

# **COURSE UNIT: COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

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## COURSE OUTLINE

### Unit content

	Topics	Content	Time(hours)
1	Meaning and role of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of communication</li> <li>• Role of communication</li> <li>• Interpersonal communication</li> </ul>	2
2	The process of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication process</li> <li>• Barriers to effective communication</li> <li>□ Overcoming barriers to effective communication</li> </ul>	2

3	Principles of effective communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of effective communication</li> <li>• □ Definition of a sentence</li> <li>□ Sentence structure</li> <li>Sentence meaning</li> </ul>	8
4	Summary writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of summary</li> <li>• Summarization of passages, speeches, reports</li> </ul>	8
5	Forms of business correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of business correspondence</li> <li>• Description of business correspondence</li> <li>• Curriculum vitae</li> </ul>	6
6	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Definition of meetings</li> <li>□ Different types of meetings</li> <li>• Purpose of meetings</li> <li>• Terminologies used in meetings</li> <li>• □ Preparation of meetings</li> <li>Procedures of conducting meetings</li> <li>• Advantages and disadvantages</li> </ul>	4
7	Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Definition of interviews</li> <li>□ Types of interviews</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Purpose of interviews</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• □ Preparation of interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role of the interviewer and interviewee</li> </ul> </li> <li>• □ Conducting interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges of an interview</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	4
8	Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Definition of reports</li> <li>□ Types of reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purpose of reports</li> </ul> </li> <li>• □ Structure and content of reports</li> <li>• □ Preparation of a report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Style used in report writing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	4
9	Oral/verbal communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Definition of oral/verbal communication</li> <li>□ Types of oral communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Importance of oral communication</li> <li>Barriers to effective oral communication</li> <li>Overcoming barriers to oral communication</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	4
10	Non-verbal communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Definition of non-verbal communication</li> </ul>	

		<input type="checkbox"/> Types of non-verbal communication <input type="checkbox"/> Importance of non-verbal communication <input type="checkbox"/> Barriers to effective nonverbal communication	4
		<input type="checkbox"/> Overcoming barriers to nonverbal communication	

### Assessment Procedure

- Continuous Assessment Tests/Assignments 30%
- Written Examination 70%
- Total 100%

### REFERENCES

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray ( Publishers) Ltd, London.



## TOPIC 1

### 1.0 MEANING AND ROLE OF COMMUNICATION

#### Introduction

According to William Marsteller (an advertising executive), communication is not just words, paint on canvas, math symbols or the equations and models of scientists; it is the interrelation of human beings trying to escape loneliness, trying to share experience, trying to implant ideas.

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Explain the meaning of the term communication
- b) Explain the role of communication in an organization
- c) Explain inter-personal relations

#### 1.1 Definition of communication

It is the giving, receiving or exchange of information, opinions or ideas through words in speaking or writing or without the use of words or through visual means such that the material communicated is completely understood by everyone.

#### 1.2 Roles of communication in an org

- It plays a role in that is essential to the manager's work. It is the very core of work in many situations.
- It helps to give feedback to the management of the org. This helps in improving the working conditions of employees within the organization.
- It helps people in an organization to socialize where different employees with different backgrounds meet and have conversations.
- It promotes unity among members where people come together to discuss various issues affecting them and the organization.
- It is the life-blood of any organization; no activity can take place without communication.
- It creates awareness where people acquire new knowledge and skills while communicating; they are updated on the affairs of the organization.
- It creates efficiency in an organization.
  
- It is important in networking.

- It helps in creating and achieving the organizational goals.

### **1.3 Inter-personal relations**

Interpersonal relationships refer to the association between two or more people. The basis of this association might be love, same interests, work, business engagements, and family relations among others. Interpersonal communication involves a direct face-to-face relationship between the sender and receiver of a message, who are in an interdependent relationship. Communication is enhanced when the relationship exists over a long period of time. Interpersonal communication involves not only the words used but also the various elements of nonverbal communication. The purposes of interpersonal communication are to influence, help and discover, as well as to share and play together.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Discuss the importance of good communication system
2. Define communication and discuss the main aspects of communication
3. What is the role of communication in an organization
4. What are the essentials of effective communication?
5. Define inter-personal communication

### **REFERENCES**

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London.

## **TOPIC 2**

### **2.0 THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION**

## Introduction

The process of communication describes every act of communication that we perform. There are also difficulties encountered during communication. However, these barriers can be overcome and thus enabling the smooth flow of communication.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- d) Describe the communication process
- e) Explain the barriers to effective communication in an organization
- f) Discuss ways of overcoming barriers to effective communication.

## 2.1 The Communication process

Terms used in the communication process:

1. Sender - This is a person who formulates, encodes or transmits a message
2. Receiver – This is a person who decodes or interprets a message
3. Encode – It is to put information in its most suitable form
4. Decode – It is to interpret the message conveyed
5. Message – It is the content of the communicative act e.g the way you sit, what you talk about, facial expressions, touch etc all have communicative information
6. Channel – This is the passage or medium through which a message is sent
7. Feedback – It is the reaction after a message has been sent. It could be positive or negative
8. Noise – It is anything that interferes or distorts the ability to send or receive a message

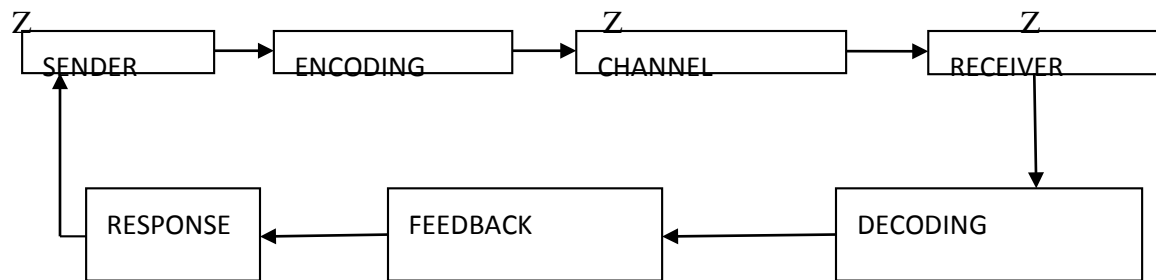
### The Communication Process

There are several stages in the communication cycle

1. Sender – The sender defines the information to be sent by thinking about the aim of the communication and the context to be conveyed. There are three main aims:
  - a) Informing – the intention is simply to tell someone something eg a ‘no smoking’ notice, a letter of appointment, etc
  - b) Influencing – the intention is to persuade someone to adopt a particular course of action or attitude towards something eg an advertisement.
  - c) Initiating action – the intention is to get the receiver to do something eg to activate a bank account
2. Encoding – This is the process of putting information into the most suitable form. It involves putting an idea into words, a picture, a gesture, etc
3. Channel – This is the actual transfer of information by means of a medium eg

- Verbal communication can be done through an interview, a meeting, a telephone, etc
  - Written communication can be done through a notice board, an internal mail service, a public postal service, etc
  - Visual communication can be done through a computer, a printer, a fax machine, etc
4. Receiver – The receiver takes in the message by reading a letter, listening to a speech, watching a TV program, etc
  5. Decoding – The receiver interprets the message he or she has been given in order to obtain his or her own idea of the information it conveys. This may or may not be the same as the information which the sender wanted to convey. If the sender encodes the idea wrongly or in terms which the receiver interprets according to his or her own experience rather than the sender’s, then distortion is likely to occur and the receiver will get a different message from that which was intended.
  6. Feedback – It is where the receiver’s first reaction to the message is made. A skilled communicator should look out for feedback when talking to an individual or group eg
    - murmurs, is a sign of discontentment
    - yawning – hunger, boredom
    - nodding - agreement
  7. Response – This is the final stage. It is a complete repetition of the communication cycle, eg a person who receives and reads a letter will write a reply. In so doing, he or she will start communicating from the first stage by defining the information to be sent.

The Communication Cycle



KEY

Z - Noise

Examples of Noise/Interference

Sender: Language, lack of content, physical noise, poor handwriting

Channel: lack of resources, breakdown of equipment, poor network

Receiver: Language, misinterpretation, physical noise

## **2.2 Barriers to effective communication**

Communication breakdowns will sometimes occur irrespective of how an individual or organization plans to communicate effectively. We should be aware of these barriers if we are to overcome them. There are two main classifications namely:

1. Barriers caused by the sender or receiver
2. Barriers caused by external factors

### **Barriers caused by the sender or receiver**

#### 1. Language

This barrier arises at the encoding and decoding stages of communication. There are various ways in which language can be a barrier, such as:

- Mother-tongue interference
- Similar words with different meaning
- Speaking too fast or too slow
- Pronunciation
- Stammering
- Technical terminology
- Accents

These barriers can be overcome by: use of interpreters, practice speaking, moderate pace, simple language, common language, etc.

#### 2. Poorly defined Aim.

There are three main aims of communication: inform, influence or initiate action. The sender must have a clear idea of what the communication aims to achieve.

This can be overcome by having a clear idea of the purpose of communication.

#### 3. Wrong medium

Choosing the wrong medium to communicate can be disastrous. It may lead to conveying false information or receiving negative reactions e.g. informing an employee about a

promotion or salary increase shouldn't be done on a notice board, but rather sent by delivery through a messenger or post office.

Careful selection of the medium will help overcome this barrier.

#### 4. Wrong time

It is important to know when to communicate. Trying to discuss an important issue with someone when he or she is about to leave for an important meeting, will almost certainly end in failure.

Seeking and making appointments will help overcome this barrier.

#### 5. Differences in perception

The way we view the world is largely determined by our past experiences. People see things differently depending on different age, nationality, culture, education, occupation, gender, status, personality, etc. For example, the Kenyan view of time is there's no hurry in Africa, whereas in Japan, time is money.

Respecting other people's views and being more accommodating may help overcome this barrier.

#### 6. Jumping to conclusions

We often see what we want to see and therefore hear what we expect to hear rather than what is actually there.

Listening attentively to a speaker without interruptions can be useful in overcoming.

#### 7. Lack of knowledge

It is difficult to communicate effectively with someone whose level of knowledge of a particular subject or discussion is considerably less than yours.

Use of simple language or discussing issues that are of the same level may be useful in overcoming.

#### 8. Lack of interest

The receiver may lack interest in the sender's message.

The sender should make the message appealing to the receiver e.g use of illustrations

#### 9. Difficulties with self expression

The sender may have difficulty finding the right words to convey their ideas.

Careful preparation and planning will help overcome this barrier.

#### 10. Emotions

These refer to the feelings of either the sender or receiver. Particularly, negative feelings such as anger, hatred, bitterness can be a hindrance to communication.

One should work at controlling one's feelings by: taking deep breaths, a walk, ignoring, silent prayer, etc.

### **Barriers caused by external factors**

#### Physical barriers

These are often caused by the nature of the environment. One natural barrier is when managers and employees are located in different buildings or on different site of the operation. Likewise, poor or outdated equipment, particularly the failure of management to introduce new technology, may cause problems. Employee shortages are another factor that frequently cause communication difficulties for an operation. Any number of physical distractions can interfere with the effectiveness of communication, including a telephone call, drop-in visitors, distances between people, walls, and static on the radio. People often take physical barriers for granted, but sometimes they can be removed. For example, an inconveniently positioned wall can be removed. Interruptions such as telephone calls and drop-in visitors can be removed by issuing instructions to a secretary. An appropriate choice of media can overcome distance barriers between people. Noise is of different forms:

- Physical e. g sounds made by sirens, alarms, bells, shouts, etc.
- Interference e. g poor network, power blackout, poor handwriting, etc.

- Conflicting messages e. g a speakers facial expression that conveys a different message from what has been said.

These noise barriers can be overcome by: changing the form of comm, buying a UPS, printing,etc

#### 11. Organizational barriers

These occur when the communication structure within an organization fails to allow communication to take place fully and accurately. The supervisors may be unaware of complaints about the conditions of employment.

Such barriers can be overcome by constantly reviewing the structure of an organization's system of communication to ensure that the right pattern of exchange is used.

#### 12. Human Relations barriers

There are occasions when human beings fail to co-exist harmoniously. This can negatively affect any organization. When relational problems go beyond the level of simple personality clash, it becomes clear that those individuals are unable to work together.

If both parties fail at removing the existing barrier, then the transfer of one of them to another section may help solve the barrier.

#### 13. Psychological barriers

Psychological factors such as employee's state of mind. We all tend to feel happier and more receptive to information when the sun shines. Equally, if someone has personal problems like worries about their health, family, or marriage, then this will probably affect them.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Discuss in detail the process of communication.
2. Explain any five barriers caused by the sender or receiver and state how these barriers can be overcome.
3. State and explain barriers caused by external factors.

### **REFERENCES**

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London.



## TOPIC 3

### 3.0 PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

#### Introduction

To be classified as a good communicator, you must possess certain skills in speaking and listening. This topic identifies such principles and looks into their application. Good communication is also determined by a sound background in sentence construction and meaning. This topic helps you determine your competence in both.

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Describe the principles of effective communication
- b) Apply the principles to effective communication
- c) Define a sentence
- d) Construct a sentence
- e) Explain the meaning of given vocabulary

#### 3.1 Principles of effective communication Basic speaking skills

##### 1. CLARITY

- This is the ability to express your ideas clearly
- The language you use should be simple
- Organize your message/content so that it can be easily followed
- Avoid trying to impress by using long complicated words
- Explain any terms that may be unfamiliar to your audience
- Utter words distinctly so that they are easily recognizable

##### 2. CONCISENESS

- This is the use of the exact words to express what you mean
- Wide vocabulary range will enable you choose the precise words to suit your purpose □  
Facts used should be correct
- Research your subject thoroughly

- Ensure that any authorities quoted are reliable
- Avoid making statements which go beyond the facts and which might be challenged

### **3. CONSIDERATION**

- Consideration means that you prepare every message with the recipient in mind and try to put yourself in his or her place.
- Try to visualize your readers (or listeners)—with their desires, problems, circumstances, emotions, and probable reactions to your request.
- Then handle the matter from their point of view. This thoughtful consideration is also called "you-attitude," empathy, the human touch, and understanding of human nature. (It does not mean, however, that you should overlook the needs of your organization.)

### **4. COMPLETENESS**

- Ensure that your information contains all facts the reader or listener needs for the reaction you desire.
- Completeness is necessary for several reasons.
- First, complete messages are more likely to bring the desired results without the expense of additional messages.
- Second, they can do a better job of building goodwill. Third, they can help avert costly lawsuits that may result if important information is missing.
- Answer all questions asked.
- Give extra information, where necessary

### **5. CONCRETENESS**

- Communicating concretely means being specific, definite, and vivid rather than vague and general.
- Use specific facts and figures.
- Put action in your verbs.
- Choose vivid, image-building words.

### **6. COURTESY**

- Courteous messages help to strengthen present business friendships, as well as make new friends.
- Courtesy stems from sincere you-attitude. It is not merely politeness with mechanical insertions of "please's" and "thank-you's." □ Be sincerely tactful, thoughtful, and appreciative.
- Omit expressions that irritate, hurt, or belittle. □ Grant and apologize good-naturedly.

### 3.2 Definition of a sentence

It is a set of words that is complete in itself, typically containing a subject and predicate that conveys a statement, question, exclamation or command and consisting of a main clause and sometimes one or more subordinate clauses.

#### Sentence structure – Syntax

Every clause is in a sense, a miniature sentence. There are 4 structures of a sentence namely:

- The simple sentence
- The compound sentence
- The complex sentence
- The compound-complex sentence

##### 1. Simple sentence

This is the most basic type of a sentence. It contains only one independent clause i.e one subject and one verb/adjective/adverb ect. For example:

- Run!
- Ice melts.
- Ice melts quickly.

##### 2. Compound sentence

It consists of two or more independent clauses. These clauses are joined by co-ordinating conjunctions e.g and, but, or. For example:

- Canada is a rich country. It has many poor people.  
Canada is a rich country, **but** it has many poor people.
- I don't like dogs. My sister doesn't like cats.

I don't like dogs **and** my sister doesn't like cats.  
□ You can write on paper. You can use a computer.

You can write on paper **or** use a computer.

##### 3. Complex sentence

It contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause. The dependent clause is similar to an incomplete sentence. It doesn't make sense on its own. The independent clause is referred to as the main clause. It makes sense on its own. A dependent clause usually starts with a subordinating conjunction e.g that, because, although, where, which, when, since, etc. for example:

- **Although** my friend invited me to a party, I do not want to go.
- I don't like dogs **that** bark at me during the day.
- None of the students were injured **when** the tree fell through the classroom roof.

#### 4. Compound – complex sentence

It contains at least two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause. That means it has three clauses. E.g

- I don't like dogs, and my sister doesn't like cats because they make her sneeze.
- You can write on paper, but using a computer is better because you can easily correct your mistakes.
- A tree fell through the classroom roof in a storm, but none of the students was injured although many of them were in the classrooms located at the top of the building.

### 3.3 Sentence meaning – semantics

A phrase is a group of words without a finite verb e.g

- The man in the bank
- An early history of pottery
- As soon as possible

A phrase isn't a sentence. It works exactly as a noun, adjective, adverb according to its nature and purpose.

Noun phrases name people, things or ideas e.g

- The man in the picture
- A cookery demonstration

Adjectival phrases describe something e.g

- with a long nose

- for business users

### Activity

1. Each of the following sentences has an error. Rewrite the sentence correcting the error.

- The pupil told the teacher, “I beg you pardon.” □ Michael burst in tears when he saw the accident.
- I was held in traffic for two hours.
- Neither Walter nor Jesica were prepared for the news.
- I do not think I can put up with these noise.
- The two brothers do not get a long.
- Jane wanted to know who she was talking to.
- I take two teaspoonfuls of sugar with my tea.

2. Answer the questions below according to the instructions given after each. □ Many people lost their life in the floods. (correct the error) □ “Did you attend the National International Trade Fair?” the teacher asked the students. (Rewrite in reported speech.)

- The manager bought receipt books, biros and rulers for his office. (Replace the underlined words with one word.)
- Mrs. Juma has lived in Nakuru \_\_\_\_\_ 1990. (Fill the blank space with the correct preposition.)
- Most people had (go) by the time the meeting started. (Use the verb in brackets in the correct form.)
- Jane passed the exam. John too passed. (Rewrite as one sentence using the word BOTH)
- A group of people has arrived. (Rewrite in plural)

### QUESTION

Write an essay of about 250 words on: “What the Kenya Government should do to increase its forest cover”.

### REFERENCES

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London.

### TOPIC 4

#### 4.0 SUMMARY WRITING

##### Introduction

Summary is also referred to as precise or abstract. It means a prose (written in paragraphs) passage or composition from which all unnecessary and unrelated ideas and words have been removed. The word precise is a French term that means exact or just.

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Define the term summary
- b) Summarize passages, speeches, reports and correspondence

#### 4.1 Definition of summary

It is a brief statement or account of the main points of something

It is a brief interpretation of a passage. It is expressed in either of the following ways:

- In about 25 words (+5-)
- In not more than 30 words (exact)
- In 50 words (exact)

Do not paraphrase the passage but instead write as it is written. It is advisable to first write a rough draft which will be corrected and serve as the final copy.

#### ROUGH COPY

- Give your points as they are in the passage i.e word for word.
- Do away with too many words by replacing them with one word that would cater for those lost.
- Cross out words that are not necessary while maintaining the meaning and the tense.
- Let the work maintain tidiness. Don't rub or scribble or delete in the final copy.

#### FAIR COPY

- Transfer the clean copy here.
- Sentences are awarded marks depending on whether they are correct or not.
- The writing must be in continuous prose i.e in paragraph form.

#### 4.2 Qualities of good summary

##### i) Conciseness

A summary should be as long or short to serve the purpose. It should be brief and straight to the point.

##### ii) Clarity

It should be easy to understand. The ideas should flow in a logical order.

##### iii) Coherence

The paragraph should hold together. There should be consistency with the ideas in the passage. You can use the following words to join sentences or paragraphs consequently. Moreover, however, naturally, next, thus, nevertheless, finally etc. You can also use phrases to join paragraphs or sentences e.g. equally important, in this way, on contrary, first of all, on the other hand, of course, for instance etc.

### **4.3 Steps in writing summary**

1. Read the passage thoroughly to get a general idea of the passage.
2. Study the question asked at the end of the passage.
2. Read the passage again with the questions in mind.
3. Underline/highlight all important information according to the question.
4. Using your points write down sum and substance of the passage in well-connected and readable paragraphs. This is your rough draft.
5. Count the words in your rough draft. Make alterations if necessary to give your summary the required length.
6. Consider giving your passage an appropriate heading/title.
7. Write a clean copy of the summary. Indicate the no. of words at the end.

### **Title/ Heading**

The heading can be written before the summary is made. The heading should express in a few words the theme of passage.

The topic should be written one line or less. More than one line may appear confusing. A summary can have many suitable headings but you should choose the best that gives the central theme of the passage.

### **4.4 Rules of writing summary**

- i. Determine the theme of the passage very carefully.
- iii. Brevity is good but should not be at the expense of clarity.
- iv. Your summary ought to be intelligible even to a person who has not read the original passage.
- v. Use your own discretion if the passage contains statistical information.

vi. Write the summary in continuous prose (paragraphs).

### **How to achieve brevity**

1. Try to replace clauses by phrases and phrases by words. E.g. “an arrangement of a permanent nature,” Can be written as “A permanent arrangement”

E.g. “To a considerable degree” you can write “considerably”.

2. Make use of one word substitutions. E.g. “the secretary’s proposal was adopted with the full agreement of all the members”. You can simply say “the secretary’s proposal was adopted unanimously”.

3. Avoid unnecessary repetition e.g. it was decided to allow only our own executives to participate in the seminar *and not to invite any external participants*. The words in italics are unnecessary repetitions.

4. Its important to link various sentences. For example; we are selling a new garden fertilizer in the market. It’s in form of powder. Its colour is pink. You can dust it on the plants. You can dissolve it in water and spray. You can say “*Our new garden fertilizer, a fine pink coloured powder, can be dusted on the plants or dissolved in water and sprayed*”.

5. When writing a summary; omit examples, comparisons, contrasts and mere details if necessary.

### **QUESTION**

#### **Summarizing a passage**

*Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.*

From the time we are born we are always learning. Our learning takes place in many different ways. When we are young, we learn through the things we do every day. Schools also provide a lot of learning opportunities. Learning at school is formal because the material to be learned is controlled and provided at different levels. Moreover, it takes place in supervised settings where the learner’s progress is closely monitored.

Learning does not, however, stop when we leave school. As we learn more and understand the world better, we are able to make better decisions. Having knowledge gives many advantages in life.

Gaining knowledge is a lifelong process. Part of this ongoing experience is given through civic education. Civic education deals with acquiring the information and skills that we need in order to play our roles as citizens responsibly and effectively. This learning is largely informal. The knowledge and skills we gain from it give us a better

understanding of what is required of us as citizens. This understanding ultimately makes us better citizens. Learning through civic education is intended to have many positive results.

When our understanding of the affairs of the world has improved, we are able to play a more valuable role in the activities and discussions concerning all citizens. It also helps us to understand other people's views and be able to seek agreement with people on a wide range of subjects. It also contributes to the growth of a more tolerant and mature political culture in our society.

Civic education should cover important aspects of good citizenship. This includes information on what a nation state is and how it is formed. It should also sensitize people on the differences between nation-state, ethnic groups and ethnicity. It is important that the citizens appreciate the challenges encountered in forming a nation state and how to handle the challenges.

Modern nation states are governed by the principles of democracy. When a nation state moves towards democracy, we say that it is in the process of democratization. Democracy is based on allowing the individual to decide the way he or she is to be governed. It is important, therefore, for democratic governments to create the process through which people can be involved in making decisions. A good civic education should sensitize people on the obligation and responsibilities expected of them in the creation of a more democratic state.

It is important that the citizens are made aware of the general rules which provide the general guidelines for the management of a country by its government and the action of all the citizens. Together, these rules form the constitution.

Lastly, a sound civic education should explain something about governance or management of public affairs, being the basis of any society which claims to be just and

democratic. The citizens should be made aware of how governments spend their taxes since proper financial management can do a lot to improve the life of the average citizen. All this calls for good leadership and if civic education throws some light on what makes good leadership, so much the better.

(a) In not more than **50** words, explain the areas that a good civic education should cover. (10 marks)

(b) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases. (5 marks)

- i. Valuable role
- ii. Tolerant
- iii. Good citizenship
- iv. Democratization
- v. Ethnic

## REFERENCES

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London.

## TOPIC 5

### 5.0 FORMS OF BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

#### Introduction

Good communication helps businesses to function effectively. It makes easier to recognize and deal with potential problems. There are various forms of communication that are used in business organizations.

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Identify types of business correspondence<sup>20</sup>
- b) Describe types of business correspondence

c) Write a curriculum vitae

### **5.1 Types of business correspondence**

The following are types of business correspondence:

- Business letters
- Memorandum
- Telegram/telex/cables
- Forms
- Press advertisements
- Questionnaires
- Message forms
- Posters
- Electronic mail

#### **Description of business correspondence**

##### **a) Business letters**

There are different types of letters written in organizations. The structure of writing these formal letters is basically the same; it is only the content that changes depending on the type of letter.

#### **TYPES OF LETTERS**

- Letter of confirmation
- Letter of acknowledgement
- Letter of collection
- Letter of complaint
- Letter of enquiry
- Letter of introduction
- Letter of recommendation

- Letter of apology
- Letter of application

#### LETTER OF CONFIRMATION

It is a confirmation on arrangements made by the sender and receiver either in person (face to face) or by telephone. The main purpose of this letter is to provide a written documentation of such an arrangement.

#### LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This letter assures the sender of the receipt of a document, letter, report, etc. The receiver of such a document admits in writing having received the sent document.

#### LETTER OF ENQUIRY

It is a letter that requests for information such as prices of goods or charges of services provided by an organization. It is important to be brief and specific with the enquiry.

#### LETTER OF COLLECTION

It is a letter sent to customers who have failed to pay their debt. The tone used in such a letter is important and should not be abusive or threatening. One should consider whether the customer has a history of defaulting on his/her debt.

#### LETTER OF COMPLAINT

This letter disapproves goods or services offered by a company in one way or another. It states the fault simply and clearly. The writer should avoid the use of abusive language.

#### LETTER OF APOLOGY

It is written when an error has been made. The best approach is to apologize in the first paragraph of the letter. This is an indicator that one has taken responsibility of the mistake and is sincere in the apology.

#### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

It is written to introduce a new member to an organization or a new customer to a business. It is also known as a letter of recommendation.

#### LETTER OF REFERENCE

It usually accompanies an application letter and is written by a referee. It includes information about the applicant such as the period of knowledge, qualifications and suitability of the applicant. It is posted directly in a separate envelope which is marked 'confidential' because of the nature of its contents.

SAMPLE LETTER OF APPLICATION (full-block format)

Alex Mwangi Njagi  
Thika Technical Training Institute  
P. O.Box 91-01000  
Thika

20<sup>th</sup> May 2012

The Human Resource Manager  
Kenya Airways  
P.O.Box 234567-00100 GPO  
Nairobi

Dear Sir/ Madam

**RE: APPLICATION FOR POST OF AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE ENGINEER**

I wish to apply for the above post as advertised in The Daily Nation dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 2012. I am a Kenyan citizen aged 24 years and have recently completed my Diploma course in Mechanical Engineering at Thika Technical Training Institute.

During my study period, I acquired vital skills and knowledge in this field as indicated in my attached transcripts. I also gained some experience in aircraft maintenance during my attachment period of six months at the Wilson Airport. Given an opportunity, I believe my skills will be of benefit to your company as I establish my career.

Please find attached copies of my curriculum vitae and other testimonials. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully

Alex M. Njagi

**B)Memorandum**

A memo is a formal note sent to members of an organization for a range of purposes. It is typed and a copy kept by the sender. It is short and allows room for the barest details. It may for example, remind a colleague that an important client is visiting that day or request from him or her details of a forthcoming conference. Longer memos allow more details to be included but they put the reader off by their length.

**Sample memo**

**MEMO**

TO: The Managing Director  
FROM: Denis Onyango, Training Manager  
C.C: Peter Wambugu, Finance Manager

DATE: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2013

SUBJECT: INDUCTION TRAINING PROGRAMME

Following our recent conversation, I have enclosed a draft programme of an induction training which will be held from 15<sup>th</sup> June 2013 to 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013 at the Conference Hall.

You will note that you have been allocated the afternoon session on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013. I will appreciate your confirmation of that date and time.

Denis Onyango  
Training Manager

**b) Telegram/telex/cables**

This is a means of sending a written message across a telephone line and is particularly useful e.g when a bank wishes to send an urgent message to a client in another counter. The sender types the text to be sent on a special keyboard and it is sent by telephone lines to the receiver's machine which prints the message out in detail.

**c) Forms**

A form is a written document that contains questions that are used to gather information about an individual. Examples include: admission forms, application forms, etc. organizations use forms for both internal and external communication.

Advantages

1. A lot of information can be collected quickly
2. Information can be compared and contrasted
3. Specific information can be obtained

Disadvantages

1. May fail to provide information when an individual fails to answer all relevant questions
2. Poor design of the form may hinder effective collection of information e.g inadequate space to answer, ambiguous questions
3. It can be time consuming

Designing a form

1. Make the layout as attractive as possible
2. Write the instructions clearly and arrange the questions in a logical order
3. Make the questions brief
4. Ensure the form is functional by asking relevant questions
5. Give sufficient space for each question
6. Use simple language that is easy to understand
7. Avoid contradictions that may arise from the questions asked

8. Always pilot test the form to assess its effectiveness and make necessary changes

**d) Questionnaires**

A questionnaire is a formal way of obtaining first hand information. It is commonly used in research where each item addresses a specific objective, research question or hypothesis.

Disadvantages:

1. It may confuse respondents as to the nature of the information required
2. It may discourage respondents to the extent of discarding the questionnaire
3. It may leave out important information required in the study
4. Respondents may not take the survey as seriously as the researcher
5. Some respondents may fail to answer truthfully

Designing a questionnaire

There are two main categories of questions:

1. Close-ended questions
2. Open-ended questions

Close-ended questions

They refer to questions which are accompanied by a list of all possible alternatives where one chooses the best answer e.g What type of house do you live in?

1. Bungalow
2. Flat
3. Maisonette
4. Other

Advantages

1. They are easy to analyze since they are in an immediate usable form
2. Easy to administer because each item is followed by alternative answers
3. Save on time

Disadvantages

1. Difficult to construct because categories must be well thought out
2. Responses are limited and the respondent is compelled to answer questions according to the researcher's choices

Open-ended questions

It refers to questions which give the respondent complete freedom to respond in his or her own words. The amount of space provided is however an indicator of whether a brief or lengthy answer is desired e.g

Q. In your opinion, how can we improve the work environment?

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### Advantages

1. The respondent can give their personal responses
2. Simple to formulate because they are no response categories
3. Responses can give rise to a different perspective

### Disadvantages

1. Some responses given may fail to provide the required information
2. More difficult to analyze responses because there are no categories
3. It is time consuming and may put off respondents

### e) Press advertisements

There are two types of advertisements:

- Small advertisement/ linear advertisement
- Large advertisement/ display advertisement

#### 1. Small advertisement

It usually appears under the classified section in newspapers. It is commonly used to advertise services or products. Each is paid at a given rate per word. It is brief and should contain the following:

- A description of the product.
- The price
- The contact person

### Sample

**ROLLS ROYCE** car hire, discounted prices for weddings. Brian: 0703123456.

#### 2. Display advertisement

It is a combination of a notice and a small advertisement. It contains more details in different designs. It is more expensive due to the size of the advertisement.

### Advantages of advertisements

- It can reach a wide audience
- It is a fast means of communication

### Disadvantages

- It is costly to place an advertisement in the newspaper
- Information is received by literate
- It cannot benefit the visually impaired

## **PRESS ADVERTISEMENTS**

### Step 1

Top the advertisement with an attention-getting headline. A bold, well-worded headline will draw people to your ad. In the absence of a strong headline, newspaper readers will be more likely to just skip over your section of the paper. Create a headline of no more than five words that clearly communicates an important bit of information about your product.

### Step 2

Use a clear, easy-to-read font. Select a bold font in a simple print. Consider the use of Arial or another clear font to ensure that an overly complicated font does not deter potential customers.

### Step 3

Include no more than two or three sentences explaining the good or service. Do not overload your ad with text. You only want to include the most important information in two to three simple sentences. In these sentences, you should attempt to highlight why your good or service is preferable to others like it on the market.

### Step 4

Use simple vocabulary, and avoid jargon. Potential customers are not likely to consult a dictionary to discover the meaning of a complex or overly technical word. Use easy-to-understand words so that all readers can understand your ad.

### Step 5

Add one or two prominent pictures. Select a picture or two that is relevant to your product to feature in your ad. Do not violate copyright laws by using pictures that you do not have the right to re-print. Either purchase re-print rights, or use your own original photography to ensure that you stay within the law.

### Step 6

Avoid clutter in your ad. You will likely turn off viewers if you fill your ad too heavily with pictures or text. Keep your ad clean to ensure that viewers are not overwhelmed.

### Step 7

Make factual claims. Do not make promises you can't keep. Do not claim that your good or service is the best without imperial evidence to support this fact. Instead of making grandiose statements that you can't back up, keep your claims clear and factual, highlighting specific things that make your product special.

## Step 8

Include your contact information. Your ad does no good if potential customers cannot reach you to purchase the advertised good or service. Include contact information, including your phone and any website that the customer could visit for more information to ensure that an interested ad viewer can easily buy the product he sees advertised.

## **NOTICES**

A notice is a formal means of communication. The purpose of a notice is to announce or display information to a specific group of people. Notices are generally meant to be pinned up on specific display boards whether in schools or in public places. Notices issued by the government appear in newspapers.

### Format/ Structure:

A notice should be written in the following format:

- The name of the organisation issuing the notice
- The title 'NOTICE' placed at the center of the page
- The date

A heading to introduce the subject of the notice

• The body of the notice. A well-written notice must inform the readers about the 5 Ws:

- What is going to happen, (that is, the event)
- Where it will take place
- When it will take place (that is, the date and time)
- Who can apply or is eligible for it
- Whom to contact or apply to (that is, the issuing authority)

- The writer's signature, name (in block letters) and designation/ title

### **Characteristics of a notice**

- Only the most important points should be written.
- The sentences should be short and grammatically accurate.
- The language used in a notice must be clear and should not cause any misunderstanding or confusion.
- A notice must be catchy and appealing – it should attract the reader's attention at once. This can be achieved by using bold letters, catchy slogans, striking words and phrases, etc.
- Standard abbreviations are allowed.

### **f) Message forms**

It is a form used to record a message intended for a person who is not available. It should be passed on immediately to the concerned person. It should include space for all the necessary details about the caller and the call.

Sample:

### **g)Electronic mail**

#### **E-MAIL**

It is a way of sending or receiving a message through electronic means. It can be used to send memos, letters, application forms, reports, pictures, newsletters, and many paged documents e.g e-books.

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- It is relatively cheap especially when sending a document of several pages
- It can be used to send a message to many people at the same time
- It is a very fast means of communication especially if the recipient is online
- The message is sent as a plain text hence there is no need to memorize a particular layout
- It is simple, convenient and independent of time and time zones
- Documents can be attached to the email and sent saving time and money

#### **DISADVANTAGES**

- One can receive unwanted messages from people known and unknown to them
- Some messages may be incomprehensible due to miss-pelt words or coded language
- Some senders write annoying messages impulsively and thoughtlessly which they later regret
- It is phasing out other types of communication e.g. notes, letters, telephone, face to face

### **EMAIL ETIQUETTE**

This is the expected behavior when sending or receiving email:

- Treat email as public messages that can be accessed by anyone else
- Emails can be subjected to fraud, defamation, plagiarism, obscenities etc
- Avoid sending copies of emails indiscriminately to long lists of recipients because many people read only mail with relevant subject headings
- Do not expose other peoples email addresses especially when sending a forwarded message
- Use humour and sarcasm cautiously to avoid offending the recipient
- The use of too many abbreviations or codes can make email messages difficult to read e.g. BTW (By the way), NKT (click sound),
- Edit the text to remove irrelevancies
- Avoid sending documents that are too bulky, the downloading may be too slow for the recipient.

- Ensure your email is sent to the right address Check and re-check
- Clear your inbox regularly to de-clutter

## EMAIL

### Writing Your Email

1. **Use a neutral e-mail address.** Your e-mail address should be a variation of your real name, not a username or nickname. Use periods, hyphens, or underscores to secure an e-mail address that's just your name, without extra numbers or letters, if you can.

**tmcaden@gmail.com**

Never use an unprofessional email address. No one will take you seriously if your reply-to is [monsigneur.harry.manback@slip'nslides.net](mailto:monsigneur.harry.manback@slip'nslides.net).

2. **Use a short and accurate subject header.** Avoid saying too much in the subject header, but make sure it reflects the content of your email to a person unfamiliar with you. If possible, include a keyword that will make the email content easier to remember and/or search for in a crowded inbox. For example, "Meeting on March 12th" is specific enough that the email topic won't be mistaken for anything else but not so specific as to be distracting (ex. "Schedule, Guest List, Lunch Requests, and Meeting Overview for March 12th").

For example:

**Subject: Meeting About New Internet Service Provider 1/8/2013**

3. **Use a proper salutation.** Addressing the recipient by name is preferred. Use the person's title (Mr. Mrs.Ms. or Dr.) with their last name, followed by a comma or a colon. Optionally, you can precede the salutation with "Dear..." (but "Hello..." is acceptable as well). Using a last name is more formal and should be used unless you are on first-name terms with the recipient. If you don't know the name of the person you're writing to (but you really should try and find one) use "Dear Sir/Madam" or "Dear Sir or Madam" followed by a colon.

Subject: Meeting About New Internet Service Provider 1/8/2013 **Mr. Jones,**

4. **Introduce yourself in the first paragraph (if necessary).** Also include why you're writing, and how you found that person's e-mail address, or the opportunity you're writing about. Eg

Subject: Meeting About New Internet Service Provider 1/8/2013

Mr. Jones,

I have been researching our choices for internet providers over the past week, and I wanted to update you on my progress. Introduce yourself/why you're writing

*My name is Earl Rivers. I'm contacting you to apply for the administrative assistant position listed on CareerXYZ.com.*

*My name is Arlene Rivers. I am writing about the traffic citation I received on December 31, 2009. I obtained your e-mail address for the Westchester County Clerk*

5. **Write the actual message.** Be sure to get your point across without rambling; if it's fluffed up, the reader may glance over the important details. Try to break up the message into paragraphs by topic to make your message more logical and digestible.

Subject: Meeting About New Internet Service Provider 1/8/2013

Mr. Jones,

I have been researching our choices for internet providers over the past week, and I wanted to update you on my progress.

We have two options: H.C. Cable and Toll South. Both offer business plans, and I will go over the pricing of each plan at the meeting on Tuesday. Both of the options I listed have comparable speed and data usage offerings as well. I called your personal provider, GoGo Satellite, but they did not have any business offerings. They primarily do residential internet service.

I will talk with Joe and Susan in IT about these options and get their suggestions. I will also send out meeting requests to everyone, including Mr. Morris in operations. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please let me know.

6. **Use the correct closing tag.** This will depend on your level of intimacy with the recipient. Examples include:

Subject: Meeting About New Internet Service Provider 1/8/2013

Mr. Jones,

I have been researching our choices for internet providers over the past week, and I wanted to update you on my progress. We have two options: H.C. Cable and Toll South. Both offer business plans, and I will go over the pricing of each plan at the meeting on Tuesday. Both of the options I listed have comparable speed and data usage offerings as well. I called your personal provider, GoGo Satellite, but they did not have any business offerings. They primarily do residential internet service.

I will talk with Joe and Susan in IT about these options and get their suggestions. I will also send out meeting requests to everyone, including Mr. Morris in operations. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please let me know. **Respectfully,**

**Yours sincerely,**

**Yours cordially,  
Kind Regards,**

**Best Regards,**

7. **Sign with your full name.** If you have a job title, include that in the line after your name, and write the company name or website in the line after that. If you do not have a job title but you have your own blog or website related to the content of the e-mail, include a link to that below your name. If the e-mail is about a job, only include a careerrelated website or blog, not hobbies or interests.

Subject: Meeting About New Internet Service Provider 1/8/2013

Mr. Jones,

I have been researching our choices for internet providers over the past week, and I wanted to update you on my progress. We have two options: H.C. Cable and Toll South. Both offer business plans, and I will go over the pricing of each plan at the meeting on Tuesday. Both of the options I listed have comparable speed and data usage offerings as well. I called your personal provider, GoGo Satellite, but they did not have any business offerings. They primarily do residential internet service.

I will talk with Joe and Susan in IT about these options and get their suggestions. I will also send out meeting requests to everyone, including Mr. Morris in operations. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please let me know.

Respectfully,  
**Tina McAden**  
**Administrative Assistant**  
**Jones Office Solutions**  
**<http://www.jonesofficesolutions.com>**  
**(555) 124-5678**

## **5.2 CURRICULUM VITAE WRITING**

It is a document that is prepared by a person seeking employment or a promotion.

Structure of a C.V

- Heading
- Personal information
  - Full name
  - Date of birth
  - Gender
  - Status
  - Religion
  - Postal address
  - Telephone

Email

- Academic achievements

College name:            years attended            grades achieved

Secondary school:    years attended            grades achieved

Primary school:        years attended            grades achieved

- Work experience

List the Places of work (beginning with the most recent) and the period of time worked

- Responsibilities

Provide details begin with the most recent

- Interests/ hobbies List a few

- Referees

At least 3 people who know you well. Shouldn't be a relative e.g a priest, principal, head of department, manager, etc.

Name

Position/Title

Name of Organization

Tel no

Email address

## QUESTION

Write a detailed curriculum vitae that you would use to search for a job.

## REFERENCES

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London

## TOPIC 6

### 6.0 MEETINGS

#### Introduction

Minutes are the official record of the proceedings of a meeting. They constitute a permanent record of the decisions and actions of a constituted body and serve as a reminder of the subjects previously dealt with and the conclusions reached. Once approved and signed, they are acceptable in a court of law as evidence of the proceedings.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
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By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Define a meeting
- b) Explain types of meetings
- c) Explain the purpose of meetings
- d) Explain difficult terminologies used in meetings
- e) Explain preparation of meetings
- f) Describe the procedure of conducting a meeting
- g) Discuss advantages and disadvantages of meetings

### **6.1 Definition of meeting A**

meeting can be defined as:

1. The coming together of at least two persons for any lawful purpose.
2. An assembly of persons in accordance with legally defined procedures to discharge business as required by the law.
3. A gathering of persons in an organization who meet to exchange views, ideas, information with a view of making decision.

### **6.2 Types of meetings**

The following are types of meetings:

- Executive meetings
- Briefing meetings
- Advisory meetings
- Managerial meetings
- Brainstorming meetings
- Task force/ Working party
- Departmental meetings

Executive meetings

- These meetings are participatory in nature.
- All members present share in decision making which result in action being taken.
- It consists of an assembly of people with common interests who arrive at decisions and institute action.

- The meetings involve an exchange of relevant ideas, views and information which leads to an agreement favored by the majority of all those present.

#### Briefing meetings

- These meetings are called within an organization to relay information or decisions from a more senior source.
- They are an assembly of people who are summoned to receive, accept and comply with the requirements of formulated decisions.
- The people retain the information relayed by a person in authority for use.

#### Advisory meetings

- These meetings are called to generate proposals or advice either from those in lower ranks or in authority.
- In such meetings, suggestions are made for submission to higher authority for ratification. e.g. Workers Union meetings

#### Managerial meetings

- Many meetings occur between a manager and his/her subordinates or counterparts.
- They meet to exchange opinions, give advice or supply information e.g. staff meetings.

#### Task force/ working party

- This is a meeting that brings together of a group of people with a varying responsibility and different departments to pursue a particular task or problem.
- They find a solution to a problem by working outside the normal administrative structure.

#### Brainstorming meetings

- Some informal meetings are called with the aim of generating a fresh approach or new ideas relating to organizational activities.
- Members are encouraged to contribute without restriction or fear of victimization.

### **6.3 Purpose of meetings**

- To pass on information
- To bring people together to share ideas
- Used for making decisions
- Used in problem solving
- To introduce new staff
- To give instructions
- To introduce new strategy for implementation

- To inform on new changes
- To remind people about rules and regulation
- To enhance relationships of the staff
- To create awareness
- To recommend change
- To raise grievances
- To make people feel part of the org

#### **6.4 Terminologies used in meetings**

- Agenda- a list of items to be discussed at a meeting
- Ad hoc- A Latin word meaning ‘for the purpose of’ e.g sub-committee set up to investigate the cause of high turn- over among employees
- Adjourn – to close the meeting for a moment
- Adjourn *sine die* – to close without a new date being fixed
- Reconvene – to meet again at a later date
- Fixed items- items to be found in most agenda; they include:apologies, matters arising, correspondence, A.O.B, date of next meeting.
- Particular items
- Proposals- formal suggestions which members will vote during the meeting.
- Propose a motion – to put forward an idea to be adopted as the conclusion of the meeting
- Second – to offer ones support
- Resolution – a passed motion
- Matters arising – items arising directly from the previous meeting that were not concluded.
- Addendum- an addition to a certain document
- Casting vote – if votes for and against are equal, the chair may use his/her vote
- Ex-officio member- a member given powers or rights by reason of office
- Speak to a paper – a member discusses a paper or report which he/ she has written and circulated to members before the meeting.
- Out of order – a ruling by the chair to a member for behaving in a manner contrary to the standing orders.
- Move progress – propose to move to the next item on the agenda.
- Point of order
- Quorum
- Resolution
- Standing orders

#### **6.5 Preparation of meetings**

We prepare for a meeting in different ways depending on our role in the meeting. This will include preparations before .during and after the meeting. All the three important participants in a meeting (chairperson, secretary, members) all have duties to perform during the three phases.

## **1. Chairperson**

### **Before the Meeting**

- Draft the agenda
- Ensures members receive the agenda through the secretary
- Suggests the venue

### **During the meeting**

- Ensures the meeting starts on time
- Welcomes members to the meeting by initiating the preliminaries
- Ensures that all contributions are made through the chair
- Ensures members do not go outside the subject of discussion
- Maintains order in a meeting
- Ensures the meeting is conducted fairly without taking sides
- Ensures that all agenda has been discussed without taking too much time
- Signs the previous minutes
- Asks for confirmation from members
- Closes the meeting

### **After the meeting**

- Monitors progress of assigned tasks in special cases
- Follows-up absent members
- Reads through the written minutes

## **2. Secretary**

### **Before the meeting**

- Writes the minutes in readiness for the next meeting
- Drafts the agenda in a logical order
- Sends out notices of meeting to members
- Requests and receives items for the agenda from members
- Ensures the venue is ready for the meeting
- Consult with the chair

### **During the meeting**

- Attends meeting before time
- Prepares the room with equipment, furniture, stationery, water, etc
- Takes down notes of the proceedings of the meeting
- Reads the previous minutes
- Takes note of the agenda

#### **After the meeting**

- Writes the minutes logically
- Consults with the chair
- Distributes minutes to members before the next meeting
- Reminds members of assigned tasks
- May report progress of tasks to the chair

### **3. Members**

#### **Before the meeting**

- Submit proposals for discussion
- Read minutes before meeting
- Perform assigned tasks before meeting
- Make corrections with secretary if any
- Read the notice carefully and locate the venue before the meeting **During the meeting**
- Attend the meeting on time
- Maintain order by making contributions in a disciplined way
- Control their emotions
- Be flexible and tolerant
- Have a positive attitude towards the meeting
- Take note of any tasks given

#### **After the meeting**

- Carry out assigned tasks

#### **6.6 Procedure of conducting a meeting**

- The chair calls the meeting to order when he/she is satisfied with the quorum.
- The chair declares the meeting open, making clear that the meeting has formally started and the exact time is recorded.
- The secretary reads out names of members who have sent apologies.

- The minutes of the previous meeting are read by the secretary.
  - If there are any omissions or differences in the way the minutes were recorded, corrections are made.
  - If the minutes are accurate, proposals is made to pass them, and are seconded as a true copy.
  - The chair signs the minutes.
  - Matters which were not concluded at the last meeting are discussed as matters arising.
  - The main business of the meeting as outlined in the agenda is discussed.
  - A member might suggest a particular course of action, also known as *proposing a motion* e.g. “It is proposed that the committee investigate the possibility of engaging a communications consultant to deal with the press during the current takeover crisis.” □
- Once a motion has been proposed, it must be seconded.
- If there is a seconder, the motion is put to vote.
  - The chair suggests formally that members move the vote. A show of hands is taken for those *for* the motion, followed by those *against* the motion, and finally those who wish to abstain.
  - A motion may be either *carried* or *defeated*, depending on the majority of the votes. e.g. the motion was carried by a majority of eight votes to three.
  - Amendments of a proposed motion may be proposed by a member and seconded after which the chair conducts a vote on the amendment. If it is carried, the revised motion is put to vote.
  - After discussing the business of the meeting, and voting, the secretary usually announces details of any correspondence which has been received.
  - The final item for discussion is *Any Other Business* where additional matters are raised.
  - The chair fixes the date of the next meeting.
  - The chair then declares the meeting closed at the exact time when the business ceases.

#### Advantages of Meetings

- Information is shared at once
- Encourages teamwork
- Strengthens bonds by building good working relationships
- Boost individual morale – some people have brilliant ideas
- It fosters creativity
- It provides instant feedback

#### Disadvantages of Meetings

1. They can be time consuming
2. It can be expensive to prepare for meetings; the expenses may include sitting allowances, lunch and tea, hiring of the venue, facilitators fees, etc
3. Some members may withhold important information
4. There at times when members fight over leadership positions

5. Victimization may occur when a member airs their views or grievances which do not go well with those in senior positions
6. Negative influence and incitement can take place in a meeting
7. Lack of skills in conducting a meeting

#### Challenges in conducting meetings

1. Lack of quorum
2. Lack of venue
3. Lack of adequate resources like, seats, reports, handouts
4. Technological breakdown e.g TV, VCR,
5. Time keeping
6. `Following the agenda to ensure all items are discussed

### QUESTION

Imagine you have been appointed to chair a meeting at your workplace. Outline the steps you would use to ensure that you chair the meeting successfully.

### REFERENCES

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London.

## TOPIC 7

### 7.0 INTERVIEWS

#### Introduction

The word 'interview' means 'view between' or 'sight between'. It suggests meeting between two persons for the purpose of getting a view of each other or for knowing each other. When we normally think of an interview, we think of a situation in which an employer tries to size up his applicant for a job. The employer's aim is to know whether the applicant can be of service to his company and the applicant's aim is to find out whether the job being offered by the company can be suitable for him.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Define an interview
- b) Identify types of interviews
- c) Explain the purpose of interviews
- d) Explain the preparation of an interview
- e) Identify roles of the interviewer and interviewee
- f) Explain the conduct of interviews
- g) Discuss challenges of interviews

### **7.1 Definition of an interview**

It is any planned, purposeful conversation between two or more people during which both parties speak and listen from time to time.

### **7.2 Types of Interviews**

#### 1. Selection Interview

It is an encounter that takes place to determine whether or not someone will be given a job. One or more senior staff will ask questions about the candidate's background, work experience, ambitions and interests.

#### 2. Promotion Interview

It takes place when an employee has applied for a job of a higher grade within the organization. It is conducted in a similar manner as selection interviews. It aims to discover whether the applicant has the necessary qualifications and abilities to perform the job.

3. Appraisal Interview  
It is used to assess or evaluate the work done and progress made by an individual employee. It can be conducted annually where the employees' progress during the year is reviewed and future recommendations made e.g promotion, training, etc

4. Instructional Interview  
It is used to issue instructions about new procedures to key individuals within an organization. These procedures should be explained or demonstrated clearly to the individuals for maximum benefit of the organization

#### 5. Disciplinary Interview

It is the least pleasant of all interviews. It is carried out when an employee has been accused of breach of company regulations.

#### 6. Grievance Interview

It takes place when an employee feels they have been unfairly treated by another member of the organization. It relies on sound facts so as to arrive at the truth and appropriate action taken.

#### 7. Decision making Interview

It is a small meeting between company employees of equal status or position.

#### 8. Information gathering Interview

It is used to gather information. It is used by the media to gather information

9. Persuasive Interview

It is used to change a person's behavior or attitude. It is used by sales people

10. Exit Interview

It is used to determine why someone is leaving a position

11. Counseling Interview

It is used to provide guidance

### **Purpose of interviews**

1. To determine whether someone will be given a job or not.
2. To determine whether an employee is suitable to be promoted.
3. To evaluate the work done and progress made by an individual employee.
4. To issue instructions about new procedures to key individuals within an organization.
5. To undertake disciplinary measures.
6. To air particular grievances.
7. To make decisions.
8. To gather information.
9. To change a person's behavior or attitude.
10. To provide guidance.
11. To determine the reason why an employee is leaving their position.

### **Role of the interviewee**

1. Research about the company before the interview through their websites and brochures
2. Try to work out the questions likely to be asked and how to answer them
3. Watch the news and read recent newspapers to be updated on the current affairs
4. Think about your hobbies, recreational interests and ambitions which might form the basis of questions.
5. Arrive early at the venue. If possible arrive an hour earlier.

### **7.3 Conduct during an interview**

1. The language used should be formal. Use polite expressions when answering questions. Some polite words and expressions include 'please', 'excuse me', 'thank you.'
2. Listen carefully. This is very crucial because one's suitability for the job will be determined by the answers given
3. Think before speaking. Never rush in with your ideas. Work out whether they are really valid and try to think of a complete sentence which expresses them clearly
4. Be honest. Answer questions as truthfully as possible. Giving a false impression will only create problems at a later stage
5. Be audible. Speak clearly and loud enough for everyone to hear
6. Send the correct non verbal signals. Dress appropriately in official wear, your body and head movements should not display nervousness

7. Maintain eye contact. Although you should look mainly at the person who asked questions, glance quickly at any other people present to show that you are including them in what you are saying

### **Role of the interviewer**

The following areas should be considered when organizing to conduct an interview with another individual:

1. The purpose

Have a clearly defined reason why the interview is being held e.g job seeking, information gathering, evaluation, etc

2. Research

Obtain all the relevant information and familiarize yourself with it beforehand e.g job application forms, reports, files of documents. Make notes from these sources that will help gather information. Research on the people involved in the interview. This is applicable with selection, appraisal, disciplinary or grievance interviews.

3. Setting

Set a time and place that are convenient for all concerned. The interview room should be of suitable size, well lit and properly ventilated. Arrange the furniture appropriately. Ensure there will be no interruptions during the interview by placing signs on the door.

### **7.4 Challenges of an interview**

1. The interviewer may have a personal bias or dislike towards the interviewee and result in disqualifying such a candidate.
2. Some individuals may be very skilled with the necessary expertise, however they may lack the desired qualifications e.g. good academic certificates; therefore, they are disadvantaged over other candidates with the qualifications.
3. Language. A candidate may not know how to express themselves; they may lack the right way of expressing themselves.
4. The interview process may be prone to be compromised through corrupt deals such that the deserving candidate is denied the opportunity.
5. Preparation for conducting an interview can be expensive.e.g training the interviewers, conducting the interview and transcribing.
6. Data analysis can be time consuming.
7. Interviews require preparation on the part of the interviewer and interviewee. One cannot show up having not done adequate research for both parties.
8. There is a possibility of candidates giving suitable answers without necessarily meaning what they say i.e. lack of honesty.
9. Lack of objectivity resulting in pre-judgement of the interviewee with respect to nonverbal cues such as appearance, paralinguistic elements.
9. Interviews are not effective when dealing with large number of candidates as the process may result in inconsistent treatment of interviewees.
10. There's no guarantee of a job in the case of selection interviews.
11. They lack future reference as what is discussed is not necessarily recorded.

## QUESTION

1. Give suggestions to ensure success in an interview.
2. How can you conduct yourself during an interview.

## REFERENCES

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London.

## TOPIC 8

### 8.0 REPORTS

#### Introduction

A Business report is an orderly presentation of facts about specific business activity or programme. A report is communication from someone who has some information to someone who wants to use that information.

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Define a report
- b) Identify types of reports
- c) Explain the purpose of reports
- d) Explain the structure and content of a report
- e) Explain the preparation of a report
- f) Explain the presentation of a report
- g) Explain the style used in report writing

#### 8.1 Definition of a report

Definition: A report is communication of information or advice from a person who has collected and studied the facts to a person who has requested the information for a specific purpose.

Reports are written in an organization, businesses or institutions and are an important method of acquiring information. They are presented orally or in written form. Reports usually contain a

record of an event. It takes note of any action taken, explanations of facts collected, conclusions and recommendations for future action.

## **8.2 Types of reports □**

Long report

- Short report
- Oral reports
- Written reports
- Solicited reports
- Unsolicited reports
- Reports based on the subject e.g financial/medical/agricultural
- Reports based on time e.g daily/weekly/monthly/ quarterly/annual

Long reports are also known as special reports. They are written in response to a request for specific information e.g one may want to find out the reason of an unusual occurrence within an organization such as a fire outbreak.

Short reports are also known as routine reports e.g a report on the progress of a department in an organization\

## **Purpose of reports**

1. To provide information
2. To provide a basis for decisions to be implemented/action to be taken
3. To gain information written by others
4. To give advice
5. To co-ordinate activities
6. To make employees to be more responsible
7. To help solve problems within an organization
8. Help in accountability of results
9. Help in record keeping
10. Help in reducing the workload for seniors who rely on them in managing an organization.

## **8.3 Characteristics of a good Report**

1. Precision

In a good report, the writer is very clear about the exact purpose of writing it. The investigation, analysis and recommendations are directed by this central purpose. Precision gives a kind of unity and coherence to the report and makes it a valuable document.

2. Accuracy of facts

The scientific accuracy of facts is very essential to a good report. Since reports invariably lead to decision-making, inaccurate facts may lead to disastrous decisions.

3. Relevance

The facts presented in a report should be not only accurate but relevant also. While it is essential that every fact included in a report has a bearing on the central purpose, it is equally essential to see that nothing relevant has escaped inclusion

4. Reader-orientation

A good report is always reader-oriented. While drafting a report, it is necessary to keep in mind the person(s) who is (are) going to read it. A report meant for layman will be different from another meant for technical experts.

5. Objectivity of recommendations

If recommendations are made at the end of a report, they must be impartial and objective. They should come as logical conclusion to investigation and analysis. They must not reveal any self-interest on the part of the writer.

6. Simple and unambiguous language

A good report is written in a simple and unambiguous language. It is a kind of scientific document of practical utility, hence it should be free from various forms of poetic embellishment like figures of speech.

7. Clarity

A good report is absolutely clear. Clarity depends on proper arrangement of facts. The report writer must proceed systematically. He should make his purpose clear, define his sources, state his findings and finally make necessary recommendations.

8. Brevity

A report should be brief. It is difficult to define brevity in absolute terms. Nor can brevity be laid down as a rule. All that can be said is that a good report should be as brief as possible. Brevity should not be achieved at the cost of clarity. Nor should it be at the cost of completeness.

## 9. Grammatical Accuracy

The grammatical accuracy of language though listed at number 9 in the characteristics of good report of fundamental importance. It is one of the basic requisites of a good report as of any other piece of composition.

### **Styles used in report writing**

- Letter format
- Memo format
- Schematic format

## **8.4 Structure and content of reports**

### 1. Heading

- It includes the purpose of writing the report e.g A report on complaints of poor food and service in the staff restaurant.
- It should be written in capital letters and underlined

### 2. Introduction

- It comprises of Terms of Reference and Procedure
- Terms of Reference comprises of: the reasons for writing the report, date of request, name of the person requesting
- Procedure comprises of the means used in carrying out the investigation e.g telephone calls, interviews, observation

### 3. Body

- It comprise of findings and conclusions
- It is also known as report proper
- This section lies between the introduction and the final report
- The writer reveals his/her findings based on facts
- The concluding paragraph should be based on the findings
- It should be brief

### 4. Final section

- It comprises of recommendations and appendices
- It leaves the reader with the final impression
- It offers solutions to problems
- Appendices contain information that is relevant to the report but which would interrupt the flow of the content were it included in the main text e.g statistics tables, copy of questionnaire, maps, diagrams, bibliography
- Bibliography is a list of works consulted in alphabetical order

## **Preparation of a report using the schematic format**

Sample:

A REPORT ON COMPLAINTS OF POOR FOOD AND SERVICE IN THE STAFF

## RESTAURANT

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

To investigate complaints about poor food and service provided in the staff restaurant and make recommendations as requested by Mr. J. N. Kariuki, the Principal, Thika Technical Training Institute on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2013

### PROCEDURE

1. An interview was held with Mrs. Gitonga, the cateress on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013.
2. Interviews were held with a cross- section of staff members (20) who frequented the restaurant between 5<sup>th</sup> June to 7<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

### FINDINGS

#### 1.0 INTERVIEW WITH CATERESS

##### 1.1 STAFF

Mrs. Gitonga had three full- time employees. The youngest, Ms. Lillian, attends day classes at the nearby Amboseli Institute. Her classes were on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week. She worked half day between 2pm to 4pm.

##### 1.2 EQUIPMENT

A schedule of the current equipment in the kitchen and their year of purchase has been attached to this report. No major problems were reported; however, Mrs. Gitonga said that additional equipment would be useful e.g a micro-wave oven and a rice cooker.

##### 1.3 WATER SHORTAGE

There has been a re-current water shortage in the institution. It resulted in interference with the smooth flow of activities in the kitchen because water was bought from water vendors.

#### 2.0 INTERVIEW WITH STAFF MEMBERS

Ten staff members who were served between 12 noon to 1pm were interviewed first. Additional interviews were held with the other staff served between 1pm to 2pm.

##### 2.1 MENU

The choice of food served is clearly shown in the menu attached to this report. Out of the staff interviewed, 60% of the staff said they preferred changes in the food choices to include fruit, snacks and salads.

##### 2.2 QUEUES

Majority of the staff were served between 12 noon to 1pm. This resulted in long queues forming during the first lunch sitting.

##### 2.3 HYGIENE

There was no running water from the taps. This inconvenienced the cleaning activities required in the restaurant.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings in this report, the following conclusions can be made:

1. There are inadequate assistants to cope with the food and service in the morning and during the popular first lunch sitting.
2. Service can improve through the purchase of a microwave oven and rice cooker
3. The variety of meals served is not wide enough to cater for the staff needs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following suggestions can help improve the situation:

1. A new assistant should be recruited on part time basis to work between 9am to 2pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
2. Mrs. Gitonga should be asked to come up with a variety of foods and drinks to include the snacks, salad and fruits.
3. Mrs. Gitonga should be asked to look into the prices and availability of the new equipment suggested.
4. Water storage tanks should be purchased to fight the challenge of water shortage.

Compiled by

Grace Mburu  
The Dean

## **Formats of Long Reports**

### **1. Title page**

The report should have an appropriate title telling what the report is about.

It normally gives the author, title, the recipient and the date.

### **2. Summary**

It is important to have a well-presented summary at the beginning of the report, as the reader may not always read each section of the report, especially if it is quite detailed. The summary is usually the last part of the report to be written.

### **3. Contents Page**

The content page is very important. It gives the reader an overview of the subject at a glance. If you develop the contents page as you write the report, it will help you map out the subject and achieve an overview. The numbered sections of the report are listed in sequence. Some contents

pages are very detailed and show every subsection heading too. This can help the reader take in the contents at a glance, but may be confusing.

#### 4. Terms of Reference

Terms of reference usually outline the purpose of the report, who it was commissioned by and its submission date. The terms of reference section is sometimes combined with the introduction, depending on personal preference. If there is any ambiguity in the brief for the report then it is important that it is cleared up before your research actually begins.

#### 5. Introduction

An introduction to a report will normally give a brief background to the contents of the report, to enable its reader to visualize the situation, if no prior knowledge exists. The introduction puts the report into context for the reader. It may also explain the methods of investigation for the report.

#### 6. Methodology

If research is involved then many reports (especially market research reports) have a section, which describes the way research was carried out. (e.g desk research, questionnaire, interview)

#### 7. Findings

The findings are normally divided between various sections, depending upon the complexity of the case. A different section is normally allocated to each separate area of information. This makes it easier to identify individual areas of concern. The sections should follow a systematic order. It is important that these sections are very clearly defined and accurate as they form the basis for the remainder of your discussion- and your recommendations.

#### 8. Conclusion

This section summarizes the main points of the report, giving a brief overview of what has been discussed. The recommendations section may sometimes be combined with this.

#### 8. Recommendation

The recommendations will offer a solution to any problems, which have arisen within the main body of findings. The style of writing in this part of the report should not only be persuasive but also positive and should instill confidence. Recommendations should be realistic and practical. Numerous recommendations should be listed separately so they can be clearly understood.

#### 9. Appendix

The appendix usually contains supporting material which may be referred to throughout the report. E.g leaflets, copies of questionnaires and statistical information e.t.c this section is often invaluable, proving back up material to your findings and recommendations without clogging up the body of the report. This section also allows the author to add material without having to rewrite the whole report.

#### 10. Acknowledgements/references/ Bibliography

This section includes references, which have been used in conjunction with the contents of the report. There are set formats for use when citing references- ask at your local library. The reference should include the author's name, the publication title, the date, the publisher's name and the page number.

#### **Presentation of a report**

#### **QUESTION**

As the Dean of students of a college, you have been summoned by the Principal to complain about a huge rise in the electricity bill. Write a report explaining your findings and recommendations.

#### **REFERENCES**

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London.

## **TOPIC 9**

### **9.0 ORAL/VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

#### **Introduction**

This is communication through word of mouth. It includes face to face conversation, conversation over the telephone, mobiles, radio broadcasts, interviews, group discussions, meetings, conferences and seminars, announcement over the public address system, speeches e.t.c

#### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Define oral/verbal communication
- b) Identify types of oral communication
- c) Explain the importance of oral communication
- d) Discuss the barriers to effective oral communication
- e) Explain ways of overcoming barriers to effective oral communication

#### **9.1 Definition of oral/verbal communication**

This is the giving, receiving or exchange of information, opinions or ideas by word of mouth so that the message is completely understood by everybody concerned.

#### **9.2 Types of oral/verbal communication**

- Discussions
- Lectures
- Meetings
- Telephone conversations
- Face to face
- Interviews
- Speeches

- Presentations

### **Importance of oral communication**

- It is quite fast
- Used by literate and illiterate people
- Accuracy
- Instant feedback
- Reliability
- One can seek clarification
- It is flexible

### **9.3 Barriers to effective oral communication**

- Noise
- Language
- Jumping to conclusions
- Poorly defined aim

### **Overcoming barriers to effective oral communication**

- Use a public address system
- Simple language that is understood by all
- Listen keenly
- Know the purpose of communication and prepare adequately

### **QUESTION**

Explain the importance of listening in oral communication. What other points should you remember when communicating with someone orally.

### **REFERENCES**

Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London.

### **TOPIC 10**

#### **10.0 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

## **Introduction**

It is anything other than words that communicate a message. Peoples behavior can convey messages just as effectively as anything they might say e.g nodding, smiling. Such actions may be made consciously or unconsciously.

### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Define non-verbal communication
- b) Identify types of non-verbal communication
- c) Explain the importance of non-verbal communication
- d) Discuss the barriers to effective non-verbal communication
- e) Explain ways of overcoming barriers to effective non-verbal communication

#### **10.1 Definition of non-verbal communication**

This is the giving, receiving or exchange of information, opinions or ideas without the use of words so that the message is understood.

#### **10.2 Types of non-verbal communication**

- Body language
- Written language
- Sign language

Communicating using body language

- Facial expressions
- Gestures
- Pantomimes
- Physical contact mimes

Communication using written language

- Written English
- Braille

Communicating using sign language

- Finger spelling
- Signing exact English (SEE)
- Kenya sign language (KSL)

#### Other types of non-verbal communication

- Dress and appearance
- Eye contact
- Facial expressions
- Body movement and gestures
- Head movements
- Body direction
- Silence
- Space
- Voice
- Circumstances
- Arrangement of the room

#### 1. DRESS AND APPEARANCE

The way a person dresses makes an important statement about them. It is also an indicator of how one regards the people to whom they are addressing. Smart clean clothes will convey a message of efficiency and that one is responsible. Many people will judge a person's personality by their dressing. One's appearance is a key factor in interviews.

#### 2. EYE CONTACT

Participants in a room should be able to see the speaker as well as each other. If someone is hidden in a dark corner or behind a pillar, they would tend to feel cut off and will contribute little in a discussion. Looking at someone directly in the eye suggests openness or truthfulness; whereas looking away gives an impression of shyness or dishonesty. When giving a talk, the speaker should ensure that their eyes roam regularly around the room rather than fixing one's gaze on the floor or on one of the persons in the room. Eye contact ensures that everyone is involved in the discussion.

#### 3. FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

These give a clear indication of one's feelings. A smile suggests amusement, agreement or humor. A frown suggests displeasure. A distant expression or look suggests lack of concentration. These signals are much stronger than verbal communication. One should try to match their facial expression with what they are saying otherwise there will be conflicting messages transmitted.

#### 4. BODY MOVEMENT AND GESTURES

It is also referred to as kinesics. Peoples' body movement can say a lot about their mood. Anxiety can be detected by kneading of fingers; impatience – crossing and uncrossing the legs; absentmindedness – drumming of a table. Some movements are very distracting to the

audience e.g stroking of a beard (real or imaginary), cleaning one's spectacles. Other gestures are too forceful and should be avoided e.g banging one's fist on a table.

## 5. HEAD MOVEMENTS

This includes nodding or shaking of the head. Nodding suggests agreement or understanding while shaking the head means disagreement or disapproval, disbelief. Both are ways of conveying feedback.

## 6. BODY DIRECTION

This concerns the way in which the body may convey signals about a person's feelings. It is divided into four areas: posture, proximity, orientation and contact.

- Posture

It refers to the position of the body e.g sitting upright, leaning forwards or backwards, folding of the arms, etc. A listener who leans forward during a talk suggests that they are very interested in what is said. A listener who sits back in their chairs, gazing at the floor is probably not interested or has lost concentration.

- Proximity

It is the distance between people during communication. Some people feel threatened by those who approach them too closely and may become nervous. Some informal sitting arrangements permit a close distance between people.

- Orientation

This is simply the direction in which the body is facing. Facing the person you are speaking to, suggests interest in the subject. Speaking with your body turned away suggests restlessness or lack of commitment. Change of orientation during a conversation will signify a change in mood e.g turning away or walking away may suggest boredom or lack of interest or anger

- Contact

Physical contact should be minimal especially during business e.g a handshake, pat on the back. A firm handshake is a sign of goodwill. People from different cultures will respond differently to touch. Some view it as a sign of goodwill while others feel threatened or offended. It is wise to know who you are dealing with and treat them appropriately.

## 7. SILENCE

When someone asks a question and one fails to answer, one communicates a message that could mean they were not concentrating, disagreement, rejection, lack of knowledge or total satisfaction. Human beings are social beings who need assurance from those around us. Holding one's tongue can sometimes be wise; however, sometimes it can be seen as an act of rebellion or rejection. Silence builds walls and walls are barriers to communication. On the other hand, silence can be used strategically to indicate that one is prepared to listen and encourage the speaker to continue speaking.

## 8. SPACE

This is an area or place that belongs to someone. In offices, space is usually directly related to status or position. The higher the rank the more square feet or space one has. Different cultures view space differently e.g Europeans will position the office desk at the centre of the room so that the authority flows from upwards to the centre. The more one is close to the centre, the more important they are. Human beings tend to claim particular areas of space, this is the reason homes are surrounded by walls or hedges to indicate the boundaries. Even in public spaces like classrooms, people tend to own some space. It is wise to respect each other's space.

## 9. VOICE

It is also referred to as paralinguistic elements. This term is used to describe the noises of agreement and encouragement or disagreement which people make when listening to others. E.g 'uh huh' 'a hah' 'mmm' 'eeeeeh'. Other elements of paralinguistics include: pitch, volume, rate, and pause.

- Pitch

This is the highness or lowness of the voice. A high pitch is associated with females while a low pitch is associated with males

- Volume

This is the degree of loudness. Loud people are viewed to be aggressive while the soft spoken people are shy or polite. A good speaker should vary their degree of loudness when necessary to be more effective.

- Rate

It is the speed at which we speak. It can be quick, slow, or moderate. Fast speakers are seen to be intelligent while slow speakers can be viewed to be lazy or inefficient which may not necessarily be the case.

- Pause

It is a planned stop. It is used to slow the rate of speech and give the sender and receiver a chance to gather their thoughts, unfortunately, many people feel that all pauses must be filled and consciously or unconsciously seek ways to fill the pauses with meaningless phrases e.g 'mmmmm'

## 10. CIRCUMSTANCES

It refers to the situation in which an Exchange takes place. It has a lot to do with the impression one conveys or one gives. It affects the overall message that is received by the other person. Eg the amount of preparation made for a presentation or discussion; observation of punctuality; avoidance of disturbance or distraction during a meeting or presentation.

## 11. ARRANGEMENT OF THE ROOM

The physical layout of a room can have a great influence on the communication that takes place e.g board members seated at a round table suggest equality. A horse-shoe arrangement also suggests equality. A manager, who sits behind his/her desk throughout a conversation with an employee, will emphasize the difference in rank or position between the two; on the other hand, if the two share a table an air of equality is immediately created.

### **10.3 Importance of non-verbal communication**

- Can be used by the hearing impaired
- Can be used where noise is prohibited eg library, banking hall, lecture hall, etc
- Creates emphasis when it accompanies oral communication
- Can be used where there is language barrier
- Very fast in transmitting information
- Can be used by both literate and illiterate
- It provides instant feedback

### **Barriers to effective non-verbal communication**

- Distance
- Conflicting messages
- Culture barriers

### **Overcoming barriers to effective non-verbal communication**

- Keep close distance
- Respect other people's culture
- The signs used should match the message sent

### **QUESTION**

1. What kind of non-verbal signals would you associate with:
  - Confidence
  - Nervousness
  - Attentive listening
  - Making someone feel welcome
2. Explain with examples, how non-verbal communication can influence one's view of another person at first meeting.

### **REFERENCES**

3. Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.
4. Sillars, S. (1988) *Success in Communication*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London.



## 11.0 AUDIO, VISUAL AND AUDIO-VISUAL COMMUNICATION

### Introduction

Audio visual communication that makes use of telecasts, short films on the cinema screen, video tapes and digital video disc is the latest medium of communication. It is a combination of sight and sound. it may make use of the written word also.

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Define the terms audio, visual and audio-visual communication
- b) Discuss the types of audio communication aids
- c) Explain the importance of audio communication aids
- d) Barriers to effective audio communication
- e) Overcoming barriers to audio communication
- f) Types of visual communication aids
- g) Importance of visual communication
- h) Barriers to effective visual communication
- i) Overcoming barriers to visual communication
- j) Types of audio-visual communication aids
- k) Importance of audio-visual communication
- l) Barriers to effective audio-visual communication
- m) Overcoming barriers to audio-visual communication

#### 11.1 *Definition of audio, visual and audio-visual communication*

Audio means anything that you listen to. It uses the ears as the channel.

Visual means anything that can be seen. It uses the eyes or the sense of sight as a channel.

Audio- visual communication aids refer to equipment and applications that deal with sound and sight.

#### 11.2 *Types of audio communication*

- Radio cassette
- Radio

### **Importance of communication aids**

- Can be used in meetings
- Used when dealing with impairments like blindness
- Keeps people alert in presentations
- One can interpret what they see when they hear it. The message becomes clearer.

### **Barriers to effective audio communication**

- Noise
- Interference e.g power blackout
- Technical breakdown

### **Overcoming barriers to effective audio communication**

- Increase the volume so as to be heard above the noise
- Have some power
- back up
- Repair any breakages

### *11.3 Types of visual communication*

- Photographs
- Pictures
- Drawings
- Charts
- Tables
- Posters
- Pie charts
- Histograms
- Bar graphs

### **Importance of visual communication**

- Retention of verbal presentations is 10%. You can achieve almost 50% retention by combining your presentation with visual messages.
- Presenters who work with visual aids are twice as likely to achieve the audience objectives than those who don't.
- Visual content accounts for 55% of what people learn from world class conferences with audio accounting for only 38%.

### **Barriers to effective visual communication**

- Distance
- Clarity
- Poor Lighting
- Size

### **Overcoming barriers to effective visual communication**

- Enlarge the visuals
- Good lighting

#### *11.4 Types of audio-visual communication*

- Blackboard
- Whiteboard
- Flip charts
- Magnetic boards
- Physical objects
- Models and experiments
- Overhead projector
- Data projector
- Videos
- Television
- DVD

- VCD

### **Importance of audio-visual communication**

- They make presentations more interesting to the audience
- The content is made easier to grasp
- It reinforces the speaker's message
- It reminds the audience of the key ideas being presented hence enhances memory
- It is more effective than any amount of words used

### **Barriers to effective audio-visual communication**

- Improper designing may lead to mis-communication
- Barriers will occur when the aids used fail to correspond with the content eg physical objects
- They may distract the audience
- They can be expensive
- If the receiver is not prepared to concentrate and take the audio-visual aids seriously, the message may not be appreciated
- They may not be useful to people with impairments

### **Overcoming barriers to effective audio-visual communication**

- Prepare well before hand
- Know when to use the aids to avoid distracting the audience

### **QUESTION**

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of audio-visual communication.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Hackett, P. (1988) *Success in Office Practice*, John Murray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London.

### **TOPIC 12**

## **12.0 TECHNOLOGY IN COMMUNICATION**

### **Introduction**

Information technology has been with us for longer than many people realize. It has a precise meaning: the storage, processing and retrieval of information by means of electronic technology, in particular computers and advanced technology.

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Define the terms technology
- b) Discuss technological developments in communication
- c) Explain the role of technology in communication
- d) Discuss the impact of technology in communication

### 12.1 Definition of technology

It is the making, modification, usage and knowledge of tools, machines, techniques, crafts, systems and methods of organization, in order to solve a problem, improve a pre-existing solution to a problem, achieve a goal, handle an applied input/output relation or perform a specific function.

### 12.2 Technological developments in communication

#### E-MAIL

It is a way of sending or receiving a message through electronic means. It can be used to send memos, letters, application forms, reports, pictures, newsletters, and many pagged documents e.g e-books.

#### ADVANTAGES

- It is relatively cheap especially when sending a document of several pages
- It can be used to send a message to many people at the same time
- It is a very fast means of communication especially if the recipient is online
- The message is sent as a plain text hence there is no need to memorize a particular layout
- It is simple, convenient and independent of time and time zones
- Documents can be attached to the email and sent saving time and money

#### DISADVANTAGES

- One can receive unwanted messages from people known and unknown to them
- Some messages may be incomprehensible due to miss-pelt words or coded language
- Some senders write annoying messages impulsively and thoughtlessly which they later regret
- It is phasing out other types of communication e.g. notes, letters, telephone, face to face

#### EMAIL ETIQUETTE

This is the expected behavior when sending or receiving email:

- Treat email as public messages that can be accessed by anyone else
- Emails can be subjected to fraud, defamation, plagiarism, obscenities etc
- Avoid sending copies of emails indiscriminately to long lists of recipients because many people read only mail with relevant subject headings
- Do not expose other peoples email addresses especially when sending a forwarded message
- Use humour and sarcasm cautiously to avoid offending the recipient
- The use of too many abbreviations or codes can make email messages difficult to read e.g. BTW (By the way), NKT (click sound),
- Edit the text to remove irrelevancies
- Avoid sending documents that are too bulky, the downloading may be too slow for the recipient.
- Ensure your email is sent to the right address Check and re-check
- Clear your inbox regularly to de-clutter

## FAX

It is short for facsimile. It is a device that can send or receive pictures or text to a telephone number connected to a printer or other output devices. The receiving fax machine reconverts the coded image, printing a paper copy.



## ADVANTAGES

- It can be used to send sensitive information unlike the internet which is vulnerable to interception
- It provides a reliable method of transmitting correspondence, contracts, hand written notes, resumes and illustrations
- It is immediate
- You can quickly send documents from one building to another without relying upon messenger services or other potentially costly document transportation companies
- It provides senders with a receipt after the document has finished moving through the fax process, the user has some evidence which can substantiate his claims that he followed through with his part of the deal.

## DISADVANTAGES

- Just like all technology, fax machines can fail.
- Documents you transmit via fax may not be as safe and secure as you would like. Wouldbe information thieves have devised ways of pulling information from old fax machines or discarded printing cartridges.

## TEXT MESSAGING

It is also known as short message service (SMS)

### ADVANTAGES

- Can be used to communicate in a noisy environment
- It is cheap
- Text Messaging is silent communication between two individuals. You can send text messages to each other without other people being able to hear what is being said.
- It enables you the privacy to exchange messages with each other without fear of other people knowing what you and another individual are talking about.
- You can also send pictures in text messages instantly.
- They also allow you to send a quick note
- You can customize quick notes automatically to send to someone without having to type question or sentence each time
- The ability to send a message to someone to ask them to call you later regarding something important. At the same time though it doesn't interrupt them with a phone call. It allows them to respond back to you when it is most convenient to them.

### DISADVANTAGES

- One of the disadvantages is sometimes you don't receive all incoming messages from people.
- Often a person's text messaging box will get so full with incoming and sent text messages. In the event that the box gets too full then the person can no longer receive anymore messages unless he or she deletes some of them.
- Use of coded words can be difficult to comprehend

## THE INTERNET

According to the definition provided by Oxford dictionary, the Internet is an arrangement of connected computers, which lets the computer users all over the globe exchange data. The internet is undoubtedly the most outstanding innovation in the field of communication in the history of mankind. At the present time, approximately 33% of the world population has accessibility to the Internet. The Internet is an extraordinary entertainment and learning tool that may be utilized in a number of modes to increase the ability of a user to collect information. The principal components of the Internet are the World Wide Web (WWW) and e-mail. With the passage of time, the Internet has become the most effective business tool in the contemporary world. It can be described as a global meeting place where people from every corner of the world can come simultaneously.

The advantages of Internet

- 1) Information. The biggest benefit offered by the Internet is information. It functions as a valuable resource of information. You can find any type of information on any subject with the help of the search engines like Yahoo and Google.
- 2) Communication. The primary goal of the Internet is communication. It has done extremely well in this field, however the development process is still going on to make it more dependable and quick. By sending an e-mail, we can contact a person who is physically present thousand miles away within the fraction of a second's time.
- 3) Entertainment. Internet functions as a popular medium of entertainment. A wide variety of entertainment including video games, music, movies, chat room, news and others can be accessed through the Internet.
- 4) E-commerce. E-commerce is the idea that is implemented for any form of commercial strategy or business transactions that entails transmission of data from one corner of the world to another. E-commerce has become a fantastic option through which you can shop anything.
- 5) Formation of communities. Internet helps in formation of communities or forums. Here a number of people can participate in different types of debates and discussions, express their views and gather valuable knowledge.
- 6) Services. A variety of services are offered via Internet, for example job searching, online banking, buying movie tickets, hotel reservations and consultation services etc. When you avail these services offline, they become more expensive.

#### 7) Easy and cheap communication

Communicating with your friends and loved ones has been easy through e-mail and social communication sites like Facebook and MySpace. You don't have to pay even a single cent just to chat with them because these services are free of charge!

#### 8) Send small or big files with others easily!

If you have to send a file, for example, a video to your friend who's living in other country, it is very easy. The disadvantages of Internet

- Spaming: Spaming denotes distribution of unsolicited e-mails in large numbers. They are meaningless and they unnecessarily block the whole system. These activities are treated as illegal.
- Theft of personal details. While using the Internet, there is high probability that your personal details like name, address and credit card number may be accessed by con artists and used for fraudulent purposes.
- Pornography: Pornography is definitely harmful for your children. There are numerous pornographic sites available over the Internet and watching any of those can have very bad influence on the mental health of your children.
- Virus threat Virus is a program that interrupts the usual operation of your personal computer system. PCs linked to the Internet have high probability of virus attacks and as a result of this your hard disk can crash, giving you a lot of trouble.
- There are risks attached to the unknown / hidden elements on the internet (you don't necessarily know who you are talking to).
- Reliability of information – everyone's posting so just because something's on the web doesn't mean it's reliable.

- There are costs associated with maintaining equipment and keeping equipment up with contemporary software.
- Addiction – some people get addicted to web / games etc.. which increases their social isolation and can cause health problems.
- Health issues related to less sun, exercise etc... and a tendency to eat more.
- Interruptions – because people don't tend to turn off technology, they don't focus or concentrate for uninterrupted periods as much. There's a trend towards multi-tasking that can have benefits but also impacts productivity.
- There are potential risks relating to cancer and fertility associated with regular exposure to mobile phones.

## TELECONFERENCING

A teleconference is the live exchange information among several persons and machines remote from one another but linked by a telecommunications system. Terms such as audio conferencing, telephone conferencing and video conferencing are also sometimes used to refer to teleconferencing.

Video conferencing is similar to the popular video phones where you can call anyone around the world and not only speak with them, but see them on your computer or television screen during the conversation. The difference is that video conferencing is intended to work for larger conferences rather than serving the needs of individual consumers, often using closed circuit television.

While many businesses have taken this technology under wing as a useful tool, there are advantages and disadvantages of video conferencing which must be considered before you decide if it will work for your meeting needs or not.

### Advantages

1. Reach anyone you need to reach immediately, no matter what time of day it may be for anyone involved. Time differences between states and countries can be overlooked without anyone traveling long distances for the conference.
2. While a phone call may suffice for two people who need to have a short conversation, webbased conferencing allows large rooms of people at different locations to interact with one another effectively. Ten business execs in Amsterdam can easily interact with five others in New York and two in Tokyo to create a full conference with everyone able to see and hear perfectly.
3. PowerPoint and other visual displays can be shared with everyone attending the conference at the same time, giving the feel of everyone being in one room and keeping everyone on task and focused.

4. Virtual whiteboards allow people from different locations to add in their own thoughts or ideas into one collaborative space. This enables everyone to form a plan of action or collaborate on a design or slogan instantly.
5. It is possible, with some services, for everyone to gain access to another computer, seeing whatever is on that computer screen. With more advanced services, a document can even be changed and typed into directly from other computers connected into the conference. Businesses that require active collaboration on one project form can be greatly enhanced with this possibility.

### **Disadvantages**

1. The price may be the biggest drawback for some people, though there are very cheap options if you do not require the more advanced features. Usually, a business that can make good use of the more advanced features often finds that the money they save flying clients or employees around the country or world more than makes up for the cost of the service provider. As fuel becomes more of an issue around the world, the price becomes less of a disadvantage and more of an advantage.
2. There are some human ways of communicating that do not translate very well over a distance, such as eye contact. When you sit in the same room with someone and listen to a speech or presentation you will make eye contact and they will judge who is paying attention by looking around the room. Much of this contact is not easily delivered through a webcam.

### **12.3 Impact of Technology in Communication**

- 1) It has made work easier hence creating efficiency
- 2) Documents and files can be stored easily
- 3) People with poor handwriting can use the computer to communicate
- 4) The world has become a global village through the world wide web
- 5) The speed of communication has also been enhanced
- 6) There's been a movement away from face-to-face meetings / communication. Instead, people and businesses use video conferencing. Loss of face-to-face may mean loss of some communication skills and loss of the personal touch.
- 7) Technology is more portable and people have and expect constant access to the internet.
- 8) Communication is virtually instantaneous (compare email versus snailmail).
- 9) Communication is less rigid and less inclined to conform to traditional standards and rules. It's less formal. Mistakes are common. Acronyms are also common.
- 10) Reliance on technology – people don't bother learning to spell because they use spellchecker etc...

## **TOPIC 13**

### **13.0 EMERGING TRENDS IN COMMUNICATION**

#### **Introduction**

##### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this topic, the trainee should be able to:

- a) Identify emerging trends in communication

#### **13.1 Emerging trends in communication**

- Internet technology has led to the rapid growth of social media e.g facebook, twitter, whatsapp, etc.
- Diversity in the development of physical infrastructure eg broadband, digital broadcasting, satellite services

- Continuing spread of distributed connectivity through the integration of information processing beyond the desktop into everyday objects and activities.