

Training Program on
Effective Communication

Reading Material



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CONTENTS

Sl.No.	Subject	Pg. No.
1.	Communication importance, process and elements	01-05
2.	Organizational Communication	06-10
3.	Verbal Communication	11
4.	Written communication	12
5.	Nonverbal Communication	13-17
6.	Communication Styles	18-19
7.	Feedback in communication	20-25
8.	Listening in Communication	26-31
9.	Assertive Communication	32-33
10.	Persuasion Skills	34-38
11.	Presentation skills	39-48
12.	Problems or Barriers to Effective Communication	49-52
	Effective communication	53-58

1. Communication importance, process and elements

Communication is one of the most basic functions of management, the manager can make a good decision, think out well conceived plans, establish a sound organization structure, and even be well linked by his associates. Communication is essential for achieving managerial and organizational effectiveness. Good communication helps employees become more involved in their work and helps them develop a better understanding of their jobs. Clear, precise and timely communication of information also prevents the occurrence of organizational problems. Without communication, employees will not be aware of what their co-workers are doing, will not have any idea about what their goals are, and will not be able to assess their performance. Managers will not be able to give instructions to their subordinates and management will not receive the information it requires to develop plans and take decisions, hence communication acts as nervous system for any organization

Concept of communication

The world communication has been derived from the Latin word "communis", which means common. Communication, therefore, refers to the sharing of ideas, facts, opinions, information and understanding. It is the transfer or transmission of some information and understanding from one person to another. Although the word "communication" is used often, there is no consensus amongst communication experts regarding its definition. In general, it is defined as the process by which information is exchanged between individuals. The process uses written messages, spoken words and gestures. Communication can be defined as process of transmitting information, thoughts, opinions, messages, facts, ideas or emotions and understanding from one person, place or things to another person, place or thing. Organizational Behaviour seeks to examine the impact of communication on the behaviour of employees within organizations.

Agricultural communication is defined as a planned transfer of farm technologies from the research system to the farmers' system through extension system and media with a view to make desirable changes in respect of higher productivity, profitability and prosperity and also get feedback from the clients.



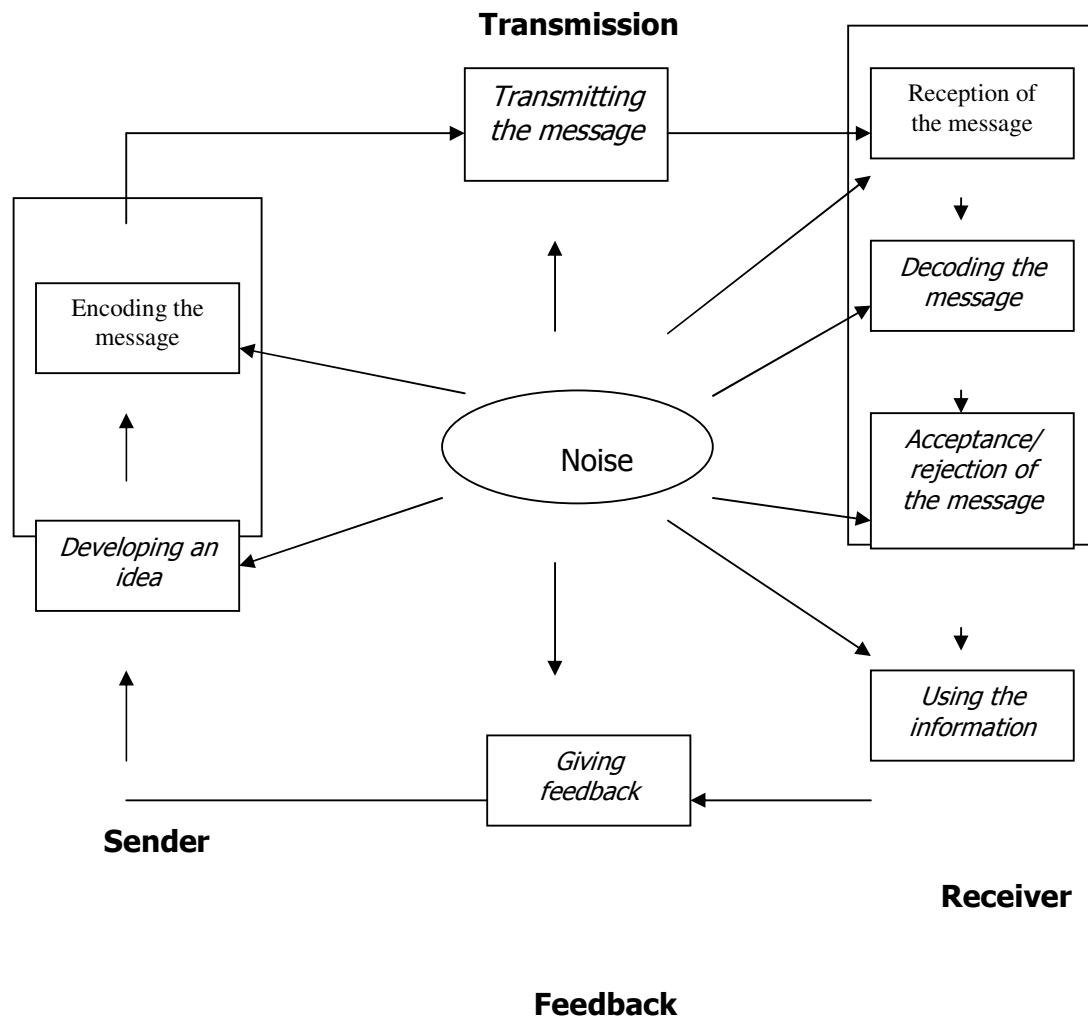
The importance of communication in any managerial process can hardly be over-emphasized. If an organization is to operate as an integrated unit, it is necessary that the top management should keep the lower level supervisors and employees well-informed of its ultimate objectives and what it wants each person to accomplish towards their realization. By freely sharing information, the management takes employees into its confidence, prepares them for changes, avoids misunderstanding, and removes it if at all it develops, and makes them more knowledgeable about the problems and policies of the enterprise.

Functions of communication

- a. The information function** serves to provide knowledge to the individuals need for guidance in their actions. It also fulfills worker's desires for awareness of things that affect them.
- b. The command and instructive functions** serve to make the employee aware of his obligations to the formal organization and to provide him with additional guidance on how to perform his duties adequately.
- c. The influence and persuasion** function (also known as motivational function) encourages the appropriate individual to perform or to exhibit a certain behaviour. Messages communicated are used to convince individuals that their actions can be personally or organizationally beneficial.
- d. The integrative function** refers to the fact that the communication of messages / ideas, if properly handled, should help to relate the activities of the

workers to their efforts complement rather than detract from each other. Work efforts are unified rather than fragmented as a result of properly integrative communication. Employees can perform well and be involved in their work only when they understand their job duties and responsibilities. Unless the organization's key goals, values and strategies are communicated to employees, they will not work in that direction.

The Communication Process



The two-way communication process involves the transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver and back. Communication may take place through speech, hand signals, or other form. All communication involves eight steps, regardless of the form used.

1. Developing an idea: The sender should perceive that he has some important message to be conveyed to the receiver. The sender should have a clear idea about what he wants to communicate to the receiver.

2. Encoding the message: The sender codifies the message. He selects appropriate word, charts, or symbols in this step, to convey his idea as clearly as possible. He also decides on the medium of transmission so that the words and symbols constituting the message can be arranged in a suitable manner.

3. Transmitting the message: This step involves the transmission of the message using an appropriate medium of communication such as memo, phone call or personal interaction. While transmitting the message, the sender tries to ensure that the timing of the message is right. The sender also takes care that the transmission of the message doesn't encounter any barriers or interference, which may impede the flow of communication. Ensuring that the communication channel is free from barriers or interference increases the chances of the message reaching the target audience and holding its attention.

4. Reception of the message: In this step, the receiver, the person for whom the message was intended, receives the message. If the message was communicated orally, the receiver has to be a good listener to avoid loss of information during transmission of the message.

5. Decoding the message: The message is decoded and understood by the receiver. The receiver has to understand the message exactly as intended by the sender. The communicator of a message can make the receiver listen to him, but understanding has to be achieved by the receiver alone. This aspect of understanding is referred to as "getting through" to a person.

6. Acceptance or rejection of the message: The receiver is free to accept or reject the decoded message. The receiver can not only choose whether to accept a message, he can also choose whether to accept the message in toto or in part. The acceptance decision of the receiver is influenced by factors such as his perception regarding the accuracy of the message, the authority of the sender, and the implications of accepting the information.

7. Using the information: This step involves the use of the information by the receiver. The receiver may use the information, discard it, or store it for future.

8. Giving feedback: Feedback occurs when the receiver sends back some response to the sender or acknowledges receipt of the message. The communication loop is complete only after feedback has been provided. Feedback is essential for finding out whether the message has been properly received, decoded, accepted and used by the receiver

The two-way communication process can be compared to the back-and-forth pattern of play of tennis or badminton. The players adjust their shots depending on the response of the opponent. Similarly, as communication progresses, the sender adjusts his message according to the previous response of the receiver. Two-way communication leads to the accurate transmission of information and improves the quality of decisions and actions dependent on that information.

2. Organizational Communication

Organizational Communication can be broadly classified into formal and informal communication.

Formal communications are those that are official, that are a part of the recognized communication system which is involved in the operation of the organization. These communications may be oral or written. A formal communication can be from a superior to a subordinate, from a subordinate to a superior, intra-administrative, or external. Formal communications take place externally to the organization i.e. with outside groups, such as suppliers, clients, unions, government agencies and community groups.

Formal communications may be mandatory, indicative or explanatory. Mandatory communication implies an order or command to be followed and goes by various euphemistic names such as instructions, briefing, etc., this kind of communication is mostly vertical and usually one way from top to downward. The indicative or explanatory communication may exist between any level and may be vertical as well as horizontal.

Informal communications grow out of the social interactions among people who work together. These are not bound by any chart on the wall but are bound by conventions, customs and culture. Such communication provides useful information for events to come, in the form of grapevine.

Organizational Communication can also be classified as

1. Downward Communication
2. Upward Communication
3. Lateral Communication
4. Interactive Communication

1. Downward Communication

Downward communication is one of the important processes of organizational communication. It establishes linkages between people by facilitating flow of information between them.

Downward communication has five purposes:

1. To give instruction to employees regarding their jobs and specific tasks.
2. To provide information about organizational procedures and practices to new employees.
3. To explain the rationale of a job to a new employee
4. To provide subordinates feedback about their job performance
5. To give information required by different teams and departments for the achievement of goals.

In the past, organizations gave attention only to the first two purposes; modern organizations emphasize all five. If the communication process fails to achieve these purposes, employees will not receive all the information they require about their jobs and will not be aware about the importance of their work. They may consider their job to be of little significance in the organization and may not show interest in them. They may carry out their tasks only because they have been asked to do so by their boss. This kind of attitude on the part of employees will have a negative impact on organizational performance. It will promote an authoritative atmosphere, which will adversely affect the upward and horizontal flow of information. It is, therefore, important to communicate to all employees how their jobs will contribute to the achievement of organizational goals and how their poor/excellent performance will affect other jobs in the organization. Thus, the objective of downward communication should be to help employees understand their jobs better and align their goals with organizational goals.

Downward communication depends on different types of print and oral media to disseminate information. Handbooks, manuals, magazines, newspapers, bulletin boards, notices, posters, reports and memos are different kinds of written media used by organizations. Direct orders or instructions from top executives, speeches, meetings, public address systems, telephones, closed-circuit television are examples of oral media used for downward communication.

2. Upward Communication

The upward communication process is non-directive in nature, unlike the downward process, which is directive. Effective upward communication is possible only when organizations empower their employees and allow them to participate freely in decision-making. The techniques described below are used to promote upward communication in organizations:

- 1. The grievance redressal procedure:** Enables employees to appeal to management and seek redressal of their grievances.
- 2. Open-door policy:** Allows employees to approach managers at any time and discuss their problems with them.
- 3. Counseling, attitude questionnaires and exit interviews:** The Personnel Department can conduct nondirective counseling programs to help employees deal with their work-related problems as well as work and family conflicts. Attitude questionnaires may be administered periodically to find out employees' attitudes towards the workplace and the workload. Exit interviews may be held for the employees quitting the organization to find out their reasons for leaving and their suggestions for improving the workplace.
- 4. Participative techniques:** upward communication can be achieved through formal participation programs like union-management committees, suggestion boxes, junior boards and quality circles or through informal involvement of employees. Research has shown that employees who participate in these programs are more satisfied with their job, show greater commitment toward the job, and perform better than non-participating employees.

5. The ombudsperson: A position created to receive and respond to inquiries, complaints, requests for policy clarification, or allegations of injustice by employees. Through an ombudsperson, employees can have their problems resolved quickly without going through lengthy channels. This position had initially been created in Scandinavia as an outlet for people who felt that they had been treated unfairly by the government bureaucracy.

3. Lateral Communication

Lateral communication involves communication across chains of command. It facilitates coordination among departments. It probably takes place because people prefer the informality of lateral communication to the formal downward and upward communication. Those actively involved in lateral communication are called "boundary spanners." Since "boundary spanning," allows for accumulation of vast amounts of information, such persons wield tremendous power and enjoy greater status by filtering and communicating with others.

4. Interactive Communication

Interactive communication is beneficial when communication is necessary between peers involved in tasks that require coordinated effort. However, if they are not involved in tasks that require coordinated effort, interactive communication would result in reduced productivity. Interactive communication among peers may also affect vertical communication in a negative way. Employees at each level may communicate freely among themselves but fail to communicate upward and downward.

The main aims of interactive communication are:

1. Task coordination
2. Problem solving
3. Information sharing, and
4. Conflict resolution

There are two main types of interactive communication:

1. Networks: A network is a group of people who develop and maintain contact with each other to exchange information of common interest in an informal manner. A person who is actively involved in information exchange is said to be networking. Networks can be both internal and external to an organization. Internal networks consist of employees from different departments and business units. Networks that extend beyond the company to business partners, customers and sometimes even competitors are external networks. External networks are formed when employees attend social clubs, professional groups and other similar associations.

Networks enable employees to widen their interests and get information relating to recent developments in their field. A good networker can get access to powerful and influential people if they have certain interests in common. Effective networks can help develop productive working relationships that may result in enhanced job performance.

2. Grapevine communication: It supplements the formal channels of communication and provides information, which is not communicated through the latter. It provides information on the unwritten rules of the organization and important management decisions (well before they are implemented). Managers generally do not use the grapevine as a source of information. However, they try to keep track of the information passing through the grapevine through their loyal subordinates. This helps managers identify the issues that cause anxiety to employees. They can send a message that alleviates their fears and reduces their anxiety. Managers thus use the grapevine as a filter and feedback mechanism to eliminate rumours and prevent their negative impact on organizational performance. The important characteristics of a grapevine are:

- a. It is beyond the control of the management.
- b. It is considered more reliable by the employees than the formal communication channels, and
- c. Employees mostly use it to serve their personal and social interests.

3. Verbal Communication

Verbal communication takes place directly between the superiors and juniors in organizations and between farmers and extension functionaries in the field and is often known as face to face communication. It takes the form of talks, a public address, verbal discussions, telephonic talks, telecommunications and other artificial media, such as audio-visual aids speeches and orders, holdings of meetings and conferences, lectures, social get-togethers, training sessions, public address systems, museums, exhibitions, counseling etc.

Verbal communication enjoys certain merits

- i. It is the least time consuming, is more direct, simple and the least expensive.
- ii. It is more communicative and effective and aids in avoiding delays, red-tape and formalities.
- iii. It generates a friendly and co-operative spirit.
- iv. It provides an immediate feedback, as questions can be put and answers obtained about the information transmitted
- v. Since every information cannot be put into writing, most of it is conveyed by means of oral instructions, mutual discussions and telephonic conversations.

However, verbal communication has certain demerits. These are:

- Lengthy, distant and important information cannot be effectively conveyed verbally
- Verbal talks may often be distorted if there is some cause of indifference between the receiver and the sender.
- It is inadequate where permanency and uniformity of form are required.
- Due to various communication gaps, as a result of status and other physical or personal barriers communication is incomplete.
- Spontaneous responses may not be carefully thought.
- The spoken words can be more easily misunderstood than the written words.
- It presupposes expertise in the art of effective speaking.

4. Written communication

A written communication is always put into writing and generally used when the audience is at a distance or when a permanency or record is required or where its preservation is essential in case it is needed as a evidence in cases of dispute. It is generally in the form of instruction, orders, rules and regulations, policies, procedures, posters, memos, reports information bulletins.

The merits of written communication are:

- It serves as evidence of what has occurred or what was stated
- It provides a permanent record for future use
- It reduces the chances for misinterpretation and distortion of information
- It is reliable when transmitting lengthy information on financial, production or other important data.
- It provides an opportunity to the subordinates to put up their grievances in writing and get them supported by facts

However, a written communication also suffers from certain disadvantages.

- It is generally an expensive and a time-consuming process.
- Even though such communication has been transmitted, it is not certain whether the receiver has understood it.
- Written materials not only get out of date but may also be leaked out before time.
- It sometimes leads to excessive formality and rigidity in personal relations.

5. Nonverbal Communication

A message can be sometimes expressed without the help of words. Nonverbal communication is the process of communicating without the use of words. It is defined as non-word human responses like facial expressions and gestures and the perceived characteristics of the environment through which the human verbal and nonverbal messages are transmitted. Nonverbal communication is also known as "silent language." It involves the use of cues, gestures, vocal characteristics, facial expressions, and spatial relationship between the sender and the receiver to convey a message. For example, a smile, glance, stare or a frown convey different meanings.

The components of Non Verbal Communication are:

1. **Kinesics** is the interpretation of body language such as facial expressions and gestures — or, more formally, non-verbal behavior related to movement, either of any part of the body or the body as a whole. Body Language is technically known as kinesics

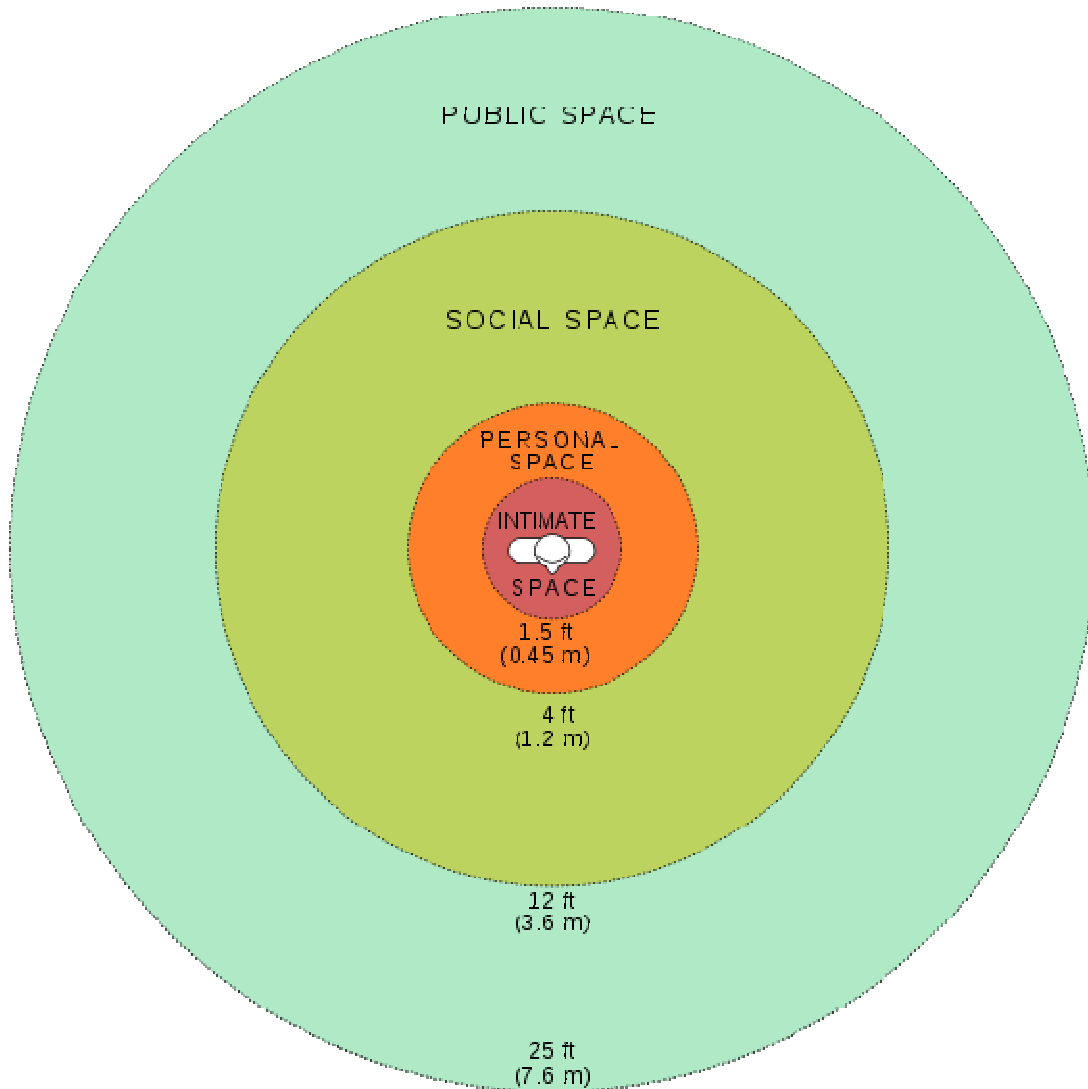
Body language is the unconscious and conscious transmission and interpretation of feelings, attitudes, and moods, through:

- body posture, movement, physical state, position and relationship to other bodies, objects and surroundings,
- facial expression and eye movement,
- and this transmission and interpretation can be quite different to the spoken words.

Body movements include gestures, facial expressions and other physical movements. Every body movement conveys a certain meaning. For example, raising an eyebrow conveys disbelief, rubbing the nose indicates puzzlement and shrugging shoulders shows indifference. When a person is eager to hear something, he sits with his feet under the chair, toes pressed to the ground, and leans forward on the desk. When a person is listening carefully, he maintains eye contact and frequently nods his head.

Body language coupled with verbal communication gives more meaning to a message.

- 2. Proxemics** is the technical term for the personal space aspect of body language. Proxemics is the study of measurable distance between people as they interact.



Body spacing and posture are unintentional reactions to sensory fluctuations or shifts, such as subtle changes in the sound and pitch of a person's voice. Social distance between people is reliably correlated with physical distance, as are intimate and personal distance, according to the following delineations:

- **Intimate distance** for embracing, touching or whispering
 - *Close phase* – less than 6 inches (15 cm)
 - *Far phase* – 6 to 18 inches (15 to 46 cm)
 - **Personal distance** for interactions among good friends or family members
 - *Close phase* – 1.5 to 2.5 feet (46 to 76 cm)
 - *Far phase* – 2.5 to 4 feet (76 to 120 cm)
 - **Social distance** for interactions among acquaintances
 - *Close phase* – 4 to 7 feet (1.2 to 2.1 m)
 - *Far phase* – 7 to 12 feet (2.1 to 3.7 m)
 - **Public distance** used for public speaking
 - *Close phase* – 12 to 25 feet (3.7 to 7.6 m)
 - *Far phase* – 25 feet (7.6 m) or more.
- 3. Oculesics:** It is the study of the role of eye contact in non verbal communication. Our eyes are a very significant aspect of the non-verbal signals we send to others. Oculesics is one form of nonverbal communication, which is the transmission and reception of meaning between communicators without the use of words. It can include the environment around the communicators, the physical attributes or characteristics of the communicators, and the behavior of the communicators
- 4. Chronemics** is the study of the use of time in nonverbal Communication. The way we perceive time, structure our time and react to time is a powerful communication tool, and helps set the stage for the communication process. Across cultures, time perception plays a large role in the nonverbal communication process. Time perceptions include punctuality, willingness to wait, and interactions. The use of time can affect lifestyles, daily agendas, speed of speech, movements and how long people are willing to listen.

5. **Haptics** refers to the study of touching. There is six different kinds of touch. These include: positive, playful, control, ritualistic, task-related and unintentional. Managers should know the effectiveness of using touch while communicating to subordinates, but need to be cautious and understand how touch can be misunderstood. Working with others and using touch to communicate, a manager needs to be aware of each person's touch tolerance.
6. **Paralinguistics:** It is the study of variations in pitch, speed, volume, and pauses to convey meaning. Interestingly, when the speaker is making a presentation and is looking for a response, he will pause. However, when no response is desired, he will talk faster with minimal pause.
7. **Paralanguage** refers to the non-verbal elements of communication used to modify meaning and convey emotion. Paralanguage may be expressed consciously or unconsciously, and it includes the pitch, volume, and, in some cases, intonation of speech. Sometimes the definition is restricted to vocally-produced sounds. The study is known as paralinguistics.

Paralanguage refers to voice quality, volume, pitch, speed and non-fluencies (like 'ah,' 'um,' or 'uh.')

used to convey a message. It helps to convey information about the attitude of the speaker. Sometimes there may be a contradiction between what a person says and what his actions indicate. In such cases, the person's actions can be regarded as a truer picture of his feelings and ideas.

Physical Appearance: Physical appearance always contributes towards how people perceive about individuals. Neatly combed hair, ironed clothes and a lively smile will always carry more weight than words. It is believed that physical appearance determines the success a person will attain at every stage of his life.

Understanding nonverbal communication


The following guidelines can help individuals understand nonverbal communication better:

1. *Observe keenly what is happening:* When nonverbal behaviour involves an emotional response (for example, tears rolling down the cheeks or eyes becoming red), it clearly conveys the message to the other person.
2. *Consider the differences between verbal statements and nonverbal behaviour:* If there is a discrepancy between what a person says and what his body language indicates, then the situation should be studied closely. It is believed that actions are more accurate than words.
3. *Look for subtleties in nonverbal behaviour:* Through careful observation, one can differentiate between a fake action and a genuine action. For instance, a sarcastic smile can be differentiated from a genuine one.

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6. Communication Styles

	Passive	Assertive	Aggressive
			
Definition	Communication style in which you put the rights of others before your own, minimizing your own self worth	Communication style in which you stand up for your rights while maintaining respect for the rights of others	Communication style in which you stand up for your rights but you violate the rights of others
General	Compliant, submissive, talks little, vague non-committal communication, puts self down, praises others <i>"I don't mind...that's fine....yes alright"</i>	Actions and expressions fit with words spoken, firm but polite and clear messages, respectful of self and others <i>"That's a good idea, and how about if we did this too..." or "I can see that, but I'd really like..."</i>	Sarcastic, harsh, always right, superior, know it all, interrupts, talks over others, critical, put-downs, patronising, disrespectful of others <i>"This is what we're doing, if you don't like it, tough"</i>
Implications to Others	My feelings are not important I don't matter I think I'm inferior	We are both important we both matter I think we are equal	Your feelings are not important you don't matter I think I'm superior
Beliefs	You're okay, I'm not Has no opinion other than that the other person/s are always more important, so it doesn't matter what they think anyway	I'm okay, you're okay Believes or acts as if all the individuals involved are equal, each deserving of respect, and no more entitled than the other to have	I'm okay, you're not Believe they are entitled to have things done their way, the way they want it to be done, because they are right, and others (and their needs) are less important

		things done their way	
Verbal Styles	apologetic overly soft or tentative voice	I statements firm voice	you statements loud voice
Non-Verbal Styles	looking down or away stooped posture, excessive head nodding Avoids eye contact, teary, pleading	looking direct relaxed posture, smooth and relaxed movements Warm, welcoming, friendly, comfortable eye contact	staring, narrow eyes tense, clenched fists, rigid posture, pointing fingers Narrow, emotion-less, expressionless
Posture	Makes body smaller – stooped, leaning, hunched shoulders	Relaxed, open, welcoming	Makes body bigger – upright, head high, shoulders out, hands on hips, feet apart
Hands	Together, fidgety, clammy	Open, friendly and appropriate gestures	Pointing fingers, making fists, clenched, hands on hips
Potential Consequences	lowered self esteem anger at self false feelings of inferiority disrespect from others pitied by others Give in to others, don't get what we want or need, self-critical thoughts, miserable	higher self esteem self respect respect from others respect of others Good relationships with others, happy with outcome and to compromise	Guilt anger from others lowered self esteem disrespect from others feared by others Make enemies, upset others and self, feel angry and resentful

by Christopher L. Heffner, M.S.

Source: http://www.cedanet.com/meta/communication_styles.htm,
<http://www.get.gg/communication.htm>

7. Feedback in communication

The importance of feedback cannot be overemphasized and needs no special elucidation. Feedback is the yardstick which measures the effectiveness of communication and is used for evaluation review and to amend the message in the light of response. Efficient workers have reliable feedback and they succeed in their effective communication.

The "Glossary of Training Terms" defines Feedback as: "The process by which information about the results of an action is communicated to the source of the action. It is argued for example, that learning takes place either through the informational characteristic or the knowledge of result, or through a combination of health".

Characteristics of feedback

- i. Intention:** Effective feedback is directed towards improving work performance and making the worker a more valuable asset. It is not a personal attack. Feedback is directed towards aspect of the job.
- ii. Specificity:** Be specific rather than saying things like "you always" or "you never". Vague criticism causes resentment.
- iii. Description: Effective** feedback can also be characterized as descriptive rather than evaluative. It tells the receivers what he or she has done in objective terms, rather than presenting a value judgment.
- iv. Usefulness: Effective** feedback is information that the receiver can use to improve performance. If it is not something the receiver can correct, it is not worth mentioning.
- v. Timeliness:** There are considerations in timing feedback properly. As a rule, the more immediate the feedback, the better. This way the receiver has a better chance of knowing what the sender is talking about and can take corrective action.

vi. Clarity: Effective feedback must be clearly understood by the recipient. A good way of checking this is to ask the recipient to restate the major points of discussion.

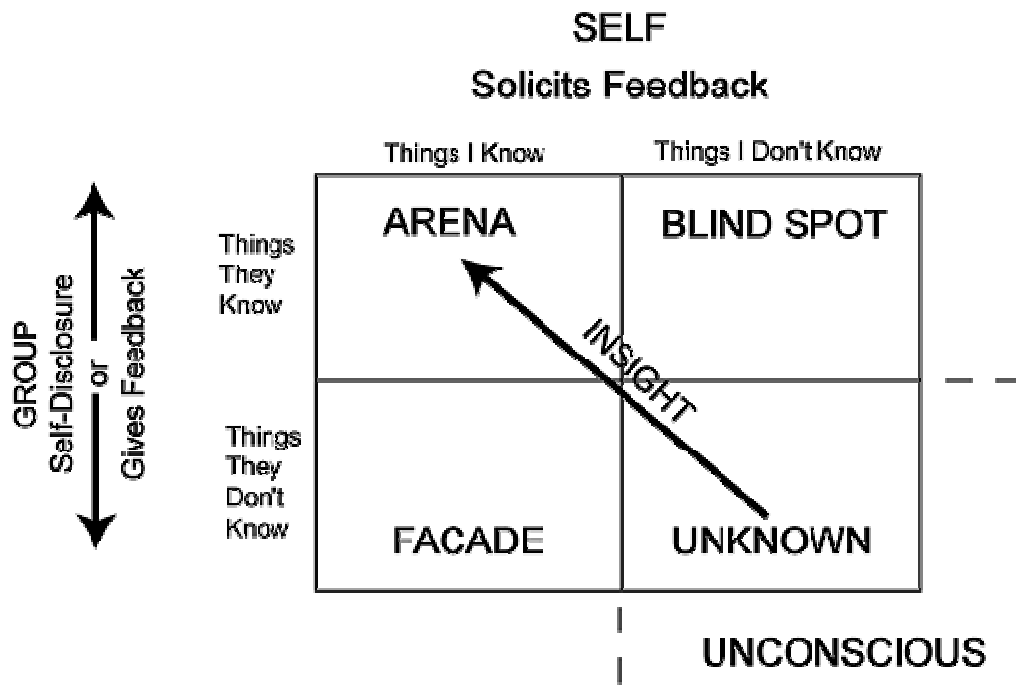
vii. Validity: In order, for feedback, to be effective, it must be reliable and valid.

viii. Readiness: In order, for feedback, to be effective, the receiver must be ready to receive. When feedback is imposed upon the receiver it is much less effective.

Feedback should be a continuous process as the audience and communicators are neither always the same persons, nor they are interacting in the same situation. The extension agent shall take steps to analyze the responses of the audience, which may be positive, negative or no response. If there has been no response or negative response to a message, the extension agent shall find out reasons for the same. If it pertains to research, the problem should be referred as feedback information to research, to find out solutions for the same.

The Johari Window: A Model for Soliciting and Giving Feedback

The process of giving and receiving feedback is one of the most important concepts in training. Through the feedback process, we see ourselves as others see us. Through feedback, other people also learn how we see them. Feedback gives information to a person or group either by verbal or nonverbal communication. The information you give tells others how their behavior affects you, how you feel, and what you perceive (feedback and self-disclosure). Feedback is also a reaction by others, usually in terms of their feelings and perceptions, telling you how your behavior affects them (receiving feedback).



A model known as the Johari Window illustrates the process of giving and receiving feedback. Psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham developed the window for their group process program. Look at the model above as a communication window through which you give and receive information about yourself and others. Look at the four panes in terms of columns and rows. The two columns represent the self; the two rows represent the group. Column one contains "things that I know about myself;" column two contains "things that I do not know about myself." The information in these rows and columns moves from one pane to another as the level of mutual trust and the exchange of feedback varies in the group. As a consequence of this movement, the size and shape of the panes within the window will vary.

The first pane, the "Arena," contains things that I know about myself and about which the group knows. Characterized by free and open exchanges of information between myself and others, this behavior is public and available to everyone. The Arena increases in size as the level of trust increases between individuals or between an individual and the group. Individuals share more information, particularly personally relevant information.

The second pane, the "Blind Spot," contains information that I do not know about myself but of which the group may know. As I begin to participate in the group, I am not aware of the information I communicate to the group. The people in the group learn this information from my verbal cues, mannerisms, the way I say things, or the style in which I relate to others. For instance, I may not know that I always look away from a person when I talk... or that I always clear my throat just before I say something. The group learns this from me.

Pane three, the "Facade" or "Hidden Area," contains information that I know about myself but the group does not know. I keep these things hidden from them. I may fear that if the group knew my feelings, perceptions, and opinions about the group or the individuals in the group, they might reject, attack, or hurt me. As a consequence, I withhold this information. Before taking the risk of telling the group something, I must know there are supportive elements in our group. I want group members to judge me positively when I reveal my feelings, thoughts, and reactions. I must reveal something of myself to find out how members will react. On the other hand, I may keep certain information to myself so that I can manipulate or control others.

The fourth and last pane, the "Unknown," contains things that neither I nor the group knows about me. I may never become aware of material buried far below the surface in my unconscious area. The group and I may learn other material, though, through a feedback exchange among us. This unknown area represents intrapersonal dynamics, early childhood memories, latent potentialities, and unrecognized resources. The internal boundaries of this pane change depending on the amount of feedback sought and received. Knowing all about myself is extremely unlikely, and the unknown extension in the model represents the part of me that will always remain unknown (the unconscious in Freudian terms).

The organization should be receptive to their employee's feedback.

Value of Feedback

Providing feedback therefore needs to be a constructive activity that should be helping to learn. It should not be destructive and critical. Equally important, the recipient should not interpret it as destructive and critical. To be effective, feedback needs to be skillfully given and the receiver must hear, understand, accept and act upon it. However accurate the feedback, if the individuals rejects it, the result will be no improvement in performance. Therefore, always consider the human element during feedback.

H - Hear

U - Understand

M - Motivate

A - Acceptable

N - Negotiate

The giving and receiving of feedback are skills which require very careful handling. They require courage, tact, honesty, understanding and respect – both for yourself and for others. Like all other skills, they are developed only through practice. In providing feedback to others you will need to be sensitive to the feedback you will receive in response. The giving of feedback cannot be separated from receiving it in return.

Guidelines for giving Feedback

You are giving feedback to someone in his/her performance. Your intention must be to improve performance through your feedback.

- Focus Feedback on behaviour rather than on personality
- Feedback should focus on observations rather than inferences.
- Concentrate on change rather than make value judgments
- Feedback is most acceptable when it is describing specific rather than general patterns of behaviour.
- Focus the feedback on the value it may have for the individual

- Focus feedback on the amount of information the individual can use, rather than the amount you feel capable of giving.
- Feedback is most acceptable when it is describing specific rather than general patterns of behaviour.
- Feedback should be well-timed
- Positive feedback followed by negative
- Check the accuracy of the feedback

Guidelines for Receiving Feedback

- Be positive towards the feedback giver
- Listen to the feedback
- Clarify and check understanding
- Check the feedback with others
- Ask for feedback not volunteered
- Describe how to use feedback.
- Explore Options
- Thank the feedback giver

Giving and receiving feedback is a demanding process that requires confidence and respect between the parties involved. The advice offered is necessarily broad and will vary between different individuals and activities. We cannot doubt the value of the feedback in learning. The provision of feedback is especially important for those process skills that occur during learning activities, particularly involving interpersonal skills.

1. Small Group Instructor Training Course (Sgitc), Student Reference For Chapter 5: Johari Window <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/sgitc/read5.htm> downloaded on 20-07-11
2. http://www.managementstudyguide.com/feedback_communication.htm

8. Listening in Communication

Listening helps in the following ways:

- Building trust
- Establishing Credibility
- Gaining Support
- Getting things done
- Collecting Information
- Exchange
- Reflecting
- Demonstrate respect

Types of listening

Here are six types of listening, starting with basic discrimination of sounds and ending in deep communication.

Discriminative listening

Discriminative listening is the most basic type of listening, whereby the difference between difference sounds is identified. If you cannot hear differences, then you cannot make sense of the meaning that is expressed by such differences.

We learn to discriminate between sounds within our own language early, and later are unable to discriminate between the phonemes of other languages. This is one reason why a person from one country finds it difficult to speak another language perfectly, as they are unable to distinguish the subtle sounds that are required in that language. Listening is a visual as well as auditory act, as we communicate much through body language. We thus also need to be able to discriminate between muscle and skeletal movements that signify different meanings.

Comprehension listening

The next step beyond discriminating between different sound and sights is to make sense of them. To comprehend the meaning requires first having a lexicon of words at our fingertips and also all rules of grammar and syntax by which we can understand what others are saying.

Critical listening

Critical listening is listening in order to evaluate and judge, forming opinion about what is being said. Judgment includes assessing strengths and weaknesses, agreement and approval. This form of listening requires significant real-time cognitive effort as the listener analyzes what is being said, relating it to existing knowledge and rules, whilst simultaneously listening to the ongoing words from the speaker.

Biased listening

Biased listening happens when the person hears only what they want to hear, typically misinterpreting what the other person says based on the stereotypes and other biases that they have. Such biased listening is often very evaluative in nature.

Evaluative listening

In evaluative listening, or *critical listening*, we make judgments about what the other person is saying. We seek to assess the truth of what is being said. We also judge what they say against our values, assessing them as good or bad, worthy or unworthy.

Evaluative listening is particularly pertinent when the other person is trying to persuade us, perhaps to change our behavior and maybe even to change our beliefs. Within this, we also discriminate between subtleties of language and comprehend the inner meaning of what is said. Typically also we weigh up the pros and cons of an argument, determining whether it makes sense logically as well as whether it is helpful to us.

Appreciative listening

In appreciative listening, we seek certain information which will appreciate, for example that which helps meet our needs and goals. We use appreciative listening when we are listening to good music, poetry or maybe even the stirring words of a great leader.

Sympathetic listening

In sympathetic listening, we care about the other person and show this concern in the way we pay close attention and express our sorrow for their ills and happiness at their joys.

Empathetic listening

When we listen empathetically, we go beyond sympathy to seek a truer understand how others are feeling. This requires excellent discrimination and close attention to the nuances of emotional signals. When we are being truly empathetic, we actually feel what they are feeling.

Therapeutic listening

In therapeutic listening, the listener has a purpose of not only empathizing with the speaker but also to use this deep connection in order to help the speaker understand, change or develop in some way.

Dialogic listening

The word 'dialogue' stems from the Greek words 'dia', meaning 'through' and 'logos' meaning 'words'. Thus dialogic listening mean learning through conversation and an engaged interchange of ideas and information in which we actively seek to learn more about the person and how they think.

Relationship listening

Sometimes the most important factor in listening is in order to develop or sustain a relationship. Relationship listening is also important in areas such as negotiation and sales, where it is helpful if the other person likes you and trusts you.

Types of Faulty Listening

But being able to listen well when we need and want it to be a prized skill is important. Each of us have bad habits that can interfere with the quality of our listening. The following are the various types of bad listening habits:

1. **Pseudo-listening:** Sometimes we look as though we're listening, engage in all the right external behaviour, but allow our minds to travel elsewhere. Students may perform this type of listening in some of the classes where they are not willing to listen. When a superior delivers a long and technical speech, subordinates usually go for it. This type of listening is very common when listeners have to forcibly listen.
2. **Selective listening:** We allow ourselves listen only to those parts of a message that are of particular interest or immediate relevance to us. For example, perhaps one wants someone to listen carefully as he tells about an argument with one's best friend. Instead, the other person pays little attention until he mentions that his or her name was brought up during the argument.
3. **Self-centered listening :** An approach was summarized by the humorist Fran Lebowitz as "The opposite of talking isn't listening. The opposite of talking is opportunity to speak; we use that time to rehearse our next response instead of really listening to him or her. We are so focussed on self that the others don't have a chance. This is the type of listening, which a few management students use on case discussions.

4. **Fill-in listening** : Selective listening leaves inevitable gaps in our understanding. Then, when we do not have any option except to simply fill in the gaps by hearing what we expect to hear. This is nothing but *fill-in listening*. This is the type of listening that we usually go for. The phone conversation hasn't been of much interest to a listener on the other end of the line until one hears a matter relating to his interest. Then, he makes efforts to fill the gaps of the earlier message. This happens when you listen to others under forced circumstances.

5. **Insulated listening** : On the other hand, we actually choose not to listen to messages that make us uncomfortable. This is the type of listening that occurs when we don't hear criticism of an unfinished job or advice about improving poor grades or bad driving habits. Rather than choosing what parts of a message to focus on, they choose what parts to miss. This affects listening adversely.

6. **Defensive listening**: In this listening, we focus on ideas that aren't even there, interpreting comments as personal attacks when they were not intended that way. This is the type of listening which teenagers may do when they mistake an innocent parental question for an expression of distrust, and it is the type of listening parents are doing when they view an innocent question from a child as a sign of disrespect or disregard.

7. **Reconstruction listening**: Sometimes we also use reconstructive listening (also called *assimilation*). This habit occurs when we take a new message and reconstruct it so that it fits with or is just like a prior message. If we are used to hear everyone talk about a particular class in a highly negative manner, we may hear a new comment about the class as negative when it wasn't at all. If we are used to particular instructions in a classroom, we may hear the old instructions, when actually new instructions are being spoken.

Bad listening habits

There are many ways to listen badly, sometimes affected by the listener and sometimes by the environment.

1. Lack of interest in the subject
2. Focus on the person, not on the content
3. Interrupting
4. Focus on the detail, missing the big picture
5. Force-fitting their ideas into your mental models
6. Body language that signals disinterest
7. Creating or allowing distractions
8. Ignoring what you do not understand
9. Letting emotions block the subject
10. Daydreaming

The Effective Listener

- Makes eye contact
- Exhibits affirmative head nods and appropriate facial expressions
- Avoids distracting actions or gestures that suggest boredom
- Asks questions
- Paraphrases using his or her own words
- Avoids interrupting the speaker
- Doesn't over talk
- Makes smooth transitions between the role of speaker and that of listener

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9. Assertive Communication

Positive Words and Phrases

Dictionary says – Positive = “expressing certainty or affirmation to emphasize what is good”

- What I can do for you is.....
- You can be confident that..
- I can assure you ...
- Immediately
- I'll do that personally for you
- I have a solution
- I will...
- I am positive..
- I will investigate this now for you...
- Thank you
- I can confirm that...
- I am delighted to...
- The good news is
- The product I would recommend for you is....
- From my experience, I would suggest
- That's not a problem
- Any favourites of yours to add to the list

Assertiveness is all about

- Being honest about yourself and others
- Being confident
- Trying to find solutions
- Listening to and understanding the other point of view
- Expressing what you want, need or feel but not at the expense of others
- Showing genuine empathy
- Being prepared

Quotes from assertive people

- I'd like to tackle the task in this way. How does that affect you?
- I know we're really stressed at the moment. However I've stayed late the last 3 evenings
- so I want to go home on time tonight
- I understand what you are saying, however I've got to go. Can we tackle the problem in the morning
- I appreciate that we normally go out to the pub on a Thursday night, however I want to stop in tonight

Aggressiveness is all about

- Getting your own way (at the expense of others)
- Making sure you come out the winner
- Not listening to others
- Giving no consideration to others

Quotes from aggressive people

- Just do it.
- I don't agree with you
- That's stupid
- Surely you don't believe that
- It's your turn to go to the coffee machine
- It's a load of rubbish – typical of the finance department – they haven't got a clue
- I'd like it done by 2.30
- No, I don't want to go out for a drink tonight

10. Persuasion Skills

We persuade people every day, whether it's getting our children to follow their time schedule, asking a colleague to help with a project, or convincing our farmers to adopt improved production technologies or adopt new marketing strategies.

Persuasion is communication with a purpose - to cause a person or group to adopt as their own a product, person, idea, entity, or point of view that the person would otherwise not support. To put it more simply, persuasion is going beyond "please." To be persuasive, you have to establish a common bond between yourself and the person you are trying to influence. This bond, often called "common ground," comes from shared experiences, understandings, cues, and meanings. The language we use and the way we communicate are central to this bonding process. Words convey meaning, emotion and feelings. All words are not created equal, however, some words evoke more emotion in listeners, and as such they are more powerful and hence persuasive.

Persuasion is underneath the umbrella term of Influence. In other words, persuasion is influence, but it requires communication, whereas influence doesn't necessarily. Persuasion can attempt to influence the beliefs, attitudes, intentions, motivations or behaviors. Persuasion is a process aimed at changing a person's (or a group's) attitude or behavior toward some event, idea, object, or other person (s), by using written or spoken words to convey information, feelings, or reasoning, or a combination thereof (Wikipedia).

Effective persuasion is a process which involves negotiating and learning through which a persuader leads colleagues to a problem's shared solution. It incorporates discovery, preparation and dialogue. It is about testing and revising ideas in concert with one's colleagues' concerns and needs.

Process of Persuasion

1. Establish Credibility

Expertise/Knowledge
Strong Relationships
Listening to others
History of good judgment



2. Find Common Ground

Clarify the Benefits
Mutually Beneficial Solutions
Illuminate the Advantages
Understand Other Views



3. Provide Vivid Evidence

Logic and Facts
Imagery and Metaphors
Stories and Examples
Spreadsheets/Statistics



4. Connect Emotionally

Understand the Emotions
Show Empathy
Demonstrate Commitment
Self-Awareness

Ten Tips to Effectively Influence Others

1. Set an outcome for what the other person will do, if you are successful in influencing him/her:
 - Flush out in detail what would really be ideal for you - even if you think there's no way that ideal is possible. At a minimum, you'll know your own goals, and you are likely to get closer to them than you think.

- Consider the other person's outcome(s). Are there ways you can include their goals in your proposal? What are the benefits and costs to him/her in doing what you want? Are there ways to enhance his/her benefits and/or lessen his/her costs that could still get you what you want?
- 2. Aim high when you make the first suggestion(s). Suggesting that he/she does even more than you might really want gives you room to lessen your suggestions, and makes it more likely you'll get closer to what you really want in the final agreement.
- 3. Be congruent and confident as you communicate. Other people usually notice (not always consciously) your body language and voice tone, so if you're uncertain in making suggestions, it's likely that will come across. In other words, be as certain of yourself and your suggestions as you can possibly be. This doesn't mean you need to be demanding or argumentative. It does mean that you present your position and/or requests as if you are certain that this is what you want. A quiet, solid, clear confidence is often your best attitude.
- 4. Consider your long-term relationship with this person or people. What impact will the results of this interaction have over time? What will your relationship with him/her be if your suggestions are implemented? What will it be like if the suggestions are not implemented?
- 5. Begin where they are, that is, acknowledging that they have a particular perspective that makes sense for them. This is best done by considering their mood and/or attitude, as well as the particular position he/she may have at the beginning of the discussion.
- 6. Consider the larger context. What factors might make it difficult for the person to do what you want? Can you develop some ideas that would minimize these difficulties, or better yet, turn them into advantages for him/her?
- 7. What might you be able to give the person 'no strings attached'? This can be information, and need not be anything physical (such as a gift). Giving something can be a good move towards developing a favourable context, a move inviting

reciprocity but be perfectly willing to have your 'gift' taken, without expecting anything back. So, it needs to be something you can give freely.

8. Be clear on what you would get if this person agreed to your request. That is, what would you benefit of influencing them so that you get your outcome? One way to determine your benefits is to ask yourself "What would have this done for me?" When you get the first answer, ask yourself the same question about that answer. You may determine a wider range of options that would satisfy you. This gives you more flexibility in making suggestions and/or requests from the person.
9. Are there any changes you could make to the environment that would make it more likely for the person to agree to your request? This is intended as a thought provoking question, i.e. to get you to think about factors you might not ordinarily consider. For instance, there's some evidence that people are more likely to accommodate requests when they are eating (associating a pleasant activity with your request). Hence, a number of business deals are completed over lunch. Another environmental factor when influencing someone is to consider whether to discuss an issue on the phone, in person, or by e-mail. In many cases, you will get a very different response to the same request, depending on how it is made. Thinking of the environment in a slightly broader sense, for instance, could you persuade a colleague to be more cooperative? Perhaps this increased cooperation would make it easier for the person to take your suggestions.
10. It goes without saying that when you are successful in influencing, you'll certainly live up to the agreements that you've made – both during and after the 'influence time'. These agreements should be implemented as the other person understands them. This requires you to verify that your communication has been understood in the same way you intended it. The benefit to you is a long-term business relationship, in which you have established your reliability and in which you request the same. Atmospheres in which you trust one another makes better business sense for all.

An Effective Persuader

- Uses a positive and tactful tone
- Presents ideas one at a time
- Presents strong evidence to support position
- Tailors arguments to the listener
- Appeals to the subject's self-interest
- Makes a logical argument
- Uses emotional appeals

References:

1. Centre for Good Governance, Handbook on Persuasion Skills,
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11. Presentation skills

Presentation is a speech that is usually given in a formal setup - business, technical, professional or scientific environment. Something set forth to an audience for the attention of the mind. An effective presentation creates a change in the audience; they become more informed or gain a better understanding of a particular subject. A good presentation is a kind of communication between the speaker and the audience.

Presentations are an important way of communicating ideas and information to a group. Presentation carries the speaker's personality better and allows immediate interaction between all participants.

Why Presentation?

- To teach/train
- To gather opinions
- To publicize an idea
- To share findings of research
- To highlight a problem (and to seek a solution)
- To pass on information
- To entertain
- To motivate

Presentation Formats

- Providing Information
- Teaching a skill
- Reporting Progress
- Selling a product, Service or Strategy
- Obtaining a Decision
- Solving a Problem

In order to communicate with your audience, you need to consider the following points:

- 1. Content:** It contains information that people need. The presenter should assess how much information the audience can absorb.
- 2. Structure:** It has a logical beginning, middle and end. It must be sequenced and paced so that the audience can understand it. The presenter must be careful not to lose the audience when wandering from the main point of the presentation.

An Outline for Presentations:

Introduction

- What? Overview of the presentation
- Why? Purpose of the presentation (why the subject is important)
- How? How will you deliver your presentation, what are the expectations of the audience from it?
- Who? If more than one person is presenting, provide introductions and indicate roles (don't expect audience to memorize it)

Body

The following list suggests alternative formats for presenting information: multiple formats can be used within the presentation:

- Rhetorical – questions & answers
- Logical progression – indicate steps e.g. A then B then C
- Time series – order information from beginning to end, earlier to later etc.
- Compare and contrast – use the same structure to compare different events individuals or situations
- Problems and solutions – don't present problems without working toward some recommended solutions
- Simple to complex – use successive building blocks to communicate complex process or concepts

- Deductive reasoning –moving from general principles or values to specific applications or examples
- Inductive reasoning – using specific applications/examples to reach general principles or conclusions

3. Conclusion

Review, highlight and emphasize key points, benefits and recommendations.

Draw conclusions – What are we? What does all of this mean? What’s the next step?

Packaging

It must be well prepared. Writing can be re-read and portions skipped over, but with a presentation, the audience is at the mercy of the presenter.

- Tell the audience what you are going to tell them;
- Tell them; and
- Tell them what you have told them.

A Checklist for Presentation

You owe your audience, so creating an effective presentation takes planning and practice. Following are the tips to deliver an effective presentation:

1. Start preparing early: don’t wait until the last few days to prepare
 - Don’t wait for the last moment
 - Practice your entire presentation
 - Try to practice it before a group of colleagues or friends
2. Think about your audience
 - Who are they and why are they gathered?
 - What are their interests?
 - What do they know? What do they want to know? What is worth their time?

3. As an audience member, think about these questions:
 - Why should I pay attention to the presenter? And when can I think about more interesting things?
 - Why should I care about these issues?
 - I agree with the significance of the topic, but how is the presenter justifying his ideas?
 - Now that I am convinced, what does the presenter want from me?

4. Be clear about your purpose
 - Are you informing or persuading?
 - Tell them what you are going to do, tell them what you told them
 - What do you want the audience to know, feel or believe afterwards?

5. Use an effective introduction
 - Orient the audience, explain why it's important and set the tone
 - Establish a relationship between the speaker and the audience, establish credibility
 - Avoid weak introduction such as apologizes, jokes, rhetorical questions

6. Organize your presentation clearly and simply
 - Prioritize topics and allocate time accordingly
 - Stick to only 3-5 points
 - Have a well thought-out pattern (examples are problem/solution, chronological, causes and effect, topical); use transitions to move smoothly from one point to the next.

7. Use supporting materials to flesh out main points
 - Use examples, statistics, expert opinion etc.

8. Compose for the ears, not for the eyes
 - Use simple words, simple sentences, markers, repetition, images, personal, language etc.

9. Create an effective conclusion
 - Summarize, set final image, provide closure; don't trail off, don't use trite phrases
 - Don't just present data or summarized results and leave audience to draw its own conclusions
 - You have had much more time to work with your information than your audience; share your insight and understanding and tell them what you have concluded from your work

10. Sound spontaneous, conversational, and enthusiastic
 - Use key phrases in your notes, so you don't have to read, use the overhead instead of notes
 - Vary volume, don't be afraid of silence, and don't use fillers like "ummm...Aahmm"
 - Practice, practice and practice

11. Use body language effectively
 - Relaxed gestures, eye contact, don't play with a pen or pointer
 - Don't block visual aids

12. Use visual aids to enhance the message
 - Use visual aids to reinforce and clarify, not overwhelm
 - Keep visual aids uncluttered, use titles to guide the audience

13. Analyze the environment

- Note the size of the room, placement of chairs, time of day, temperature, distractions
- Check audio visual equipment ahead of time

Making the Presentation Delivery

- Speak clearly. Don't shout or whisper - judge the acoustics of the room.
- Don't rush, or talk deliberately slowly. Be natural - although not conversational.
- Deliberately pause at key points - this has the effect of emphasizing the importance of a particular point you are making.
- Avoid jokes - always disastrous unless you are a natural expert.
- To make the presentation interesting, change your delivery, but not too obviously. e.g.: speed, pitch of voice.

Use your hands to emphasize points but don't indulge in too much hand waving. People can, over a period of time, envelop irritating habits. Ask colleagues occasionally what they think of your style.

- Look at the audience as much as possible, but don't fix on one individual - it can be intimidating. Pitch our presentation towards the back of the audience, especially in larger rooms.
- Don't face the display screen behind you and talk to it. Other annoying habits include: Standing in a position where you obscure the screen. In fact, positively check for anyone in the audience who may be disadvantaged and try to accommodate them.

Presentation Skills - Some Practice Tips:

Practicing these exercises will make presentation more natural.

Posture -- Practice standing in the correct posture [feet, knees, hips, shoulders all in a straight line with your arms at your sides] while standing on lifts, standing in queues, waiting at the cash machine, on a coffee break, etc.

Movement -- Practice movement on your feet at home. Cut faces out of magazines and tape or pin them to chairs and sofas. Speaking to one "person" at a time, look first, walk over and stand still for 3 or 4 sentences while speaking, then look at someone else, and repeat the process.

Gestures -- Start practicing the use of gestures for description and/or emphasis by first becoming more aware of your own natural gestures. Do you gesture while on telephone? Do you gesture while talking to a friend, colleague, or family member? By increasing your awareness of what you do with your arms and hands in every day conversations, you will be able to transfer these gestures into all speaking situations. Facial Animation -- Appropriate facial expressions usually coincide with gestures.

Facial Animation -- Appropriate facial expressions usually coincide with gestures. If you tend to look overly serious during presentations, using more gestures will help liven up things. Also practice making a variety of facial gestures while speaking in a mirror or driving in the car.

Voice - For Volume and Variety: For sufficient volume, become more aware of breathing deeply from your diaphragm. Lie on the floor with a book placed just above your belt or waist. Yawn several times. This is what breathing from the diaphragm should feel like. Breathe in slowly to the count of 10 watching your stomach expand and then exhale slowly expelling all the air.

For vocal variety practice, try reading children's books aloud. Your voice will naturally animate with the story. Record your voice and listen to it resonate in your head for higher vocal tones, in your throat for the midrange and deep in your chest for lower vocal tones. Using more gestures will also help to naturally animate your voice.

Pause and Pace - To help eliminate clutter words and use the right, controlled pace, try playing back your voice mail messages before sending them to the recipient and evaluate yourself. Listen for short sentences that end without clutter and "over-connectors" such as: and, but, and so, and rate your pace.

Eye Contact -- Place three to four small Post-It Notes randomly around your workspace. These will be your "eye targets." Whenever you're on the phone, speak one short sentence while looking at the first Post-It Note. After finishing the sentence, pause. Then move on to the next Post-it Note and repeat. This will help you to maintain eye contact with one person at a time while completing a thought or sentence, and eliminate clutter words.

Dos and Don'ts of Presentation

Dos

- Lots of background research. Even if the information is not used in the presentation, it is useful to have as much knowledge as possible for the discussion and audience questions. It will assist your confidence too.
- Be organized - prepare in plenty of time.
- Structure your presentation.
- Focus on the question set.
- Obtain material from a wide range of sources.
- Practice your presentation.
- Use note cards.
- Speak clearly.

Don'ts

- Leave research and preparation until the last minute.
- Rely on one source of information.
- Make it up.
- Just hope that it will come together on the day without preparation and practice.
- Have no notes to rely on if you get stuck.
- Worry too much it's not as bad as it seems.
- Mumble.
- Read from script.
- Rush the presentation by speaking too fast.
- Make eye contact with your audience.

Research indicates that we tend to base our judgment of other people on three main characteristics:

Verbal content: 7%

Vocal Interests: 38%

Body Language: 55%

This shows that more than 90% of your public image depends of how you look and sound than the content that you deliver.

There is no mystery about making a good presentation

- It is all about finding out how to do it right.
- It is a skill, and like any other skill it can be learnt.
- It is a skill, which can be mastered with little time and effort.
- The most brilliant speech will ultimately depend for its success on presentation style of the speaker. And not on the contents of the speech itself.

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12. Problems or Barriers to Effective Communication

Filtering: Refers to the manipulation of information by the sender so as to obtain a favorable opinion from the receiver. Example, an employee updating his superior about projects in which there is significant progress but not informing him about the projects that are lagging behind. The process of filtering information takes place at each level of the organization and may sometimes affect the quantity as well as the quality of information that reaches the top management. The amount of information that gets filtered increases with the number of vertical levels in the organizational hierarchy. Filtering may lead to problems in the long term as only pleasant information is allowed to pass up to the top management and thus they may not know about a problem till it assumes serious proportions.

Selective perception: A person perceives information on the basis of his needs, values, experience, and background. His personal interests and expectations influence the way he decodes information.

Defensiveness: People intentionally attempt to block communication when they feel that the other person is threatening their self-image and prestige. They react in a defensive manner by making sarcastic comments, by passing judgments on others, or by questioning the motives of the other party.

Language: Words convey different meanings to different people. Age, education and cultural background are the major factors that influence the use of language by people and the meanings they associate with words.

Barriers to communication can be further classified as

- Human/personal
- Semantic and
- Technical barriers.

Barriers to communication

Human/personal	Semantic	Technical
Personal emotions	Word interpretations	Space or geographical distance
Biases	Gesture decodings	Mechanical failures
Perceptual variations	Language translations	Physical obstructions
Competencies	Sign and symbols	Technological malfunctions
Sensual abilities	Cue meanings	Concrete obstacles
Mental faculties		Time lags

Human limitations also act as a hindrance to effective communication. Instead of listening in a rational and objective manner to what is being said, one occasionally becomes emotionally involved. Judgments are imposed in place of rational fact appraisal. Consequently the receiver hears only what he expects to hear.

Removal of communication barriers: Some guidelines

- i. Identify and analyze the barriers: find out the possible barriers in the way of effective communication and then try to remove these. To make the communication clear, make use of the listeners' language and avoid faulty translations.
- ii. Top management must be convinced of the need of communication: a good communication is good human relations, and good communication is good business.
- iii. Emphasis upon the written statement of policies: this is the best means of letting everyone know how an organization feels about communication. It sets the tone for the type of communication that everyone throughout the organization should have. It sets the basis for the procedures and practices, which will be used to implement policy.
- iv. Recognize that communication is a two way process: it is necessary to know whether communication has been properly received and perceived. This can be

done by encouraging action, responses, asking questions, removing confusion and explaining clearly the meaning of the message sent.

- v. Consistency and coherence are essential for successful communication: Orders should be consistent with the objectives of the organization and in line with other activities.
- vi. Overcome disadvantages of the distance barriers: whenever possible use the physical devices like telephone and the intercom and see that people understand ie. the sender should see to that the information is not distorted, misinterpreted or stopped by those who are responsible for passing it on to others.
- vii. Communication is a continuous process: it cannot be compartmentalized or reduced to one or more communication programs, because the goal of communication is complete understanding. Communication should be constant, habitual and automatic.
- viii. Empathetic speaking and hearing are essential for effective communication. Therefore, the speaker should know his audience and be sensitive to their needs and feelings when he speaks and listens; otherwise he may short circuit important communication networks.
- ix. Optimum timing is important in communication. The best time for communicating important messages is when they are competing the least with other situations affecting the listeners. Messages are most likely to be considered and attended to when they provide a solution to a problem affecting the receiver.
- x. The use of feedback improves the communication process and reduces the chance of major disparities between the information or idea received and the one intended.
- xi. Reception of messages may be helpful in conveying the intended thoughts. Often a single transmission of an idea may not be received or decoded properly. A second or third message may assist the receiver in his understanding and use of the concept. Repetition can be done by using various media and different formats.
- xii. Messages should be timed so that they are received when they are needed and are not misconstrued as a result of other thoughts on the receiver's mind.

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Effective communication

Effective communication occurs when there is shared meaning. The message that is sent is the same message that is received. There must be a mutual understanding between the sender and the receiver for the transmission of ideas or information to be successful.

Effective communication may be defined as:

- Using language that is appropriate to others' levels of understanding.
- Making sure others receive the information or knowledge intended.
- Developing relationships with others.
- Talking with others in a way that facilitates openness, honesty and cooperation.
- Providing feedback.

Effective communication is a part and parcel of any successful organization. Any communication should be free from barriers so as to be effective. The characteristics of effective communication are:

1. **Clarity of Purpose:** The message to be delivered must be clear in the mind of sender. The person to whom it is targeted and the aim of the message should be clear.
2. **Completeness:** The message delivered should be complete. It should be supported by facts and observations. It should be well planned and organized. No assumptions should be made by the receiver.
3. **Conciseness:** The message should be concise. It should not include any unnecessary details. It should be short and complete.
4. **Feedback:** Whether the message sent by the sender is understood in same terms by the receiver or not can be judged by the feedback received. The feedback should be timely and in personal. It should be specific rather than general.
5. **Empathy:** Empathy with the listeners is essential for effective verbal communication. The speaker should step into the shoes of the listener and be sensitive to their needs and emotions. This way he can understand things from their perspective and make communication more effective.

6. **Modify the message according to the audience:** The information requirement by different people in the organization differs according to their needs. What is relevant to the middle level management might not be relevant to the top level of management. Use of jargons should be minimized because it might lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretations. The message should be modified according to the needs and requirements of the targeted audience.
7. **Multiple Channels of communication:** For effective communication multiple channels should be used as it increases the chances of clarity of message. The message is reinforced by using different channels and there are less chances of deformation of message.
8. **Make effective use of Grapevine (informal channel of communication):** The employees and managers should not always discourage grapevine. They should make effective use of grapevine. The managers can use grapevine to deliver formal messages and for identification of issues which are significant for the employees. The managers can get to know the problems faced by the employees and can work upon it.

7 C's and 4 S's of Communication

In any business environment, adherence to the 7 C's and the 4 S's of Communication helps the sender in transmitting his message with ease and accuracy. The 7 C's are as follows:

Credibility. If the sender can establish his credibility, the receiver has no problems in accepting his statement. Establishing credibility is not the outcome of a one-shot statement. It is a long-drawn out process in which the receiver through constant interaction with the sender understands his credible nature and is willing to accept his statements as being truthful and honest. Once the credibility of the sender has been established, attempts should be made at being courteous in expression. Much can be accomplished if tact, diplomacy and appreciation of people are woven in the message. Courtesy implies taking into consideration both viewpoints as well as feelings of the receiver of the message. A courteous message is positive and focused at the audience. It makes use of terms showing respect for the receiver of message and it is not biased.

Completeness. The communication must be complete. It should convey all facts required by the audience. The sender of the message must take into consideration the receiver's mind set and convey the message accordingly. A complete communication develops and enhances reputation of an organization. It is cost saving as no crucial information is missing and no additional cost is incurred in conveying extra message if the communication is complete. A complete communication always gives additional information wherever required. It leaves no questions in the mind of the receiver. Complete communication helps in better decision-making by the audience/ readers/ receivers of message as they get all desired and crucial information. It persuades the audience.

Clarity. Absolute clarity of ideas adds much to the meaning of the message. The first stage is clarity in the mind of the sender. The next stage is the transmission of the message in a manner which makes it simple for the receiver to comprehend. As far as possible, simple language and easy sentence constructions, which are not difficult for the receiver to grasp, should be used. Clarity in communication makes understanding easier. Complete clarity of thoughts and ideas enhances the meaning of message. A clear message makes use of exact, appropriate and concrete words.

Correctness: The sender should ensure that his knowledge of the receiver is comprehensive. The level of knowledge, educational background and status of the decoder help the encoder in formulating his message. In case there is any discrepancy between the usage and comprehension of terms, miscommunication can arise. If the sender decides to back up his communication with facts and figures, there should be accuracy in stating the same. A situation in which the listener is forced to check the presented facts and figures should not arise. Finally, the usage of terms should be nondiscriminatory. In correct communication the message is exact, correct and well-timed; it boosts up the confidence level; a correct message has greater impact on the audience/ readers; it checks for the precision and accurateness of facts and figures used in the message and makes use of appropriate and correct language in the message.

Consistency. The approach to communication should, as far as possible, be consistent. There should not be too many ups and downs that might lead to confusion in the mind of the receiver. If a certain stand has been taken, it should be observed without there being situations in which the sender desires to bring about a change in his understanding of the situation. He should ensure that the shift is gradual and not hard for the receiver to comprehend.

Concreteness. Concrete and specific expressions are to be preferred in favour of vague and abstract expressions. In continuation of the point on correctness, the facts and figures presented should be specific. Abstractions or abstract statements can cloud the mind of the sender. Instead of stating "There has been a rise in paddy yield", if the sender made the following statement: "There has been a rise in paddy yield by almost 20% as compared to last year", the receiver is more apt to listen and comprehend the details. Concrete message is supported with specific facts and figures; it makes use of words that are clear and build the reputation and concrete messages are not misinterpreted.

Conciseness. The message to be communicated should be as brief and concise as possible. As far as possible, only simple and brief statements should be made. Excessive information can also sway the receiver into either a wrong direction or into inaction. Quantum of information should be just right, neither too much nor too little. Concise communication is both time-saving as well as cost-saving. It underlines and highlights the main message as it avoids using excessive and needless words. Concise communication provides short and essential message in limited words to the audience. A concise message is more appealing and comprehensible to the audience and is non-repetitive in nature

4S's : An understanding of the 4 S's is equally important.

Shortness. It is often said that "Brevity is the soul of wit.". The same can be said about communication. If the message can be made brief, then transmission and comprehension of messages is going to be faster and more effective. Flooding messages with high sounding words does not create an impact. Often, the receiver

has spent a major chunk of his time in trying to decipher the actual meaning of the message.

Simplicity. Simplicity both in the usage of words and ideas reveals clarity in the thinking process. Using simple terminology and equally simple concepts would help.

Strength. The strength of a message emanates from the credibility of the sender. If the sender himself believes in a message that he is about to transmit, there is bound to be strength and conviction in whatever he tries to state. Half-hearted statements or utterances that the sender himself does not believe in adds a touch of falsehood to the entire communication process.

Sincerity. A sincere approach to an issue is clearly evident to the receiver. If the sender is genuine, it will be reflected in the manner in which he communicates.

Conditions for effective communication:

It is important to recognize that the environment within the formal organization structure will have an effect upon the successful transmission of concepts and ideas from the appropriate sender to the receiver. If the employees are clearly aware of superior-subordinate relationships and horizontal networks, the employees will know with whom they should communicate directly and what communication needs and expectations the receiver will have. If lines of authority and channels of communication are not known, an abundance of miscommunication, excessive communication or lack of communication will occur; similar is the case in the field between extension functionaries and farmers.

In an exhaustive theory of organization, communication would occupy a central place because the structure, extensiveness and scope of organization are almost entirely determined by communication techniques. Researchers have shown that the average executive spends nearly 70 percent of his working time in communication – in writing, reading, speaking and listening. Today's managers must be active communicators since all management functions require the skill of communication.

Communication is the crux of Agricultural Extension and hence needs to be understood and practiced in the right perspective to realize the objectives of Agricultural Extension and make the farmers better informed farmers about the technology, domestic and international markets and the emerging trends in the field.

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