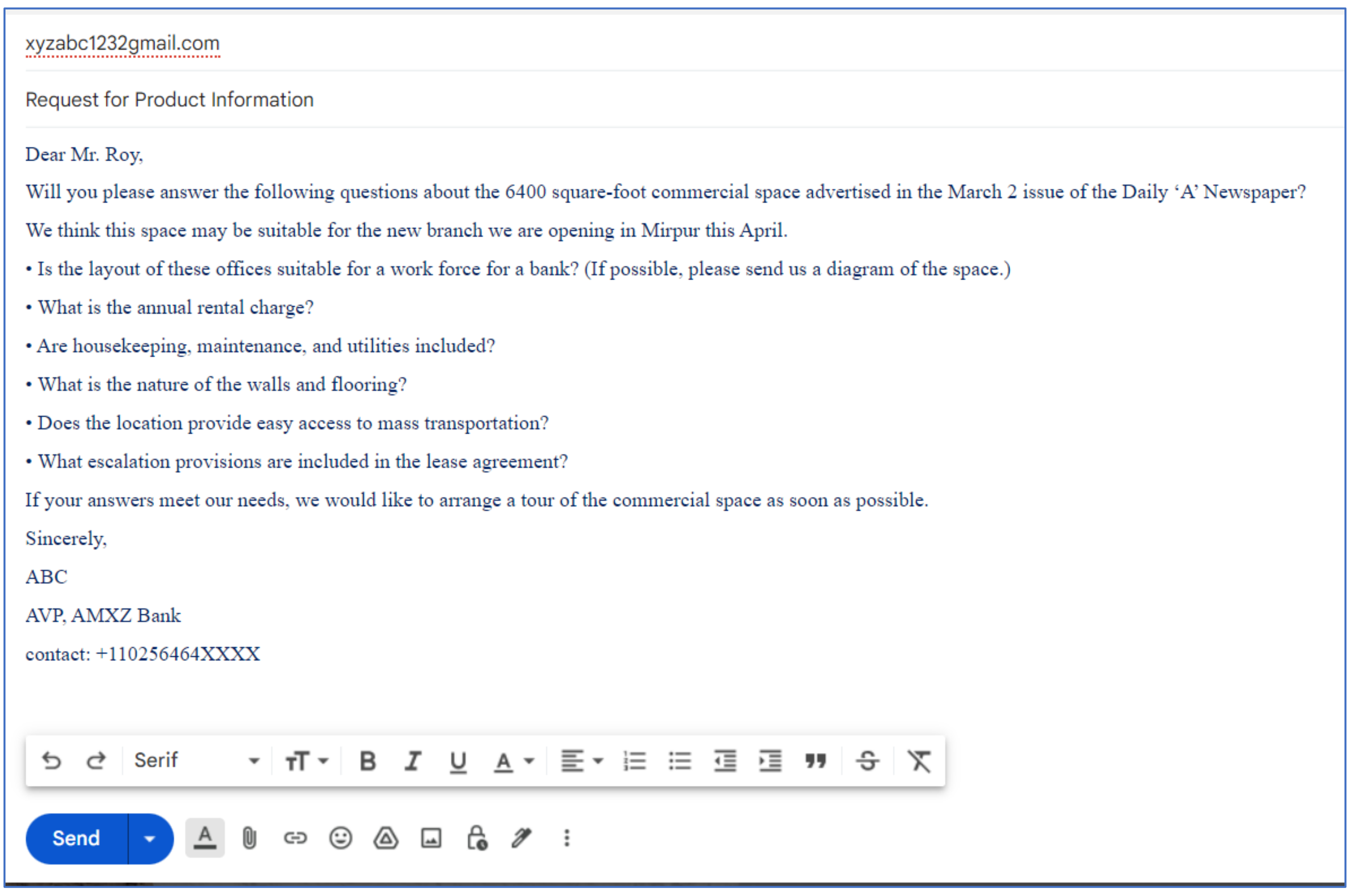
The subject line is almost always the most important part of an email. Depending on the subject line, the recipient may or may not even look inside the mail. Therefore, crafting a crisp subject line is very essential. Earlier, we mentioned SMART subject line. Let’s elaborate on this a bit more.

- S – Specific: The subject line has to be precise and to the point. There should not be any unnecessary wording or information. If the reader is aware of the context, then the subject should only satisfy what the email is about. If he/she is not, then the subject should satisfy what, when and why. For example: “Application for deadline extension” is a specific subject line that says that the mail is an application and its for the deadline extension. The reader will instantly get an idea and will open the mail looking for logical reasons behind the extension.
- M – Meaningful: The subject line can’t be mere words without meaning. There should a core purpose of the subject line. For example: “Sale! Buy Now” is a meaningless subject line. It would have been better off if written like “50% Off! Buy these shoes now!”
- A- Appropriate: The subject line needs to be in accordance with the target recipient/s. Since most business emails are formal in nature, the subject line should be formal too. Using informal words and jargons will ruin the subject line. For example: “Need A break, Boss!” is a very unprofessional subject line and will irritate and annoy your boss. Instead, the subject line should be “Request for a Leave”.
- R- Relevant: The subject line must be relevant to the main message of the mail. If the mail is on a request for project funds, the subject line can’t be “Need More Personnel”. It is a completely irrelevant subject line and will confuse the recipient. The ideal subject line should be “Request for funds for “X” Project”.
- T- Thoughtful: The subject line must be carefully thought. It needs to be tailored to the needs of the business and the audience. If there is a house rule, that should be followed strictly. The wording in the subject line should be carefully chosen.

Email Body

The email will always start with greetings such as “Hope you are doing well”. This shows compassion and makes the communication more humane. But then, the mail should quickly jump into the main message without any delay. If it’s a small message with one main point, then the email main body should be of one paragraph not more than 200 words. However, if it's a sizable message, the mail may contain different paragraphs for different points. The contents must be coherent and relevant to the subject matter of the overall email. It is well advised to not put multiple different messages in one email. It clutters the mail and reduces the quality. Separate emails for separate messages are well advised. For example: in a mail for requesting for extra project funds, one must not include a personal request like "leave of absence". The email should always end in goodwill. The writer should thank the recipient for taking the time to go through the mail. IF there is any direct request, inquiry or reply needed, it should be put clearly before the goodwill. After goodwill, the sender must put their first name. And two spaces down, he/she must put in the details of his designation & contact information.

Sample Email



xyzabc1232gmail.com

Request for Product Information

Dear Mr. Roy,

Will you please answer the following questions about the 6400 square-foot commercial space advertised in the March 2 issue of the Daily 'A' Newspaper?

We think this space may be suitable for the new branch we are opening in Mirpur this April.

- Is the layout of these offices suitable for a work force for a bank? (If possible, please send us a diagram of the space.)
- What is the annual rental charge?
- Are housekeeping, maintenance, and utilities included?
- What is the nature of the walls and flooring?
- Does the location provide easy access to mass transportation?
- What escalation provisions are included in the lease agreement?

If your answers meet our needs, we would like to arrange a tour of the commercial space as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

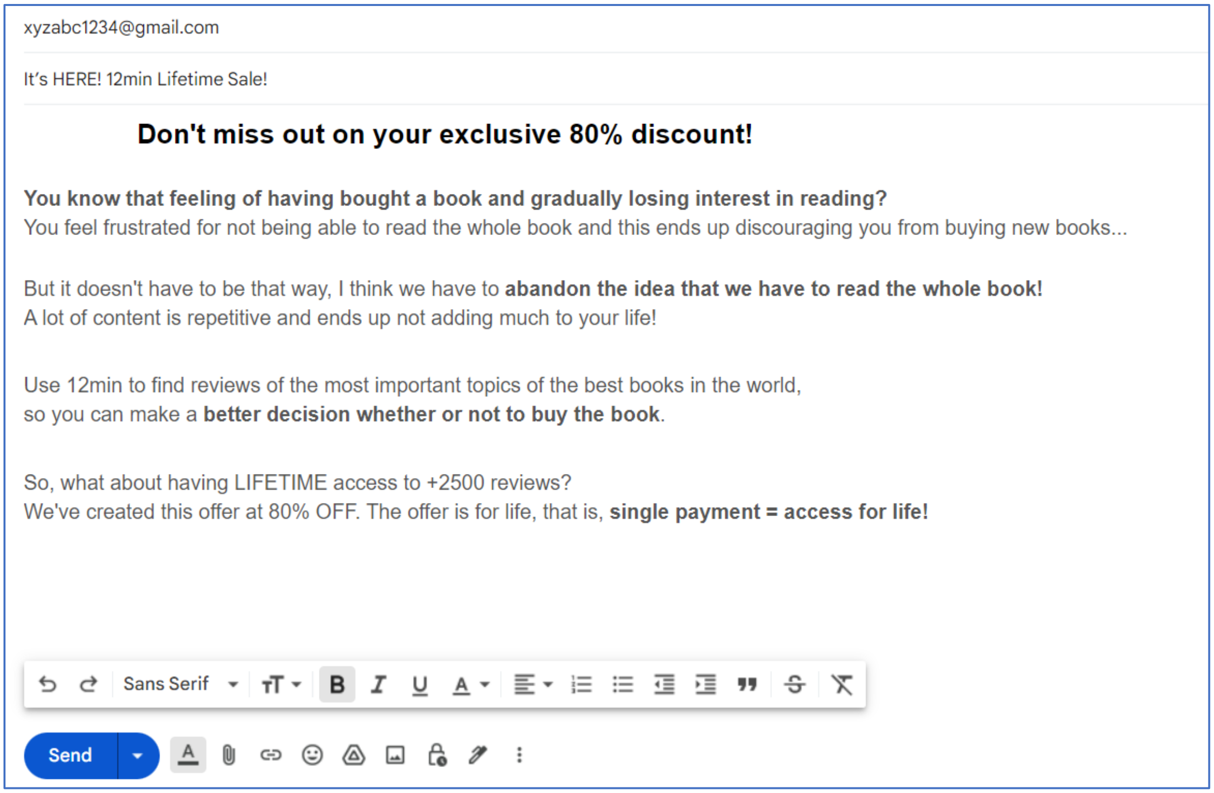
ABC

AVP, AMXZ Bank

contact: +110256464XXXX

Figure 19.1: Sample Email for Product Information Request

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz


xyzabc1234@gmail.com

It's HERE! 12min Lifetime Sale!

Don't miss out on your exclusive 80% discount!

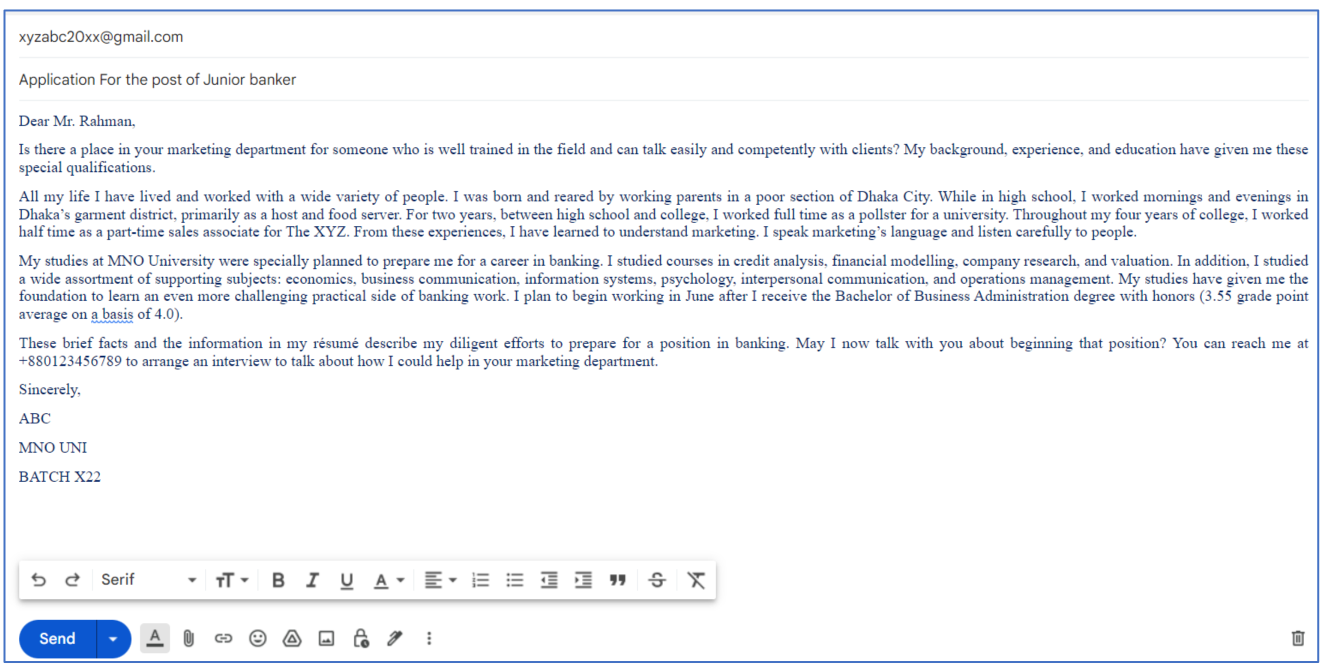
You know that feeling of having bought a book and gradually losing interest in reading?
You feel frustrated for not being able to read the whole book and this ends up discouraging you from buying new books...

But it doesn't have to be that way, I think we have to **abandon the idea that we have to read the whole book!**
A lot of content is repetitive and ends up not adding much to your life!

Use 12min to find reviews of the most important topics of the best books in the world,
so you can make a **better decision whether or not to buy the book**.

So, what about having LIFETIME access to +2500 reviews?
We've created this offer at 80% OFF. The offer is for life, that is, **single payment = access for life!**

Figure 19.2: Sample Email Sales Message, Source: 12min Read


xyzabc20xx@gmail.com

Application For the post of Junior banker

Dear Mr. Rahman,

Is there a place in your marketing department for someone who is well trained in the field and can talk easily and competently with clients? My background, experience, and education have given me these special qualifications.

All my life I have lived and worked with a wide variety of people. I was born and reared by working parents in a poor section of Dhaka City. While in high school, I worked mornings and evenings in Dhaka's garment district, primarily as a host and food server. For two years, between high school and college, I worked full time as a pollster for a university. Throughout my four years of college, I worked half time as a part-time sales associate for The XYZ. From these experiences, I have learned to understand marketing. I speak marketing's language and listen carefully to people.

My studies at MNO University were specially planned to prepare me for a career in banking. I studied courses in credit analysis, financial modelling, company research, and valuation. In addition, I studied a wide assortment of supporting subjects: economics, business communication, information systems, psychology, interpersonal communication, and operations management. My studies have given me the foundation to learn an even more challenging practical side of banking work. I plan to begin working in June after I receive the Bachelor of Business Administration degree with honors (3.55 grade point average on a basis of 4.0).

These brief facts and the information in my résumé describe my diligent efforts to prepare for a position in banking. May I now talk with you about beginning that position? You can reach me at +880123456789 to arrange an interview to talk about how I could help in your marketing department.

Sincerely,

ABC

MNO UNI

BATCH X22

Figure 19.3: Sample Email Cover Letter

Source: Business Communication, Lesikar, Faltley & Rentz

Topic – 21: Social Media Etiquette

Social media is intimately related to everyday lives of 21st century human beings. Post covid, almost all businesses strengthened their presence in the social media space. The most common social media used are Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, YouTube, Snap Chat etc. Depending on the usage of the social media, a company can thrive or decline in real time. Therefore, knowing the social media do's and don'ts are essential for any person especially employees of a company. In addition to the more obvious benefits in external communication, many businesses increasingly utilize social media for internal communication as well. Companies may become more cohesive, come together after mergers or reorganizations, and get beyond structural hurdles to communication with the aid of internal social networks.

The Main Business Uses of Social Media

- Integrating & Expanding Employees: Internal social networks can help businesses become more unified in the same way that public networks may unite families and friends.. By linking new recruits with industry experts, mentors, and other important connections, these networks may help them integrate into the firm. They can also help workforces come together after mergers or reorganizations; and get around structural communication barriers by delivering information where it is needed without using the formal communication system.
- Employee Collaboration: Social media can be a great to streamline collaboration among inter-company and intra-company employees. A group chat can streamline the process of communication between team members in a common project. This reduces the need for cluttering inbox with same emails and sends the message to everyone in the same platform at the same time. Doing meetings becomes easier in the virtual world with employees being anywhere in the world. Internal social media can be a great platform to disseminate information across a big business organization.
- Building Communities: Individuals who carry out comparable work, and communities of similar interests, or people who are passionate about a certain good or activity, may naturally be brought together through social platforms. Communities that link professionals who may operate in separate departments or other regions can be very helpful to large, geographically scattered businesses.
- Branding: The most famous use of social media is for branding a business. It can be a powerful tool for any company. The Facebook or Instagram page of a company is key to communicating with its customers, stakeholders and the mass public. Every major

business has a dedicated page to showcase their products or services. The customers also find it convenient to check out the product or service offering without visiting the business in-person. The customer reviews on social media can make or break a company. Which is why social media also works as a quality control measure for many companies.

- Customer Service: Customer service is a vital component of business communication that has been transformed by social media. In order to provide consumers with a more convenient manner to receive assistance from the business and to assist one another, social customer service makes use of social networks and other social media platforms. The social media manager of a company usually engages in this communication with customers. They satisfy customer queries, complaints and other issues using direct chat or through call.
- Gaining Insight on Target Market: Social media is a great tool to understand your customers. As millions of people express themselves on the social space daily, companies can see these and understand the behavioral aspects of their target market.

The Do's & Don'ts of social media

1. Read every message before clicking "Send."
2. Every time you "friend," "follow," or enter a chat, make an effort to introduce yourself.
3. Be honest and transparent in your communications.
4. Before engaging with the mass, think up the purpose strategically.
5. Do not react abruptly to negative reactions and rude customers.
6. Follow in-house rules for social media.
7. Do not post a product or service offering without proper customer engagement plan.
8. If a piece of information is part of the offering, keep it public. Do not request your customers for private communication for miniature details.
9. In marketing campaigns, keep the communication integrated and coherent.
10. Showcase positive feedback from your customers effectively so that new customers can view them easily.

Managing The Challenges of Social Media from Organizational Perspective

Getting staff to utilize internal social networks may be a major hurdle. For instance, management may need to discover strategies to persuade individuals to utilize a new internal social network or workgroup messaging system that a firm is launching to replace email. Shutting down alternate routes, gamifying incentives (such rewarding recognition points for content contributions), and ensuring that corporate executives are outwardly using the new system are all possible components of this approach. Companies need a combination of good policy and ethical staff conduct when it comes to all forms of social media. Typical issues include:

- Preventing employees from being overburdened with social media chores.
- Not expecting them to create content or reply to incoming messages while also juggling a heavy workload of other activities
- Preventing staff members from wasting excessive amounts of time on social media.
- Preventing staff members from disseminating offensive content or sensitive information.
- Ensuring that the brand has a consistent voice on social media, so that the messages shared on different platforms don't conflict with one another.
- Preventing the creation of exclusive networks or groups that use internal social networks to purposefully exclude particular workers.

Cases

Case 1

You are the business development executive for AMXZ bank's investment banking division. You have asked to pitch an idea to an MNC client who is looking for acquiring a medium sized business. You have made a presentation slide to talk about target companies and their business models. On the day of pitching, you see that your client is not feeling satisfied with your presentation and at one point stops you.

1. How would you handle the situation? What skill will you apply that you've learnt from this module?

Case – 2

You are the client relationship manager for PCO group's account in your bank XYZ BANK. You have been dealing with this client for some time and have a strong relationship with the client. Your boss has asked you to convey some information regarding the client's request for additional funding for a project. The details of the message are not numerous but certainly requires written documentation that they were conveyed to the client. The message needs to sent this afternoon.

1. How would you communicate this message? Why?

Case – 3

You are the marketing manager for LSI BANK. You have been asked to promote the bank's new service offering to the public. The offering is an exclusive debut card concierge service for special clients. The service is clearly for medium to high net worth individuals and needs to be conveyed clearly to them.

1. Create an email for conveying this message to the bank's already existing clients.
2. Is mass marketing in social media for this campaign helpful? Why or why not?

MCQ

1. Which of the following is not part of organizing a presentation?
   a. Defining the Main Idea
   b. Choosing Order
   c. Preparing Outline
   d. Analysing the situation
2. What is the ideal way to showcase a business process in a presentation slide?
   a. Direct List
   b. Horizontal List
   c. Staircase List
   d. All of the above
3. Which of the following is best for showcasing a budget for the quarter?
   a. Pie Chart
   b. Bar Chart
   c. Scatter Plot
   d. Infographics
4. Which of the following is not a use of email?
   a. To provide day-to-day communication and updates
   b. To carry newsletters to customers and clients
   c. To carry documents, pictures, or videos
   d. All of the above are use of email
5. Which of the following is a characteristic of email subject line?
   a. Being Specific
   b. Being succinct
   c. Being spacious
   d. Being sarcastic
6. Which of the following is a direct business use of social media?
   a. Collaboration
   b. Sending memes
   c. Looking for new products
   d. None of the above

Short Questions

1. What are the steps in preparing an outline for a presentation?
2. What are the dos and don’ts of using social media?
3. What are the challenges of social media in an organization?

Broad Questions

1. How will you plan for a presentation? Discuss the steps.
2. What are the do’s and don’ts of email writing?
3. How would you write a SMART subject line?
4. Discuss the main business uses of social media.

Module F: Standard & Physical Aspects of Communication

Topic – 22: Effective Listening, Public Speaking, Body language, Spoken & Written English

Effective Listening

An important aspect of communication is listening. A message must be heard, understood, and favorably kept by the receivers or listeners in order for communication to occur. A dynamic process, listening is. Listening entails being focused and interested, which may be seen in both posture and facial expression. Active listening fosters communication, resolves issues, ensures comprehension, settles disputes, and increases accuracy. Effective listening at work results in fewer mistakes and less time wasted. It aids in the development of resourceful, independent children who can handle their own difficulties at home. Effective listening needs active participation and is more challenging than it first appears.

Steps in Effective Listening

1. Proper Eye Contact: When talking to a person, look into their eyes. Looking elsewhere is considered rude and will depress the audience. Eye contact also helps in keeping focus on what the speaker is saying and make meaningful conversations.
2. Be Attentive: Put your phone or other devices that may cause you distraction away. In business communication, focusing on what the other side is saying is crucial. The other person is putting time and effort in talking to you. You must respect their time and effort and to show respect you must be attentive to the conversation.
3. Have an open mind: Avoid passing judgment on the speaker or internalizing their statements as you listen. If the speaker's words alarm you, feel free to express your alarm but keep your thoughts to yourself. Pay attention without drawing judgements. Keep in mind that the speaker is expressing her feelings and thoughts in language. The only way you will learn what those thoughts and feelings are is through listening.
4. Visualize: To better understand and focus on the content that's being discussed, you can use visualizing what the speaker is saying. Allow your brain to construct a mental representation of the information being conveyed. Whether it's a physical image or a combination of abstract ideas, your brain will perform efficiently provided you maintain focus and are completely aware of your surroundings. Concentrate on, and keep in mind, important words and phrases when listening for extended periods of time.
5. Don't Interrupt: Interrupting mid-speaking is not only rude but also very distressing for the speaker. Keep the thoughts in your mind and tell it when the speaker pauses. If you

interrupt, you will distract the speaker. He/she will not be able to finish their thoughts or communicate the message effectively.

6. Wait for pause: When the speaker pauses, you should communicate your thoughts and reservations. You may ask any questions or comment on content being discussed. You may ask for some clarifications or explanations if you don't understand anything that the speaker has just told you before the pause.
7. Ask clarification questions: This is a great way to engage with the speaker and not make him/her feel bored. It's natural that you will not understand everything he/she says the first time. You have to ask these questions to further clarify the topic. This will help you not only in understanding the content but also in storing the information in your memory. But when you ask questions, ask them in an objective manner. Don't pose the questions to doubt the credibility or the integrity of the speaker.
8. Empathize: To understand the speaker's mentality and motivation behind the message, you need to empathize with them. Imagine yourself in their shoes and think from their perspective. What may not seem to be relevant to you, may be very much relevant for them. Empathizing is essential for effective communication.
9. Provide Feedback: You may provide constructive feedback after the speaker is done speaking. But before making any feedback, make sure you understand the message clearly and completely. The feedback should reflect your honest thinking and understanding of the situation. Do not sugarcoat anything and do not exaggerate. Keep the feedback brief and to the point.
10. Pay attention to Gestures: Nonverbal cues like gestures, handshake, voice tone etc. can portray a great deal about the speaker. If the speaker feels uncomfortable talking to you, you should be able to notice that. Try to remain calm and composed. A firm handshake shows that the speaker is confident and in a positive mood. You must learn to read people when talking to them.

Public Speaking

A presentation given in front of a live audience is known as public speaking. A vast variety of topics are suitable for public presentations. The audience's goal for the speech may be to be informed, entertained, or persuaded. One of the best methods to communicate your ideas, show off your knowledge, and influence people is through public speaking. You might even manage to stay more organized, write better, and communicate better with others. Many people who now feel entirely at ease speaking in front of large groups of people once suffered from severe public speaking anxiety. You can significantly improve your life by getting over this fear, practicing, and developing confidence.

Steps in Effective Public Speaking

1. Prepare Talking Points: Make a list of talking points before you deliver a speech that includes the main ideas you want your audience to be aware of by the time you are done speaking. Start with three to five overarching messages, then include multiple supporting arguments for each of those messages. Talking points should be arranged chronologically, beginning with the first point you intend to make. A prepared outline of your messaging can help you stay on course during your presentation and make sure you don't miss any crucial elements.
2. Practice: Being nervous speaking to the mass people is very natural and happens to almost everybody. Strong preparation is the best remedy for anxiety. Spend some time reviewing your notes multiple times. Practice a lot after you've gotten used to the material. Make a video of yourself, or get a friend to watch it and give you feedback.
3. Analyze the Audience: Think on the audience for your message before you start to write it. As much as you can, find out who your listeners are. This will assist you in deciding on your word choice, informational level, organizational style, and motivating statement. This will help you be prepared for any type of situation that may occur during the speech. If the listeners are business professional, you may need to speak in an affirmative formal manner. If the audience is a bunch of young kids, you need to be relaxed and exuberant in your speech.
4. Organize Content: In order to achieve your goals, structure your material as effectively as possible. Set up a structure for your speech. Topic, broad goal, detailed goal, major points, and central thought should all be noted. Aim to capture the audience's interest inside the first 30 seconds. This will not only act as a guide during the speech but also will help you keep in track and not digress mid-stream.

5. Pause: An audience member will be greatly distracted by a speaker who uses the words "uh" or "um" frequently. These filler words are frequently employed as a means to speak while you are mulling about your next point. However, some of the most effective orators are aware that "the pause" should not be avoided. A well-timed pause in speech can even be utilized to reinforce a point by allowing the listener to reflect on it before going on to the next subject. You will improve as a public speaker if you get more used to this pause.
6. Speak Directly: Maintain eye contact and refrain from reciting a script. Practice does more than just make sure that your presentation is organized and capable of conveying the necessary ideas. Additionally, it enables you to physically unwind on stage by making you feel confident enough in your subject. Making eye contact also increases the likelihood that you will connect with individuals around you. Presenters have various options for staying on schedule. You can also see if the crowd understands your major ideas or if you need to explain them by glancing at the individuals in the audience.
7. Take Criticism Positively: Keep your audience in mind. Evaluate their responses, modify your message, and maintain flexibility. Even the most loyal listeners will get distracted or perplexed if you deliver a prepared speech. Accepting constructive criticism may be difficult. Spend some time thinking before you speak to avoid coming off defensive or taking criticism personally. Integrate the concepts in a way that will enable you to enhance your presentation going forward. Always express gratitude to the speaker for their contributions.
8. Pay Attention to Gestures: Most messages are sent through nonverbal means. In contrast to drawing attention to itself, effective delivery simply and unobtrusively communicates the speaker's thoughts. Some individuals instinctively use their hands to speak. This kind of gesture might increase when someone is anxious. It's crucial to avoid letting your hand gestures detract from what you're saying even though using them to accentuate particular points is an excellent approach to do so. So, when you talk, pay attention to your hands. They may be able to calm you down more by slowing down your thoughts as well as their movement. When people are anxious, they frequently pace. If this describes you, you could have a tendency to circle the podium when giving a speech. A little bit of movement is OK, but too much is, well, too much, much as with hand movements. While you shouldn't be scared to leave the stage, you should also attempt to avoid giving the impression that your audience is witnessing a tennis match.

Body Language

Without speaking words, we communicate with people a lot via the physical gestures of our bodies. We communicate particular messages when we wave our arms and fingers, wrinkle our foreheads, stand straight, smile, look someone in the eye, wear a coat and tie, and other ways. Particularly effective markers of how our bodies are internally processing emotions are the face and eyes, gestures, posture, and physical appearance. Your interactions, connections, and opportunities to advance your firm may all be improved or hampered by the way you speak in business. Your commercial destiny may be made or lost by your body language, the unspoken message you convey in conversation. Because of this, it's critical that you comprehend how your body language affects your relationships with others in the workplace.

Here are elements of body language that we need to keep in mind:

- Eye Contact: The initial degree of connection you share with another individual is through eye contact. Before you even speak, it takes place. It is a clear-cut way to convey interest, assurance, and sincerity. When you engage in conversation with someone, it puts your engagement at danger of being taken lightly or having your intentions misunderstood if you find it difficult to create eye contact. When you meet and converse with someone, looking them in the eye demonstrates that you are paying attention. The most crucial human relations ability is listening, and making eye contact with other people helps you show them that you're interested in them.
- Facial Expression: One of the finest things you can do to help a coworker feel more comfortable in a conversation is to grin. Whether you are interacting with coworkers or customers, a grin is an essential component of body language in business. Any conversation becomes less tense when someone smiles. Try to mimic the facial expressions of the person you're speaking to as a further helpful rule of thumb. You'll be more likely to enjoy the conversation if you act in a laid-back and easygoing manner, just like the person you're speaking with. Conversely, if you're conversing with someone who has a really serious demeanor, using the same body language will demonstrate that you're addressing the situation seriously.
- Posture: When chatting to another person, one of the first things that people notice is how that person handles themselves. When it comes to displaying traits like confidence and assertiveness, posture is essential. Even more, studies show that we are drawn to those with flexible opinions. Think of open arms, straight spines, and uncrossed limbs as examples. You give off an anxious, closed-in vibe when you cross your arms and knees,

hunch your shoulders, and fold your body in on itself. Instead of asking others to engage with you more deeply, these behaviors inherently push them to take a backward step.

- Gestures: Gestures are a supplement to spoken language that enhance it. By demonstrating instead than only stating things, they give your words more impact. This improves audience participation and makes it possible for you to physically evoke an emotional reaction from the listener. Such gestures like holding the chin or rubbing the face with the hand convey unease or lack of commitment. You could not even be believed if you speak while covering your mouth.
- Personal Space: The use of space to convey meaning when speaking and listening is another kind of nonverbal communication. The way we utilize space and the things we do in the settings we design reveal a lot about who we are. So, just as we all have body language, each of us also has a space language. Our society has created this space language. You must not encroach or invade someone's personal space. You should also communicate clearly about your own.

Spoken English

English is the official language for any global business today and for most local businesses as well. Speaking English correctly, clearly and effectively can enhance one's career and provide unparalleled opportunities in the modern times. Here are the steps to ace spoken English:

1. Engage in English Content Media: The best way to learn speaking English is to experience people speaking English. This can be done easily through English Content Media such as movies, tv-series, podcasts, YouTube, radio etc. When engaging with them, try to understand how the characters are talking to each other. As you keep engaging in them, you will learn how to speak in English properly.
2. Study Phrases, Not Individual Words: Never focus on one word at a time. Always note the phrase a new word is in when you discover it. Always. Always go over every phrase in a review—not just the words. Gather words. Your grammar and speaking skills will improve 4-5 times more quickly. Always type the entire sentence. Never again take a word study course. Never, ever write a word in your notepad; just learn phrases.
3. Listen Carefully: Listening carefully can enhance your understanding of English a great feal. As your brain tries to relate to the words, you will get better at speaking it as well. Effective listening skills previously discussed can be used to learn English from listening.

4. Think in English: As a native Bengali speaker, it can be hard to think in English. You should nonetheless practice thinking in English. You can force your mind to do so. This will automatically enhance your speaking capabilities.
5. Read: Reading is very much important to understand English. Start with reading easy materials like story books and then delve into newspapers, articles and analytical reports. You should read both fiction and non-fiction materials to understand English and apply it. Reading provides the reader with new words, phrases and sentence construction methods. It also helps the reader think in English.

Written English

Writing in English is an essential day-to-day task of any business. Clear, correct and coherent writing is crucial to the success of communicating business messages like requests, replies, job applications etc. The first step in writing clearly is to tailor your message to your target audience. You should find out as much as you can about the people you want to interact with and take into consideration any previous communication with them in order to use phrases that convey effectively and with the proper tone. Then, you should formulate your argument in a way that will enable people to comprehend it and respond favorably. In addition to being strategically important, tailoring your message to your readers demonstrates respect for their time and effort. When communications are concise and pertinent to the correspondents' circumstances, everyone wins.

Selecting Words

Selecting words properly to construct effective sentences is a crucial first step in writing business English.

- Use Common Words: Use of well-known terms is the best advice for word choice. These are common terms that have distinct and distinct mental connotations. You must choose common terms carefully since some individuals may be unfamiliar with them while others may be familiar with them. You can only depend on your own judgment at this point. For example, the sentence, “The conclusion ascertained from a perusal of pertinent data is that a lucrative market exists for the product”, is worded with tough vocabulary. Even native English speakers may have a hard time understanding the message. It could have been better said by saying “The data studied show that the product is in good demand.”

- Choose Short Words: Although it seems to be smart to use long complex words to make your sentence more thoughtful, it is often discouraged in business writing. Your reader is spending time and effort reading your message and don't want the added pressure of going through long words unnecessarily. This will create a bad impression and discontent. For example, the sentence, "The decision was predicated on the assumption that an abundance of monetary funds was forthcoming", has used long words unnecessarily. This could have been better said by saying "The decision was based on the belief that there would be more money." This is more clear, direct and efficient.
- Use Technical Words Cautiously: Technical terms are used in all disciplines. When speaking with professionals in your industry, these terms might be helpful. However, they do not converse with outsiders. Take caution when using these. This is where adapting your writing to your audience comes into play. If you know your audience is aware of the technical words then use them to communicate efficiently. But if they are not aware, you may want to explain the terms before using them or avoid using them altogether. It may seem smart to use technical words but it undermines the core message you're trying to communicate.
- Use Specific information: Do not use generic words when constructing business messages. Always use precise information. For example, instead of saying "The revenue has decreased significantly", you should say, "The revenue has decreased 65%." This clearly sends the message and backs it up with specific and relevant information. Another example can be "The purchase will cost a lot of money". This sentence is too generic and will not convey the message effectively. Instead, the writer should include the cost in the sentence. He/she should write "The purchase will cost 1.5 crore Taka". This sentence clearly indicates that the purchase is costly and also conveys the purchase price in one sentence.
- Use Active Verbs: Active verbs construct strong sentences and shows confidence. They are better to use than using "To Be" verbs. The best way to use active verbs is to use active voice instead of passive voice. This sends a strong signal to the reader. For example, instead of writing "A complete reorganization of the administration was effected by the president", one should write "The president completely reorganized the administration." The recommendation that active voice be used more often does not imply that passive voice is ineffective or that it should never be employed. The passive voice is appropriate and has its place. The issue is that many authors have a propensity to misuse it, particularly when writing reports. Using active voice in writing makes it more engaging

and effective in communicating. It's not only a matter of personal preference whether to use active or passive voice. The passive voice is preferred on occasion. For instance, passive voice appropriately de-emphasizes the action's doer when it is immaterial to the message.

- Use Non-Discriminatory Words: Your writing should not discriminate between genders, ages, races, religions etc. Therefore, you should remain very careful about this while writing in English. Don't use the masculine pronouns (he, him, his) for situations requiring allusion to both genders. For example, "When an unauthorized employee enters the security area, he is subject to dismissal" is gender-discriminatory sentence. The sentence should read like "An employee who enters the security area is subject to dismissal." This sentence is applicable to both female and male employees. Making the noun plural will also make the pronoun gender-neutral. "When unauthorized employees enter the security area, they are subject to dismissal" is also gender-neutral. It is unjust and inaccurate to use language that stereotypically portrays minorities. It is also unjust to use language that portrays people of color as the exception to stereotypes. By treating everyone equally and being mindful of the impact of your words, you may get rid of such allusions to minorities.

Discriminatory	Neutral
man-made	manufactured, of human origin
manpower	personnel, workers
businessman	business executive, businessperson
policeman	police officer
cameraman	camera operator

Sentence Making

Building concise sentences and paragraphs requires adaptability to the brains of the intended readers, just like word choice does. In general, this approach entails employing the more basic phrase patterns to communicate with those who have weaker communication skills and those who are unfamiliar with the issue. Only converse with more talkative, intelligent people while employing the more sophisticated sentence constructions. We'll discover that sometimes simplicity is necessary for the best communication results, even with knowledgeable people. In order to write successfully, you must also control the emphasis in your phrases, ensure that each sentence expresses a key concept, and arrange the sentence components in accordance with established grammatical and logical standards. You may see how to accomplish these objectives in the section that follows.

Rules of Sentence Making in Business Communication

1. Group and order information to construct the most effective sentences. You can create sentences that effectively handle the information if you are familiar with the various sentence components, regardless of whether you are aware of their grammatical names. You will become a better writer if you have an understanding of the various sentence structures and components.
2. Use short sentences. Your audience is occupied. They can save time and effort by crafting sentences that are effective. Due to cognitive constraints, short sentences convey ideas more effectively. The reader may become distracted by long, complex sentences and fail to grasp the essential idea. For readers at a middle grade level, short is defined as 16–18 words. But do not overuse short sentences. It will undermine your overall writing skills and reduce the quality of the business writing.
3. You should be careful in putting content in a sentence. Putting too much content in one sentence will puzzle the reader and may create misunderstandings. The main method for limiting sentence content is to mentally break most of the idea units into individual sentences. You can achieve this by economizing on words. Do not use cluttering phrases. As mentioned in the table below, use shorter substitutes for decreasing sentence length. Also say things directly instead going around the main phrase. And finally, avoid repeating ideas. If you understand the task, you do not need to go into the details explaining it in one sentence.

Cluttered Phrases	Substitutes
In very few cases	Seldom
For the purpose of	For
Along the lines of	Like
In the neighborhood of	About
On the basis of	By
With reference to	About
With a view to	To

Surplus Words	Streamlined
There are five rules that should be followed.	Five rules should be followed.
In addition to these defects, numerous other defects mar the operating procedure.	Numerous other defects mar the operating procedure.
In the period between March and April, we solved the problem.	Between March and April we solved the problem.
I am prepared to report to the effect that sales increased.	I am prepared to report that sales increased.

Going Around	Direct
It is essential that the income be used to Pay off the debt.	The income must be used to pay off the debt.
The supervisors should take appropriate action to determine whether the absentee reports are being verified.	The supervisors should determine whether the absentee reports are being verified.
Mr. Khan is of the opinion that the tax was paid.	Mr. Khan believes the tax was paid.
The price increase will afford the company an opportunity to retire the debt.	The price will enable the company to retire the debt.

Unnecessary Repetition	Streamlined
Please endorse your name on the back of this check.	Please endorse this check.
One should know the basic fundamentals of clear writing.	One should know the fundamentals of clear writing.
By acting now, we can finish sooner than if we wait until a later date.	By acting now, we can finish sooner.
As a matter of interest, I am interested in learning your plan.	I am interested in learning your plan.

4. Determine Emphasis in sentence Construction correctly. Your written words should correctly emphasize the topic. Any written business communication has a lot of information, but not all of it is equally important. Some are particularly significant, such as a report's conclusion or a message's goal. Others are comparatively not significant. Writing requires you to structure your sentences in a way that conveys the significance of each element. Long, complex statements lack the emphasis that short, straightforward ones do. They draw attention to their contents because they stand out. As a result, they convey a single message to the reader without any supplementary or related information getting in the way.
5. Make Sentences Coherent. A sentence should only have one main idea. Placing unrelated information in one sentence clearly violates the coherence and unity of the sentence. For example, saying "Using the cost-of-living calculator is simple, but no tool will work well unless it is explained clearly." This sentence is incoherent. The two ideas are not in conjunction. Two separate sentences would put more cohesion. "Using the cost-of-living calculator is simple. But it will not work if not explained clearly."
6. Do not put excessive detail in one sentence. Put the detail in a different sentence if it is significant.For example, the sentence "Our Dhaka offices, considered plush in the 2000s, but now badly in need of renovation, as is the case with most offices that have not been maintained, have been abandoned" is a wordy sentence with too much details distracting the reader from understanding the main point. It would have been better said by saying "Considered plush in the 2000s, our Dhaka offices have not been maintained properly. As they badly need repair, we have abandoned them."
7. Arrange sentence content logically and clearly. The rules of grammar must be followed in order to write clearly. These laws are founded on accepted practices and logical connections. For example: dangling modifiers, unparalleled construction, pronouns without antecedents etc. can violate sentence cohesion.

These are some of the key points you need to keep in mind when constructing sentences. Incorporating these in your writings will significantly improve quality of writing.

Topic – 23: Group Discussion, Conducting Meetings, Conducting Interviews, Networking Etiquette

Group Discussions

Nearly all occupations require people to have the ability to collaborate in order to tackle complicated challenges. A group is a team of two or more individuals who, unlike other work groups, rely on one another to accomplish a common purpose. The following illustrates different types of groups in a business:

1. Committee: A permanent group created to handle persistent problems, including worker safety or corporate governance
2. Project: Group assembled to complete a specific project, such as a new product launch
3. Cross-functional: Brings together individuals from many departments or functional areas; greatest method for addressing organizational-wide problems or possibilities, but can be difficult to manage.

Characteristics of Effective Groups

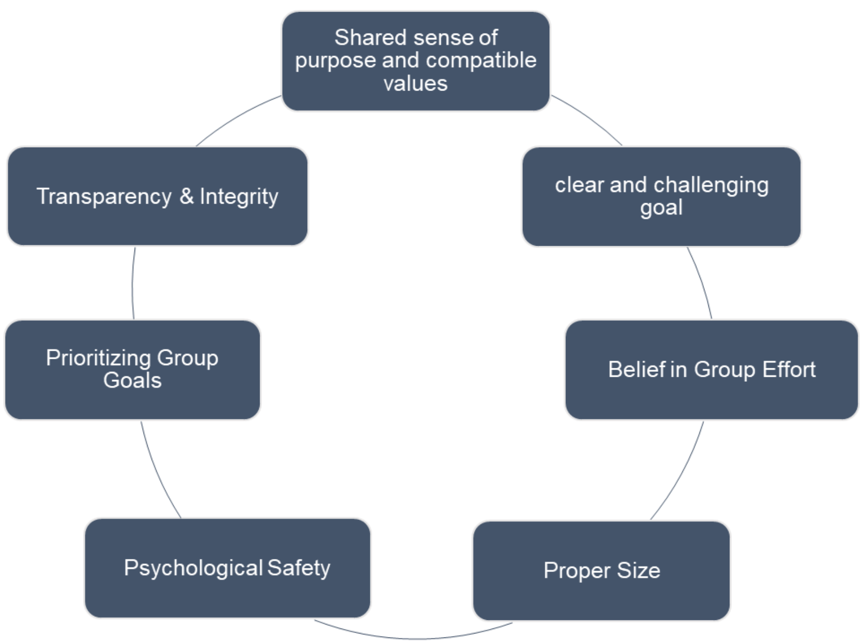


Figure 23.7: Characteristics of Effective Groups

Source: Business Communication Today, Bovee & Thill

Steps in Conducting Effective Group Discussion

- Speak to the group in a friendly and respectful manner.
- Respect and acknowledge each member's work, and show it with a nod or a grin.
- Whatever you find intriguing, agree with it.
- Since this is a debate and not an argument, disagree nicely.
- Reread what you're about to say in your head. Consider how you may contribute to the discussion or effectively respond to the question.
- Don't stray from the topic at hand and refrain from engaging in other unrelated conversations.
- Be courteous when conversing.
- Be confident.
- Keep your composure. It is not a debate; it is a group conversation.
- Avoid using a loud or combative voice. Always utilize a medium pitch and a moderate tone.
- Avoid making movements like tapping the table or pointing your finger. Limit your body language since it could come out as harsh.
- Don't take over the conversation. As assured speakers, we ought to give others who are more reserved the chance to speak out and participate in the conversation.
- Don't rely too heavily on your own experiences.
- When someone else is speaking, avoid interjecting. Prior to speaking, listen for someone else to finish.

Importance of Group Discussion in Business

Group discussion is greatly important for any company. Group discussions are held at workplaces to explore new business growth ideas and to identify workable solutions to issues relating to the operations of the firm. Group conversations are the only way to arrive at a solution that is both significant and realistically implementable. These ideas are combined to form a new one, allowing for the creation of the greatest results. Given that participants come from all departments within a given corporate organization, group discussions assist to provide a broad perspective on any issue under review. A problem is evaluated and an appropriate solution is reached through group discussion based on the participants' recommendations. The sharing of ideas takes place with the use of group discussions. The diversity of the ideas is a result of each participant in the debate contributing their views to the table.

Resolving Conflict in a Group

Conflicts are natural to arise in a group setting. Conflict may be a particular problem when people are working in teams since they are expected to put the needs of the group before their own. Numerous factors can lead to conflict, including rivalry for resources, conflicts over objectives or working techniques, and personality differences. Here are the steps in resolving conflicts:

- Determine whether the conflict merits resolution. Conflict resolution requires effort and time, and it may momentarily sour relationships and interactions. Living with the disagreement could make more sense if it is mild or will go away on its own (for example, when a temporary team disbands).
- Determine the real source of the conflict. Conflicts aren't always about what they appear to be; the real difference could be hidden. You have surely noticed such in your own personal life. For instance, two team members may appear to be at odds while actually harboring deeper issues. They may prioritize various cultural values, such as the value of group unity above individual job achievement, for example.
- Find a common ground. Discover the points on which everyone does agree, and then use that consensus as the basis for your solution. For instance, if employees dispute on the team's objectives, go further to see if they concur about the larger objectives and strategies of the business. If they concur at that level, you may utilize it to start a conversation about how to create team goals that aid corporate objectives.
- Look at your own attitudes and actions. Before taking any action in a problem that you desire to resolve, consider your own viewpoint. You can be playing a role in the dispute that you weren't aware of.
- Choose a conflict resolution strategy depending on the situation. You have four choices for resolving conflict: avoid, accommodate, compromise, or collaborate. Conflict-provoking situations can be avoided, for example, by avoiding giving the same responsibilities to coworkers. One party has the option to make accommodations or sacrifices for the benefit of the company or to preserve good ties. When two individuals differ on the best course of action for a project, one may choose to accept and support the other's choice. Both parties have the option to reach a compromise in which they each give up something. One of the defining characteristics of effective teams is balanced compromise. Both parties have the option of working together to develop a novel solution that meets the requirements and expectations of all parties—a win-win tactic.

Conducting Meetings

Your capacity to contribute to the organization will mostly depend on how well you are able to lead meetings, whether they take place in person or online. Successful meetings may aid businesses in problem-solving, idea development, and opportunity identification. Whether you're a manager, supervisor, team leader, or employee, running a meeting provides you the chance to cooperate with your coworkers, exchange ideas and information, and discuss crucial concerns and objectives. You can operate your business more effectively if you know how to handle meetings appropriately.

Preparation for the Meeting

Meetings can be used to make decisions, exchange information, or work together to solve issues or seize opportunities. Whatever your goal, state what the ideal meeting outcome would be. Reduce the number of attendees at meetings as much as you can to guarantee effective utilization of everyone's time. Online meetings are the best way to bring people from various locations together or to reach large audiences. Review the location and seating arrangements for face-to-face meetings. Consider the meeting space's acoustics, lighting, ventilation, and temperature because these factors may make or break a session. Morning meetings, if you can schedule them, can be more effective since attendees are often more attentive and not yet immersed in the day's work. Give attendees a professionally drafted agenda so they may make any necessary preparations. This will enable them to be more productive during the meeting and contribute efficiently to the meeting discussion.

Rules of Conducting a Meeting

Making a meeting fruitful is a shared duty among all attendees. However, you have a higher level of accountability and responsibility if you are the leader. The following recommendations can assist hosts and attendees in creating meetings that are more productive:

- Do not divert from the core discussion. Stay on track and keep the discussion points relevant to the main topic of the meeting. Diverting from the agenda costs the business valuable time and, in some cases, money. The leader of the meeting has the duty to ensure that the meeting is going as planned and the members are not digressing from the agenda.

- Follow the predetermined rules properly. Formal meetings require strict adherence to the rules and norms of the meetings. The seating arrangement, the method of discussion, the predetermined time for Q&A all must be done accordingly.
- Engage actively in the meeting. Do not just sit there and be a silent audience. You need to provide relevant information, findings and your opinions in the meeting to make it fruitful. You should also speak up if you have any questions or reservations unless it goes against the rules. Even then, you should communicate your reservations to key stakeholders in the meeting after the meeting is over.
- Do not interrupt while the meeting is going. As mentioned earlier, wait for your turn to speak or communicate with people after the meeting is over. It is rude to interrupt when someone is talking in the meeting.
- Switch off or silent your mobile devices. Do not talk to anyone over phone in a meeting. If it’s an emergency, apologize politely and go outside the meeting room and then take the call. If you want to take notes in your phone, ask beforehand.
- The meeting should be closed as effectively as possible. The meeting close should address the agendas of the meeting and a possible solution to any major issue that is discussed. Summarize the discussion's overall conclusion and any necessary steps. Ensure that the outcome is understood by and accepted by all participants.

Making Meeting Results Productive

The meeting should be recorded using meeting minutes. Written summaries of significant material given and decisions taken in meetings are called minutes. Making ensuring you document all the key information, especially in regards to the obligations that were allocated during the meeting, is more essential than the exact format of the minutes. Lists of individuals present and those who were invited but did not attend are typical components, as are the start and conclusion times of the meeting, all significant decisions made there, all responsibilities assigned to meeting participants, and all topics deferred to a future meeting. Important talks should be honestly summarized in minutes, with credit given to individuals who made significant contributions.

AMXZ BANGLADESH

Sample Meeting Minutes

Name of Team
Day & Date
Time Location
MINUTES

PRESENT: A list of first and last names of all those present at the meeting

REGRETS: A list of first and last names of Committee members who have contacted the Chairman to let them know that they will be unable to attend the meeting

ABSENT: A list of first and last names of Committee members who DID NOT contact the Chairman to let them know that they won't be in attendance

1. **CALL TO ORDER/OPENING REMARKS**
   - Time that the Chairperson called the meeting to order.
   - Any opening remarks from the Chairperson summarize here
2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM (DATE)** (You need a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as circulated or a motion to approve the minutes as amended. If any corrections are needed to the minutes.)

   Motion: To approve the minutes of (DATE) as circulated (or AMENDED)
   Motion By: Name of person (FIRST & LAST) who made the motion
   Seconded By: Name of the person (FIRST & LAST)) who seconded the motion
   Carried or Defeated
3. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** (If anyone has an item that they would like to be added to the agenda they would bring it up here and ask the Chair if the item maybe added to the agenda or can be added to the next meeting's agenda. See #8 below for added items to current meeting agenda.)
4. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

   Motion: to approve the agenda as circulated (or AMENDED)
   Motion By: name of person (FIRST & LAST) who made the motion
   Seconded By: name of person (FIRST & LAST) who made the motion
   Carried or Defeated
5. **BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
   a. Outstanding Items from the previous meeting that need to be updated or discussed further

Figure 23.1: Example of A Meeting Minutes Document

Source: notejoy.com

b. Outstanding Items from the previous meeting that need to be updated or discussed further
c. Outstanding Items from the previous meeting that need to be updated or discussed further

6. **ITEM # 1 TO BE DISCUSSED**
   a. Put a summary of the discussion around the topic
   b. If a motion was made put the information in here
   c. If further information is needed agree on who is to do the follow up and put their name and a timeline that this information will be completed
   d. Task: put who is to do it and when it is to be completed by (DATE)

7. **ITEM #2 TO BE DISCUSSED**
   a. Put a summary of the discussion around the topic
   b. If a motion was made put the information in here
   c. If further information is needed agree on who is to do the follow up and put their name and a timeline that this information will be completed
   d. **Task:** put who is to do it and when it is to be completed by (DATE)

8. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**
   a. Added agenda Item # 1
      i. Put a summary of the discussion around the topic
      ii. If a motion was made put the information in here
      iii. If further information is needed agree on who is to do the follow up and put their name and a timeline that this information will be completed
      iv. **Task:** put who is to do it and when it is to be completed by (DATE)
   b. Added agenda Item # 2
      i. Put a summary of the discussion around the topic
      ii. If a motion was made put the information in here
      iii. If further information is needed agree on who is to do the follow up and put their name and a timeline that this information will be completed
      iv. **Task:** put who is to do it and when it is to be completed by (DATE)

9. **ADJOURNMENT** (Record the time the Chair adjourned the meeting.)

10. **NEXT MEETING (DATE)** (The next meeting date should be decided before everyone leaves the meeting. It is a handy reminder to put it at the bottom of the minutes.)

NOTE:

The minutes should be completed by the Recording Secretary and forwarded to the Chairperson to review prior to being sent out to the rest of the Committee. The minutes should be distributed no more than 2 weeks after the meeting was held. The minutes are a reminder of the tasks that need to be completed and items to be followed up on.

A copy of the minutes should also be saved for future references.

Figure 23.2: Example of A Meeting Minutes Document (Cont.)

Source: notejoy.com

Conducting Interviews

Conducting interviews of job candidates is a crucial step in the hiring process and every company conducts interviews. Interviews are also done for other purposes as well. Businesses take interviews to get in-depth knowledge from an industry expert. They conduct customer interviews for understanding their target market. Typically, an interview is described as a conversation with a goal. When your organization needs information on presumptions and views of activities in your society, they may be quite useful. The greatest approach to ensure that you and the target of your inquiry have an accurate and full exchange of ideas is through an interview. You have control over the sequence of the questions, and you can make sure that each one will receive a response. Additionally, the interview process's spontaneity could be advantageous to you. Interviewees aren't usually afforded the luxury of deliberating over their answers or, to some extent, editing them. It's possible that interviewers will say things out loud that they'd never agree to in writing on a questionnaire.

Preparation for Conducting Interview

- Set aside a specified window of time, conducting the interview in a suitable area away from email, phones, and other workers. This will help you focus and provide the candidate a positive first impression of your business.
- Study the CV of the candidate. Identifying particular roles on a candidate's CV that are relevant to the position you are interviewing for is important. Inquire about the specifics of their position, their duties, their accomplishments, and any pressures they faced. Inconsistencies or gaps in work or schooling should be questioned since there could be an easy explanation. Inquire as to why the applicant left a previous or present position.
- The job description must be comprehensive and informative so that the candidates have a clear idea on what they are applying for. The roles, objectives, responsibilities, requirements everything must be outlined in the job description clearly and precisely.
- Keep a set of question ready before conducting the interview. These questions should be same for all candidates so that the interviewer can judge the skills and strengths of each candidate for the job.
- Keep additional questions in mind which may vary from candidate to candidate based on their CV, skills, experiences etc.

Steps in Conducting the Interview:

- Introduce yourself. Candidates will feel respected and at ease if they are greeted politely. Tell them a little bit about the business and yourself. Because this will be the candidate's first impression of you, keep your workplace neat and put your phone away.
- Set the tone by letting the candidate know what to anticipate during the ensuing 30-45 minutes. Keep in mind that you are also being watched. The interview's atmosphere will be created by your behavior. An candidate could take the interview less seriously if you come off as being too casual. However, taking things too seriously will probably make the applicant more uneasy. You're not likely to bring out the best in the person in either situation. The manner in which you behave yourself throughout the interview must also align with the goals and principles of your company.
- Ask each candidate one same set of questions. This will make it easier for you to evaluate prospects and identify the one whose qualifications most closely match your needs. You have prepared these questions before the interview.
- Start by getting some information about a candidate's history and interest in the job. Request information from applicants on their perspectives on the position and what they can bring to the table. The most common opener is “Tell me about yourself.” If the candidate is a fresh graduate, you can ask them about their university life and their subject of study.
- Vary your questions. It's crucial that you focus your inquiries on abilities that are directly connected to the obligations and responsibilities of the work. This can assist you in learning about the qualifications of candidates. Ask open-ended questions such as, “What is your greatest strength? Or why should we hire you?”
- Allow candidates to ask questions. Knowing every facet of the role, being able to articulate your expectations, and being able to enumerate the advantages of working for your company can help you respond to any question with confidence. Candidates should have the opportunity to ask questions of their own and respond to your queries in order to assess if the position and the firm are a good fit for them. Their inquiries can assist you in determining whether applicants are sincerely interested in the position and have appropriately prepared for the interview.

Networking Etiquette

The goal of networking is to engage and connect with others for both parties' benefit. Your network may be able to provide you guidance if your company is experiencing difficulties. Additionally, you will be able to aid contacts by imparting your knowledge and expertise, strengthening your bonds with them. Because networking can be personalized and targeted, it may be crucial to your marketing strategy. Networking is done to explore opportunities with customers, employees, investors, mentors etc. The people in your network can play significant role in your career progression and business performance. These people can help you get a new job, an introduction to a new client, a source of funding for your new business or simply provide you with valuable advice in difficult situation. Therefore, creating a good network of professionals is very important for success in professional life.

How to find People to Network

- Business Associates & Contacts: Find and connect with prominent figures within or outside of your business. Develop relationships with those you get along with easily. Talk to people going through similar circumstances so you can support one another.
- Business Meets: Participate in networking groups set up by industry associations. Read publications and other materials to keep informed on developments in your industry. To establish credibility and meet new people, think about applying for a business award.
- Online Networking: LinkedIn is the best professional social media platform. It is the best tool for anyone to increase and enhance their networks. Everyone should have a LinkedIn account and engage in meaning conversation with relevant industry professionals. Connecting with different people on LinkedIn will automatically enhance your reach.
- Personal Connections: Talk to your loved ones to see if they can assist you grow your network. Keep in mind that close connections are frequently where referrals come from. Identify potential business partners at social gatherings. University alumni can be a great source of people working in different industries. Reaching out to them is easier and more effective as you all went to the same university and have something common amongst yourselves.

The Rules of Networking

- Tell people how they can assist you. Most individuals genuinely want to assist, but they are unsure of how to go about it. Help them out by having prepared real actions they can do, such as introducing you to a colleague or member of their human resources department, or by providing you suggestions for additional business contacts you can make.
- Respect their time and boundaries. Recognize that if someone agrees to meet you for coffee, they are doing you a great favor. Always keep the meeting to the time they have specified and meet in a location that is convenient for them. You might also buy them coffee as a kind gesture.
- Maintain contact. It's an excellent idea to keep in touch with connections you've met, even after your initial meeting. Find them on social media, then respond to or spread their posts. Send them the link to an article you think they'll enjoy along with a brief message.
- Have your contact details prepared. Don't force them to look you up online. Making ensuring you have their contact details is certainly preferable because it puts the responsibility of following up in your rather than their hands. However, be prepared to give them something professional if they ask for a card or CV.
- Pay it forward. Always keep in mind how crucial it is to network effectively on both sides. If you have the chance to assist someone who is looking for a job, keep in mind how it felt and how even the tiniest act of kindness was so crucial.

Topic – 24: Communication in the Financial Institutions and Banks of Bangladesh

Proper business communication is essential for the successful operation of banks and financial institutions. These entities are intermediaries who are connecting clients and facilitating trade and commerce. Through training, knowledge management, risk management, internal control systems, and data security management, effective banking communication improves organizational effectiveness and strengthens relationships with customers, suppliers, stakeholders, clients, employees, and the board of directors.

Communication in Different Banking Functions

1. Client Relationship Management: Managing the clients of a bank or financial institution is one of the most important tasks. The bank's performance heavily relies on how the bank monetizes its relationship with customers. Both formal and informal business communication plays a role here. The relationship manager has to maintain a formal relationship with the clients and understand the clients' needs to service them properly.
2. Investor Relations: For publicly listed banks and financial institutions, investor relations is a major part of the business communication for banks. The banks must communicate their performance and their overall business goals effectively to the investors. This is usually done through the annual report. The annual report must provide transparent and true information regarding the bank or financial institution. The report will have a formal setting and will be structured according to the rules outlined by BSEC (Bangladesh Securities Exchange Commission).
3. Inter-Departmental Communication: Communication among the various departments of the banks and the financial institutions is crucial for successful routine business operations. The banks have several departments namely credit analysis, risk management, treasury, compliance etc. A central database is required to provide the information across different divisions. For example: the risk management monitors the health of the bank's loan portfolio and requires detailed credit reports on different clients from the credit analysis department.
4. Marketing Communications: Every bank and financial institution needs to maintain its acquired customer base and target new ones. Integrated marketing campaigns on attractive deposit schemes, borrowing rates, credit facilities or other banking services play crucial role in continuing the bank's businesses. For example: a bank is rolling out a new

deposit scheme for school students. They have to advertise this facility effectively to parents and schools.

5. Formal Communication with Regulatory Authorities: Banks and financial institutions need to communicate with government entities and regulatory authorities often. As the regulations in the industry are strict, the communication is often necessary to clarify different issues. Banks will have to comply with any order issued by BSEC, Bangladesh Bank and other relevant government entities.
6. Customer Service: Banks must maintain a 24/7 customer service to answer customer queries and address customer problems. The customer service personnel must be trained properly on business communication and handling customers in different scenarios.
7. Sales: The brokerage houses and credit card sales departments of banks engage in front-line selling. The brokerage houses often try to persuade customers to persue a certain investment strategy or buy certain stocks. Business communication is crucial is such persuasion and sales. The credit card department tries to obtain new customers and therefore gives different facilities with the credit cards such as discounts, cash-back etc. These require careful selling and marketing of the cards and finding the right clients.

Putting Business Communication in Bangladeshi Perspective

Banks and financial institutions in our country needs to take the best elements from the global business communication rules but apply them in a Bangladeshi context for optimal effect. The bankers need to be familiar with the local norms, culture and tradition to better service the local market. As ours is a developing country with a growing economy, the banking needs are growing day by day. But to keep up with the banking needs, bankers need to adapt to the changing consumer behavior. For example: 50 years ago, a lucrative pension scheme would attract a lot of customers. But the modern generation in Bangladesh is mostly concerned with short term earnings and monthly cash flows. The banks will need to adjust to these needs by providing tailored financing solutions to the new generation. Business communication plays a vital role here. Understanding the new generation requires effective listening, efficient usage of social media and a shrewd observation of consumer spending patterns. The insurance industry in Bangladesh has some great potential but relatively low market share. The insurance companies need to enhance their business communication skills to attract more subscribers and acquire more customers. The sales and persuasion skills will have to relate to the Bangladeshi people in different aspects of life.

Cases

Case – 1

You work in the risk management department of Bank BBZX. An emergency meeting has been called to discuss a problem that has caused a serious threat to the bank's profitability. Due to some fraudulent activities, a big client of the bank is now is jail and the business has gone bankrupt. BBZX Bank has provided this client with a 50 crore Taka term loan very recently for the launch of the new division in the client's business. You are now in a private conversation with the Head of Risk Management. After that, you will join the emergency meeting where contingency plans will discussed. You have been asked to moderate the meeting as you personally have been dealing with the client for over a year and know more information about the business.

1. In the private meeting, how would you communicate with your boss and gain information?
2. The meeting has gone heated. Departments are blaming each other for the threat. How will you deal with the situation?

Case – 2

You are in the annual shareholders meeting for CPIAS Finance, a leading brokerage house and asset management company. Your company has sustained losses past year and the investors are less than happy. You know the meeting will be heated and you will face tough questions from your audience. As you work in the investor relations department, you have been asked to deliver a speech to the shareholders in a public gathering.

1. How will you apply your skills learned in this module?

Case – 3

You work in the Cross Product Sales (CPS) team at AMXZ Bank. You conduct regular discussions on how to improve the sales of financial securities and increase the sales commissions for the desk. Today's discussion topic is hiring a fresh graduate for the analyst role of the desk. It's a critical process and requires opinions from the team members to understand how the new hire will fit into the team and with the culture.

1. How will you conduct the discussion?
2. Imagine you have found 5 ideal candidates. How will you conduct their interviews?

MCQ

1. Which one the following is a step in Effective Listening?
    a. Proper Eye Contact
    b. Firm Handshake
    c. Asking questions whenever you need to
    d. Dress Code
2. Which of the following is not a step in public speaking?
    a. Analyzing the audience
    b. Pausing in the speech
    c. Speaking indirectly
    d. Paying Attention to gestures
3. Which of the following is an element of body language?
    a. Language
    b. Posture
    c. Time Management
    d. None of the Above
4. Which of the following sentences would you use?
    a. We do not have enough manpower
    b. The cameraman hasn't come yet for the photoshoot.
    c. It's a man-made company with deep roots.
    d. None of the above.
5. How will you substitute the word "In very few cases"?
    a. Seldom
    b. Rarely
    c. Hardly
    d. All of the above
6. Which of the following is not a characteristic of effective groups?
    a. Psychological Safety
    b. Groupthink
    c. Clear Goals
    d. None of the above
7. What you should not do in conducting a meeting?
    a. Talking about today's traffic jam in a strategy session
    b. Adhering to the predetermined rules.

c. Participating in front of your boss

d. None of the above

8. Which of the following is an opportunity for networking?

a. Business Contacts

b. Business Cards

c. Business Magazines

d. Business Statistics

9. Which of the following social media is best for professional networking?

a. Facebook

b. Instagram

c. LinkedIn

d. Snap Chat

Short Questions

1. How would you use non-discriminatory words? Provide examples.
2. What are the characteristics of group discussions?
3. How to prepare for meetings?
4. What is networking? Discuss briefly.
5. How will you apply your business communication skills in the Bangladeshi perspective?

Broad Questions

1. Briefly discuss the steps in effective listening.
2. How will you resolve conflict in a group? Describe briefly.
3. Write the rules of conducting meetings.
4. Write the steps in conducting interviews.
5. Discuss the role of business communication in different banking functions.

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