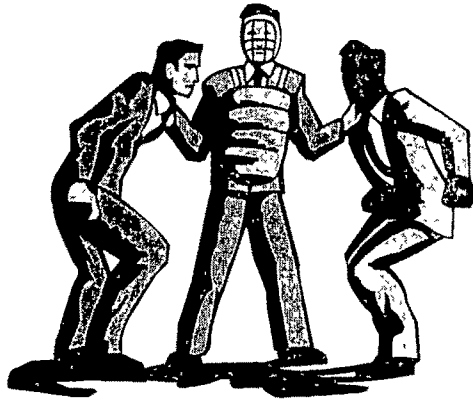


SECTION 2

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND ITS DYNAMICS

(A) UNDERSTANDING ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION



Section 2 : Unit A

Understanding Organizational Communication

2A.1 Understanding an Organization

At the beginning of this Section, in Unit A, I have tried to present a theoretical understanding of 'Organizational Communication' – which I believe is important to comprehend before we get into the detailing of the types and nuances of communication which take place within an organization – particularly in the context of educational institutes – viz. colleges.

Basic communication patterns cut across all types of organizations and are similar in all set-ups except of course that the nature of work differs from place to place – and in keeping with that – the communication (per se) does so too.

As a college principal, I am sure you will find it interesting and useful to go through this unit.

An organization can be visualized as a social grouping that creates tasks and/or interpersonal patterns of relationships for the achievement of a specific objective. Analyzing this definition critically, it can be concluded that every organization has a structure, people, and an external environment with which it interacts. An organization may be considered as a system of overlapping and interdependent groups, which could be the different departments, located either on the same floor of a building, or scattered over the face of the earth. Other things being equal, people will communicate very often with those people geographically closest to them, even within a relatively small organization. Spatial distance itself thus proves to be a barrier to effective communication.

Each one of the subgroups in an organization demands allegiance, loyalty and compliance from its members. It has its own immediate objectives / goals, strategy and means for attending them. It distributes material as well as immaterial rewards to members of the group, based on their contribution to these objectives. When any particular communication is sent to a member of subgroups in an organization, each group extracts a different meaning from the message, depending

upon its significance for the values and things the group cherishes most, and is trying to attain.

The groups in an organization represent different subcultures – as different, for example, as those inhabited by salesmen, engineers, accountants, managers and includes such diverse departments as engineering, manufacturing, finance, materials, and industrial relations. Similarly in Educational Organizations like colleges too there would be different departments, different subgroups and varied responsibilities shouldered by all. Each occupational or professional group contains its own idealized image, and value system based on its past traditions. These are closely and zealously guarded because they give the members of that group their feelings of identity from others. Other groups in an organization, based on experience, age, sex and marital status have to varying degrees, identical tendencies. Each group develops along with its peculiar value system a somewhat specialized system of meanings and interpretation of the contents of information conveyed to it.

It is also one of the main characteristics of organizations that persons are structured into different patterns of relationships. A work structure prevails which permits certain persons to perform certain jobs alongwith other persons. An authority structure exists implying that some people have overall responsibility for guiding and directing the activities of other persons. This authority in colleges rests with the principal. The status structure determines which persons possess what rights and privileges. The prestige structure allows certain persons to expect differential behaviour from others. The friendship structure is dependent upon feelings of interpersonal trust and confidence.

These systems of relationships overlap but are not similar. Each has an important bearing on the communication process in an organization, because each greatly influences the expectations people have regarding who should communicate to whom, about what, and in what manner. Now, the question arises, how often people openly and freely discuss these matters and come to agreement? Since these areas involve ranking of persons with discriminating distinctions, these discussions are commonly held back. Yet disagreements and twisted and distorted perceptions

about questions of relationship in an organization create many communication problems.

Another chief characteristic of the organization and which greatly intensifies these communication problems is the fact that relationships among persons are in a continual state of flux and liquidity. A basic unavoidable feature of any organization is that the people in them do not work in isolation. For example – in colleges – there is need for coordination amongst all staff (whether academic or administrative); particularly teachers need to go by their time-tables for classes, maintain timings for practicals, examination schedules, and all other students activities. Personnel losses, transfers, promotions, and replacements are occurring constantly and decisions about new policies and procedures taken simultaneously, often modifying and affecting relationships in organizations. For example – uncertainty about the appointments of temporary lecturers / visiting faculty – most often creates a lot of tension and abrasion amongst teachers. Some people are informed about changes before others; whereas some are not informed at all. As a college principal, it should be your common practice to communicate decisions to all the persons who are affected by them. We should be extremely sensitive to the social structure of our organizations otherwise we will restrict communication too narrowly. This restrictive communication of decisions about change, however, may prove highly disruptive to any concern people may have about their relationships to one another, and this, in turn, can create communication problems in an organization.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant .

- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :

- i) What do you understand by 'Organizational Communication'?

- ii.) Try to recall and write about an incidence of 'change' that may have occurred in the recent past in your college (For example – when you may have had to convey to a temporary lecturer who has been working for a couple of years in your college – the termination of his / her contract). How did you deal with the situation then, and would you handle it differently if faced with a similar predicament now?

2A.2 The Classical Principles of Organization

The classical principles of organization generally applicable to all types of set-ups – including colleges - are based upon the fundamental assumptions that :

- (a) People behave as individuals,
- (b) All activities are impersonalised,
- (c) All relationships are ideal,
- (d) Ideal lines of communication can be created and maintained.

The first of the classical principles is the principle of the objective which is simply stating the obvious, for an organization must have an objective or objectives to be fulfilled for maintaining its identity in the social structure. An organization is a means to an end and not an end in itself. Further, each unit in the organization should contribute to the attainment of the overall objectives in some way or the other, and that each one should have an objective that will explicitly make clear as to what it is supposed to contribute to the common goal / objectives of the organization.

Another classical principle insisted upon by many writers is the principle of coordination. 'Coordination', says James D. Mooney, 'expresses the principles of organization in toto : nothing less', an organization strongly needs coordination of activities because if people are to work together for a common objective, it is absolutely essential to coordinate their activities. As a college principal, this indeed is your main task at work –viz.- that of binding all staff and students together; working in coordination towards academic output and administrative maintenance

2A.3 Communication Flow and Organization

Communication problems of an organization might satisfactorily be solved by a careful analysis of the situation in which the problem occurs, and applying the general principles directing the flow of communication. Recent researches in this field have revealed the feasibility of formulating the general principles about the forces in an organization guiding communication flow.

It has often been said that although communication flows top to bottom smoothly, the problem remains with an upward flow of communication. In fact, any generalization about the flow of communication, either upward, downward, horizontal or side-ways is equally deceptive.

It goes without saying that motivational forces are the guiding factors in determining the directionality of communication-flow. People communicate or avoid to communicate with a view to achieving some goals / objectives, satisfying some personal need or improving their present position.

In a study made about the communication patterns among the personnel of a medium-sized government agency (Jagson,1953) it was found that people communicate largely with members of their own subgroups than to any other persons. They also like to communicate with the higher-status persons than themselves, and tend to avoid communicating with lower-status persons. The only exception to this trend was seen when a person had supervisory responsibilities which removed his constraints against communicating with lower-status persons. A supervisor can accomplish his work-objectives/goals, etc. only by having relatively frequent contact with his subordinates, and he would probably like to have more such contacts. It was also found that when people communicated with others belonging to their status-level, they preferred communicating with those who were more socially influential and avoided those who made little contribution. These results can, however, be explained by working out a principle. The formal subgroups in an organization are dependent upon the maxim of joint work responsibilities. Consequently, there exist strong motivations for people to communicate more and more with the persons whose work-goals are identical. Again, the people who can offer the best advice and information, are valued most. These findings point out to the following conclusion :

1. In the achievement of their objectives / goals, etc., people have strong forces and motivations which compel them to communicate with those persons who help them in achieving such objectives / goals, etc., on the other hand, there are also forces restraining people not to hold communication with those persons who are unable to assist in the achievement of their objectives / goals, etc.

This kind of (self) interest and ambiguity lead to what is known as 'rumour'. Rumour is that information which is communicated without secure standards of evidence being present. It is unverified and untrue and could by chance be correct – but it is generally incorrect; and therefore quite dangerous – since it could sometimes lead to difficult, undesirable circumstances.

During the course of a study of a housing settlement (Festinger, 1948), a rumour was spread through the community which considerably dislocated the research proceedings. The investigators then directed their attention towards this rumour, and were successful in tracing out its path from person to person, and understanding the forces or circumstances which led people to communicate. Afterwards, they also tested their hypothesis by deliberately initiating a rumour in an organization, and again, discovering its path by the use of informants (Back, Festinger et al., 1950). They came to the conclusion that people spread rumours under two circumstances, i.e. (i) when they are confused and perplexed about what is going on; and (ii) when they are helpless to act upon their own destinies. Findings from research studies conducted in industry, in hospital and in a government agency reveal the same result; people like to communicate to the higher-status persons rather than with lower-status individuals (Mishler and Tropp, 1956; Jackson, 1953; and Burns, 1954). And similar things happen in educational institutes as well, and have to be guarded against.

The reason for a possible precipitation of this state of affairs can be traced to the following factor, viz., higher-status individuals are able to create either enlivening and satisfying conditions in the form of tangible decisions, rewards or simple expressions of approval and confidence for their employees. Conversely, also, they (high-status individuals) can bring about depriving conditions for their employees. Again, lower status persons need encouragement and reassurance about their superior's behaviour, evaluations and intentions towards them. On the basis of these findings we can draw another general conclusion.

2 People have strong motivations as well as powerful forces acting upon them to enter into communication with those individuals who could satisfy their needs, and make them feel secure. Conversely, they will restrain their communication

activities with those individuals who are likely to turn a deaf ear to their aspirations and needs.

It has been observed that the personal and individual needs and aspirations play a significant role in determining the contents and flow of communication to others of different positions and status. Ample evidence exists that subordinates are often unwilling to ask for help from their superiors since this might be taken as a threatening admission of inadequacy. Again, superiors are also reluctant in their communication to their employees to confess their own mistakes or errors in judgement. We can again work out a third principle which greatly helps us to understand the flow of communication in organizations.

3. The ambitious people who are working in an organization and strive to promote their position and status, have to communicate effectively with their subordinates, management and others with whom they need to interact on a regular basis.

They may or may not be aware of the operation of this principle in their own behaviour towards others. But the fact is that they like to improve their position or status; belong to a more socially higher group and obtain more authority and power to influence their decisions. Persons in an organization who want to join a more prestigious department or a group are seen more inclined to communicate in that direction. Even if they are debarred from membership of that particular department or group, they increase the volume of their communication still further, as if doing so, represents a substitute for actually moving into the desirable group.

In a study (conducted by Zander, Cohen and Scotland, 1957) of the role relationships of three types of professionals who worked together in the mental health field, viz., psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and psychiatric social workers – it was revealed that the direction, amount, and content of their communication to one another can be largely determined from these two factors : (1) their insight of the other professions, power as compared with their own and (2) how much satisfaction they derive from their own power positions as contrasted to that of the other groups.

Thus, it is obvious that the general principle, viz., that forces act on persons to communicate with a view to improving their relative position in the organization seems to be supported by all these findings. And thus it would be important for you as a college principal to be aware of this and recognize such behaviour, if any, amongst subordinates in order to be able to monitor the overall administration of the college accordingly.

2A.4 The Communication Flow in the Enterprise

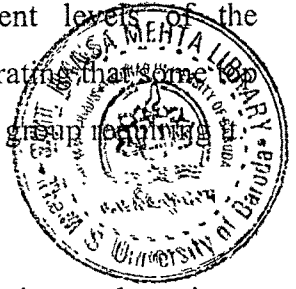
In an effective enterprise, communication flows in various directions downward, upward, and crosswise. Traditionally, downward communication was emphasized, but there is ample evidence that if this is the only direction of communication flow, problems will develop. In fact, one could argue that effective communication has to start with the subordinate, and this means primarily upward communication. Communication also flows horizontally, that is, between people on the same or similar organizational levels, and diagonally, involving persons from different levels who are not in direct reporting relationships with one another.

2A.4.1 Downward Communication

Downward communication flows from people at higher levels to those at lower levels in the organizational hierarchy. This kind of communication exists especially in organizations with an authoritarian atmosphere. The kinds of media used for downward oral communication include instructions, speeches, meetings, the use of telephones, and sometimes even microphones / loudspeakers to address large gatherings. Examples of written downward communication are memoranda, letters, handbooks, pamphlets, policy statements, and procedures.

Unfortunately, information is often lost or distorted as it comes down the chain of command. Top management's issuance of policies and procedures does not ensure communication. In fact, many directives are not understood or even read. And this is often true for educational institutes as well. Consequently, a feedback system is essential for finding out whether information was perceived as intended by the sender.

Downward flow of information through the different levels of the organization is time-consuming. Indeed, delays may be so frustrating that some managers insist that information be sent directly to the person or group needing it.



2A.4.2 Upward Communication

Upward communication travels from subordinates to superiors and continues up the organizational hierarchy. Unfortunately, this flow is often hindered by managers in the communications link who filter the messages and do not transmit all the information – especially unfavourable news – to their bosses. Yet, objective transmission of information is essential for control purposes. Upper management needs to know specifically about production performance, marketing information, financial data, what lower-level employees are thinking, and so on.

There is also a human perspective to upward communication, which is primarily nondirective and is usually found in participative and democratic organizational environments. Typical means for upward communication – besides the chain of command – are suggestion systems, appeal and grievance procedures, complaint systems, counselling sessions, the grapevine, group meetings, brainstorming sessions, the practice of open-door policy, morale questionnaires, the exit interview, and the ombudsperson. The concept of the ombudsperson, used relatively little in the United States until recently, now seems to be gaining somewhat wider acceptance. Effective upward communication requires an environment in which subordinates feel free to communicate. Since the organizational climate is greatly influenced by upper management, it means that the responsibility for creating a free flow of upward communication rests to a great extent – although not exclusively – with superiors. And therefore in a college setting – such a responsibility rests clearly on the shoulders of the college principal.

2A.4.3 Crosswise Communication

Crosswise communication, as pointed out earlier, includes the horizontal flow of information with people on the same or similar organizational levels and diagonal flow with persons at different levels who have no direct reporting

relationships. This kind of communication is used to speed information flow, to improve understanding, and to coordinate efforts for the achievement of organizational objectives. A great deal of communication does not follow the organizational hierarchy, but cuts across the chain of command.

Because information may not follow the chain of command, proper safeguards need to be taken to prevent potential problems. Specifically, crosswise communication should rest on the understanding that (1) crosswise relationships will be encouraged wherever they are appropriate, (2) subordinates will refrain from making commitments beyond their authority, and (3) subordinates will keep superiors informed of important interdepartmental activities. In short, crosswise communication may create difficulties, but it is a necessity in many enterprises in order to respond to the needs of the complex and dynamic organizational environment.

In a college setting, one has to guard against any mis-information that might get thrown up owing to crosswise communication amongst academic / administrative staff and students; and as a college principal – take preventive / corrective action as necessary.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :

- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :

- i.) Discuss briefly the various types of 'Communication Flow' in an organization
- ii.) Try to recall and write about an instance of 'upward communication' at work, where-in, your subordinates / students may have tried to convey something to you. (For example – putting forth a request for suspension of classes for rehearsals for a programme). How did you deal with the situation then, and would you handle it differently if faced with a similar predicament now?

2A.5 Problems of Communication in an Organization - Often Symptomatic

It is obvious that communication problems are often only the symptoms of other difficulties which exist among persons and groups in an organization. Concisely, we would like to point out the following four problems which must be solved in organizations – even educational institutes - with a view to overcoming the barriers to communication.

(a) The problem of trust or lack of trust :

It has been proved that communication flows along friendship channels. In a more reliable and trustworthy atmosphere, communication contents are more freely passed, absorbed and assimilated. The recipient is more accurate and definite in perceiving the sender's opinions and attitudes.

(b) The problem of maintaining interdependence among persons; creating common goals and agreement about means for accomplishing them :

When persons have various goals / objectives, and value systems in organizations, then it is especially vital to create mutual understanding about needs and motives.

(c) The problem of distributing rewards impartially :

This is vital so that people's needs and aspirations are being met, and they are motivated to contribute significantly to the overall goals / objectives of the organization. There is a free flow of ideas and information in the organization from persons who are assured to get their basic due.

(d) The problem of understanding and coming to common agreement about the social structure of the organization :

Consensus about questions of work, performance-standards, authority, status relationships, etc. is most vital to the free flow of communication in organizations.

2A.6 Organizational Elements Affect Communication

It goes without saying that the organization exercises its far-reaching influence upon the communication behaviour of the people who deal with it. The very structure of the organization is so portrayed as to give rise to a multiplicity of communication situations, decision points, and defining the direction of

communication flow. Besides, the organization affects the communication behaviour of people as individuals. These two communication aspects, though they are overlapping, are mutually distinguishable, and are referred to by W. Charles Redding as ‘structural and personal communication’. This applies to communication in educational institutes as well.

2A.6.1 *Structural Communication*

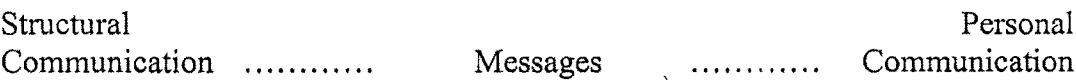
It means communication activities which are not chiefly connected or associated with any individual person as transmitter or receiver but denotes messages required by the intrinsic ‘structural-functional’ demands of the organization per se’ e.g. general or impersonal notifications, bulletins, manuals and handbooks, advertisements, company announcements, safety instructions, union contracts, employee publications and orientation materials for new employees.

2A.6.2 *Personal Communication*

It includes the writing, reading, speaking, listening, and non-verbal forms of communication behaviour of individual persons in an organization. Examples include orders or instructions issued to the employees, listening to suggestions and complaints, conducting appraisal interviews of candidates, visiting the plant premises; participating in conferences, congresses and seminars, and talking to employee groups.

These two aspects of organizational communication involving both structural and personal dimensions can be seen as existing at either end of a continuum as shown below.

2A.6.3 *Relationship between Structural and Personal Communication*



As we approach nearer to the midpoint of the continuum, we move closer to those messages that involve both structural and personal aspects, e.g., business meetings are conducted very often in organizations for planning the effective operation of day to day performance of workers, and these consist of persons both listening and speaking, and stand for the personal aspects of communication. Again, these meetings are affected to a considerable extent by the organizational system itself, in view of the fact that they echo and reflect a structured superior-subordinate relationship.

It is obvious that the very structure of an organization determines the communication pattern in organizations. This is since organizations consist of interrelated and interconnected parts known as departments with communication linkages existing all over between and among these parts. This is applicable to a college set-up as well – where the linkages are between the college principal who is the central person – connected to others around him – viz. – the office and academic staff, students, guardians, visitors, management and other university officials, dealers and many others. If we were to reorganize an organization, we would actually be changing as well as creating afresh the channels of message flow (paths) and networks (interconnected paths). Adjusting the parts automatically causes changes or adjustments among the interconnected communication linkages existing in organizations.

The division of labour brings forth the concept of vertical-communication. Vertical communication consists of upward communication (reports, ideas, suggestions, complaints, grievances, protests, attitudes and information services, union publications, etc.) and downward communication (directive demanding actions from subordinates). Therefore the chains of command are, in fact, the lines of authority and accountability which represent the formal channels of communication in organizations. The hierarchical structure of most tall organizations compels the manager, (in colleges – the principal) i.e., the decision-maker, to be isolated from the people above and below him or her. Consequently, organizational communication is less spontaneous, and it does not echo and reflect the real circumstances surrounding problems.

2A.6.4 *The Grapevine*

The informal communication system of an organization is usually referred to as the grapevine. It co-exists with the management's formal communication system. Such a channel of communication is inevitable, since the people constituting the organization will form both work groups and social groups. The grapevine arises from social interaction, and it is as fickle, dynamic and varied as people are. Since much of the information transmitted by grapevine is fallacious, many managers become disturbed at its existence. Furthermore, the speed of informational exchange is sometimes much quicker through the grapevine than through the formal channels of communication since the former is not restricted by concern about the unity of command, or any strictly established channels.

Modern organization theory stresses the importance of lateral and informal communication networks within organizations. Both have tremendous influence on diverse organizational phenomena and their interrelationship needs to be further explored with a view to effecting improvement in organizations. The manager's task is not to impede such information flows, but rather to help assure that information so transmitted is accurate and relevant to organizational success.

2A.6.5 *The Span of Control*

Span of control decides whether we should have a tall or flat organization. This in turn has an important bearing on the number of levels the organization will have. Tall organizations add significantly to the number of communication channels. Moreover, this tendency greatly increases the possibility of message distortion. Another outstanding feature of tall organization lies in the fact that they have few power and decision-making points. Consequently, there is better control over the decision-making process. But decisions are often delayed, and they are not immediately responsive to emergencies.

On the other hand, flat organizations greatly reduce the number of organizational levels through which messages travel. This tendency often leads to information overload to the manager's office. Authority, and decision making are greatly dispersed throughout the organization, allowing for more immediate

response to emergent communication situations. The span of control for college principals is quite extensive – and he does have to deal with a large number of issues and people, thereby always having to face a time constraint (for ‘communication’ at different levels) – most of the time.

Organizations also affect the communication behaviour of the individual as a person. As a member of an organization we are also members of a structural set of interpersonal relationships. Each of us is assigned a role to play in accordance with the prescribed standards or rules of conduct. Our roles compel us to develop mutual interdependence and expectations among ourselves. They also determine whom we interact with, how and when we interact, and indeed, whether we interact. Besides, simple membership in a large complex organization creates tensions on professional, social and personal levels affecting our daily communication.

Thus, in an organization, there exist both formal and informal communication channels. Formal channels represent the ‘official’ lines of communication as specified on the organizational chart and as embodied in the link representing the chains of command. Formal messages theoretically do not need any persuasion, and are indeed accepted by members of the organization without question.

Please check your progress

1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :

2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :

i.) Discuss briefly the following types of communication in an organization with examples :

a.) Structural Communication :

b) Personal Communication :

ii) Try to recall and write about an instance, wherein, owing to a rumour spread through the grapevine (For example – a rumour about a lecturer having favoured a few students in a viva-voce examination) considerable damage may have been done to the reputation and morale of a colleague. How did you deal with the situation then and would you handle it differently if faced with a similar predicament now?

2A.7 Communication and Leadership

While defining leadership, Keith Davis says, "Leadership is the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically". It is the human factor which binds a group together and motivates it towards goals. This ability depends very largely upon the art of communication. Without communication it is quite impossible for a leader to bind his group together for achieving the ultimate goals of the enterprise.

The relationship between leadership and communication can be very well understood when one considers a small group, for example, the employees of a college. Let us assume that this group consists of a principal who acts as a leader. Assume in the beginning they do not communicate with each other. Each man has around him a 'Wall of Silence' blocking all forms of communication. It is obvious that under these conditions the leader (principal in this case), neither leads his employees nor can they follow him. Because the employer / staff has no means to know what / how he is expected to perform. The principal, owing to the 'wall of silence' around him is not in a position to give orders and instructions, nor is he able to motivate his men because he may be quite ignorant of their needs, wants and aspirations. Further, the workers cannot see even the facial expressions of their leader as the 'Wall of Silence' is so high that each worker cannot see even his colleague.

When there is a total lack of communication, group effort is impossible. If the 'Walls of Silence' are removed from the leader and his men, they are able to work together. Not only this, the leader can now lead his men more effectively as communication provides the necessary information and understanding so essential for group effort and dynamic leadership. Coordination of activities and open communication are indeed so imperative in organizational setting like colleges.

The quality of communication skills possessed by managers or administrators and organized personnel determines the degree of achievement motivation that can be generated for desired behaviour. The principal responsibility of management (leadership) may be viewed as the coordination and control of relations between the

organization and its internal environment in order to optimize organizational goal achievement. Just how a manager will communicate within the organization will depend largely upon the leadership style, he is employing at any given point in time. The leadership style and corresponding communication pattern is extremely important because, according to Marlick and Van Nese, "to a considerable extent the holders of power in an organization hold their power because they are able to get their definition of the situation accepted by others".

Communication serves two main purposes for the organizational leader :

- (1) It provides a vehicle through which he can implement his plan of action.
- (2) It provides a means by which members of the organization can be motivated to execute the plans.

Hence, it is important that the principals in colleges - be sensitive to the needs and wants of the employees, demonstrate a concern for their welfare, and impart understanding of the reason for work and the value to be derived by the employee.

Redding has drawn a number of conclusions regarding good communication and effective leadership :

- (1) The better supervisors / principals tend to be more communication-minded; e.g., they enjoy talking in meetings; are able to explain instructions and policies; enjoy conversing with subordinates.
- (2) The better supervisors / principals tend to be willing, emphatic listeners; they respond understandingly to so-called silly questions from employees; they are approachable; they will listen to suggestions and complaints with an attitude of fair consideration and willingness to take appropriate action.
- (3) The better supervisors / principals tend to ask or persuade in preference to telling or demanding.
- (4) The better supervisors / principals tend to be sensitive to the feelings and ego-defence needs of their subordinates, e.g., they are careful to reprimand in private rather than in public.

- (5) The better supervisors / principals tend to be more open in pushing along information, they are in favour of giving advance notice of impending changes and explaining the reason behind policies and regulations.

Following is a list of do's and don'ts that have direct bearing on one as a leader of 'Communication' in an organization :

- (1) Do make yourself available for frank, unhurried discussions of employee's problems or complaints.
- (2) Don't attempt such discussions between phone calls or on the run.
- (3) Say 'no' tactfully and always explain why.
- (4) Don't belittle or criticize anyone in front of others and never in front of fellow employees.
- (5) Do consider timing for corrective counselling. An evening criticism, for example, is exaggerated by darkness and day-end fatigue. An employee will accept criticism with less resistance and hostility if it is (a) prefaced with a sincere compliment for something the associate did well; (b) if you show the other person how he or she can do it better; (c) if you limit the criticism to one subject at a time, rather than a barrage of fault-finding that covers many problems; (d) prior to the counseling session if you make notes of what you want corrected and ways in which to correct, it will help focus the session and contribute to constructive improvement.
- (6) Don't play favourites even though they may be your most productive employees. You can reward the best employee through the annual wage review system and with recommendation for promotions.
- (7) Don't show up or put down an employee by doing a particular job better or faster than him.
- (8) Do be sensitive to little things. The death of an employee's pet dog may not generate a great deal of concern on your part, but it could seriously affect her productivity for a number of days. Try to remember the birthdays and anniversaries of the employees / staff of your college.
- (9) Do give praise when appropriate. This would well be your most effective management tool

- (10) Try to spend 50 per cent of your time as a manager - listening. Ask for and listen to employees' ideas and opinions.
- (11) Do delegate as much as possible. The key to participatory management is the delegation of responsibility and authority. An employee's sense of self-worth increases proportionately to the trust you place in him or her.
- (12) Do review the performance of your employees on a regular basis. They want and deserve the feedback.
- (13) Only make promises that you can keep.
- (14) Don't take yourself too seriously, keep a healthy sense of humour.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :

- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :

- 1.) Discuss briefly some do's and don't's to be followed in order to be a good leader and ensure healthy communication flow in your college.
- ii.) Try to recall and write down an instance where-in your leadership qualities came to the fore. (For example – when you have taken a prompt decision on some matter, helped some students avail of monetary benefits). How did you deal with the situation then and would you handle it differently if faced with a similar predicament now?

2A.8 Self-concept and Self-disclosure

Self-concept refers to the perception of our own self, whereas self-disclosure is the sharing of the view of self with others. One's own self-concept and self-disclosures are responsible for developing interpersonal relationships in an organization structure. Organizational leaders (here – college principals) - need to be cautious of behaviours on their part which pose a threat to others self-concept and consequently, cause them to become defensive.

Selectivity is one of the means we use to maintain our self-concept. "Selectivity takes many forms, all of which serve to give some stability to one's self-concept. In general (i) we can selectively expose ourselves to individuals who support our self-concept, (ii) we can selectively interpret either our or the other person's behaviour, and (iii) we can selectively choose the goals we wish to achieve

Thomas Harris has beautifully demonstrated the interrelatedness of our perception of ourselves with others in an interpersonal relationship in his popular transactional analysis book. He states that there are four possible positions in this respect :

- (1) *I'm not O.K., You're O.K.* "Somehow everyone else seems to have things going for them – it's just me who is out of line". When a person is in this position, he communicates to others that he has rejected the personal self and needs other's acceptance and support before feeling O.K. about ones own self.
- (2) *I'm not O K., You're not O.K.* : A person in this position has given up hope of developing meaningful relationships since he can neither give nor receive help from others. This person communicates both rejection of the self as well as rejection of others.
- (3) *I'm O.K., You're not O.K.* : This person feels that she can support her own self-concept without anyone's help She is too independent and rejects other's support. She communicates to others that she is fine; it's everyone else who is not.
- (4) *I'm O K., You're O.K* : According to transactional theory, this is the healthiest approach. Here the individual has a strong self-concept and also accepts

others in positive ways. She sees herself and others as worthwhile and consequently is able to develop close personal relationships.

When people communicate with each other, especially face-to-face, their physical and emotional behaviours are exposed to a considerable extent. This exposure is sometimes disturbing because our culture places a high value on self-concealment. In a competitive society, concealment is frequently more useful than self-exposure or self-revelation. Communication experts believe that if we revealed more of ourselves to each other, it would help us to understand each other better.

When people wish to reveal themselves to each other, they talk about personal matters such as beliefs and fears, worries and anxieties, loves and hates, perceptions about work, themselves and each other. Can satisfying communication take place if at least a few of these subjects are not discussed? Of course, the atmosphere for self-disclosure must be one of mutual acceptance and goodwill or mutual self-defence systems will automatically switch our psychic 'early warning systems' on to 'red alert', 'defensive barriers' will be raised, and communication will be short-circuited.

Recent researchers have laid great stress on the multidimensional nature of self-disclosure. In any setting, and especially in an organizational setting, there are appropriate and inappropriate moments when one is expected to self-disclose. It is evident that too little or too much self-disclosure are destructive to an interpersonal process. Gilbert and Whiteneck have studied not only the amount of self-disclosure between persons, but also the multidimensional approaches to the study of self-disclosure. They found that more positive disclosures are made in the initial stages of building relationships with the staff; whereas personal disclosures come at a much later stage of the relationship.

2A.9 Trust Building

The importance of trust in building effective relationship cannot be over-emphasized. Giffin and Patton define trust as "reliance upon communication behaviour (speaking and/or listening) of another person while attempting to achieve

a desired but uncertain objective in a risky situation". Risk in this case means that a person's potential loss, if trust is violated, is greater than the potential gain if it is fulfilled. To quote an example : One young woman with a limited corporate experience, was appointed in an organization as an in-house consultant to advise managers who had recently been released from the company on their career planning. The situation became ridiculous for she was to advise some 40 and 50 years old executives having much more corporate experience than her. But she took a risk at the beginning of the relationship by admitting openly that she could share with them whatever information she had on career planning. She further told them that the best possible course of action would be through mutual consultation. This situation allowed her to develop a trusting environment in which to operate.

Rossiter and Pearce state that trust can be increased in the same way, the self-disclosure is increased. They conclude, "Trusting behaviour on your part sometimes produces trust in the other, but distrusting behaviour almost always produces distrust". Consequently, they define trust as a reciprocal process, where each person suggests to the other person that he trusts the other a little more than him. As a college principal, it IS important to create and build trust with staff and students to ensure a smooth functioning flow within the institute. Ofcourse, a measure of discretion would be necessary; but most of the time – trust begets trust; whether it is to get work done or for a 'confessional' session – where a student / staff member wants to confess a mistake. Talking it out – and winning and keeping trust at the work place always helps.

Recent research on trust indicates that individuals have certain personality traits which identify people as high or low trustee. In a study on trust, conducted by a researcher it was found that high trustees continue to trust even if they have been deceived. These individuals allow one or two mistakes on the part of the defaulters and will trust again provided the mistake is admitted and an apology made.

In a study conducted by a researcher, it was found that a high level of self-confidence as well as respect for each other were indispensable for building trust in interpersonal relationships in an organizational setting. Without a positive self-

concept, an individual cannot be expected to trust others since any feedback he or she gets will be depreciated. If the sender does not establish an atmosphere of trust and confidence, the communication process will be burdened with distortion and rejection. Trust, is thus, not a one-sided affair.

In summary, the research evidence indicates that the reactions to a communication are significantly affected by the communicator's intentions, expertness and trustworthiness. The very same presentation tends to be judged more favourably when made by a communicator of high credibility than by one of the low credibility. In the case of two of the three studies conducted on credibility by an eminent researcher, it was found that the immediate acceptance of the recommended opinion was greater when presented by a highly credible communicator.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - i.) Discuss briefly the significance of 'self-concept', 'self-disclosure', and 'trust-building' in developing interpersonal relationships in an organization.
 - ii.) As a college principal (suppose) you sense a feeling of 'lack of trust' for you on the part of a colleague, how will you handle the situation and work towards 'trust-building' to enhance a better relationship with him / her and a congenial work atmosphere.

2A.10 Feedback in Organizations

The concept of feedback involves nothing more than allowing for two-way communication. After a receiver has decoded a message, he is allowed to send a message back to the original sender. This does not necessarily mean that the return message must be verbal. It may be sent via facial expressions or by various other actions. For instance, Ram may send a message to Shyam, and by observing Shyam's expression or return message, determine, if he (Shyam) understood the original message. If Shyam makes known to Ram that he is confused, Ram can attempt to convey his idea by using a different encoding system, by using synonyms, or possibly by changing to a graphic explanation.

The teacher in the classroom attempts to use feedback by observing his students. If he has stressed an important and complex point, and the students look blank and confused, he attempts to reword his statement stressing the point in a more clearer and intelligible language.

The manager also attempts to use feedback by encouraging the subordinates to ask questions or otherwise to respond to the messages received. If the manager does not receive immediate feedback from his subordinates, he cannot ascertain whether the message was received and understood. His feedback may come later in the form of poor production, high waste, or low morale. The manager who desires functional feedback may well work towards an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and respect.

Basic reinforcement theory provides the foundation for the use of feedback. Feedback may deal with work performance, interpersonal relationship issues, or structured organizational information. The style of giving feedback often has a greater effect on interpersonal relations than the content of the feedback. This is indeed very important. For example – conveying to a student his / her mistake in a calm yet emphatic tone -, has better impact rather shouting at her in harsh, loud language.

It has been observed that people give the following three types of feedback to others in an interpersonal relationship :

2A.10.1 *Evaluative*

In this type of feedback one observes the other’s behaviour and responds with his own critique of it. For instance, Ram told Shyam, “You are very much indifferent and in my view it is not a good way to be for a person in your position.”

2A.10.2 *Interpretive*

In this type of feedback one observes the behaviour and tries to analyze why a person is behaving in that particular way, viz., A told B “You are acting very indifferently towards your employees, and I think it is because you have not liked your new assignment.”

2A.10.3 *Descriptive*

In this type of feedback, one observes a person’s behaviour and simply gives feedback to the person which are one’s own specific observations without evaluation. However, one shares with the person how the latter’s behaviour affects the former. For instance X told Y : “Quite often it becomes difficult for me to understand as to what you mean, simply because you look so stern and speak so abruptly which gives me impression that you are angry.”

2A.10.4 *Feedback Summary Chart*

| <i>Do make feedback</i> | <i>Don't make feedback</i> |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Descriptive | Judgemental |
| Specific | General and vague |
| Relevant to both persons needs | Irrelevant to either |
| Directed towards behaviour | Directed towards personality |
| Well timed | Inappropriate for the setting or occasion |

The question now arises that if feedback is so beneficial, why is it not used more often? People do not allow feedback for several reasons. First, the use of feedback consumes time and the time factor might be scarce. Secondly, an emergency situation may not allow feedback. Thirdly, people often avoid feedback

because they view questions from subordinates as a threat to their status and power. Fourthly, managers / administrators, often at high positions at work, (sometimes) feel that questions may expose their lack of a sound knowledge about a subject.

The conclusion that should be drawn is that feedback and reinforcement of that feedback can make significant changes not only to the individual but also in the total organizational structure. Finally, there is skill to receiving and giving feedback and, depending on the skill used, feedback can be destructive or extremely helpful to furthering interpersonal relationships. Feedback is indeed about an open mind and an open attitude (at all levels of hierarchy in the organization) to give and receive the truth in its true spirit.

Please check your progress

1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :

2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :

i.) Explain briefly the following three types of Feedback :

(a) Evaluative Feedback

(b) Interpretative Feedback

(c) Descriptive Feedback

ii.) As a college principal, (suppose) you are required to give feedback to your office superintendent (who is almost the same age as you are) on his work performance through the year. State some points on how you would go about this 'feedback session'.

2A.11 Conflict Management

As a college principal, resolving conflict, is, I'm sure, one of the main activities with which you remain preoccupied and busy. It IS important to handle conflict tactfully – since on it hinges the sustenance of an amicable and friendly atmosphere – in which work output has to be enhanced; and good, meaningful interpersonal relationships built.

Conflict situations have certain characteristics that indicate the degrees of polarization. The only way to solve a polarized issue is through careful communication.

Conflict has been defined as all kinds of opposition or antagonistic interactions in or among individuals, groups, and organizations. This happens a lot in most educational institutes and colleges as well. A conflict is a dispute, difference, or struggle between two parties that is indicated by open expression of hostility and/or intentional interference in the goal achievement of the opposing party. Likert views conflict as the active striving for one's own preferred outcome which, if attained, prevents the attainment by others of their own preferred outcome, thereby prohibiting harmony and coordination and producing undesirable hostility and opposition in the organization.

There appear to be two types of conflicts in the organizational setting : (i) content conflict, which is conflict over the goals of the organization, its structure, policies, or networks, and (ii) personal conflict, which takes the form of emotional and personal differences among the individuals within the organization. A conflict over content or issues might revolve around staff relations or salary increases while a personal conflict may precipitate owing to the inability of a group to talk openly with a superior because he or she is so dictatorial and unfair. The attitude of the person at the helm of affairs thus becomes a significant factor. His openness and transparency can help resolve conflict.

2A.11.1 *Five Stages of Conflict Development*

L.R. Pondy has identified five distinct stages of conflict development :

(i) *Latent Conflict* : It deals with underlying sources of organizational conflict like competition for scarce resources.

(ii) *Perceived Conflict* : It is the second stage and is comparable to role conflict.

(iii) *Felt Conflict* : In the third stage, perceived conflict is converted into felt conflict in which emotional reactions develop and feelings are brought into conflict situations. In a felt conflict we have the personalization of conflict because it is at this stage that conflict actually affects the individual directly.

(iv) *Manifest Conflict* : In the fourth stage of conflict, emotions and feeling give rise to open or unconcealed behaviour, i.e., verbal or physical aggression, apathy or indifference, work to rule tactics, etc.

(v) *Conflict Aftermath* : It is the last stage in the process of conflict but it also sets the stage ready for subsequent conflict episodes. The legacy of conflict episodes is known as conflict aftermath. If the conflict is not settled but merely suppressed, the latent conditions of conflict may be aggravated and the conflict may explode in a more serious form until the conflict is resolved or until the relationship between the conflicting parties are terminated.

Alan Filley has identified some of the causes of conflict in the organization as follows: Ambiguity in fixing responsibilities; conflict of interests (or competition for scarce resources) barriers to communication creating misunderstanding and confusion, need for consensus; dependence of one person on another, suppression of conflict; status problems; individual traits; and personalization of the situation.

2A.11.2 *Five Interpersonal Styles of Dealing with Conflict Situations*

Jay Hall has identified five interpersonal styles of dealing with conflict situations. Individuals may use all these five styles at one time or another :

(i) *The Win-Lose Style* : It is used when individuals associate winning with status and competence and relate losing to losing status. Such an individual becomes aggressive, dogmatic and inflexible.

(ii) *The Yield Lose Style* : It is based on the assumption that human relationships are so fragile that they cannot bear the process of working through differences. Here the person's need for affection and acceptance is paramount, and, this in turn, causes submissive behaviour on the part of the person.

(iii) *The Lose-leave Style* : It views conflict as hopeless and thus the individual simply tries to protect himself from a punishing experience by withdrawing from the situation entirely.

(iv) *The Compromise Style* : According to this style, a little bit of winning and losing are better than losing altogether. This strategy helps to soften the effects of losing by limiting the gains of winning. Consequently, this results in a climate of suspicion for both the individuals because none of them is perfectly satisfied with the results of the relationship.

(v) *The Synergistic Style* : It is the most desirable for an organizational setting. In this style of relationship great stress is laid on achieving the goals of the participants in the relationship and to the well being of the relationship at the same time. The main components are : (i) solving the differences in a problem-solving way and (ii) tolerance for difference.

Besides these interpersonal styles, that may go a long way towards resolving conflicting situations, definite attitudes such as 1.) belief in the existence and desirability of a mutually acceptable solution, 2.) belief in cooperation rather than competition, 3.) belief that the other person is useful and reliable and 4.) belief that the other person can compete but may also choose the way to cooperate; also help considerably in the resolution of conflicting situations in an organizational setting.

2A.11.3 *Methods of Analysing a Conflict Situation*

Phelps and DeWine have suggested the following methods to analyze a conflict situation :

(i) *Assess Immediacy*

Firstly, a person must decide if the relationship is important enough for him to try its resolution. Once a person is committed to the relationship, he will go in for its resolution.

(ii) *Identify type of Conflict*

(a) *Intrapersonal conflict* : It exists within a person and may not involve others, and requires a decision between two choices.

(b) *Interpersonal conflict* : It exists between two or more persons.

A relationship is not in conflict unless both the parties are aware of its existence. The existence of a conflict may be known to everyone, or it might be hidden from someone.

(iii) *Decide basic Coping Strategy*

We must decide whether we can merely control the conflict (not let it go out of hand, cool it down but not really resolve it) or we actually are able to resolve it.

(iv) *Distinguish Symptoms from Cause*

We often waste time in trying to resolve symptoms instead of the real underlying cause of the conflict. One of the difficulties in resolving or managing conflicts is that the real cause or issue is often hidden behind symptoms. A careful analysis of the real cause is a crucial step towards managing the conflict situation.

(v) *Identify Methods used so far*

We must be aware of our basic coping techniques for handling conflict. What methods have we already tried to adopt for resolving the conflict and what success have we gained in this direction?

(vi) *Alternatives Available*

When trying to arrive at a solution for resolving the conflict, a person must be able to brainstorm ideas. He must be competent to put forth as many ideas as possible for it might be that anyone of them might be a clue to the solution.

(vii) *Evaluate Outcome of each Alternative*

Quite often it is difficult for us to imagine the best possible outcome of a behaviour. When there is a conflict, we are in the habit of seeing only the negative results. We must evaluate each alternative negatively and positively, i.e., both the worst and the best possible outcomes of an alternative in use.

(viii) *Select Alternative Communication Skills*

We must determine what communication skills are needed to resolve conflict.

In a large and complex formal organization we always have greater potential for conflict. Any kind of conflict tends to divert energies and affects productive work. As disproportionate amounts of energy are consumed in conflict inspite of vast resources of money, technology and talents, large organizations give only moderate economic performance and profitability. Hence, better management of differences and conflicts through effective coordination and communication can go a long way in improving interpersonal relationships in an organizational setting. Open communication technique is very useful when the issue or conflict can be clearly defined. For example : A conflict may have arisen in your college, owing to some teachers who want additional help for examination supervision, and the administrative staff not willing to concede. At such a time, an open discussion with both the concerned groups can help bring about a solution acceptable to all. And the decision can be internalized and followed through each time there are exams so that the problem does not arise again. Intergroup meetings - with open, frank and sincere communication can easily be organized which develop enduring understanding of the other party's point of view. This will help to create a healthy organizational environment for harmonious and peaceful collaboration.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - i.) Describe briefly the types of conflict in an organizational setting and discuss some of the ways in which the conflict situations may be analyzed in order to work towards resolving the same.
 - ii.) As a college principal, (suppose) you need to resolve a conflict which has arisen amongst your teaching staff, owing to one of them being a very good teacher – thereby enjoying immense popularity with students; but disappearing from college as soon as he is done with his classes. The other teachers resent this since he would never offer to share any day-to-day responsibilities, nor would he be around for any meeting / other activities of the college. How will you tackle this situation?

2A.12 The Helping Process

Organizational leaders (college principals) often have to act the role of helpers, solving personal and organizational problems. Unless they are able to solve these problems successfully, organizational effectiveness will be nullified. The helping process may involve dealing with performance related issues or emotional problems of employees, inter and intra-personal dynamics as well as content-oriented issues.

2A.12.1 *Various Types of Helping Processes*

Aubrey Sanford distinguishes between the various types of helping processes as follows :

1 *Direct Counselling*

It involves finding solutions to problems of others and then persuading and motivating them to accept and implement solutions.

2. *Non-directive Counselling*

It focuses on helping people to understand their own problems and then to develop their solutions.

It goes without saying that many of the situations faced by managers require some combination of the two approaches. Non-directive approach is most suitable when employees come to the manager or leader for help, and the directive approach is more appropriate when managers initiate the session to confront employees. Although direct counseling may indeed help to solve problems, it is by nature, highly manipulative, if misused, and may destroy trust in an interpersonal relationship.

2A.12.2 Key Elements in a Helping Process

Lawrence M. Brammer has suggested a formula for identifying the key elements in a helping process :-

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Personality of helper | + | helping skills | = | growth facilitating conditions | → | specific outcomes |
| ↓ | | ↓ | | ↓ | | ↓ |
| traits | | for understanding | | trust | | for the person |
| attitudes | | for comfort | | respect | | for society |
| values | | for action | | freedom | | |

This formula lays great stress on certain personality traits on the part of the helper as well as specific helping skills. It is clear that a combination of both the elements is essential to produce the desired results. Eagan also emphasizes these initial traits of the helper when he says, “A helper is first of all committed to his own growth – physical, intellectual, social, emotional – for he realizes that he must model the behaviour he hopes to help others achieve. He knows that he can help only if, in the root sense of the term, he is a ‘potent’ human being, a person with the will and the resources to act’. In fact, the helping process starts with your own environment because modeling is one of the most effective ways of changing behaviour.

2A.12.3 Basic Steps of the Helping Process

Robert Carkhuff identifies four basic steps of the helping process : physically and emotionally attending to the other person; responding to the content of his or her message as well as to the ‘feeling’ level of the message; initiating additional empathy to help the other person in understanding his or her particular situation at deeper levels; and extending your support of healthy behaviour and non-support of unhealthy behaviour.

What the helper is required to do is to give the other individual some encouragement to continue the conversation. This may simply be direct eye contact, head nods, smiles, and repetitions of the last few words said by the other person. Further, open-ended statements / questions help give direction to the conversation. “How do you feel about your new assignment?” is an open question

which allows the respondent to express fully on the matter; whereas “Do you like your new assignment?” is a closed question that forces the respondent to make a choice. Once the feeling level has been identified, the helper may inquire from the person concerned whether he or she has understood the message correctly. The helper can then move to help the person in a more positive way by using specific terms instead of general terms.

There are, of course, some distinct pitfalls as giving advice, criticizing, preaching, always agreeing with the other individual, etc., which the helper should avoid, in resolving conflicts. What the organizational leaders need, is a good understanding of the helping process which will go a long way towards improving the flow of communication and increasing productivity in an organizational setting.

2A.12.4 *Introspection on part of the Helper*

In the final analysis there are some important questions which a helper should answer introspectively before attempting to play his role effectively :

(i) Do you consistently try, in conversations, to put yourself in the other persons’ shoes?

(ii) If someone is making a decision, do you refrain from giving to that person the solution, and try to help him in finding out the solution himself.

(iii) When others are expressing their feelings of deep anguish and sorrow, do you allow them their expression without trying to divert the situation elsewhere to some less difficult situations?

(iv) If a person says that he does not need your help, do you accept it without feeling hurt or rejected by him?

It is, thus, quite clear, that an individual in an organizational setting has great potentiality for the development of inter-personal relationships which can be meaningful and productive.

2A.13 *Developing an Organized Approach to Communication*

Developing an organized approach to communication would in the long run help manifest the messages in the manner they were supposed to be received and

understood. And this holds true for all organizations – including educational institutes like colleges.

2A.13.1 *Plan the Communication*

What are some questions to be considered in planning?

1. What is the objective? What do I want this communication to accomplish?
2. What to communicate? The information which is needed to do the job or which will make people feel a part of the show and thereby help motivate them to do the job?
3. Have I checked the information - to avoid inaccurate, conflicting or incomplete statements?
4. Who should be told and when? What is the best timing?
5. What do I know about the person or persons to whom I will be communicating? Their values, goals, interests, opinions, level of knowledge?
6. Who should tell? Who should do the communicating?

2A.13.2 *“Communicate” !*

1. Identify your subject, arouse listeners interest, use words commonly understood, avoid talking in general terms – be specific, use examples, illustrations, specific instances; explain technical terms or special slang terms.
2. Remember – Your tone of voice and your actions, or lack of it also convey messages.

2A.14 Basic or Effective Communication / The Ten Commandments /

Principles of Good Communication in any Organization

The person who seems, almost intuitively, to say the right thing at the right time is actually exercising skills, not intuition – putting into practice certain basic

principles of communication which they know so well that they require no conscious thought. As a principal of your college, your prime responsibility is to get things done through people. However sound your ideas or well reasoned your decisions, they become effective only as they are transmitted to others and achieve the desired action – or reaction. Communication, therefore, is your most vital management tool. On the job you communicate not only with words, but through your apparent attitudes and your actions. For communication encompasses all human behaviour that results in an exchange of meaning. How well you manage depends upon how well you communicate in this broad sense. These ten commandments are designed to help you improve your skills as a principal by improving your skills of communication – with superiors, subordinates and associates.

1. Seek to clarify your ideas before communicating

The more systematically we analyse the problem or idea to be communicated, the clearer it becomes. This is the first step towards effective communication. Much communication fails because of inadequate planning. Good planning must consider the goals and attitudes of those who will receive the communication and those who will be affected by it.

2. Examine the true purpose of each communication

Before you communicate, ask yourself what you really want to accomplish with your message – to obtain information, to initiate action, to change another person's attitude? Identify your most important goal and then adapt your language, tone and total approach to serve that specific objective. Don't try to accomplish too much with each communication. The sharper the focus of your message, the greater its chances of success.

3. Consider the total physical and human setting whenever you communicate

Meaning and intent are conveyed by more than words alone. Many other factors influence the overall impact of a communication, and the manager must be sensitive to the total setting in which he communicates. Consider, for example, your sense of timing, i.e. the circumstances under which you make an announcement or render a decision; the physical setting-whether you communicate

in private or otherwise, the social climate that pervades work relationships within the company or a department and sets the tone of its communications; the degree to which your communication conforms to or departs from custom and past practise, and the expectations of your audience. Be constantly aware of the total setting in which you communicate. Like all living things, communication must be capable of adapting to its environment.

4. Consult with others, where appropriate, in planning communication

Frequently it is desirable or necessary to seek the participation of others in planning a communication or developing the facts on which to base it. Such consultation often helps to lend additional insight and objectivity to your message. Moreover, those who have helped you plan your communication will give it their active support.

5. Be mindful, while you communicate, of the overtones as well as the basic content of your message

Your tone of voice, your expression, your apparent receptiveness to the responses of others – all have tremendous impact on those you wish to reach. Frequently overlooked, these subtleties of communication often affect a listener's reaction to a message even more than its basic content. Similarly, your choice of language – particularly your awareness of the fine shades of meaning and emotion in the words you use – predetermines in large part the reactions of your listeners.

6. Take the opportunity, when it arises, to convey something of help or value to the receiver

Consideration of the other person's interests and needs – the habit of trying to look at things from his point of view – will frequently point up opportunities to convey something of immediate benefit or long-range value to him. People on the job are most responsive to the manager whose messages take their own interests into account.

7. Follow up your communication

Our best efforts at communication may be wasted, and we may never know whether we have succeeded in expressing our true meaning and intent, if we do not follow up to see how well we have put our message across. This, one can do by

encouraging the receivers to express their reactions, and by subsequent review of performance. Make certain that every important communication has a 'feedback' so that complete understanding and appropriate action result.

8. Communicate for tomorrow as well as today

While communications may be aimed primarily at meeting the demands of an immediate situation, they must be planned with the past in mind if they are to maintain consistency in the receiver's views; but, most important of all, they must be consistent with long-range interests and goals. For example, it is not easy to communicate frankly on such matters as poor performance or the shortcomings of a loyal subordinate – but postponing disagreeable communications makes them more difficult in the long run and is actually unfair to your subordinates and your company.

9. Be sure your actions support your communication

In the final analysis, the most persuasive kind of communication is not what you say but what you do. When a man's actions or attitudes contradict his words, we tend to discount what he has said. For every manager this means that good supervisory practices such as clear assignment of responsibility and authority, fair rewards for effort, and sound policy enforcement – serve to communicate more than all the gifts or oratory.

10. Last, but by no means least : Seek not only to be understood but to understand. Be a good listener

When we start talking we often cease to listen – in that larger sense of being attuned to the other person's unspoken reactions and attitudes. Even more serious is the fact that we are all guilty, at times, of inattentiveness when others are attempting to communicate to us. Listening is one of the most important, most difficult and most neglected skills in communication. It demands that we concentrate not only on the explicit meanings another person is expressing but on the implicit meanings, unspoken words, and undertones - that may be far more significant. *Thus, good and effective communication is indeed the bedrock of coordination of all activity in any organization, and enhanced communication skills would certainly help to manifest the desired work output at all levels.*

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - i.) Try to recall and enlist some of the principles of good communication in an organization.
 - ii.) As a college principal, (suppose) you need to help a lecturer who has been struggling to complete his doctoral research. Owing to a difficult family situation which has given rise to an acute financial and time constraint, the lecturer is under great stress and almost unable to cope with his situation. How would you help him steer himself through this crisis phase of his career?

Self-Assessment Exercises

At the end of this section, it may be interesting for you to work through the following four exercises:

- (i) An Exercise on 'Listening'
- (ii) An Exercise on 'Interpersonal Behaviour'
- (iii) An Exercise on 'Resolving Conflict'
- (iv) 'Personality Check' Exercise.

Please note : Work space pages are provided at the end of the Exercises.

Exercise 1

LISTENING

For each of the following statements, select the one that best suits your listening habits :

| While Listening ... | | Usually | Sometimes | Seldom |
|---|---|---------|-----------|--------|
| 1 | I maintain eye contact with the speaker. | | | |
| 2 | I determine whether or not a speaker's ideas are worthwhile solely by his or her appearance and delivery, | | | |
| 3 | I try to align my thoughts and feelings with those of the speaker. | | | |
| 4 | I listen for specific facts than for "the big picture". | | | |
| 5 | I listen for both factual content and the emotion behind the literal words. | | | |
| 6 | I ask questions for clarification and understanding. | | | |
| 7 | I withhold judgement of what the speaker is saying until he or she is finished. | | | |
| 8 | I make a conscious effort to evaluate the logic and consistency of what is being said. | | | |
| 9 | While listening I think about what I'm going to say as soon as I have my chance. | | | |
| 10 | I try to have the last word. | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCORING KEY AND INTERPRETATION</u></p> <p>For Questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 give yourself 3 points for "Usually", 2 points for "Sometimes", and 1 point for "Seldom".</p> <p>For Questions 2, 4, 9 and 10 give yourself 3 points for "Seldom", 2 points for "Sometimes" and 1 point for "Usually"</p> <p>Sum up your total points. A score of 27 or higher means you are a good listener. A score of 22 to 26 suggests you have some listening deficiencies. A score below 22 indicates that you have developed a number of bad listening habits.</p> | | | | |

Exercise 2

INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOUR

For each statement below, decide which of the following answers best applies to you. Place the number of the answer to the left of the statements.

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Never true | 2. Sometimes true | 3. Often true | 4. Always true |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|

| | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | I respond with more modesty than I really feel when my work is complimented. |
| 2. | If people are rude, I will be rude right back. |
| 3. | Other people find me interesting. |
| 4. | I find it difficult to speak up in a group of strangers. |
| 5. | I don't mind using sarcasm (taunting) if it helps me make a point. |
| 6. | I ask for a recognition when I feel I really deserve it. |
| 7. | If others interrupt me when I am talking, I suffer in silence. |
| 8. | If people criticize my work, I find a way to put them down. |
| 9. | I can express pride in my accomplishments without being boastful. |
| 10. | People take advantage of me. |
| 11. | I tell people what they want to hear if it helps me get what I want. |
| 12. | I find it easy to ask for help. |
| 13. | I lend things to others even when I don't really want to. |
| 14. | I win arguments by dominating the discussion. |
| 15. | I can express my true feelings to someone I really care for. |
| 16. | When I feel angry with other people, I bottle it up rather than express it. |
| 17. | When I criticize someone else's work they get mad. |
| 18. | I feel confident in my ability to stand up for my rights. |

| SCORING KEY AND INTERPRETATION | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| <p>To calculate your interpersonal style scores, refer to the responses you gave. Sum up your answers to items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13 and 16. That is your passive score. Put that number in the appropriate place below. Your aggressive score is the total of your answers to items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14 and 17. Your assertive score is the total of your answer to items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15 and 18 Put these scores in the appropriate box below. Your score in each box will range between 6 and 24.</p> | | |
| Passive | Aggressive | Assertive |
| <p>This score evaluates your basic interpersonal style in terms of the emphasis you place on passive, aggressive and assertive behaviours. Passive behaviour is inhibited and submissive. Individuals who score high in passive behaviour seek to avoid conflicts and tend to sublimate their own needs and feelings in order to satisfy other people. Aggressive behaviour is the opposite of passiveness; it is domineering, pushy, self-centered and without regard for the feelings or rights of others.</p> <p>People who score high in assertiveness express their ideas and feelings openly, stand up for their rights, and do so in a way that makes it easier for others to do the same. The assertive person is therefore straightforward yet sensitive to the needs of others. Assertiveness improves interpersonal communication because the more assertive you are, the more assertive you encourage others to be. So assertiveness facilitates more effective interactions because it lessens defensiveness, domination, putting down other people, 'wishy-washiness' and similar dysfunctional behaviours.</p> | | |

Exercise 3
RESOLVING CONFLICT
Self Assessment Exercise

Indicate how often you do the following when you differ with someone :

| When I differ with someone ... | | Usually | Sometimes | Seldom |
|--------------------------------|---|---------|-----------|--------|
| 1 | I explore our differences not backing down, but not imposing my view either. | | | |
| 2 | I disagree openly, then invite more discussion about differences. | | | |
| 3 | I look for a mutually satisfactory solution. | | | |
| 4 | Rather than let the other person make a decision without my input, I make sure I am heard and also that I hear the other out. | | | |
| 5 | I agree to a middle ground rather than look for a completely satisfying solution. | | | |
| 6 | I admit I am half wrong rather than explore our differences. | | | |
| 7 | I have a reputation for meeting a person halfway. | | | |
| 8 | I expect to convey at least half of what I really want to say. | | | |
| 9 | I give in totally rather than try to change another's opinion. | | | |
| 10 | I put aside any controversial aspects of an issue. | | | |
| 11 | I agree early on, rather than argue about a point. | | | |
| 12 | I give in as soon as the other party gets emotional about an issue. | | | |
| 13 | I try to win the other person over. | | | |
| 14 | I work to come out more victorious no matter what. | | | |
| 15 | I never back away from a good argument. | | | |
| 16 | I would rather win than end up compromising. | | | |

| | |
|---|--|
| SCORING KEY AND INTERPRETATION | |
| Total your choices as follows : Give yourself 5 points for “Usually”; 3 points for “Sometimes”; and 1 point for “Seldom”. Then total them for each set of statements, grouped as follows : | |
| Set A : Item 13 – 16 Set B : Item 9 – 12 | Set C : Item 5 – 8 Set D : Item 1 – 4 |
| Treat each set separately. A score of 17 or above on any set is considered high; scores of 12 – 16 are moderately high; scores of 8 to 11 are moderately low; and scores of 7 or less are considered low in resolving conflict. | |
| <p>Sets A, B, C and D represent different conflict-resolution strategies :</p> <p>A = Forcing / Domination → I win, you lose.</p> <p>B = Accommodation / Distancing → I lose, you lose. I lose, you win.</p> <p>C = Compromise. Both win some, lose some.</p> <p>D = Collaboration. Adjustment. I win, you win.</p> <p>Everyone has a basic or underlying conflict-handling style. Your scores on this exercise indicate the strategies you rely upon most.</p> | |

Exercise 4

PERSONALITY CHECK

Do you have an abrasive personality?

| | |
|---|--|
| You might ask yourself these questions. Then ask them of your spouse, your peers, your friends – and even your subordinates : | |
| 1. | Are you condescendingly critical? When you talk of others in the organization, do you speak of “straightening them out” or “whipping them into shape”? |
| 2. | Do you need to be in full control? Does almost everything need to be cleared with you? |
| 3. | In meetings, do your comments take a disproportionate amount of time? |
| 4. | Are you quick to rise to the attack, to challenge? |
| 5. | Do you have a need to debate? Do discussions quickly become arguments? |
| 6. | Are people reluctant to discuss things with you? Does no one speak up? When someone does, are his or her statements inane? |
| 7. | Are you preoccupied with acquiring symbols of status and power? |
| 8. | Do you weasel out of responsibilities? |
| 9. | Are you reluctant to let others have the same privileges or perquisites as yourself? |
| 10. | When you talk about your activities, do you use the word “I” disproportionately? |
| 11. | Do your subordinates admire you because you are so strong and capable or because, in you, they feel strong and capable – and supported? |
| 12. | To your amazement do people speak of you as cold and distant when you really want them to like you? |
| 13. | Do you regard yourself as more competent than your peers or your boss? Does your behaviour let them know that? |

Interpretation

What if you are abrasive? If you asked yourself the questions and found that you answer three of them in the affirmative, the chances are that your behaviour is abrasive to the people around you. If you answered six or more affirmatively, it takes no great insight to recognize that you have more problems than are good for your career. Of course, none of these questions taken by themselves is necessarily indicative of anything, but enough affirmative answers may reveal an abrasive profile.

If you are the problem and it troubles you, you can work at self-correction. Most often, however, you need the help of a third person – your spouse, a friend, your boss, or a professional. If your behaviour causes you serious problems on the job, then a professional is indicated. Managers and executives with naturally heavy orientations to control, need to check themselves carefully for this kind of behaviour lest unconsciously they defeat their own ends.

Workspace for your thoughts / notes / comments

Workspace for your thoughts / notes / comments

Section 2 - Unit A

Interpretation and Application . . .

Communication is indeed an effective tool in management. Good communication is the foundation of sound management – in all organizations – as also in educational institutes like colleges. In a managerial process, keeping everybody informed is vital; and this can be achieved by freely sharing information through the various communication channels, techniques and networks.

As a principal, it is important for you to bind together all the people working in your college – to ensure a smooth flow of work – within the scope of their designations, groups, activities, duties and responsibilities. As a principal, it is also important for you to take people into your confidence – (sometimes of course, you may need to discreetly keep some information to yourself); build rapport, and keep their trust. By not remaining sensitive and conscientious, the trust built with difficulty over a period of time – can be easily lost. For example – going back on a simple promise and withdrawing a holiday (declared by you earlier), can create a rift of doubt and uncertainty towards you. It is also important to have an attitude of understanding towards the students and staff of your college; as also patience with dealers and visitors and a regard for parents / guardians – who may be frequenting your office for various reasons.

Sometimes, as a principal – you may need to prepare your students and staff for changes – for example – new timings, upgraded syllabus, or rotation of duties; and it is important for you to inform them in such a way that a smooth transition is ensured, and misunderstandings and conflicts avoided. And if for any reason dissatisfaction / conflict do arise, you should be able to handle it through discussion or sound argumentation if required. Sometimes tactful negotiations too might be required with student leaders – some of who may create problems during crucial times like admission, examination, elections or youth meets. Explaining things to them in an open manner in their socio-cultural context, in which they can understand and perceive the consequences of their irresponsible behaviour will have the most impact. For example – telling them that postponement of examinations would only lead to academic loss for them – may help them see some

reason, rather than threatening them with some dire consequences. Equally important is leading by setting an example yourself. In matters of punctuality too – it would be exemplary to be in your place on / before time, in order to elicit similar behaviour from students and staff. Another leadership quality is to keep ones composure when dealing with an errant student or staff member. It would be better not to admonish the concerned person in front of others, and later – in a one-to-one sitting – first offer praise for the good things he might have achieved and then deliver the real message. This too should be done with sensitivity and due concern, since people have ego problems and are usually very touchy about criticism – specially if you are pointing out a lack of application, or some work-output inadequacy. There are some other ways of informal communication, for dealing with difficult interpersonal issues. If for example – a group of persons is the cause of some trouble in the college; then it sometimes becomes necessary and works well to play smart and pose the problem situation to that group itself (either collectively or individually) in the form of a ‘story’, and ask them how they would resolve the situation. Another idea could be – playing a game of ‘who is who’ during a tea-break or ‘off-work’ hours – when persons in the group are posed with personality traits (including giving a hint about the behaviour which needs corrective measures) of one of them – and the rest of them would have to guess who the person in question is. This may trigger introspection on part of the concerned person – and a lot can be rectified without directly having to take it up. Other informal means which can be used in a college set-up are writing notes, or even indulging in conversation, when pertinent issues can be picked up, talked over and sorted out casually outside or in office itself.

Formal communication includes letters, circulars, financial / annual reports and other official statement writing – all of which becomes quite routine after years at the job. As a principal, you have to maintain communication with people outside of the college too. For example – participating in public meets on various occasions, conducting interviews / viva in educational organizations or in industry or other public / private sectors on invitation. Interacting with persons / reporters from media houses – viz. – press, radio and television for notifications or sharing of

significant happenings like seminars / academic programmes that may have taken place at the college / university is also one of the ‘out-reach’ responsibilities of the principals.

Thus, as a college principal, you are indeed in a pivotal role – with multiple communication linkages emanating from – and coming towards you . . ., and you would have to be able to discern the appropriate mode / channel to use, and decide on the nature of treatment to administer to your ‘communication’ – according to the situations as they present themselves to you – everyday; day after day . . . in the proceeds of your job.

Thus, in light of all the theorization and parameters discussed in the section, the self-assessment practical exercises; and the perspectives and tips presented in the above interpretation and application, it would indeed be useful for you as a college principal to understand organizational communication in all its dynamics, thereby enjoying better control and confidence at your job.

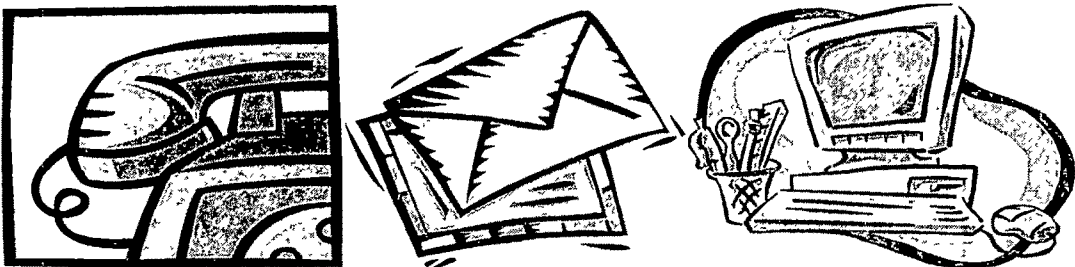
Further Reading. Please refer the references on page 228.

SECTION 2

(B) ORAL COMMUNICATION

(C) WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

(D) USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN
COMMUNICATION





WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION

Written and oral communication modes have both – favourable and unfavourable characteristics; consequently, they are often used together so that the favourable qualities of each can complement the other. In addition, visual aids may be used to supplement both oral and written communication. For example, a lecture in a management training session may be made more effective by using written handouts, transparencies, and films. Evidence has shown that when a message is repeated through several media, the people receiving it will more accurately comprehend and recall it.

In selecting the media, one must consider one's own qualities as a communicator, the audience, and the situation in which the communication happens. An executive who feels uncomfortable in front of a large audience may choose written communication rather than a speech. On the other hand, certain audiences who may not 'read' a memo may be reached and motivated by direct oral communication. Situations depending on their peculiarity may also demand a specific medium. Using one's discretion as a head of an educational institute in deciding the appropriate channel / mode of communication, the content of it, as well as the manner of conveying it too – helps enhance the message effectiveness.

Section 2 : Unit B

Oral Communication

We begin to discuss oral communication with the concept of the 'art of listening' since it is equally important to be a good listener as a good talker. A great deal of information is communicated orally. One study found that 70 per cent of the respondents stated that superiors gave 75 per cent of their assignments orally. Oral communication can be a face-to-face meeting of two people, or a manager addressing a large audience; it can be formal or informal, and it can be planned or accidental.

The advantages of oral communication are that it can provide for speedy interchange with immediate feedback. People can ask questions and clarify points. In a face-to-face interaction, the effect can be noted. Furthermore, a meeting with the superior may give the subordinate a feeling of importance. Clearly, informal or planned meetings can greatly contribute to the understanding of the issues.

However, oral communication also has disadvantages. It does not always save time, as you may know since you may have attended meetings in which no results or agreements were achieved. These meetings can be costly in terms of time and money.

2B.1 Good Listening for Improved Communication

The Art of Listening

Listening is a very difficult thing to do. A cardinal mistake is to be so anxious to say what we want to say, that we are not really listening to what is being said. Very often when we are speaking to someone, we notice that he is not really listening. He is just waiting for us to finish so that he can say his piece. If neither person is listening to the other, there is a complete breakdown in communication. We hear ourselves say something, the other person hears the same thing, but interprets what he heard in the light of his own experience.

There is a very simple test of effective communication. When a serious impasse is reached in a dispute or an argument, the opponents in the argument

should pause and then each in turn should try and repeat exactly the point of view of the other person. It will soon be discovered where the breakdown of communication really is.

2B.2 Grand Rules for 'Listening'

1. Perceive your power as a 'listener'.
2. A poor listener can destroy the speaker's desire to talk or his confidence in his ability to communicate.
3. An interested listener can sway the direction of the talk.
4. Ask questions : do not ask questions just to be polite but rather to clarify what is going on.
5. Reflect feelings that will show you understand what is spoken.
6. Do not be swayed by personal attitudes. Some of the biggest barriers to effective listening are the personal attitudes and prejudices that distort what we hear.
7. Do not react subjectively. When you hear of government offices, you may immediately think of bureaucratic inefficiencies, for example. It is a subjective reaction that clouds the issue and damages the power of an otherwise perceptive listener.

2B.3 Guide to Good Listening - Face to face

1. Put the speaker at ease : By your attitude, help the speaker become relaxed and aware of a willing listener. Be not only 'seen' to listen, but 'felt' to listen. And use eye contact.
2. Listen patiently : The speaker is entitled to be heard, even if you feel his approach is wrong.
3. Avoid premature arguments : Don't interrupt to question or argue about facts. Interjections only serve to abort the discussion.
4. Stay objective : Try to avoid emotional involvement. Simply try to understand the feelings, or "point of view" of the speaker. Do your evaluating later.

5. Avoid mental rebuttals : Too much time is spent mentally preparing a rebuttal or counter argument, instead of listening. Let the speaker finish before you reach a decision.
6. Remove distractions : Don't doodle or play with papers, pencils or anything else. It helps to shut a door or window to eliminate extraneous sound, and turning off the radio.
7. Indicate acceptance : An occasional "yes" or "I see" or even a nod of the head, indicates attention. It can also acknowledge what is being said (not necessarily agreement).
8. Hold your temper : An angry person almost inevitably gets wrong meanings from words. Anyway, any fool can lose his / her temper. It takes real person to keep it.
9. Respect pauses or silence : It is all too common for us to "jump in" when the speaker pauses. Silence is an embarrassment for too many people.
10. Redirect a direct question : With few exceptions this helps a great deal. If the speaker asks, for example, "What do you think I should do? The reply might be "What do you think you should do?" Be on guard against too much of this, that might be frustrating.
11. Be honest with answers : When faced with a genuine request for your opinion, give it honestly (if you have enough information to do so).
12. Listen between the lines : What is not said is important. Be alert to this. Attitudes, moods, feelings often convey far more than words. It calls for a strong feeling of empathy on the part of the listener. Try to find the right "wave length".

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - 1.) Discuss briefly why 'Listening' is more important than 'Speaking' in oral communication.
 - 11.) State some points which one should keep in mind and cultivate in order to make oneself a good listener.

2B.4 Dyadic Communication

The term 'dyadic communication', in general, refers to an interaction between two persons. Even if more than two persons are present in a situation, it is only two communicators who play a fundamental role. Basically therefore it is a person-to-person transaction and one of the commonest forms of speech communication. It provides ideal conditions for close-range continuous feedback. The meaning exchanged between the sender and the receiver is marked by high fidelity. There is frequent change in the role of the participants and body language acquires a greater significance. This is so because the minutest reactions are mutually observable.

Face to face Conversation : Conversation is the most common form of dyadic communication. It links people together, be it in social or professional life. Conversation may be defined as oral and usually informal or friendly exchange of views, ideas, etc. In a conversation the participant has to play the role of a speaker or a listener interchangeably. Very often we form an impression about an individual from the way he talks and the topic(s) on which he converses.

Most of us find it easy to converse with our friends, relatives and colleagues whom we like and trust. That is why conversation rarely finds a place in a programme of formal instruction. Since every professional is required to participate in this form of dyadic communication let us briefly look at some of the important points to be borne in mind. However, the rule that 'the best practice for conversation is conversation itself' still holds true.

In case of 'conversation' as well as 'instruction', sometimes a serious problem may be that of communication in English. There may be a problem of delivery on part of the teacher/s or a problem on part of the recipients (viz. the students) – who may not have a good command on the language. The only way to circumvent this problem is by encouraging the concerned persons to learn the language well and rehearse and get better in their expression.

It would be useful first to analyze your own conversation habits and then try to change them for greater effectiveness. Ask yourself questions such as the following for self-analysis:

- (i) Do I find it difficult to start a conversation?
- (ii) Am I unable to pick a topic?
- (iii) Am I unable to keep the conversation flowing smoothly?
- (iv) Do I always agree with what others say or disagree with them all the time?
- (v) Do I frequently talk about myself, my family and my interests?
- (vi) Have I a tendency to dominate every conversation situation?
- (vii) Do I give the other participants a chance to speak?
- (viii) Have I any mannerisms likely to annoy people?
- (ix) Do I respect other people's time and interests?
- (x) Am I self-conscious about the language I use – grammar, pronunciation, articulation, etc.?
- (xi) Am I able to convey what I really want to, even if it is something the receiving person may not be open to?

The answers that you get would prove useful both for formal and informal conversation. Now, given below are a few helpful hints.

Helpful Hints

- The conversation should be of interest to the participant and may begin with a topic in which both of you have some interest. As it flows into new channels adjust yourself to the comments and new points of view. Occasionally there would be spells of silence. These need not bother you because often during these spells new thoughts are generated.
- Be alert to the attitudes that others may have and don't be surprised when you realize that the attitudes are likely to change.
- Occasionally, call the person by name and look at him while speaking. If you speak the name aloud you would be generating a more friendly feeling. To cap it all, take care of your language and oral demeanour.
- Be always courteous and cheerful. Feel interested in what is being said.

- Being dogmatic and argumentative may spoil your conversation, but it is useful to have a point of view.
- Avoid pet and superfluous words and phrases. Often we develop a fancy for a particular expression. An analysis of your own speech may reveal that you have a fad for certain words or phrases (e.g. 'time frame', 'allergic', etc.). Avoid using them frequently in conversation. Similarly, expressions that smack of affectation and exaggeration should be shunned. The smooth flow of conversation is likely to be hampered if you deliberately use foreign words or use high-flown vocabulary to impress the listener. An overuse of words such as 'very lovely', 'wonderful', 'excellent' may also mar the pleasant informal atmosphere in which conversation ought to take place.

2B.5 Telephonic Conversation

One form of dyadic conversation is interaction between two persons on the telephone. In this form the advantage of using body language and eye-contact is lost. But it is one of the commonest and fastest ways of contacting persons; particularly in a college setting like yours, perhaps, where it may be one of the most accessible forms of communication to keep the work going. It is simple, handy, and in the long run economical. It has therefore been termed as 'a priceless means of communication'.

Here are a few guidelines for telephonic conversation :

- Cultivate a cheerful and friendly tone
- Modulate your voice
- Never sound hurried, flustered or impatient
- Enunciate your words clearly
- Do not use slang
- Speak distinctly. If you use a word which is likely to be misunderstood, spell it out.
- Listen attentively to the caller. If the message is long, keep reassuring that you are listening by speaking words such as 'Yes', 'OK', 'Yea', etc.
- Be courteous in all circumstances
- Don't engage your telephone longer than necessary:

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - i.) Write a brief note on how one can maintain pleasant and meaningful dyadic communication.
 - ii.) As a college principal, you need to talk to students and staff (both academic and administrative) of your college about the wastage of water (taps left running) and electricity (lights and fans left on unnecessarily). You need to address this issue in the assembly gathering, and perhaps offer some incentive to students / staff who may be ready to take responsibility for the same. How will you plan and convey this (oral) communication?

2B.6 Meetings

Very often you may be required to participate in discussion groups which may be small, consisting of 3 or 4 persons, or large, consisting of several hundred members. A group may be assigned a specific time-bound task or meet at periodic intervals when there is a need, or may share common experience, concerns or interests. This coming together of persons is labeled by different names on the basis of one or more of the following criteria : the purpose for which the group meets, the types of participants, and communicative pattern. The following are some of the more common labels used to name different types of discussion groups: meeting, seminar, conference, symposium, panel discussion, and convention. In this section we shall have a close look at the meeting.

The word 'meeting' is used in two senses: one, to refer to a small group meeting, committee meeting, meeting of Board of Directors, cabinet meeting, meeting of sectional heads, etc. and two, to refer to any coming together of two or more persons, whatever be the label applicable to such a group.

As a college principal, calling for meetings with different persons – viz. – teachers, students, parents, visiting faculty, office staff and others; for varied reasons – like – syllabus revision, rescheduling an agenda, examination and evaluation duties, annual day preparations etc. – is perhaps one of the most common activity at the workplace that you engage in.

A meeting is indeed the most commonly used form of discussion in a professional organization. The person who chairs the meeting (the college principal) acts as the leader of the group and usually has a higher status or enjoys authority over the other members. Every meeting is result-oriented and therefore the discussion is directed towards a specific end.

2B.6.1 *The Purpose of a Meeting*

There are a number of purposes for which meetings are held. It is difficult to prepare an exhaustive list but some of the following are typical of most situations:

- To save time on communication
- To convey information to a group at one time
- To instruct a group
- To brief members on plans already made or work already done
- To give and get new ideas
- To get immediate reactions to new ideas, proposals and plans
- To exchange ideas and experiences
- To discuss and solve problems
- To resolve conflicts, confusions and disagreements
- To arrive at widely acceptable decisions or to advise persons in power to take decisions
- To generate enthusiasm and a positive attitude.

Many of these purposes cannot be achieved through person-to-person interaction because of the nature of the business to be transacted and every organization's desire to enlist the support and to draw on the expertise of as large a number of persons as possible. The group activity which a meeting generates leads not merely to the achievement of the objective for which it is called but also to the development of a correct perspective. Thus the test of success of a meeting lies not so much in what happens at the meeting but in what happens when the members have returned to their jobs. If nothing positive happens afterwards, howsoever efficiently the meeting might have been conducted, it has in fact failed. Similarly, if the participants feel at the end of the meeting that they have gained nothing, the meeting has failed. Remember that the meeting raises an expectation among the members – an expectation to get something out of it. Failure to fulfil the expectation may exercise a negative impact, besides causing loss of precious man-hours which could otherwise have been devoted to productive work. So to obtain results the organization of a meeting needs expertise, careful planning and prompt follow-up action.

Moreover, do jot down important points at the meeting. Date and file them for reference in future. Note-taking serves two purposes; it will help you keep your

attention focused throughout the meeting and fix the important points in your mind. Keep the following points in mind while taking notes :

- Write rapidly and legibly. Write in block letters if you can.
- Let the entries be like the newspaper headlines – just adequate to trigger off the thought later.
- Don't falter over terms. Using your judgement make changes when necessary.
- Don't record any irrelevant information. However, rather than miss any important point, record more than what ultimately may be found essential. It is easier to eliminate than to recall.
- Be tactful in selecting pertinent material, exercising your editorial judgement.

2B.6.2 *Ten Rules for a Successful Meeting*

- (i) Convene a meeting when it is essential to consult others for taking action / decision.
- (ii) Hold a meeting when consultations on telephone would not yield the desired result.
- (iii) Invite only those who are essential to the meeting.
- (iv) Insist on punctuality.
- (v) Be clear about the objective of the meeting.
- (vi) Prepare an agenda breaking the issue into its smallest components.
- (vii) Circulate the agenda giving adequate time for members to prepare for the meeting.
- (viii) Set a time-limit for the discussion of each item on the agenda.
- (ix) Summarise the conclusions briefly.
- (x) Close the meeting on a pleasant note, indicating the future course of action.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :

- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions .

- i.) Write a brief note on how a manager / administrator can successfully convene a meeting.

- ii) As a principal, you need to convene and conduct a meeting with the academic staff of your college to appraise them of changes in the evaluation procedure suggested by an experts panel. How would you go about this task?

2B.7 Regulating Speech

Here we shall briefly look at the vocal elements of communication, namely – pitch, volume, rate, quality, animation and pause. These are all important to Oral Communication – particularly for Public / Impromptu speaking. In case of impromptu speaking, you may not be very well prepared with the content of your speech since you may have been asked to / had to speak at a very short notice. But having an overall (cultivated) control over vocal elements certainly would help. *Pitch* is the tone of sounds depending upon the rate of vibration of the vocal chords. You must have observed that when you speak, there is a continual variation in the levels at which your voice is pitched. The variation ranges from the soprano level to the bass level. *Volume* refers to the power of the sound and it ranges from very loud to very soft. *Rate* is the degree of speed at which you speak words (on an average, a person speaks about 150 words per minute). The characteristic tone of a voice is its *quality*. Sometimes a voice may be termed as creaky or jarring to the ears, while some persons may be blessed with a pleasant voice. The liveliness of speech is known as *animation*. *Pause* (some people use expressions such as ‘er’, ‘hmm’ etc. as fillers of the pause) refers to junctures in speech. Except the quality of the voice you can control and regulate all vocal elements by careful perception and repeated practice. A well-prepared presentation can be lost if you speak in a monotone, i.e., when you use a constant pitch, volume and rate. Similarly, lack of animation and inappropriate pauses can cause communication breakdown. If you want to be a successful speaker you should exploit fully the potential of all the six vocal elements. Your speech will then have the variations and effects to suit the material you are presenting.

What you can do . . .

For self-improvement you may tape-record your speech and critically examine it. In the subsequent efforts try to suitably amend your delivery in the light of your self-analysis. You should also test your oral presentation among friends and observe their reactions. Through systematic and persistent efforts you can certainly become a good speaker.

2B.8 Hints for Self-improvement (Group Dynamics)

You may sometimes be called upon to participate in / or chair a group discussion in your college. The discussion may be on some current affairs issue, on a controversial topic to look for a possible solution, or it could be of an academic nature. Each time after participation, you should analyze your performance so that there is continuous improvement. This is important in the light of the fact that you are the college principal and all the attention is on you most of the time.

While analyzing your performance try to gauge for yourself the following :

- (i) Whether you articulated your words clearly and distinctly and put the required stress on appropriate syllables.
- (ii) Whether you regulated the speed of your speech and paused whenever necessary to make your presentation clear and effective
- (iii) Whether in your judgement, what you said was grasped by other participants and reflected in their responses.
- (iv) Whether your intervention, if any, annoyed the concerned speaker.
- (v) Whether you could keep your mind focused all the time on what was being said.

If you find yourself deficient in any of the areas mentioned above, you should try to attain the required levels of these skills. You may go in for self-training or seek the help of experts. Do not hesitate to take the latter path as it is never too late to learn.

An Assignment . . .

A few topics for group discussion are given below. Formulate your views on each one of them, make points and rehearse what you would like to say and how — as a participant in a group consisting of your peers / colleagues.

- Relevance of Gandhian Philosophy in present times
- The Internet Revolution
- The Sports Scenario in our Country
- The Beauty Business
- Global Environmental Concerns

2B.9 Use of Audio-Visual Aids

There would be many occasions when, as a college principal, you are required to make oral presentations. The use of audio-visual aids can greatly enhance the value of the spoken words. The impact of what is seen and heard lasts longer than what is only seen or merely heard. Audio-visual aids also help sustain interest in what might otherwise become a monotonous speech.

We are concerned with the following audio-visual aids since these are the ones most commonly used in college settings : blackboard, overhead projector, filmstrip and slide projector, movie film projector, video tape recorder, audio tape recorder and models. (Sometimes the graphic aids used to support written presentations such as charts, diagrams, maps, etc., are also referred to as visual aids.)

Basic Principles and Guidelines

Keep the following principles and guidelines in mind when you decide to use an audio- or a visual-aid :

- (i) Decide the content you wish to support with an aid.
- (ii) Choose the appropriate medium.
- (iii) Integrate the aid with the presentation.
- (iv) Choose a suitable place for the equipment to be kept. Whatever you present through the aid should be capable of being heard or seen by everyone in the audience.
- (v) Ensure that you have a basic technical knowledge of how to operate the equipment. If you hate machines (as some people do), have somebody to help you. Fumbling may prove counter-productive.
- (vi) When not in use, keep the equipment away or at least covered. If it is left in view throughout the presentation, it may distract the audience.
- (vii) Inspect the venue of presentation if possible, to check the physical arrangements such as switches, power supply, size of the room, lectern, pointer, etc.

- (viii) Prepare the audio-visual material with great care emphasizing those aspects which you consider significant. Do not clutter it with irrelevant or excessive information. Use devices such as underlining, arrows, heavy lettering, colour, etc for emphasis, whenever possible. But in no circumstances should the display material become the center of attraction. It should remain supportive of what you are presenting orally.
- (ix) When you use several items of visual material, number them. Ensure that their appearance and exit are properly timed.

Please check your progress

- 1) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :

- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :

- 1.) State briefly how audio-visual aids can help in oral presentations and the points to be kept in mind while preparing and using the same.
- ii.) Try to enlist fresh input you may have got for 'oral communication' from reading this section and think about how you could use the information to enhance your style and skills for the same in the performance of your job.

Section 2 : Unit C

Written Communication

With all your experience as a college principal (and even from prior experience), you may already be quite adapt at handling all the required written communication. I have, however, briefly presented some fundamentals which might help enhance your skills for the same.

Written communication has the advantage of providing records, references, and legal defenses. We can carefully prepare a message and direct it to a large audience through mass mailings. Written communication can also promote uniformity in policy and procedure and can reduce costs, in some cases.

The dis-advantages are that written messages may create mountains of paper, may be poorly expressed by ineffective writers, and may provide no immediate feedback. Consequently, it may take a long time to know whether a message has been received and properly understood.

Effective writing may be the exception rather than the rule; nor do education and intelligence guarantee good writing. Many people fall into the habit of using technical jargon that can be understood only by experts in the same field. Common problems in written communication are that writers omit the conclusion or bury it in the report, are too wordy, and use poor grammar, ineffective sentence structure, and incorrect spelling. Yet a few guidelines suggested by Keith Davis may do much to improve written communication :

Use simple words and phrases.

Use short and familiar words.

Use personal pronouns (such as “you”) whenever appropriate.

Give illustrations and examples; use charts.

Use short sentences and paragraphs.

Use active verbs such as “The principal plans...”

Economize on adjectives.

Express thoughts logically and in a direct way.

Avoid unnecessary words.

2C.1 Style in Writing

A report is a verbal structure, and style is the way we select and arrange the elements of structure. So to attain a style that works, we need to know what to select and how to arrange the selected material. In specific terms a report consists of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences which form paragraphs and the paragraphs constitute the text of a report. The marks of punctuation and graphic aids enhance comprehension and sharpen understanding -but these, I thought, are not necessary for me to include here since you may already be very familiar with their usages.

I propose to discuss style from a practical point of view – how to attain an effective report writing style – and not to enter into a theoretical discussion – such that it helps you in general to enhance your writing skills. What I say here would be in many ways - applicable with certain modifications to other forms of professional writing also. One cannot of course give you a complete list of do's and don'ts for every writing problem that you, as college principals may face, but I hope that the discussion which follows would help you write more effectively. First let us look at the importance and features of professional writing.

2C.1.1 *Importance of Professional Writing*

Professional writing is an extension of your responsibility. It is hard work, requiring enormous patience and rigorous practice. The ability to communicate effectively is one of the greatest assets anyone can acquire, but the most common and perhaps the greatest communication problem today is that many people are unaware that they lack communicative ability. The organizations also are unable to realize what a heavy price they have to pay because of miscommunication (if we read what a person has written but fail to understand properly what he means, it is a case of miscommunication). Communication inefficiency exercises negative effects on productivity and staff relations, and can result in many problems with teaching staff, administrative staff, students, visitors, parents, suppliers and others.

2C.1.2 *Features of Written Communication*

At this stage it would be helpful to review briefly the main features of written communication. Often a written communication is the only link between the writer and the reader and thus it determines the reader's attitude towards the writer. Once it leaves the writer's hands, for all practical purposes he has no control over it. He cannot clarify or amplify what he has written, neither can he add or delete. Further, in written communication there is no effective substitute for gestures, facial expressions and modulation of voice which make oral communication vibrant.

To be an effective writer, a professional should cultivate certain habits, attitudes and qualities of mind. Let us briefly examine some of the important ones :

- Visualise what you wish to say. If the picture you want to communicate is clear to you the words would automatically follow to express it. Remember, clear thinking and clear writing go together. Adequate preparation – organization of data and their analysis, generalizations based on them, and the plan of writing as manifested in your outline – would certainly help you in attaining clarity of thought.
- Prepare the first draft without caring much for the mechanics of writing. Attention to such details disturbs the flow of thought. The sole concern at this stage should be to present your ideas.
- Stop when you have finished saying what you wanted to say. There is no need to add the so-called concluding sentence. Remember, a professional writes to express and not to impress.
- Revise the draft carefully, this time taking care of all the required details. And have the courage to delete a word, phrase, sentence or paragraph which does not add any meaning to the point under discussion.
- Approach the problem with a scientist's objectivity, detachment and passion for truth. This would help make your writing plain, concise and precise.
- Don't belabour a point unnecessarily, keep your writing crisp and sharp.

2C.2 Choice of Words and Phrases

Choosing the right words and phrases is the first important step in writing. Words have different meanings in different contexts. Their polysemantic nature makes the task of selection appear to be suitable in the first instance. To perceive their aptness requires a sophisticated sense of language use. Constant concern for the selection of the right word at the right place and an unfailing desire to extract meaning is helpful in attaining an effective style. Given below in the form of “Do’s” and “Don’t’s” are a few helpful hints.

We are however not suggesting that the words which we have termed as abstract, long, general or unfamiliar should never be used; in fact they may be the best words in certain contexts. Sometimes their use may be advisable for variety.

2C.2.1 Do’s

(i) Prefer concrete to abstract words. A concrete word permits a limited interpretation and conveys more definite meaning. Its meaning is generally fixed. A few examples are names of persons, number words, dates, etc., words pointing to one specific person (e.g. I, he, she, etc.). Concrete words tend to be more forceful, direct and exact than their abstract counterparts. Abstract words have a tendency to be general and vague. Look at the use of words in the original sentences given below and notice how the suggested revision improves communication.

| <i>Original Sentence</i> | <i>Revised Sentence</i> |
|---|---|
| For example – The reason for the popularity of slides is the simplicity of their preparation | Slides are popular because they are easy to prepare |

Words such as ‘nature’, ‘condition’, ‘character’, ‘situation’, ‘progress’, ‘ideas’, ‘excellence’ convey abstract meaning and yet we cannot avoid using them. We can make them less abstract by providing proper context. For example, ‘His ideas’ is less abstract than ‘ideas’. Similarly, ‘human nature’ is less abstract than ‘nature’.

(ii) Prefer specific to general words. The use of specific words makes the writing clearer and immediately creates an image in the mind of the reader. Often specificity and concreteness go together. A few examples are given below :

| <i>General</i> | <i>Specific</i> |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| countenance reside volume appellation terminate | face stay book name end |

The above list is only a small sample to show the point I am emphasizing.

Let us also see how the replacement of a general word by a specific word given in brackets makes a sentence more effective :

For example -

- (i) The company has brought out forty *publications* this year...(books)
- (ii) They have *produced* a book on style...(written)

Prefer plain and familiar to long and unfamiliar words. Inexperienced writers often believe that pomposity is the hallmark of an effective writer. Therefore, they are tempted to use long and unfamiliar words instead of plain words, which are short and familiar to the reader. One should not deliberately use such words which may compel the reader to consult the dictionary frequently. The use of plain words saves time – the writer’s, the typist’s and the reader’s. The list given below would give you an idea of what we are suggesting :

| <i>Long and unfamiliar</i> | <i>Plain and familiar</i> |
|---|--|
| facilitate discern personnel dwell envisage | ease see workers, staff live foresee |

In a speech written for him President F.D. Roosevelt once changed the sentence “We are endeavouring to construct a more inclusive society” to “We are going to make a country in which no one is left out”. On another occasion the President replaced “Terminate the illumination” by “Turn out the lights”. Both these examples show how plain words make the message more effective.

Unless you are alert, high flying and fancy words may completely drown your meaning and one should guard against this. Notice how in the following example a simple, straightforward message is completely lost. A famous lecturer was once asked the formula of success in public speaking.

“Well”, he said, “in promulgating your esoteric cogitations and articulating superficial, sentimental and psychological observations, beware of platitudinous ponderosity. Let your extemporaneous decantations and unpremeditated expatiations have intelligibility and veracious veracity without rodomontade and thrasonical bombast. Sedulously avoid all polysyllabic profundity, pusillanimous vacuity, pestiferous profanity and similar transgressions. Or to put it a bit differently”, he concluded, “talk simply, naturally, and above all, don’t use big words” !

2C.2.2 *Don'ts*

(1) *Avoid clichés* : A cliché is a faded word or a phrase which has lost its effectiveness because of overuse. When it is first coined, it is fresh and vigorous and conveys the meaning vividly. With the passage of time it loses sharpness and ceases to exercise the desired impact.

Very often when you start writing, such words and phrases would come to your mind and if you are not alert, find a place in the text of your report and thus weaken it. Although clichés are not necessarily unsuitable or wrong, their frequent use would tire the discriminating reader. In the beginning you may have some difficulty in recognizing clichés. Soon, however, you would discover that phrases such as ‘worthwhile areas’, ‘inter-disciplinary techniques’, ‘broader fields’, the ‘long-range view’, mean little or merely serve as substitute for real ideas. We feel

tempted to use them because they readily occur to us. The following extract makes excessive use of clichés. Notice how tiresome it is to read :

Original extract : He *left no stone unturned* in his efforts to achieve tenure. Finally, *a sadder but a wiser man*, he learned that *in this day and age*, tenured professorships are *few and far between*. His campaign *ground to a halt*, and at subsequent faculty meetings, he was *conspicuous by his absence*. He concluded his farewell to his students with these *words of wisdom* "Last but not least, follow this advice : *do as I say, not as I do*".

Suggested revision : He tried strenuously to gain tenure. But finally he became aware that few tenured professorships are available. He ceased his efforts and stopped attending faculty meetings. In his farewell to his students, he exhorted them not to follow his career as an example.

Some clichés commonly used are given below :

Food for thought, crowning glory, part and parcel, sum and substance, the vast majority, burning question, level best, spare no efforts, overriding considerations, desperate need, discuss threadbare, teeming millions, leave no stone unturned, untiring efforts, eminently satisfactory, kind perusal, favourable consideration, resource personnel, hotbed of politics, explore every avenue, iron hand of the law, day in and day out, awake to one's duty, heart and soul, melting pot, etc.

Here is a caution. There are a few clichés which communicate an idea so clearly that it would be difficult to think of a substitute. The familiar phrases like 'a drop in the ocean', 'wear and tear', 'practice what you preach' are hard to improve upon.

(Try to recall some of the clichés you may be using frequently in your oral/written communication; and think if you really need to do so ..., and make an effort to eliminate the usage of the really redundant ones.)

(ii) *Avoid excessive use of jargon* : Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary defines jargon as 'the technical terminology or characteristic idiom of a special activity or group'. Every group of specialists has developed a set of highly specialized terms; yet these are the very words that cause readers a lot of difficulty. Communication of technical matter in non-technical language is not easy but the ability to do so can be acquired with practice. For report writing it is essential to acquire this ability, for the reader of your report may not be a specialist in the subject. Only an inexperienced writer would think that the use of jargon is the mark of intellectual superiority. If he does not check the habit of using jargon, he would meet the fate of other jargonists. His writing would be weak, and unintelligible and tire the reader soon. However, remember that every profession has its jargon and it would be difficult to communicate to fellow professionals without its use. Jargon saves time but this is not the only reason which makes our writing jargon-ridden. Jargon is sometimes used to nourish one's ego and enable a group to speak in terms that impress or mystify the outsider. Its use is also justified on the ground that complex thought cannot be expressed without the use of highly technical language. But the fact is that just as lethargy prompts us to use clichés, false pride impels us to use jargon.

Let your writing be as jargon-free as possible. Try to use words more widely understood so that those who do not belong to the specialist group are also able to follow you. For example -

Jargon-ridden : The responsibility of a person involved in pedagogical pursuits

• is to impart knowledge to those sent to him for instruction.

Jargon-free : The teacher's job is to instruct students.

(iii) *Avoid using foreign words and phrases* : Foreign words and phrases also, like jargon, are often used to impress and mystify the reader or to parade one's scholarship. Some writers believe that their use would make the writing dignified. Thus, instead of 'see above' they use 'vide supra' and for 'the justification for', 'raison d'être'. To keep your writing simple, use plain English for foreign words and phrases.

In report writing the use of accepted abbreviations is unavoidable. However, certain abbreviations derived from foreign words and phrases, masked as time-savers such as *op.cit.*, *loc.cit.*, create a lot of confusion specially if the report has a large number of references. They demand extra work from the reader although they save the labour of both the author and the printer. Abbreviations like *e.g.*, *i.e.*, *vs.*, *viz.*, *a.m.*, *p.m.* etc. are well understood and you need not avoid them.

(iv) *Avoid redundancy* : Redundancy is the part of a message that can be eliminated without loss of information. It may be either the use of unnecessary words or needless repetition of an idea. It has been well said that a sentence should have no unnecessary words, just as a drawing should have no unnecessary lines, and a machine no unnecessary parts. Extra words do not confer extra value to the thought.

To win the race in this highly competitive world we need an alert and agile mind. A ponderous mind breeds, among other things, redundancy in writing. Cut out the unnecessary words from your writing and see how the thought begins to shine clearly. If you prune your language with patience and discernment, your writing would automatically become pointed and sharp. Unfortunately, superfluity is the most common cause of woolliness in expression and yet it is most easily avoidable.

For example –

I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the help of my laboratory assistant.

In the above sentence, six words are redundant. The sentence is more appropriately written as follows :

I acknowledge the help of my laboratory assistant.

There are many other parameters, but at least keeping in mind the few points discussed above would certainly enhance the effectiveness of your professional writing.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :

- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :

- i.) Discuss briefly the importance of professional writing and some of its significant factors.
- ii.) Elaborate briefly on some of the do's and don't's to be kept in mind for effective, professional writing.

2C.3 Some Ideas for the Final Draft : We close the discussion on style with three ideas which would help you to prepare the final draft of any write-up.

First, whatever be the form of writing, provide signposts for the reader. Pause and tell him what you have done and what you propose to do. This would help the reader enormously. He would be able to follow the line of thought you are pursuing and prepare himself for what is to follow. The devices that you use for this purpose (a sentence or sometimes even a short paragraph) are like traffic signs along a highway. They have to be written clearly, accurately, and well, and therefore it is important that they are structured to appropriate length and style.

Second, view the style of your writing in totality. You may sometimes have to sacrifice one quality for the sake of another. Weigh and consider what serves you best. 'No surrender to words' should be your motto. The primacy of thought must be maintained. In practice you would observe that a good piece of writing contains many qualities and that the removal of one flaw improves your writing in several ways.

Third, no clear writing is ever achieved without rewriting. Let the process of revision follow this pattern :

- Correct mechanical errors such as wrong punctuation, misspelling, improper capitalization, etc.
 - Bring your writing to the stylistic convention of the form to which it belongs.
 - Add, delete or rearrange the material to achieve greater clarity and coherence
- These stages of revision are, however, not mutually exclusive.

2C.4 Writing Proposals

Every proposal, whatever be its purpose, suggests a particular way of doing a thing, specifies a plan of action and contains an estimated cost of execution. The key to the success of a proposal is whether it is able to persuade and gain acceptance. In the case of college principals, the purpose of writing proposals could mainly be towards two causes :

- 1.) raising money / resource mobilization for college amenities, and
- 2.) academic proposals for grants / projects.

Every proposal writer should therefore know the factors of persuasion – the factors that can convert a proposal into a project or contract. To persuade the receiver of your communication, you should :

- 1.) Present the anticipated objectives in your proposal.
- 2.) Keep the proposal short and precise.
- 3.) Let your writing exude zeal.
- 4.) Indicate the advantages of your study / proposal if conducted.
- 5.) Make the terms of your proposal easy for compliance.
- 6.) Emphasise distinctive features of your proposal.
- 7.) Let your proposal look neat and attractive.

Thus you would see that the elements mentioned above do not merely relate to the language of the proposal. In this context the word *persuasion* has acquired a new connotation. So mere use of persuasive language would not win the customer. However, a proposal is more creative than certain other forms of professional writing and hence its style permits informality and personal approach to some extent.

The Summary of the Proposal :

The summary is the entire proposal in a nutshell. It is likely to be read by more persons in positions of higher authority than any other section of your proposal. Summary is often circulated separately to those responsible for taking a decision on your proposal. A well-written, comprehensive and yet concise summary would persuade the reader to appreciate your idea. Besides the name of the proposer, his designation, and the organization to which he belongs, the summary of a proposal should specifically include :

- (i) A clear statement of the requirements of your proposal.
- (ii) An analysis of the problem which your proposal addresses.
- (iii) The method of research / solution proposed by you.
- (iv) The significance of the findings / end-product resulting from the proposal.
- (v) The duration of the planned project.
- (vi) A realistic cost-estimate.
- (vii) An assurance of the capabilities and experience to execute the project

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - i.) State some important points to be kept in mind while drafting any proposal.
 - ii.) As a college principal how would you draft a proposal to an autonomous funding agency for an Environmental Science / any other project to be taken up and executed by first year students of your college?

2C.5 Notices, Agenda And Minutes

For every important meeting that you need to hold in your college, you would have to issue a notice, draft the agenda, and after the meeting is over, perhaps even write (or delegate / supervise) its minutes. Here we shall briefly discuss how notices, agenda and minutes are written in the professional world.

2C.5.1 Notices

Usually every organization devises rules of procedure for the conduct of meetings. These rules indicate the frequency of meetings for different purposes and prescribe the notice period for calling a meeting besides indicating the person who has a right to call it and the persons who have a right to attend it. When you are required to call a meeting, send a written notice within the specified time to every member of the group. The notice should mention the name and address of your college, and the date on which it is issued besides indicating the day, date, time and venue of the meeting. The business to be transacted should be mentioned in the notice if the number of items is small; otherwise it should be indicated in a separate sheet and enclosed with the notice as annexure.

2C.5.2 Agenda

Agenda is an official list of items of business to be transacted at a specific meeting. It helps in conducting the meeting in proper order, minimizes irrelevant discussion and preserves continuity in the proceedings. Since it is circulated along with the notice, every member knows beforehand the items of discussion and can make up his mind about what he wishes to say on a particular issue. The agenda would also help you to control the members from going off the track and to organize the time to be devoted to individual items.

The items of the agenda are arranged in increasing order of importance and each item bears a number. However, almost every agenda has *confirmation of the*

minutes of the previous meeting as the first item *and any other matter with the permission of the Chairman* as the last item. If there is any matter left over from the preceding meeting for enquiry and report it usually appears as the second item of the agenda.

Before finalizing the items, get the appropriate approvals.

2C.5.3 Minutes

Minutes are the official record of the business / work transacted at a meeting. Keeping minutes of meetings is often a legal requirement but it is anyway always helpful to record minutes of every meeting. The reason is obvious; minutes act as an aid to memory and provide a basis for decision and action. In fact a run-through of the minutes can give a fairly good idea to a reader of how a college / organization has been functioning / conducting itself. As the minutes of every meeting are approved by the members at the next meeting and signed by the principal / the chairman, they are considered very important records and preserved carefully.

The style of minutes is impersonal, objective and matter-of-fact. The display of emotions, strong feelings and anger has no place in minutes. A cool, concise and accurate account of the main points of discussion, the decisions arrived at, recommendations made and the assignment of tasks to individual members or sub-committees is all that is required to be recorded.

When you ask to write minutes, take notes bearing these points in mind. The actual writing of minutes can obviously be done only after the meeting is over. There should be no hesitation to check or verify particular points with the chairman or any other member before recording it in the minutes.

Minutes follow the pattern of agenda and bear the same numbers. For each item a heading is given and the discussion / decision on it is recorded. When a resolution comes up for consideration the names of the proposer and the seconder

may be mentioned. Sometimes, however, the practice is only to state whether the resolution was accepted or rejected.

As minutes are self-sufficient records, it is customary to give the following details

- Name of the college
- Day, date, time and venue of the meeting
- Number of the meeting, if in a series
- Names of the chairman / office bearers
- Names of members present
- Names of members absent
- Names of persons who attended the meeting by special invitation, if any
- Record of transactions, item-wise
- Signature of the chairman / office bearers.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - 1.) Briefly state the significance of writing / maintaining records of the following to successfully convene (formal) meetings in colleges / any organizations :
 - a) Issuing notices
 - b) Preparing an agenda
 - c) Recording minutes
 - ii) As a college principal you need to convene a meeting for discussion on setting new rules for admission to professional courses as per a University circular. How would you go about the task?

2C.6 Research Papers

As a college principal, though you are performing manifold administrative tasks; as an academician, you may, at some point of time, decide to carry out research – individually – on your own initiative, or as a member of a research project team of your college.

You may often even need to encourage students to pursue ‘Action Research’, - for example – they could research how library facilities could be improved, or conduct a Needs Assessment (Survey) of first year students on their perception of facilities for sports / co-curricular activities that ought to be provided to them at the under-graduate level in colleges. This would help students – particularly at post-graduate levels to understand the significance and scope of academic research.

For any research undertaken, the results arrived at would hardly be of any value unless they are made known to others working, or interested in, the same sphere of activity or knowledge. This you can do by presenting your findings in a professional gathering or if you wish to reach a wider audience, by publishing them in a journal. In either case you will have to organize the material (data, analysis, results, etc.) in the form of a research paper.

It is obvious that the knowledge from research should be quickly publicized. There are two reasons for it; one, to avoid wasteful duplication of work and two, to establish the researcher’s claim to the priority of discovery. That is why to accord a permanent value to the effort, the results must be published in the form of a research paper, maintaining the originality and quality of contribution.

Research is not the preserve of scientists or any such specialist group of persons; it is, in fact, any systematic investigation towards increasing the sum of knowledge. Sometimes a research work may replicate previous research with a view to testing the reported findings in the context of different cultural milieu or social settings. It may also be undertaken to follow up new leads to refine or qualify the findings of earlier studies. Research may be based on a careful search of material in journals, books and other publications or carefully designed

experiments. Whatever be the method of enquiry, every piece of research must make an original contribution to knowledge. The definition of research given in *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* is comprehensive and worth quoting here : "Investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws."

2C.6.1 Definition

We may define a research paper as a documented (it indicates that the sources of borrowed material are acknowledged and those consulted in the writing of the paper are listed) prose work, incorporating the results of an organized analysis of a subject. In its style, structure and approach it closely resembles a formal report. Therefore most of the principles discussed in earlier sections are applicable to the writing of a research paper. Similarly, the detailed information given is relevant in this context also. However, a research paper differs from a formal report in certain respects. It is written mainly to disseminate knowledge whereas a report is written for decision-making or action. The reading of a research paper is optional but a report must be read by someone. The incentive for a research paper may be the enhancement of one's own professional status, whereas a report is always prompted by a specific need of the organization.

2C.6.2 Characteristics

You are already familiar with the features of a formal report. I have given below, if only for the sake of emphasis, four characteristic features of a research paper. You will observe that they are not exclusive to this form of writing; they are given here only to complete this thought process.

- (i) A research paper may be written about any subject – social, cultural, scientific, technical, etc., but the treatment is scholarly and is supported by evidence.

- (ii) There is a relatively high concentration of certain writing techniques such as definition, classification, interpretation and abstraction or description of a process, procedure or a mechanical device.
- (iii) Its formal elements are generally those of a report and the writing is characterized by the use of graphic aids and scientific, technical or specialized vocabulary.
- (iv) The emphasis is on the presentation of information accurately and concisely and an attitude of complete impartiality and objectivity is maintained by the writer.

2C.6.3 *Types*

At this stage it might be useful to differentiate various forms of writing that are usually termed as research papers. Let us first make a distinction between what an advanced level student may be required to do as an academic exercise and what a researcher reports as his contribution to knowledge. It cannot however be denied that sometimes the contribution of a student may attain a high level of excellence and reach the same status as that of the latter but this is not its primary purpose. A student's paper is sometimes called a *library research paper*, or a *term paper* or a *theme paper*. There are three preparatory steps in writing such a paper, namely – selecting a subject, locating sources of information and note-making. Usually such a paper is written under the guidance of an instructor and the student is advised how to go about it. He may also be provided with a preliminary reading list so that he can proceed on the right course and plan his work effectively.

Two other terms, namely – scientific paper and technical paper are often used interchangeably to refer to a research paper. When a distinction is made it is on the basis of its contents. The former deals with a scientific subject and furthers the theory of a discipline; the latter deals with new ideas, relationships, processes or equipment related to the practice of some technology.

2C.6.4 *Elements*

Although a research paper does not contain all the elements of a formal report, it can be made effective if the matter is broken up into logical sections with suitable headings and sub-headings. Its usual elements are as follows; they are self-explanatory.

- Abstract or Summary
- Introduction
- Materials and Methods
- Experimental Section, Design or Procedure
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion and Recommendations
- Acknowledgements
- List of Symbols
- References or Bibliography

There is a large variety in the presentation of matter in a research paper. Every paper does not have all the elements mentioned above. In certain papers results and discussion are combined. In some Notes are combined with References. A paper may also have an Appendix. As in reports in some research papers the element 'Discussion' does not appear as a heading and the matter relating to this part is broken into a number of sub-headings. A number of journals give detailed instructions about presentation and the contributor has then to follow them.

2C.6.5 *Evaluation*

Occasionally you may even be required to evaluate a research paper. We give below some questions that are likely to prove helpful in assessing the merit of a paper.

1. What is the author's purpose? To detail an experiment? To establish a principle? To make an evaluation?
2. Does the writer include all the information that the audience may need to know?

3. Is it at a level of technicality that will be understandable to the audience?
4. Does it have an appropriate structure?
5. Are the central thesis and supporting data integrated into a logical presentation?

Can you follow the arguments?

6. Is documentation given in an acceptable form?

2C.7 Scientific / Technical Articles

A *scientific* or *technical article* may deal with subjects similar to those of a research paper, but its approach is different. It is more general and informal and is intended for a wider audience. The articles are usually written for a newspaper or a periodical. Sometimes they are semi-technical in nature, but in either case they try to answer in as plain a style as possible the following questions : ‘How does something happen?’, ‘Why does it happen?’, ‘In what way does it help us?’. The emphasis in the articles is on the communication of the human implications of a device, discovery or invention rather than on the details of the process or mechanism used for arriving at the results. For example, a research paper on environmental pollution may explain how it is caused, give the reasons and suggest ways of controlling it in scientific terms. On the other hand, an article on the same subject is likely to emphasise the impact of the pollution on plants, animals and human beings, and the role of the common man in preventing it. In an article there is greater flexibility in the sequencing of material. Formal headings may not appear at all. The author may decide to dramatise or highlight a particular aspect and therefore mention it in the very beginning and then unfold the story. Thus you will notice that an article is a piece of communication which permits greater flexibility in its approach, style and structure.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :

- 2) Please attempt to answer the following questions :

- 1.) Discuss why it is important for you as a college principal to initiate research work and also publish research papers / articles from the same.
- ii.) Please try to work out a research paper / article from a study / project that may be ongoing / nearing completion at your college, and send it for publication to an academic journal of repute. Make a note of the experience as a whole – from conceptualizing the paper to receiving feedback from the publishers / readers.

2C.8 Graphic Aids

You may often have to work with a mass of statistics and a complexity of ideas when you write a formal piece of communication such as a report, a technical proposal, etc. Many a time you would find that you can use graphic aids to make your communication easy to understand. In fact, these aids have become a sort of vocabulary for the professional.

Uses

Graphic aids are mainly used to :

- Communicate more effectively and accurately.
- Make description, explanation and comparison more vivid and eye-catching.
- Clarify and supplement the verbal analysis.
- Reinforce and support verbal communication.
- Enable the writer to present information in an organized way.
- Present a large number of details in less space and with greater precision.

You should however never permit a graphic aid to compete with your verbal presentation. And don't be tempted to use an aid solely for dramatic or aesthetic effects. Each aid must present some significant information relevant to the content.

There are several types of aids which a professional uses. Here are a few general rules which are applicable to all aids :

- (i) Give an aid when it is the best way to communicate information.
- (ii) Each aid must be neat, accurate and self-contained.
- (iii) The content of an aid should be closely related to the text.
- (iv) An aid should be explained in the text howsoever briefly and placed as close to the first reference as possible.
- (v) The size of an aid should be such that on reproduction it remains clearly legible.
- (vi) Each table and figure should be numbered and captioned. Usually the number in consecutive Roman numerals and the caption of the Table are given on the top, e.g. Table I, Table II, etc. The number and the caption of the figures are given in Arabic numerals e.g. Fig. 1, Fig. 2, etc.

Earlier, graphics used to be prepared manually but now with computer software (like Excel) – one can have, with minimal inputs, the statistical analysis neatly presented

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - i.) Discuss the importance of having graphic aids in research documents.
 - ii.) Draw up a list of ten emotionally powerful words. Write out the 'associations' or 'connotations' they have for you. Request office colleagues / others to do the same, then compare your 'associations' / 'interpretations' with theirs. Note the similarities and the discrepancies between what you and your colleagues wrote. This exercise would help you realize whether you use words while writing-in an appropriate context.

Workspace for your thoughts / notes / comments

Workspace for your thoughts / notes / comments

Section 2 - Unit B and C

Interpretation and Application . . .

Oral and Written Communication are indeed the most indispensable modes of communication in any organizational setting. Practising and having a good command over these facilitates effective communication.

As a college principal – I’m sure, you need to ‘talk’ and ‘write’ a lot most of the time. And to do so appropriately – depending on the demands of the situation and the people involved in the same – is imperative and significant – as discussed in Units C and D. The ‘helpful hints’ and other information provided in both these units (on oral and written communication), were included to help you to recognize your strengths and limitations of the same, and to eventually of course, help to hone your skills for style and performance too.

It was important to dilute and present some of the material in order to take you ‘back to the basics’ – which is indeed often helpful – to make one dwell on the fundamentals, get them right, and then build on them with work and practise.

Moreover, a college principal is perceived in a particular way by others from the manner of his oral and written communication; and often it is through these that professional relations may be sealed or broken. And this is particularly important for all educational institutes – like the college you may be working in.

Further Reading: Please refer the references on page 228.

Section 2 - Unit D

Use of Technology in Communication

The use of technology in communication is now indispensable. The world is networked today into a global village, and computer literacy is as important as basic alphabetical and numerical literacy. The significance and scope of the use of technology in communication is much more in organizations – particularly educational institutes like schools and colleges where huge data / records of students and teachers have to be maintained; and where day-to-day administrative matters need to be sorted out on a regular basis.

We begin this section by trying to understand the different facets of communication in the context of the use of technology in any organization, and how to optimally utilize the same for efficient work output.

There are two aspects of communication in organizations : one, the development and maintenance of a communication pattern to ensure harmonious relationships among the employees and two, the use of technology to secure quicker and more effective flow of information – (in this context ‘information’ may be defined as an orderly, concise and useful arrangement of facts/data) from one department or office to another or from one city or country to another. In this section we shall briefly touch upon some of the ways of doing the first task and draw your attention to certain technological aids to fulfill the second.

2D.1 Pattern of Communication

An organization is a body of persons working for a well-defined goal. To achieve it –each member of this body has to be in a state of constant touch with the others. There is both horizontal and vertical movement of information from one source to another. The horizontal flow keeps individuals of the same status and peer groups informed of what others are doing and what is expected of them. The commonality of interest towards the achievement of organizational goals sustains the flow. The vertical communication is both downward and upward. The top management keeps on sending information to the employees and also devises ways

of eliciting information from them and thus the lines of communication are kept open. The two-way movement is essential to keep the organization in a healthy state. Mere downward flow is like talking to a person continuously without giving him a chance to respond. In such a situation the pattern of communication will take the following form :

A instructs B; A speaks to B; A directs B to do something; A conveys to B a piece of information and so on.

Enlightened managements however realize that communication is essentially interactive in nature, demanding the interchange of roles of the sender and the receiver and therefore, lay equal emphasis on upward flow of communication. Any obstructions on the line are carefully looked into and quickly removed. The two-way flow then forms the following pattern :

A instructs B; B reports to A; A speaks to B; B reports to A and so on.

Communication performs a number of functions and plays a significant role in the running and growth of an organization. We may classify these functions as follows :

- (a) Internal, that is, within the organization:
 - (i) to generate and disseminate information,
 - (ii) to direct and instruct employees viz. teachers and administrative staff,
 - (iii) to maintain and improve morale, and
 - (iv) to cultivate a sense of belonging.
- (b) External, that is, outside the organization:
 - (i) to sell and obtain goods and services for maintenance of laboratories, organizing workshops, etc.
 - (ii) to liaise with other educational / industrial organizations and
 - (iii) to create goodwill.

Usually within the organization, members need the following types of information:

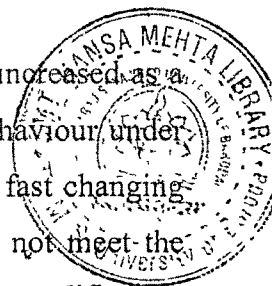
- 1.) Information of immediate concern, such as working schedules for classes, practicals, examinations; skills required for the job, method of training available for advancement, etc.
- 2.) Working environment related information such as rules for punctuality, discipline, work norms, facilities for clubs, societies, unions, cafeteria, etc.
- 3.) Information about personal benefits such as pay and allowances, health and insurance, holidays, etc.
- 4.) Information about the organization as a whole – work of other departments and sections, relationship of one's department with others, ultimate objective, etc.

It is obvious that conveying all the information to everybody would be a meaningless exercise. For proper functioning of a communication system the following questions should be asked and the answers constantly reviewed on the basis of reliable feedback :

- (i) What information is to be conveyed?
- (ii) Who requires it?
- (iii) What should be its form?
- (iv) What techniques of dissemination should be used?
- (v) What technological aids should be used?

There is a network of communication within every organization. Such a network indicates clearly the lines of communication, viz., who is to speak to whom and for what. Generally there is no direct communication between the top management and the employee at the lowest rung of the hierarchy. The *vice versa* is also true. The longer the distance, the greater are the chances of communication distortion or failure. Therefore an efficient organization often provides for an informal contact outside the usual channels of communication. It is difficult to specify the various methods of this kind of contact; each organization keeps on evaluating and modifying these methods. Further, any information received through the grapevine must be rigorously filtered to ensure that mere gossip may not pass off as truth.

In recent years the importance of communication has greatly increased as a result of the growing complexity in organizational and individual behaviour under the impact of rapid industrialization and modern technology. In the fast changing world of today it is clear that today's communication systems will not meet the demands of tomorrow. There is a need for constant review and modification particularly in the Education sector, which does not enjoy much priority of funding or government support. Appropriate, timely measures need to be initiated for upgrading and updating the system.



2D.2 Management of Information

One of the greatest concerns of an organization is how to deal with the accumulation of information and at the same time keep its communication pattern strong and healthy enough to bear the burden of handling enormous data. Here technology has come in a big way to help organizations keep their communication pattern vibrant and meaningful to meet the increasing demands. Now aids are available to store, process and disseminate information, so much so that professionals have begun talking in terms of a paperless office, discarding the traditional ways of maintaining hundreds of paper files for communication purposes. The emphasis is on speed, efficiency and facility to recall the required information at a short notice.

If you go to a well-equipped office you will find a number of technological aids buzzing with activity. Until recently the emphasis was on using electronic equipment for recording and preserving oral communication. Now there is an equal stress on using technology for what traditionally used to be recorded and transmitted on paper. (Particularly in colleges, computers can be very useful to store, retrieve, and handle records of thousands of past and present students.)

Now we shall turn our attention to some of the equipment, based on computer systems, which have quickened the pace of communication and made it more convenient and efficient.

2D.2.1 Word Processor

A word processor can type more rapidly, efficiently and effectively than a typewriter, and do many other things which a typewriter cannot do. It can perform the following functions :

- Display on the screen whatever is being typed, even the line-breakups, paragraph settings, page breakups, margins, etc.
- Rearrange a given text without retyping the entire matter.
- Adjust lines automatically.
- Shift a word automatically to the next line, if it goes beyond a line.
- Hyphenate long words occurring at the end of a line.
- Replace a word or a phrase anywhere in the text, without disturbing the rest of the matter.
- Move the text, insert the text from different files.
- Edit the text.
- Proofread.
- Prepare indexes.
- Mail merge (merging of routine form letters and the addresses).
- Sort information in alphabetical order.
- Store the text on magnetic tapes or on magnetic disks (the magnetic disk is of two types – floppy and hard. The former is detachable, while the latter is inbuilt in the system) and get various combinations of output of the text stored.
- Retrieve the text as and when required.
- Get some special formatting effects such as setting of margins, automatic indentation, etc.

The components of a word processor viz. the input and output devices are those through which the user communicates with the machine. These devices translate the user's language into the machine language (through some electrical and electronic signals), and the machine language back to the user. The devices are the keyboard, screen, and printer. They are a part of the hardware system.

The keyboard is an input device, and is similar to the keyboard of a typewriter, but has a number of special keys. Apart from the normal keys, it has a numeric keypad for the numeric information, function keys for operational use, and cursor keys to adjust the position of the cursor (cursor is a blinking underscore or a block of light or a similar indicator on the screen which marks the place where the next data would appear). Any character when keyed is enclosed, stored in memory and is also displayed on the screen. The screen is a primary output device in a personal computer (PC), and is similar to a T.V. screen in appearance. The data, graphic and the text, are both displayed on the screen. It normally displays twenty-four lines at a time, each line consisting of eighty-four characters.

The printer is an output device through which information is transferred on to paper.

Thus we see that a word processor is very useful for day to day work of an organization. Through it we can get maximum output in minimum time, keep the information stored, and retrieve it as and when needed.

2D.2.2 *Desk Top Publisher (DTP)*

A DTP is another device which can help you escape from tedious tasks like cutting, pasting, designing, and redesigning the material when you are assigned a printing job. It has made publishing easier and it is increasingly being used for bringing out reports, manuals, brochures, bulletins, etc. A unique feature of this device is its ability to combine the text and graphics and to produce finished typeset quality printed material. Its production process is integrated and it enables the user to move directly from the author's design to camera ready artwork. Thus when you use a DTP you will have a greater control over the information structure. Briefly stated, its functions are as follows :

- Creating text and visuals on the PC with the word processing and graphic software.
- Integrating text and visuals into a page using layout software.
- Printing with a laser printer, document with typeset quality appearance, and

- Designing, editing and producing high quality communication at a fraction of the time and expense required by conventional production techniques.

Usually a DTP has a laser printer which ensures quick and effective printouts. It is run by a computer system and uses software such as word processor, business graphics, picture designer, font designer, etc.

Others

Micro computers are used for storing documents of all kinds in large data bases. The information contained in these documents can be recalled quickly, modified or revised or completely erased.

Similarly, *micro-films* can store a mass of written or printed material which can be magnified and read.

2D.2.3 *Electronic mail (e-mail)* refers to a system (viz. the Internet – more information on which follows in the next segment) by using which it is now possible for a person to transmit information both orally and visually to another person without personal contact. This is done by electronic impulses controlled by a computer system through a network of terminals located at the desired places. The data is displayed on the screen and the person transmitting the data can orally explain its significance. It is also possible for a professional to use his terminal for the display of required information by drawing upon a centrally located memory bank. Though e-mail tends to miss subtle emotional nuances of the message, and rather comes across as impersonal, its sheer speed and convenience make it popular, and it is here to stay – to be used all over the world for communication.

Voice-mail essentially allows one to ‘talk’ to people even across the seas with help of an appropriate software and microphone attached to the computer. Technological advancement also now enables the person to be seen through the use of a web-camera.

Whatever devices and methods you use, remember, transmission of the message is the only concern; the sophisticated technology that might be used to construct and transmit it is of no consequence if the message is lost.

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - i.) Discuss briefly the different facets of communication in an organization and the scope of the use of technology to facilitate the same.
 - ii.) Explain in a few lines how the following computer based systems can enhance the use of technology to facilitate the management of information in any organization.
 - a.) Word Processor
 - b.) Desk Top Publishing
 - c.) Electronic Mail

2D.3 The Internet

For more interesting information on the Internet please go through the following article “*The Net in a Nutshell*” by Sarita Rani (New Delhi); published in ‘Sunday Magazine’, February 1997.

This article makes for light yet interesting reading, and quite appropriately dilutes and presents relevant information one would be looking for in order to make a beginning to access the net . . .

The Net in a Nutshell

All you wanted to know about the Internet but were too confused to ask

2D.3.1 Introduction

Nirupa’s elder son had run away from home ten years ago. Always the black sheep of the family – moody, unpredictable and a little too independent – no one knew where he was now or even whether he was alive. Vinod, the stay-at-home younger brother, took over the mantle – studying under street lamps, living on a few pieces of bread and studiously ignoring all girls – till he finally got his engineering degree and a job in a computer company.

The company had an Internet connection and after office hours, Vinod took to surfing the Net, languorously changing from site to site looking for nothing in particular. (That’s what most Internet surfers do most of the time by the way.)

Then, somebody told him of a site called *Four 11.com*. With equal disinterest Vinod typed in the address. *Four 11* said you could search for other people’s addresses here : just type in the minimum particulars. Abstractedly Vinod typed in :

Name → A-M-I-T-A-B-H

Fun Name → A-M-I-T

Suddenly, the screen went into a flurry and came up with a ‘hit’. It had found some address in California. Vinod was a little excited but not much. He left a mail at the address : Hi, my name is Vinod Khanna. I have a brother called Amit

who ran away from home a long time ago. If you are the same or if you have heard of him, get back to me at : *Vinod cland.com*

Next day he found a mail in his computer. It said : *Bhai, Main hoo bhai. Maa kaisi hai re. Mai tum logon se bahut door chala gaya tha. Par ab nahin. Ab main tujhe roz e-mail bhejoonga.*

There it is. The Internet has even replaced The Locket.

But the Bollywood touch and the change of names apart – this is a true story. There is a site on the Internet called *Four 11.com*. And it does help you find people across the globe.

What if Amit was not working in a computer company? Never mind, you can always hope he is like that taxi driver in California who is so obsessed with the Net that he devised a mobile version that he carries with him in the taxi everywhere,....

But, before one gets on to the regular binge of how much (or little?) the Net can do for you, one myth needs to be broken.

Thanks to the language used by regular columnists on the Net – surfing the Net, ‘hitting’ the spot etc., and more importantly, thanks to Hollywood movies whose new pet obsession is the Internet (*Fair Game*, *Mission Impossible* etc.) one gets the impression that all you have to do is type in an address and ask a question and presto! There you have the answer that solves the intrigues of intricate spy network, tells you who the murderer is and warns you that your house is being burgled.

Sorry. It doesn’t work that way. ‘Surfing on the Net’ is not like hitting a remote button and changing channels on the TV. Far from it. You first type in the address, then, at the bottom of your screen the computer will take its time to work and tell you ‘contacting server’. After having ‘contacted’ the address, it will tell you for interminable minutes “data being transferred” – 2 per cent of 12 K transferred. 23 per cent of 12 K transferred. And so on, till it will say, “Document Done”.

Then, if you happen to go to an address that has a lot of graphics – example RPG Musics’ Saregama.com which opens with beautiful coloured pictures of Asha

Bhosle, Kishore Kumar, Mohammad Rafi etc., - it will take another few minutes to put them on the screen. And then, you begin to surf that site.

That is, of course, if your connection remains intact. For instance, last time, I tried to find out something about the Tata group of industries and went to Tata.com, the computer took its time getting to a beautiful site all done up in Red and then bang! Big black letters told me – TRANSFER INTERRUPTED.

So, the first rule of Netomatics: you need a lot of patience.

With equal difficulty (having tried Reliance.com; Ambani.com; Dhirubhai.com) when I finally reached RIL.COM, the screen said in beautiful fonts : India's Largest Private Sector Company will be shortly on the web.

Having said all that, of what use is the Internet? To begin with, for those who've refused to play cricket or hockey or volleyball in school and have no inclination for beginning such gymnastics later, it's an interesting way of spending time in-doors. Besides, for couch potatoes, it's break from using the TV remote.

Others have better uses for it.

For students who've spent hours scouring libraries and directories for universities in the United States to migrate to, it can be quite a boon. Just about every well-known university in the States is now on the web – MIT edu. Amherst.edu. Texuniv.edu – the list is endless. Each university typically gives you details of courses offered, advise on how to apply, a special page for international students, scholarships available and cost per semester. Some universities also allow you to send direct messages to the Student / Admissions adviser before you actually get an admission. This helps you do away with half-baked information gleaned desperately from either friends in the US or those who've tried before and failed.

Business houses are increasingly using the Internet, not only for advertising their products, but to make actual transactions. Some companies have a mail order form on the Internet that requires you to type in your credit card details and after verification, you have the order at your door. This is being done by companies that have evolved method of protecting against defaults, so obviously, it is not so

widespread a phenomenon yet. Also, this is still restricted to the United States and certain European countries.

In the U.S. you can also advertise for a house available for rent, lease or purchase. The site – homes.com – will allow you to choose the state, the town, the configuration of the house (two bed-rooms, one full bath etc.), the price range and then put on your screen actual pictures of houses that fulfill that category.

In fact, if you have something called the VRML software – Virtual Reality Modelling Language – then you could even ‘enter’ the house, ‘walk’ through all the rooms, look at the furnishings etc., and then make your choice. This is in fact the latest development on the Net. Says Rajesh Nambiar, manager projects at Silicon Graphics India, “The virtual reality technology for the Net was developed and pioneered by us and is now the de facto standard in the industry to bring 3-D objects in the web domain”. SGI is now trying hard to make this concept popular in India and the Cosmo vrml 2.0 plug can be downloaded free from the Net.

Or, if you’re still interested in good old books, you could go to the site of any of the major publishers and get a list of their new releases. But the services offered by each publishing house differ. For instance, while Penguin (Penguin.com) just give you a list, Random House (randomhouse.com) provides a brief profile of the author and an excerpt from the book.

The list is really endless : access to libraries, official records that are now in the public domain, job advertisements, matrimonial alliances, admissions to colleges, history of the FBI (one month ago, the FBI had advertised on the Net for a Japanese translator – unfortunately, only those with green cards could apply), access to pharmaceutical companies that will tell you where to find a particularly rare drug and information on how to fix your plumbing.

You could argue that books on plumbing are available; that you don’t really mind driving down 15 kilometres to get a directory on universities in the US; that you read the papers, thank you, and you don’t mind continuing to deal with companies in the real world; and no thank you, you’d rather not look at the picture of a house before you buy it. You’d rather see the cracks in the walls yourself.

You could be right.

But that is not the Internet's greatest gift : creating a virtual world. Like every new technology has its downside, this might in fact, be the Internet's downside.

But the Net's greatest gift is that it connects.

An endocrinologist can now seek advice about a particularly troublesome case by posting a query on the Net. The Tata.com site did not work last time but when it does, people looking for information on India anywhere in the world, don't have to run to a harried officer at the Indian embassy; they can get it from an Indian site.

More importantly, in a world where people increasingly commute between office and home like puppets on a string : where discussion and yes, disagreement, is a rare affair, here is a communication machine that puts you in touch with Marxists; with Bible thumping diehards; with new age Hinduism-marketing managers (hindunet.org); with anglicized Islamic preachers ([wings, buffalo.edu/sa/muslim/isl/thought](http://wings.buffalo.edu/sa/muslim/isl/thought)); with mainline aberrations (Café Nirvana at tricycle.com/café) and sidelined objectivists.

And if it leads to new relationships, it also leads to rather bizarre disagreements. For instance, there is an organization in America called People for Ethical Treatment for Animals (PETA). It found to its extreme shock one day that somebody else had put up a site on the Internet also called PETA. Only, *this* PETA stood for People Eating Tasting Animals. It created a mighty row and at the time of going to press, the PETA site existed but it was blank. Presumably, the fight is not yet over.

Sociologists have for long complained about the alienation that technology creates. Here's one technology that will put you right back into the arena – and this time, your stomping grounds are as wide as the planet you live on.

It's a world without bars – neither of time, space nor language. Most non-English speaking people, Indians in particular, tend to write in their own language using the Roman script. That last barrier is being broken too as language converting software is fast catching on.

But if this gives you the impression that the Internet is the answer to life, the universe and everything, well, it is not. Nothing ever is. The Net's day has come – though it is still to set the Yamuna on fire – and it will go. The Net will either pass into everyday life as telephones have; or we will find a better method of communicating. But meanwhile, there's a world to look out upon out there and people and ideas to meet.

So, log on ...

2D.3.2 *How it all began*

(The story of the Internet, A Historical Perspective . . .)

Some of the best ideas are born in the worst of times. And so it was that the seeds of the internet were sown in the ashes of World War II.

On 6 and 9 August, 1945 a horrified world stood by and looked helplessly as the United States dropped its nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And as the mushroom cloud settled down to reveal the devastation below, the world believed this was one holocaust it wouldn't survive.

But having dropped the nukes, no one was more terrified of the results than the United States military itself. They had done it to someone else without much thought. Now, they began to wonder : what if someone was to pay them back in the same coin?

So, for many years after the war, most of the US military research concentrated on ways and means to survive a nuclear holocaust. And one of the most important strategic problems was : how would US authorities communicate with each other in the aftermath of a nuclear attack?

Computers had already arrived. But communication networks of the time were primitive, connected to each other in a sort of a chain : somewhat like an electricity line in your home. This meant that if even one chain in the middle was blown up, the whole network became useless. The American military could hardly afford that.

Then in the 1960s – at the height of the Cold War – the problem was taken up by America’s foremost military think-tank, the Rand Corporation. After a lot of ideas put up and knocked down, one of the Rand “Thinkers” – a man called Paul Baran – hit upon a new idea.

What if, he said, the network was not built like a chain but like a fishnet? If one strand on a fishnet broke, the net would still be functional. Even if numerous strands broke, the net would still work if it was big enough. The idea was revolutionary and Baran spent many agonizing hours over it till he came up with an 11-volume report for the Pentagon.

As is the nature of administrations the world over – they shelved it.

But by then, younger engineers had caught on to the idea and before the decade was over Baran’s Cold War musings had led to the creation of the first net – called the ARPANET - connecting four American research organizations : Stanford Research Institute, the University of Utah and the University of California in Los Angeles as well as Santa Barbara.

Years later Kleinrock – a pioneering computer science professor at UCLA University – described in an interview how he and his students first logged on to the Stanford computer on the ARPANET.

With his graduate students huddled around him, Kleinrock said : “We set up a telephone connection between us and the guys at SRI.”

“We typed L and we asked on the phone, “Do you see the L?”,

“Yes we see the L,” came the response.

We typed O, and we asked, ‘Do you see the O?’”

“Yes, we see the O.”

“Then we typed the G, and the SYSTEM CRASHED....”

2D.3.3 *The Growth of the Internet*

(How the men and the technology carried on)

In the strict sense of the term, Kleinrock’s experiment could be called a failure. But Kleinrock didn’t think so. For, he told the Knight Ridder Newspaper: “Yet, a revolution had begun”.

And begun it had. Things began to happen in fast succession.

By this time, the ARPANET was still an essentially defence operation. ARPA stood for – Advanced Research Projects Agency – that president Dwight Eisenhower hastily put up after the Soviets launched their Sputnik in 1957. ARPA set up the United States' first successful satellite in the next 18 months and then took over the job of forming the networking technology.

Then somebody decided that a public demonstration was required to get people motivated enough to use this limited version of the Net. So, Bob Khan from BBN was given the job of organizing public demonstration. It took one year to set that one up but when it was opened to the public – in the basement of the Washington Hotel – it was a roaring success. This was in 1971.

By this time, the ARPANET had grown. It now had 23 universities and government research centers around the United States hooked on to it. But even then, the fundamental idea was very limited ; to allow scientists and researchers to share data and access remote computers instead of having to wait for days for the public post office or the local courier service to get them their floppies in paper bags, sometimes in too tattered a condition to be of any use.

But scientists are human beings too, with an equal – if not greater – desire to chat and so the electronic-mail soon became ARPANET's most-used facility. E-mail was (and still is) a digital post office of sorts. It was an incredible boon. Now, it did not take long hours of letter writing to collaborate on research and share ideas. And soon there were all kinds of mails being passed to and fro between the best minds in the U.S.; what do you think of my research on xyz vaccine? What do you think of my new method of generating power? Even, what do you think of my orchid collection?

Now that the net was growing, it inevitably needed controls. So in 1972, the InterNetworking Working Group was set up to govern the net with a man called Vinton Cerf as its first chairman. He was later to be known as the "Father of the Internet".

Technology moved fast. The Net was still lengths of cables connected to each other without which communication was still impossible. The Transatlantic

cable – a huge cable running under the Atlantic ocean and connecting the United States to the United Kingdom had been laid . As a feat, it was compared to Man's landing on the Moon. Though that may be contentious, it was ideal for connecting computers in the United States to computers in the United Kingdom.

The satellite communication era began in the 1980s, when for the first time a satellite was used to link two local networks – it was called the CERNET after Vincent Cern.

Still, the problem remained, you had to be specifically linked to the Net to be able to access. But by 1989, a man called Tim Berners-Lee was creating something called the World Wide Web that would help even remote computers and desktops to access the Net.

This was the next stage of the revolution. The first Web server and client machines were built by CERN – the European Laboratory for Particle Physics in November, 1990 – and the stage was set for that unique gift of our generation : the world at our fingertips.

2D.3.4 The Net Connection

(This is all you need)

The Computer

First, you require a computer with necessary configuration for connecting and accessing the net. (Approx price : Rs.30,000 to Rs.50,000)

The Software

Your computer should be able to support and must have a Windows programme with a browser – a programme that helps you browse the Net. There are many browsers available in the market, the best known of which are of course the Netscape Navigator and the Microsoft Internet Explorer. (Approx price: Mostly included in the price of the computer).

☒ Telephone

Obviously, you also need a telephone connection. It does not have to have an STD facility. (Cost : Nil, if you have a telephone)

☒ Modem

You need a modem that is connected via your telephone line to your computer. It is the modem that transfers data from the telephone cable to the computer on your table. (Approx. price : Mostly included in the price of the computer).

2D.3.5 Netspeak

(Don't get scared by the apparent gibberish in which computer nerds speak)

If your friend's computer screen shows these abbreviations that make you cringe, here's a short-list of some basic words used on the Net. Once you're through them and on the Net, you don't need any more help.

A typical address on the Net could read like this :

<http://www.indianexpress.com>

☒ **http** : Stands for hyper-text transfer protocol. You don't have to know what it means.

Just type it whenever you want to access the internet.

☒ **www** : Stands for World Wide Web. It's the machine that helps you access the Net. Again, don't bother to dig behind it. Just use it.

☒ **indianexpress** : This is the place you put the name / address of whoever you want to connect to : Tatas, Penguin, Absolutvodka, etc.

☒ **com** : for most addresses (for example : tata.com).

gov : short form for government. It is one of the four widely used affixes.

edu : for educational institutions (for example : MIT.EDU)

org : for organizations (for example : redcross.org).

Please check your progress

- 1.) Make some points of what you may have understood and remember so far, or try to make a note of any point/s that may have struck you as significant :
- 2.) Please attempt to answer the following questions :
 - i.) Try to list and analyse technology based modes of communication you presently use in the performance of your job.
 - ii.) Try to enlist any new information you may have recently acquired for the use of technology in communication, and think about how you could use the same in the future to enhance your skills.

Workspace for your thoughts / notes / comments

Workspace for your thoughts / notes / comments

Section 2 - Unit D

Interpretation and Application . . .

I included this section on the use of technology in communication in the module, since I think it is very important in present times to be updated with technological modes of communication, which have advanced over the years into an integral and indispensable part of organizational set-ups.

While there is no denying it that despite great progress on the technological front, there is no escape from using traditional means – (for example – resorting to the good old postage stamp and the postal system to send loads of mail across); the fact now is that computers definitely facilitate work – administrative, academic, and personal, and once you begin to use them, you cannot do without them.

Most beginners suffer from an unwarranted ‘learning block’, which has to do with either an inhibition with handling “equipment”; or otherwise a lack of inclination to find time to learn and actually use work-friendly technology. What one could easily do is to begin by reading simple texts / material (like the article on the Internet in the unit), and then go on to self-learning manuals with the help of which one can start working on the equipment / computer hands-on. With regular practise, there is nothing that one cannot achieve.

Moreover, to be seen in a thorough professional light and for self-satisfaction too, one needs to become adept at and use computer aided presentations – be they printed reports (worked on Word and Excel software), or audio-visual support (Powerpoint software). At meetings, seminars, conferences; these have indeed replaced the Overhead Projector / other aids; and they work out better too in terms of clarity and aesthetics – if handled competently.

Not only computers, all other technologically updated office / laboratory equipment should be encouraged for use in an organization.

It would be absolutely a worthwhile exercise for you as college principals to initiate, encourage and sustain the use of technology in colleges, - particularly computers –

which not only facilitate work; but also, quite literally, open up so many “windows” to the world of knowledge and information

Further Reading: Please refer the references on page 228.