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**Subject Name: Communication Skills**

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**Chapter 3. Listening and Writing Skills**

**3.1. Basic Listening Skills**

**3.1.1. Introduction**

- Listening is a crucial aspect of effective communication. While hearing is simply the act of perceiving a sound through ears, listening involves hearing and understanding what is heard.
- The ability of listen means the ability to correctly receive and interpret messages. If one does not listen with attention, messages can be misunderstood.
- The importance of listening extends far beyond personal settings into academic and professional setting.
- The speaker can figure out if the person he is addressing is listening carefully or not through the addressee's body language, facial expressions, posture, eye contact and other non-verbal cues which do not involve direct speaking. Listening shows an understanding of an interest in the topic being discussed.
- The listener can paraphrase and summarize what the speaker has said after regular intervals and confirm with the speaker if that was he meant by politely saying, "What I gathered from", What you said is that..." or, "Correct me if I'm wrong, but..."
- Effective listening is a skill that every leader or manager must possess in order to prosper.

### **3.1.2. Elements of Effective Listening**

To improve our capacity to listen, we must be aware of and make choices regarding the level of concentration and how hard each time, we listen to something. The elements of listening effectively, arranged in the order in which they occur, are as follows.

#### **1. Hearing**

- To hear is to perform the physiological act of perceiving sounds as they reach our ears. It is essential to be an alert listener in order to be a good listener.

#### **2. Filtering:**

- The removal of unwanted stimuli is known as filtering. The stimuli can be internal and external. Internal stimuli can be work deadlines, information needed for decision-making, headache, etc.
- The external stimuli can be spoken words or physical experience that affects our senses, things beyond our control, etc.

#### **3. Interpreting:**

- To interpret the message means to make understand the sense of the message being sent.
- It is significant for the listener to understand the sense of the message, which is sent by the sender.

#### **4. Evaluating:**

- The listener must assess the message, i.e., he must evaluate what is the essence of the message, what is being said in the message, whether it is partly or fully right or wrong, respectful or disrespectful, intelligent or stupid, logical or illogical, etc.

## **5. Responding:**

- Having listened to what the speaker has to say, the listener must respond to him to indicate that he has comprehended what was conveyed to him.

### **3.1.3. Objectives of Listening**

Listening serves the following purpose:

- Develops and builds strong relationships. Listening allows individuals to know themselves and others in a better way.
- Obtains and understands information.
- Objectively evaluates the message, which involves estimating its correctness and judging its relevance to a given situation.
- People may also listen to something for their own delight, e.g., listening to a friend's experiences on a trip he had recently undertaken, listening to music or listening to birds chirping.
- People may also listen to understand the problems of others who might want to share and listen the burden of their sorrows. Someone may also listen because he wants some advice concerning the necessary action to take regarding a particular issue.

### **3.1.4. Process of Listening**

- The process of listening included five elements. One of those hearing and other four include filtering, interpreting, responding, and remembering.
- It comprise of five stages, which, in the order of their occurrence i.e., sensing/selecting, interpreting, assessing, responding and remembering.

### **1. Sensing/selecting Stage:**

- A Number of stimuli surround the listener but he/she only chooses the relevant ones. She/he then transforms them into a message.

### **2. Interpreting Stage:**

- During this stage, the listener tries to interpret or assign meaning to the message.
- In this process, the listener is confronted with many emotional, environmental, linguistic, semantic or psychological hurdles.

### **3. Evaluating Stage:**

- At this stage, the listener evaluates the message of the speaker and examines it to form a point of view, ask himself/herself what the crucial aspects of speaker's arguments are infers conclusions from the speaker's comments and checks the correctness of the information and facts for or against what the speaker has said.
- At times, previous experiences, sentiments, and beliefs disturb the listener and make the evaluation process hard for the listener.

### **4. Responding Stage**

- At this stage, the listener has interpreted and analyzed the message and is prepared to respond to the speaker.
- The listener's body language and other non-verbal cues let the speaker knows whether what he has said has made sense to the listener or not and if the listener has been only pretending to pay attention.

### **5. Remembering Stage:**

- This is the last stage of listening. If one listens effectively, one may remember the parts what one has heard.
- In fact, how much one remembers of a talk or a speech is often an indication of how much attention one was paying to it, while the presentation was going on.
- It is unfortunate that regardless of how good a speaker is most listeners can recall only 10-25% of a presentation or speech.
- For this reason, a speaker who wants to make a good impression must always present his points in an organized way, aided by good visuals, so that his audience remembers what he has said when he is over with the presentation.

### **3.1.5. Type of Listening**

### **1. Discriminative Listening**

- It begins in an individual at a very early stage.
- It is the most fundamental form of listening and does not involve comprehending the meanings of words, phrases, or sentences but simply recognizing the different sounds that are produced.

### **2. Comprehensive Listening**

- After being able to distinguish between different sounds of a language, comes the task of making sense of them.
- Word, phrase, or sentence in a particular language requires having a good vocabulary, appropriate language skills, and knowledge of rules of saying.
- Comprehensive listening is also called content listening, informative listening, and full listening.

### **3. Active Listening:**

- It involves paying maximum attention to the words of a speaker to understand as much as possible of what he is saying.

### **4. Passive listening:**

- It means to listen to what the speaker is saying without reacting in between or interrupting him and not being involved in any other activity during this time.

### **5. Biased Listening:**

- Listening in a prejudiced way occurs when someone listens only to what he wants to listen and neglects everything else.
- Such a person is unable to receive right meaning of what is being said since he makes sense of the messages he receives based on stereotypes and other prejudices.

### **6. Evaluative Listening:**

- In evaluative listening, we try to assess and examine whether what is being said is in agreement with or against our own values, is logical or illogical, coherent or incoherent, consistent or inconsistent, what are the pros and cons of an argument and whether it is beneficial to us in any way or not.
- It is especially relevant when someone is trying to influence us to change point of view as it also importantly involves noticing the subtle ways in which language can be used to get one's point across.

- It is called interpretive, judgmental, or critical listening.

## **7. Appreciative Listening**

- Appreciative; listening is activated within a person when she/he is listening to a great leader's speech, a fine musician's music, or a great poet reciting his poetry, i.e., listening to things, which she/he finds valuable, enjoys, and would prefer to give time to other things.

### **8. Sympathetic Listening:**

- Listening sympathetically to a speaker means we are concerned about him, listen to him with full attention, and feel pity and sad for his unfortunate condition.

### **9. Empathetic Listening:**

- It means to move far from sympathy and share the feelings of the speaker.
- It requires a nuanced understanding of both verbal and non-verbal emotional signals.
- For someone to trust us as an empathetic listener, we need to show that we are sensitive enough to understand his/her situation.

### **10. Therapeutic Listening:**

- Therapy is counseling intended to treat psychological problems.
- To listen therapeutically means that the listener has to go further than empathizing with the speaker and use the deep connection the listener has established with the speaker to aid the speaker evolve to see a therapist but also in many other situations.

### **11. Dialogic Listening:**

- 'Dialogue' as a word has its origins in the Greek words 'dia', meaning 'through', and 'logos', meaning 'words'.
- Thus dialogic listening means people acquiring knowledge by talking to each other and exchanging ideas in such a way that each person actively seeks to learn more about the other person's point of view.
- Dialogic listening is, at times, also called 'relational listening'.

### **12. Relationship Listening:**

- At times, the most crucial purpose of listening is to build a relationship.
- That is the reason why two people who love each other endlessly and pay careful attention to the smallest things they say to each other.
- However, those things would seem extremely meaningless to them when talking to someone else.
- Developing relationships through listening is also significant if you are, a salesperson or a negotiating with is vital if you want to sell your product to him or persuade him regarding something.

### **3.1.6. Methods for Improving Listening Skills**

Some methods that can be used to develop listening skills are:



### **1. Do not interrupt:**

- To cultivate the ability to listen, one should first stop talking oneself and let the speaker to speak freely without being interrupted.
- One should only respond when the person who is communicating has finished speaking. Listening actively, that is listening with full concentration instead of talking too much leads to a deeper understanding of the subject being discussed.
- To train yourself not to interrupt people while they are talking and improve your capacity to listen.

### **2. Ask Searching Questions:**

- To enhance his listening skills, the listener should ask through questions when a speaker has finished speaking.
- These questions may be ones, which ask the speaker to elaborate on some parts of what he has already said, request him to provide further depth regarding a few issues.
- Relying on searching questions is extremely useful in gaining greater understanding of a subject; it not only reassures the speaker that he was being listened to while he was talking, but also gives him the opportunity to go beyond the specific topic of discussion and clarify his views and feelings in greater detail to his listeners.

### **3. Statements of Confirmation:**

- It also helps to develop listening skills. A statement of confirmation offers a way for the listener to check whether he has accurately grasped what the speaker has been saying.
- It also gives the speaker an opportunity to put in additional information or clarify what he has already said. Statements of confirmation can be of four kinds:
  - I. A straight forward confirming statement such as, “Let me see if I have understood you correctly..”
  - II. A summary of the main points to check if what has been said has been understood appropriately.
  - III. A question to check if the understanding is accurate.
  - IV. Ambiguity must be sorted out, if needed.

### **4. Concentrate Fully on What the speaker is saying:**

- While the speaker is talking, the listener should not divert his concentration by simultaneously worrying about how to respond to what is being said.

- The listener should first focus on listening to the speaker clearly.
- This listener should give the speaker complete attention and acknowledge regularly nodding his head and looking directly into the speaker's eyes while he is talking.

## **5. Non-listening Exercise:**

- Try a 'non-listening exercise with a partner to get an idea of how it feels when you want to be listened to but are not.
- Tell your partner to purposely lose his focus when you are talking and trying to convey a significant idea to him.
- Your partner could do this in a variety of ways by continuously looking at his watch, by repeatedly shuffling some papers lying close by or by regularly looking away from you time to time.

### **3.1.7. Self-Awareness in Listening**

- Self-awareness facilitates a listening, which does not contain any kind of assumption.
- It is important to know how to deeply listen ourselves before listening deeply to others. The frame of reference of others can be understood by using self-awareness.
- In simple words, in order to unculcate good listening skills,
- it is vital to understand the various filters, which form our own communication styles.
- When a person listens to someone, he/she starts analyzing it, which then activates the hidden judgments and emotional reactions of the person.
- The ability to effectively deal with these filters can be hampered if we adopt a defensive approach.
- This will negatively affect the ability to establish good relations even with those whom we care and love.

The following things must be noticed while we communicate with office colleagues, friends, family members, or strangers:

**1. Body Language:** It includes the way people sit or stand; the state they are in ; their body postures (open or closed), etc.

**2. Eye Contact:** It includes making eye contact and maintaining it. People tend to look here and there, down and up, or look at different people in the environment.

**3. Mind's Focus:** It includes the things upon which the mind is concentrating. Often people do not follow what the speaker is saying. Their mind focuses upon something else, about the friend who is about to visit or call a doctor, or doing lunch, etc.

### **3.1.8. Listening in Difficult Situation:**

- When a person is emotional or angry, his/her listening becomes difficult.

- In such states, people may require some extra tools for listening and facilitating the information exchange process if they really want to have a successful and productive communication.

In difficult situations the below mentioned points can be quite useful for becoming a good listener:

**1. Prepare to Listen:**

- Preparation for listening can be done in three stages, viz. long –term, mid-term and short-term.
- It is a lifetime process to become an effective listener, which means that long term and ongoing efforts have to be made for widening the listening ability.

In order to boost our listening skills, two things can be done:

**i. Practicing listening to uneasy and complex materials and**

**ii. Concentrating on the speaker's subject.**

## **2. Adjust to the Situation:**

- Each listening situation is different from the other. There will always be some changes in the speakers or the messages.
- Listening is also affected by various other factors, which are not so evident. Psychological variables, Physical variables, and Physiological variable affect the listening capability.

## **3. Capitalise on the Speed Differential:**

- Thinking is much faster than speaking.
- The speaking capability of an average person is 2-3- words/second or 120-180 words/minute depending upon the types of words.
- However, when we are excited, there are chances that we could speak more words.
- A slow pace is maintained by the public speaker in case of large audiences.
- Most of the people can listen to about 500 words per minute depending upon subject of matter.

## **4. Avoid Negative mannerisms:**

- Every person has his/her kind of mannerism.
- This can be proved by observing someone for some time. One has not to worry about his mannerism if it is not yielding any negative effect.
- In fact, a person has to repeat all those mannerisms, which can bring some positive responses from others.
- However, we should know that there are some negative mannerisms too which must be neglected.

## **5. Training your listening:**

- For effective listening, practice and training are essential.
- People must remember that one needs good practice to become good listener similar to an athlete or musician who practices daily for improving their skills.

## **6. Eliminate Distractions:**

- External and internal disturbances along with the semantic noise must be neglected or noticed carefully in order to get avoided.
- In fact, people should always consider themselves as both listener and speaker in the communication process and they must actively participate in it.

## **3.1.9. Importance of Listening**

The following points of listening:

### **1. Respect:**

- A person shows respect when she/he listens to the speaker with complete attention. Similarly, the speaker also gives respect in return.

### **2. Airtime:**

- People tend to return favor, if a person listens to them.
- However, many people depend upon other people to them and may not return the favor. However, most of the people, in general, know the value of exchange in any conversation.

### **3. Information:**

- one can explore and learn more about the society through attentive listening.
- Learning new social concepts is important for the growth of both personal and professional life.
- The information gained from attentive listening helps in understanding different kinds of people and society as a whole.

### **4. Increased Likeability:**

- Every person wants to be liked.
- People like those who listen to them.
- By focusing on attentive listening, a person can increase his chances of being liked by other people.

### **5. Better Relationships:**

- In any relationship, whether professional or personal, listening plays a major role as it develops a feeling of helpfulness and goodwill.
- One can increase the quality of his relationships by listening to the problems and opinions of other people non-judgmentally.
- The speaker may feel the freedom to talk, share, and find solutions to their problems if the listener listens without judging.

#### **6. Greater Clarity:**

- People can avoid conflicts, confusion, and misunderstandings that usually develop in a conversation by listening carefully.
- If a person listens carefully, there is a greater possibility of avoiding conversational traps and usual arguments.
- Careful listening offers great advantages, which are synergistic and interrelated, i.e., a person can take advantage of good listening, which further provides him with other benefits as well.

## **7. No misunderstandings:**

- Misunderstandings can be reduced largely when active listening is involved.
- It includes checking and reflecting whether every individual has understood the right meaning of whatever is said and all the information and facts are heard correctly.
- The effectiveness of communication between two persons can be increased significantly through better mutual understanding.

## **8. Willingness of Speaker to open Up More:**

- By listening attentively, a person can show respect and honor to others' opinions and emotions. This opens up the people and encourages them to express themselves in a better way.
- When someone is valued through careful listening, he/she is less prone to be judged, which further builds up the inner confidence to share his/her thoughts and viewpoints thereby increasing the willingness of the speaker to open up more.

## **9. Defuses conflict:**

- The probability of conflicts decreases when the speaker is heard carefully.
- Through careful listening, people vent their emotions and apprehensions in a free manner without any hesitation or interruption.
- With this, there are fewer chances that the speaker will become aggressive or defensive, which further defuse conflicts.

## **10. Identify agreements and disagreements:**

- The areas of agreements/disagreements, flaws, etc., between the speaker and the listener can be identified with the help of attentive listening.
- An agreement when identified transforms disagreements into standpoints and minimizes their importance thereby facilitating effective communication.
- In addition, the speaker has an increased tendency to recognize flaws in his/her standpoint when the active listener recalls it without any kind of criticism.

## **11. Considers different points of view:**

- People usually tend to find an alternative opinion or soften their argument when they realize that their viewpoint is being listened and acknowledged.
- When personal opinions are valued and honored through careful listening, considering different viewpoint of other people becomes easier.



- Thus, the speaker, as well as listener, can gain a richer understanding of opinions through attentive listening which ultimately helps them to achieve desirable outcomes.

### **3.1.10. Barriers to Listening:**

- Barriers to the process of listening may arise due to the speaker, listener, or the circumstances in which communication is taking place.

Hurdles to the listening process are of following kinds:

#### **1. Physical process:**

- The listening process is more prone to disruption by physical distractions and disturbances such as physical discomfort, noise, or any other physical factor.
- Any external sound that interrupts the process of listening can be termed as physical noise.
- The listening process can also be easily disturbed by physical uneasiness since one cannot listen well if he is feeling physically tired or uneasy.

## **2. Psychological Barriers:**

- Psychological problems, that is, problems resulting from an unstable of mind, prove to be the most familiar hurdles to effective listening.
- The activity of listening demands focus and listener's unstable state of mind can obstruct it because an understanding of others ideas is adversely influenced by the feelings of fear, anxiety, anger, sadness and frustration he is going through at the time of receiving the message or which are , in general, part of his psyche.

## **3. Linguistic Barriers:**

- During oral communication, if the speaker and the listener speak different languages or different dialects of the same language, the message of the speaker could be improperly decoded by the listeners, and lead to confusion and mistakes in interpretation.

## **4. Cultural Barriers:**

- Owing to an increasingly globalised world, the workplace is becoming more and more diverse and people from different culture who inhabit the same space need to find ways to coexist and work well together.
- Each culture has its own set of customs, beliefs and standards when it comes to one-to-one interactions and trying to communicate one's point effectively to a speaker and a listener belonging to different cultures communicate orally, and the speaker may assign meanings to the message from one cultural frame of reference.

### **3.4.11. Overcoming the Barriers to Listening**

The methods by which one can overcome obstruction to the listening process are:

### **1. Maintain Eye Contact:**

- When a listener does not make an eye contact with speaker, it is an indication that he is not interested in what the speaker is saying.
- In order to support the speaker, the listener must make it a point to maintain eye contact with him.

### **2. Notice Body Language:**

- Non-Verbal cues such as listener's alert posture, or the listener's continuously read-noticing in acknowledgement of what the speaker is saying, or the suitable facial expressions of the listener in reaction to the message the speaker is conveying are crucial to indicate to the speaker that the listener is paying attention to him.

### **3. Avoid Gestures of distraction:**

- Actions such as repeatedly looking at the time in his watch or a clock close by, glancing at a newspaper, rearranging the bundle of papers, fiddling with a pen, doodling and other distractions on the part of the listener should definitely be avoided if he has to show the speaker that he is listening to him intently.

### **4. Do not be Afraid to ask Questions:**

- A good listener always has the questions to ask the speaker, after intervals of time since listening closely to the speaker will definitely generate issues, which need to be clarified for proper understanding.

### **5. Paraphrase and Summaries What the Speaker has Said:**

- To paraphrase what the speaker has said means to restate it in your own words; whereas, to summarize what the speaker has said means to rephrase it briefly without altering its substance.

Two major causes why paraphrasing and summarizing are as follow:

- I) It acts as a measure of how carefully the listener was paying attention to the speaker because unless one is listening carefully to what is being said, one cannot paraphrase and summarize it
- II) by rephrasing the message of the speaker in a concise fashion, one saves time and also ensures efficiency by saying the same thing in fewer words.

### **6. Do not hastily interpret the speaker:**

- A good listener should not hastily pre-judge what a speaker is saying and assume that he has understood it before the speaker has finished his points.

### **7. Do not cut short the speaker:**

- If a listener does not have the patience to listen to a speaker in a disciplined way, he keeps cutting him short and asserts his own viewpoint over the speakers.
- He will miss out the essence of the speaker message and will only be speaking his own mind rather than understanding the thoughts of the speaker.
- Listening to and talking to the same person cannot happen together.

### **8. Make the speaker comfortable:**

- The listener should let the speaker know, through his mental and physical attitude, that he is an attentive listener.
- Doing so will make the speaker comfortable in the listener's presence and he will be able to talk more freely.

### **9. Do not quarrel with the speaker:**

- The listener should not stop the speaker rudely in the middle of his speech with interjections such as, "how can that be possible..." or "prove what you are saying..."
- It will only lead to unfruitful quarrels and no productive output will be achieved.

### **10. Remain impartial:**

- The listener should not get too emotionally carried away by the content of the speaker's speech.
- He should not react instantly to what the speaker has said and make his comments when the speaker has finished and is ready to listen to his audience.
- The listener should attempt to understand the perspective of the speaker objectively.

### **11. Remove distractions:**

- The listener should not fiddle around with papers, pencils, doodles, etc. or indulge in other activity while the speaker is talking.
- Turning off the radio or even shutting a door or a window while communicating is talking place will also cut out unnecessary noise and help the listener to listen to the speaker more clearly.

### **12. Acknowledge what the speaker is saying in different ways:**

- Responses from the listener such as "yes" or "I see" or the listeners nodding his head while the speaker is talking tells the speaker that he is being understood.

- They do not necessarily mean that the listener agrees with the speaker on every count but just that the former is paying attention to what is being said by the latter.

### **13. Maintain cool attitude:**

- Anger often makes a listener misinterpret the meaning of the words of a speaker and causes confusion.
- It is easy to lose one's temper while listening to a speaker, especially when one does not agree with what the speaker is saying, the listener should try to avoid this as it could provoke him to react beforehand without gaining a full understanding of what is being said.
- He should at least give the speaker a fair chance to complete what he is saying before coming up with a response.

### **14. Respect pauses or silence:**

- Any good speaker would like to give himself some time to think before he speaks; therefore, he may often pause during his speech.
- The listener must not fall in to trap of interrupting the speaker during this moment of silence.

### **15. Respond honestly:**

- When genuinely asked for his response the listener should answer honestly, if he wants something rewarding to emerge out of the discussion.

### **16. Read between the lines:**

- At times, what is not being said is also as important as what is being said.
- The listener must be alert to the mood, feelings, and attitude of the speaker, which often reveals far more than the words he speaks. A strong feeling of empathy is needed from the listener for this purpose.

### **17. Grasp the total meaning:**

- The listener should try to listen to and understand the message of the speaker in its totality.
- He should not make hurried assumption or pass quick judgments regarding what is being said.

**18. Observe the speakers gesture:**

- The listener should patiently and keenly watch out for or even note down the subtle, voluntary, or involuntary gestures of the speaker such as twitches of the face or movements of the hands or tone or pitch of the speakers voice as they could shed light on the speakers honesty.

**19. Do not pretend to pay attention:**

- If the listener is eager to learn something from the speakers talk, he should be earnest and serious about grasping its essence.
- Just pretending to be a good listener by an outward show of listening silently and fake eye contact will not work for long and people who behave this way will miss out all the substance of the speaker's presentation.
- Moreover, if by chance the speaker questions such listeners at the end of his talk, they are in danger of being exposed and embarrassed.

**20. Do not be prejudiced:**

- Listeners should keep aside personal prejudice about the speaker or his views and should analyze the subject matter of his speech on his own merit.
- Example: students often assume that lectures, especially by their teachers on topics from the syllabus, will necessarily be boring and do not pay attention to them.
- In doing so, they may miss learning something valuable from an expert on the topic.

## **3.2. ACTIVE LISTENING**

### **3.2.1. Introduction**

- Active listener (usually known as engaged listener) is the one who believes in seriously performing the responsibilities of communication.
- Active listening can be thus defined as process of carefully tuning into the message of the speaker and responding to them accurately.
- It is the most fundamental aspect of effective communication. In simple terms, active listening forces the listener to respond to the emotions and opinions of the speaker.
- Since most human communications are indirect, the process of decoding is essential. People are more likely to encode their messages while speaking instead of communicating in a clear and direct manner about what they are actually thinking.
- Hence, active listening can be considered as a fusion of reflection of emotions and expertise of reaffirmation of content. It encourages a feeling of being heard and comprehended within the speaker.
- Thus, the fact that active listening is significant to the process of communication should be emphasized upon.

According to Egan, four fundamental factors exist, which the listener should focus upon when communicating with the speaker. These four fundamental factors are:

- 1) Experiences - what do they observe regarding what is happening to them?
- 2) Behaviors – what they have done successfully, or have failed to do?
- 3) Sentiments – what are their emotions, feeling and sentiments?
- 4) Viewpoint – what are their viewpoints?

### **3.2.2 Guidelines for becoming an active listener**

#### **1. Listen with patience:**

- The speaker deserves a patient bearing, even if the listener does not agree with him.
- The listener can encourage the speaker to continue talking in simple ways such as nodding, or saying “hmm...” or “go on”.

#### **2. Understand the emotions of the speaker:**

- It is important for the listener to understand the speaker both intellectually and emotionally. Effective listeners must concentrate fully on what a speaker is saying because many speakers are not able to express their emotions in a clear manner.

#### **3. Restatement and summary:**

- The listener must reframe in summary from what the speaker has said to him, and do so in such a way that it reassures the speaker and makes him go on talking.
- For example: when a speaker finishes complaining about how unhappy he is in his current job because of his manager's manipulative and dishonest behavior, the listener can summarize his long angry speech by simply focusing on the crucial reasons of his dissatisfaction and say, “so what you are saying is that your manager is unfair and only promotes his favorites over others who work much harder than them”;
- However, in doing so, he must keep his tone neutral and try not to force his own assumptions or conclusions regarding the issue on the speaker.

#### **4. Set aside time for questions and discussion:**

- Allotting separate time for questions and answer as well as discussion, when the speaker has finished talking, is always a good idea.
- This helps to separate formal from informal communication, and makes the usage of language less cumbersome and more interesting.
- In other words, it does away with any officialities that might have otherwise been part of the conversation.

#### **5. Get past common clichés:**

- If a speaker has the tendency to use too many worn-out clichés or has routines and repetitive manner of expressing himself, but still has something valuable to say, the listener should overlook the negativities and pay attention to the crux of the speaker's message if he wants to learn something beneficial from it.



**6. Avoid interrupting the speaker:**

- An effective listener should not try to express his views while the speaker is expressing his own as this could repress what the speaker is trying to say.

**7. Establish a close relationship with the speaker:**

- It is good idea for the listener to try to form a friendly equation with the speaker based on trust and goodwill.

**8. Do not judge:**

- People should listen to other rather than judging. People often evaluate and judge other people for the purpose of problem solving.
- People should know that the beginning point of listening is simply listen and others not to resolve other problems by judging them.

### **3.2.3. Advantages of Active Learning:**

1. Active listening provides surely to the listener as well as to the speaker that the message conveyed is undeniably the message received. That is to say, the listening has correctly understood the speaker's message.
2. In active listening, the listener is involved in significant manner. The listener no longer presumes that the message is correctly understood; rather, he/she acts as a participant in the communication process and gets involved in the negotiation of the message.
3. By listening actively, the listener is relieved from being a teacher, rescuer, or judge. He/she simply imitates the message again to the speaker without performing any activity such as giving advice, judging, problem solving, etc.
4. When the listener is listening carefully, the speaker can freely disclose his/her viewpoint and emotions without worrying about being criticized, threatened or scolded. It is the active listening of the listeners that provides speaker with the opportunity to explore and share their real thoughts with liberty.
5. A feeling of trust is developed between the listener and the speaker through active listening, i.e., the speaker trusts the listeners and vice versa. It is this trust, which provides speaker with the freedom to open up his/her heart and share their real opinions.

### **3.2.4. Disadvantages of active listening:**

1. Active listening requires a great deal of time and energy. In many circumstances, a lot of time is consumed in active learning.
2. Active listening demands continuous, determined, and disciplined concentration and efforts.
3. It often creates situations where speaker starts believing that the listeners are agreeing with whatever he/she is saying; regardless of whether listeners are, agree/disagree with the speaker.
4. Sometimes, an active listener becomes a 'listening post' where everyone wants him/her to listen whatever he or she are saying.
5. An active listener often facts difficulties of listening peoples unnecessary wrath or frustrates burst outs.

## **3.3. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

### **3.3.1 Meaning & Definition:**

- The communication that takes place with the help of written symbols, hand either written or printed, is known as written communication.
- The elements that facilitate written communication are memos, letters, bulletins, circulars, instruction booklets, reports, manuals, handbooks, magazines, etc.
- Any kind of interaction that uses written words can be referred to as written communication. Communication is the solution to any attempt that involves at least two persons.
- Written communication is very important in the current scenario and its gaining even more importance as the trend of information age is evolving.
- Written form of communication is the most popular among all the other types of business communications.
- Owners as well as managers of small businesses need to become efficient in written communication and motivate their employees to do the same.
- Communication methods have immensely been altered by the information age, which in turn put a lot of emphasis on the written forms of communications as compared to oral forms of communication.

According to university of North Carolina, “written communication is defined as clear expression of ideas in writing; includes grammar, organization, and structure.”

### **3.3.2. Characteristics of Written Communication**

Below mentioned are the characteristics of written communication:

#### **1. Most formal form of communication:**

- Casual, friendly, or all other informal communication often takes place orally.
- On the other hand, written modes of communication are usually preferred when formal communication is required.

#### **2. Exercised for Documentation:**

- Written communication is exercised generally for the documentation purposes.
- In organizations, written communication is required in order to document important decisions and to maintain records.

#### **3. Used to Circulate Information:**

- It is also used to circulate information within the organization.

- It is the preferred method for circulating the information because it protects the information from falsification and grammatical rules of a language.

#### **4. Conventional in Nature:**

- Grammar has more number of rules for written communication as compared to oral communication.
- Written communication strictly needs to follow a set of pattern defined by the **5. Sender and Receiver Need Not be present at the Same Time;**
- In order to proceed with the process of written communication, the availability of either the sender or the receiver is enough at a time.
- This is one of the important features of written communication.

#### **6. Creative Activity**

- Being a creative activity, the written communication needs creativity as well as conscious efforts.
- Mind produces stimuli that impart creativity to this effort.
- Oral communication gets its stimuli from the outside environment through the sensory receptor.

#### **7. Involves Time Factor:**

- The time factor that is involved in written communication is another important characteristic. In case of written communication, the receiver takes a very little or no time for decoding the message.
- Whereas, the written forms of communication takes place and the time that might be taken has no limit.

#### **8. It has Fewer Receivers**

- The number of cycles that takes place in written communication is less than that in oral communication.
- Oral communication involves numerous exchanges of symbols which results into multiple cycles.
- On the other hand, written communication mostly has one cycle, i.e., firstly a message is sent and then its reply is received.

### **3.3.3. Types of Written Communication:**

Following are the various types of written communications:

## **1. External Written Communication:**

- It is used for the individuals, which are not the part of the organization. These individuals range from local to global readers and include clients, customers, and persons who might be affected the products, services, or activities of the company, etc.
- It is becoming crucial for the organizations to identify their duty as community's responsible members, as interdependence between local economics, businesses, national and global market is increasing, and so is the concerned for the environment.

### **i. Business Letters:**

- They are the formal letters, drafted to definite goal. The main purpose of business letter is to carry out some specific business and theses are usually sent to known businesspersons.
- Letters are the basic form of written external communication that is most commonly used between friends to discuss personal matters or between companies or individuals discussing business related matters.

### **ii. Recruitment and Employment Correspondence:**

- Several types of letters are exchange between an organization and candidates.
- The basic recruitment and employment communication is done through application letter followed by different letters that are needed during the hiring process.

### **iii. Proposals:**

- Proposals are the offers made by one party to provide desired products or service to the second party in exchange for money.
- In business terms, proposals is a business letter, which is given to an organization or advertised in order to attract public attention towards any innovative measure, issue, or activity associated with the organization.

### **iv. Technical Articles;**

- Research and technical articles have their importance in the fields of technology, science, management, and humanities since they enhance the current know how and insights of a particular subjects or topic.

### **v. Facsimiles/Fax:**

- Facsimiles or fax is the picture of a document scanned and sent from one location to another through electronic media or a fax machine.

- By using a fax, businessperson can correspond with each other in a effective and efficient manner.

**vi. Telegrams:**

- A message sent by or electricity which is later printed and dispatched to the office or home of the receiver is called telegram.
- They also play an important part in business communication.

**vii. Telex Message:**

- The system of communication that involves a teletypewriter connected to a telephonic network, through which signals are sent and received, is known as a telex.
- It is considered as an international system of telegraphy, where message is printed forms are sent and received by teleprinters through public telecommunication network.

**viii. Brochures/Leaflets:**

- They are similar to post cards or open letters, which are circulated among people through hand post, or by inserting them in newspaper, leaving them at venues, restaurants shops, libraries, cafes, etc., in such a way that they attract people's attention.
- A pamphlet or booklet is extremely adaptable and can be used to promote any sort of marketing programme.

**ix. Press release:**

- This is an extremely important tool used in public and media relations.
- It aims at attracting media's interest, which would help in the publicity of events, products, and organizations.
- Several companies also use them as media outlets to fulfill their need for communication while simultaneously endorsing their corporate social responsibility.
- Press releases can also be used to communicate an organization's wider strategic directions and to make sure that corporation's image is maintained.

**x. Reports:**

- Reports are the description of a scenario or event.
- They are the most crucial tools that can be used to fulfill all types of communicative needs of a company.
- They are widely used in the process of decision-making at every managerial level of an organization.

## **2. Internal Written Communication:**

- There are two major functions played by internal writing. Its primary function is to provide information to employees regarding organization's current business of performance.
- The other function is to serve as the memory of the organization for the objective of designing, quality control, production, implementation, litigation, and transportation.
- Below mentioned are the the different type of internal communication.

### **1. Circulars:**

- There are certain notices that ask for the staff's opinion on a particular matter.
- They need to be circulated in the organization so that every employee retains its copy and can required to develop questionnaires and get them filled by the staff members, whose opinions or comments are welcomed for improving the provided suggestions.

### **ii. Notices:**

- It can be given in various forms such as written, oral, or a notification published or issued in news media.
- Prior to a meeting, a notice is given to everyone about who has right to attend the meeting.
- The date, place, and time of the meeting are informed to the members through the notice.

### **iii. Business Memorandum/Memos:**

- It is also called memos or memo, can be described as a written communication that is specially designed within the business.
- They serve several purposes such as providing directions, informing employees, outlining procedures, supplying responses, requesting data, and confirming decisions.

### **iv. Complaints:**

- In day-to-day work scenarios, many situations occur where people have complaints.
- The manner in which these complaints are dealt confirms if the client or guest would go back with a stronger relationship with the organization or would be lost forever.
- Nevertheless, these happen only when the person handling the complaint is an active listener and consider complaints as positive aspect.

### **v. Emails:**



- Electronic mails or emails are the exchange of message stored in computers by telecommunication.
- It is the service that aids in sending and receiving messages in a prompt and secure manner through a compute or electronic channel.
- It can technically be defined as a network service, which permits two or more users to correspond with each other through messages, which are sent and received using a computer or another similar device.

**vi. Questionnaire/Form:**

- Questionnaire is an instrument used to collected data. It comprises of set of questions that are asked to the respondents and proper space for the responses received.
- A questionnaire is the technique used to collect particular information regarding a distinct problem in such a way that after analyzing and interpreting the data, a proper result is obtained.
- This results are provides a better insight to the problem.

**vii. Minutes:**

- A written manuscript that records the core issues of the meeting in a precise and objective manner is called minutes.
- They are helpful because they aid the people in remembering what was discussed in the meeting and the decisions made which might otherwise be forgotten.

**viii. Staff Newsletter:**

- It is a company's publication for its staff members and contains all the necessary information and details.
- Company issues newsletters periodically. It updates the staff about of the routine activities, business scenarios, and overall performance of the company.

### **3.3.4. Advantages of Written Communication**

Advantages of written communication are as follows:

1. Content cannot be Distorted: Modifying the content of a written message is not possible. Hence, it cannot be distorted.
2. Economical: Written communication is very cheap form of communication. Written communication is more feasible when both the parties of communication are not in the same location.

3. Precise and Clear: Message that is to be communicated in written form are drafted more carefully than the oral ones. This makes written messages more precise and clear.
4. Record can be maintained: Written communication might also act as an extension to orally communicated message and assists in maintaining records. A reliable record can be maintained through written communication, which can be used for reference as well as in legal matters.

### **3.3.5. Disadvantages of Written Communication**

Disadvantages are follows:

1. Expensive: Messages communicated in the written form are not time effective. This increases the overall cost of the communication process.
2. Formal: It is a formal form of communication. Personal relations between the parties involved cannot be developed through written communication.
3. Difficulty in Amendment: After being dispatched, a written message cannot be amended or corrected for any mistake.
4. Causes of Misunderstandings: A written communication that is not properly drafted leaves scope for confusion and misinterpretation in the mind of the receiver.
5. Feedback: Instant feedback is not possible in case of written communication.

### **3.3.6. When & When not to use Written Communication**

- The possibilities of correctly understanding the message increases, if there is information about the reader's background or their previous reviews and experience with the message is known. There is a wide range of factors that help in determining when written communication is most effective.
- These factors include complexity of the topic, amount of discussion required, shades of meaning and extent of formal communication.

#### **3.3.6.1. Complexity of the topic**

- Written communication is one of the best methods of communicating with others, as it is easy to organize and understand.
- It means that it will be possible for the reader to read and understand the message effectively and clearly without requiring any additional information from any sources.
- The extent of basic difficulty related to a particular topic is termed as topic complexity.
- In fact, the topic sometimes becomes so complex that conducting a face-to-face meeting becomes a better idea.

#### **3.3.6.2. Amount of Discussion Required:**

- It is inefficient to conduct long discussions through written communication.
- Every time a person exchange information through written communication with others, the chances of misunderstanding increases, especially when the topic is complex or lengthy.

- Thus in written communication, decision making involved with explanations or conversations, or controversial subjects should be avoided.

### **Types of Discussion on Controversial Topics**

There are two types of discussions:

**1. Spontaneous Discussions:** one should always be ready to respond to controversial topics as they can be raised unexpectedly by one of the readers.

- Acknowledging the reader for raising the issue. However, it must be noted that response of the readers can differ.
- Deciding whether to deal with the issue immediately or to leave it for future.
- Evaluating whether others might need some time to write their reviews about the topic.

### **2. Planned Discussions on Controversial Topics:**

The consideration on the below mentioned topics can really help in planning the discussion on a controversial topic:

- Determining a clear objective,
- Developing the basic rules,
- Facilitating a common ground for understanding,
- Developing a discussion framework which maintains the concentration and flow, and
- Briefing discussion and obtaining feedbacks from the readers.

#### **3.3.6.3. Shades of Meaning:**

- It is an activity, which is usually done prior to the reading in order to analyze the connections between words.
- It provides the chance to interact with the words and rearrange them according to a particular intensity.
- With the help of shades of meaning, writing becomes more descriptive in nature, clearer and more interesting in reading.
- One should not feel offended or confused if the readers are not able to understand the real feelings behind the written communication when a highly important or emotional message is tried to be conveyed.

## **3.4. WRITING SKILLS**

### **3.4.1. Introduction**

- The writing ability plays important role while communicating with the customers.

- It is essential for business proposals, customer documentation, status reports, technical reports, and for replying to the e-mails.
- An efficient business communication requires well-chosen, properly organized, and effectively documented words.
- Writing skills are very essential for communication, no matter which level of organizational structure the employee belongs to Managers need to draft reports, e-mails, letters, and memos in order to give instructions to their subordinates and to direct them.
- The chances of misinterpretation also exist if the written communication is inefficient.

### **3.4.2. Purpose of Writing**

Communication serves two main purposes in business.

#### **1. Writing to Inform:**

- If a writer provides some information and attempts to explain it, then that written information is known as 'informative writing'.
- It is also known as 'expository writing' as it explains the facts and ideas. It is the information and not the opinions that are presented through informative writing.

#### **Informative Writing-A Checklist**

In order to determine whether a document is written in an effective informative manner., the below questions are asked.

- i. Does it target the topic to be discussed?
- ii. Does it inform the readers rather than persuading them?
- iii. Does it provide precise and accurate information?
- iv. Can the details and source of information be verified?
- v. Is it good to read?

#### **2. Writing to Persuade:**

- This form of writing is called 'persuasive writing' as it attempts to convince the reader viewpoint on a controversial topic.
- The matter under consideration generally has two or more opinions towards it. In this type of writing, the opinions are stated and not the facts.
- This form of writing is also known as argumentative writing.
- Opinion essays, editorials, business research reports, reviews, religious books, brochures of a political party, etc., follow persuasive form of writing.

- The opinion expressed by the by the writer should be convincing and backed by the facts and evidences.
- The viewpoints must be argued properly. The explanation of the opinion must be acceptable, logical, and well-organized.

### **Persuasive Writing-A Checklist**

The below mentioned questions must be replied positively in order to make sure that the content is persuasive or not:

- i. Does it target the reader?
- ii. Does it try to persuade and not to educate?
- iii. Whether the viewpoint is supported through valid evidences and facts?
- iv. Whether the thoughts and their explanations are logically arranged?
- v. Whether the reader gets influenced by the opinion of the writer?

### **3.4.3. Principles of Effective Writing**

In order to write effectively, the following principles should be followed.

#### **1. Place the Reader First:**

- Writers must give priority their readers while writing content.
- Doing this will help the writers to use proper language, correct tone, and suitable content in their matter.
- Writers should keep in mind that the readers do not want elaborated information, complicated language, and difficult terminologies; instead, they prefer the matter, which is easily understandable and provides only important information.
- Therefore, if a writer has understood his readers well, he would be in a better position to write his article.

#### **2. Keep to the Point:**

In case of formal letters, particularly to some business deals, one should try to remain to the point and avoid wasting the reader's time.

So one should be clear about the purpose of writing the letter. Following the points help a writer to make an outline plan of the letter, this in turn will help him to keep their letter to-the-point:

- i. Prepare a list of the topics to be covered and do not bother about their sequence.
- ii. Write the arguments and facts, e.g., evidences, keywords, under each of the listed topic.

iii. Scrutinize all the listed topics regarding their suitability as far as the readers and purposes of writing is concerned.

iv. Remove the topics, which are irrelevant to the subject or for the readers.

v. Provide a proper sequence to the topics.

### **3. Set the Right Tone:**

- A business letter should always be in a polite yet effective language.
- The audience, i.e., readers, expects that the sender is aware about their issues and grievances.
- To write in such a way, one should write exactly what he would have spoken in person.

#### **4. Write a Strong Opening:**

While writing a letter one must try to draw the attention of the readers. Following are some of the examples of beginning lines of a business letter.

- i. Thank you for writing to us. The letter you wrote on 21 June 2016 has been presented before me for my presentation.
- ii. In reference to your previous communication, we want to let you know that we have still not received the cheque from you against your outstanding arrears.
- iii. This letter is written in relation to our telephonic conversation of yesterday about....

#### **5. Write a Strong Close:**

The last paragraph of the letter must be written in a polite and professional tone. In the traditional style of sending the letter, generally the readers are requested to reply. Sometimes, too much use of phrases and jargons can distract the mind of readers and reduce the influence of the content on them.

- i. I greatly regret the delay in responding to your grievances and I believe that now your queries have been resolved. In case if you have any doubts any other information, you may pay a visit to our office.
- ii. We are hoping for a response from you on this and between if you have any doubts or confusion regarding anything, you are always welcome to contact us.
- iii. I owe you a sorry, as I will not be able to help you much in this regard. However, in case if you have any other queries, you are free to discuss your problems with me.

If the letter is too long then the last paragraph of the letter should sum up the main points of the letter. In case some successive activities are needed, then the writers should elaborate that note and in a positive way.

#### **3.4.4. Process of Writing**

Guffey illustrated the process of writing through his 3\*3 model so uniquely that students understood the writing process very easily.

3\*3 refers that the process is divided into three phases, which are further divided into three sub steps.

##### **1. Phase 1: Pre writing:**

The time period between determining the topic and actually putting it into words is known as the pre writing phase.



### **i) Analyzing:**

- Analyzing means the writer should determine the purpose behind the writing, the message he wants to convey, and the most appropriate channel for conveying it.
- Some of the channels used for delivering a written message are phone, letter, e-mail, report, memo, proposal, blogs, etc.

### **ii) Anticipating:**

- The next step is to anticipate, i.e. the writer should know that how much aware and familiar is his audience about the topic he is going to write.

### **iii) Adapting to task and audience:**

After knowing the audience properly, the next thing a writer should do is to adopt the appropriate language, tone, vocabulary, etc., so that the audience can easily understand the written matter.

## **2.Phase 2: Writing:**

In the writing phase, writer needs to collect the data, organize it, and finally put it into words for the first time.

### **i) Research:**

- The writer should collect all the relevant information related to topic to make his writing legitimate and verifiable.
- In order to collect the information, a writer can use formal research methods, informal research method, and brainstorming technique.

### **ii) Organize:**

- In order to organize the content, the writer should make outline of the whole content in the form of heading, sub heading, lists, etc.

### **iii) Compose:**

- In this sub step of writing phase, the writer just have to writes his thoughts for the first time.
- It is suggested that here writer should not give consideration to the specific details; instead he should just write down all the ideas that come in his mind.

## **3. Phase 3: Revising:**

- At this stage of the writing process, the writer reads his own matter from the perspective of audience and validates the facts and figures given in it.

### **i) Revising for clarity:**

- The writer should go through the matter in order to make necessary changes in the sentences so that they become more expressive, clear, and understandable for the readers.

## **ii) Proofreading:**

During this step, writer needs to check the smallest of the details.

- A spelling and grammar checking software can be used.
- Another better way is to ask someone else to read the article because it is very likely that the other person may spot those errors, which might have went unnoticed from the writer.

## **iii) Evaluating the outcome:**

- The writer should evaluate whether the purpose of writing the article would be fulfilled or not. With the results of evacuation, the writer should learn and try to improve his article.

The evaluation should include the following questions:

- a) How successfully the article would communicate?
- b) Will it be able to communicate the intended message?
- c) Will the purpose of writing be fulfilled?
- d) How to determine whether it succeeded or not?
- e) Whether the feedback is collected or not?

## **3.4.5. Writing Effectively:**

- Though the below mentioned information mainly deals with e-mails, they can be applied to both e-mails and other form of written forms of written communication like paper communication:

### **3.4.5.1. Subject Lines**

- The role of subject lines while writing a letter or an e-mail is equivalent to the headline of any newspaper.
- Subject line helps the writer to explain the subject of the email or letter to the leader. It attracts the readers' attention and provides the information about the message.

## **Guidelines for writing Subject Lines**

### **1. Keep it Brief:**

- The subject lines should be brief in a way that it attracts the attention of the recipient quickly.
- It is found that there are 12% higher open rates if the subject line has 50 or fewer characters.

### **2. Catch Interest:**

- A subject line must catch the interest of the reader.
- Uniqueness and interesting is the two vital features of an effective subject line.
- One should avoid cliché phrases or common words, which the reader already has read a thousand times.

### **3. Offer Value:**

- The promise of value is conveyed by the best subject lines.
- It means that subject line should be selected in such a way that it gives an impression to the reader that opening of mail or reading the letter will really add some value to their lives or their business.

### **4. Build Trust:**

- The brands, which understand the significance of subject lines, give a lot of priority to the trustworthiness.
- There must be some commonality between the subject line and the real content of the e-mail.
- One should also ensure that there are no spellings and grammatical errors in the subject line in order to maintain the credibility with the readers.

### **5. Do not Put Words In All Caps:**

- Although capital words can be used to attract readers' attention, it is not good practice as it is seen as equivalent to yelling.
- The main objective is to make the emails/letter as easy as possible for the readers rather than evoking anxiety.
- In addition, special characters such as exclamation marks should be avoided.

#### **3.4.5.2. Put the Main Point First**

- While writing the message, one should have the essential information about exactly what is to be written, why it is being written, and to whom it is targeted/addressees.
- If the writer does not have answers to these questions, it simply means that writer is not ready to write or writing is not the correct mode of communication.
- Once the reason for the writing is mentioned, the background information can be stated. However, if the mail starts with the background information, there could be chances that reader could miss important points of message.

### **Benefits of Putting Main Points First**

When a person puts main points at the starting of the message, he/she is adopting a direct strategy. Benefits of putting main points are listed below:

#### **1. Saves Readers' Time:**

- At present, most of the businesspersons are able to give only a few seconds to the written messages from their busy schedules.
- Thus, they might lose their interest if the mails are lengthy and take long to come to the main point. The writer can save readers' time.

## **2. Sets a Proper Frame of Mind:**

- All the relevant details and explanations can be framed appropriately if the objective of mail is mentioned at the beginning.
- If a clear message opening is not made then the message might appear irrelevant to the reader.

## **3. Prevents Frustration:**

- The reader might become frustrated if he/she has to go through many details before understanding the real meaning of the message.
- Sometimes, it also creates a negative impression. This can be prevented when the important points are provided at the beginning of the message.

### **3.4.5.3. Know Your Audience:**

- After deciding the objective of the message, it is important to imagine its receiver, i.e., developing a mental picture of the person who is going to receive this message.
- In order to get a positive response, it is essential to obtain abundant information about the receiver.
- Information regarding receiver's interests or concerns is present when a writer writes to the receiver or responds to any kind of query.
- The receiver of the message can be the public, an individual, or a group of people.
- The communicators' decisions such as what has to be said, how it has to be said, who will say it, when it should be said, etc., mostly depends upon the target audience.

The communicator can ask following questions to himself:

1. Who is the receiver of the message, i.e., a single individual or a group of large people?
2. What kind of information is present or what information is required about the receiver which can help in writing an effective message?
3. When will the message be received by the audience?
4. At what place will the audience be while receiving the message?
5. What are the requirements of audience?
6. What are the areas of interest or concerns of the audience?
7. What makes the audience to be interested in the message?
8. Is there a requirement of reassuring the receiver?
9. How to receive more information about the target audience?

- Once, the writer answers the above mentioned questions, he will surely know what to include in the message, how to organize the inputs, and what medium should he used for sending the message.
- Once the writer considers all these considerations, the message will have a greater effectiveness.
- For this purpose, the requirements of the audience should be focused on each level of communication.
- Thus, it is quite important to have as much information about the audience as possible in order to identify the best methods of communicating with them.

#### **3.4.5.4 Organization of the message:**

- The ways in which the writer presents or the various activities are vital.
- By organizing the communicating message, the writer develops an effective message, which is able to create and maintain reader's interest, and evoke a response.
- All the required and essential features of an effective communication are explained by AIDA(Attention-Interest-Desire-Action) framework.
- Once the writer is clear about the contents of writing, he has to deal with the question of how to write it. All the words should be selected in such a manner, which is easy to understand without being patronized.
- The writer should avoid using jargons and must explain the meaning of used acronyms or abbreviation for a better understanding of the reader.
- The important message must be presented upfront with simple and direct sentences.
- The structure of the message should be selected in such a manner that it can add the effectiveness of the message.
- The objectives of the message can be made clear in the introductory sentence.
- For having a clear understanding of the message, short sentence must be used in the paragraphs.

The below mentioned characteristics must be kept in mind while organizing the message:

##### **1) Content:**

- In order to obtain the desired response, an appropriate theme or appeal has to be selected by the writer.

- The message should be written keeping the readers interests in mind and for better effectiveness, the contents of the message should be planned effectively.
- There are mainly three types of appeals which must be included in an effective persuasive message:

### **i) Rational Appeals:**

- These appeals make use of sense and logic for influencing readers' mind. They are usually related with the self-interests of the readers.

### **ii) Emotional Appeal:**

- In order to give a shape to the perception of the persuasive message, emotional appeals are used.
- Apart from the manner in which rational appeals are perceived, the persuasion can be either enhanced or perverted significantly by the use of emotional appeals.
- These kinds of emotional steps can either be self-generated or are generated intentionally with the help of the message.
- In order to persuade readers' minds, intentional attempts are used to evoke their emotions and control unintentional emotional states with the help of emotional message appeals.
- These appeals include fear, guilt, shame, etc., that force a person to perform or not to perform a certain action.

### **iii) Moral Appeals:**

- These appeals are targeted towards the sense of readers regarding what is ethically right or wrong.
- These kinds of appeal are mainly used to encourage people to support a social cause such as clean and green environment, equal rights, helping the poor and needy, etc.

### **2) Mood:**

- Thinking about the various emotions which a writer wants to evoke in his message, the reactions of the reader will depend upon the moods of the message.
- Commonly, extreme, negative, and frightening moods are used to make the reader feel guilty, which the reader will avoid.
- Having the right balance will require a great deal of writing experience.
- In comparison to evoking negative feelings like anger, it is quite advisable to maintain a positive tone of the message to attract the interest of most of the audiences.

### **3) Language:**

- In writing, language has 2 aspects—first is actual, i.e. Hindi, English, and so on; the other aspect is the type of language used, i.e. formal or informal, simple or difficult, etc. the language which is widely spoken by common people can be used by the writer with the



help of any printed material, which includes both official and popular language among the readers who are expected to read the message.

- Also, the writer can reach other population by providing translation for the communicated messages.
- The other aspect of the language is quite difficult. If a very informal language is used, then the reader might think that the writer is not giving any importance to him or taking him for granted.
- On the other hand, a very formal language may create an impression that the message is not meant for general public or readers. Thus a plain, straight forward language which can express the message clearly should be used by combining both formal and informal method.

#### **4. Design:**

- After designing the content, the writer seeks to present it in such a way that it can help the message to be understood and does not negatively affect its conception and readability.
- The appearance of the message is its design, which mainly includes the manner in which it is organized.
- The readability and interest in the text can be improved significantly by ensuring correct selection of font size, style of fonts, spacing, simplicity, colour, contrast, line length, and use of white spaces.
- The number of words which can be fitted in a single panel can be determined with the help of a preliminary design work.

### **3.4.6. Importance of Writing**

#### **1. It helps in Securing Job:**

- If one's writing skill is effective, it can provide a lot of job opportunities to him. If anyone to choose a new career or want to progress in the current one, his way of expression becomes quite important as it can set him apart from the rest.
- In other words, if one's CV or resume is written in difficult language, having many grammatical mistakes, or is difficult to understand then it would be rejected.

#### **2. It helps in Achieving High Positions:**

- If a person is good at writing, he may quickly achieve higher positions in the hierarchy.
- Effectiveness of communication directly affects the promotion prospects, which in turn directly affects the growth of salary.

### **3. It is crucial for Some Professions:**

- Some Professions such as journalism, paralegal or public relations, writing, editing, etc., require effective writing skills mandatorily.
- As in such professions, one is employed for that purpose only.
- However, now a days, the ability to communicate effectively is becoming an essential requirement in other types of job as well.

### **4. It promotes Effective Communication:**

- In today's world, written communication is mostly done through e-mails, notes, letters, SMSs, and tweets.
- Hence, no matter to whom a person is writing, be it his friend, colleague, subordinate, supervisor, etc., he must be good at writing as his career can prosper or fail depending upon his writing skills.

### **5. It Increases Credibility:**

- If a person has good writing skills, he is considered trustworthy.
- Suppose an e-mail has plenty of grammatical and spelling mistakes, then its sender is considered to be as an inefficient person who did not even reviewed his message before sending it.
- It may also be interpreted as he has less knowledge of grammar.

### **3.4.7. Improving Writing Skills**

- One has to choose the way, which suits him best and it is not necessary that it suits other person as well.
- Here, some tips that can be beneficial for improving the writing skills are as follows:

### **1. Grammar and Punctuation:**

- Knowledge of grammar and punctuation has a direct bearing on one's skill of written communication as these factors greatly affect the flow and meaning of one's idea.
- A writer can improve himself in these areas by making regular attempts through studying fundamentals of grammar and punctuation.
- Practicing these tests can make the concepts and usage more clear. Meanwhile, if any doubts arise, the writer should again refer the manuals and books of grammar.

### **2. Audience:**

- If professional writers are able to write in such a way that the audience understand him clearly, only when they can connect with the audience.
- Best way to rehearse the writing skills is to write a same matter in different ways by keeping in mind the audience of different mind-sets and intelligence level.
- Rules of grammar and punctuation are essential for written communication, yet a writer can sometimes avoid or amend them in order to make his writing suitable for all his readers, as they might be different in their intelligence level.

### **3. Peer Evaluation:**

- A writer may take an idea of audience feedback by taking the opinion of his friends and peers on the document written by him.
- Because most of the writers cannot become much unbiased about their work, i.e., they cannot identify the confusing and intricate points in their writing.
- If the writer is able to get the written document evaluated from his friends, family members, relatives, etc., he not only gets an idea about his writing skills but also about his self-assessment.

### **4. Reading Aloud:**

- If the matter were well written and devoid of any grammatical mistake, then obviously it would be smooth in reading and east to comprehend and remember.
- In case peer evaluation is not available, no friends and family members are present there to read and evaluate the matter, or the writer simply wants to ensure that the matters is free from any mistakes when any friends or relatives read it, then the writer must read it aloud.

### **5. Reading the Works of Others:**

- This is another method of developing good writing skills as actually helps a person to understand different styles of writing.
- It introduces the writer about a range of topics and motivates him to write.
- Some people also agree that it serves as a beginning point for inculcating nice manners and works as a visual treat, which gives way to unintentional development of a certain plot, grammar and punctuation and elements of structure.

## **6. Problem Identification and Organization:**

- It is generally seen that the major drawback of ineffective writing is the problem of not being clear about the topic.
- In order to avoid such problems, the writer must identify the problem clearly before organizing their writing.
- The major step in this regard is to write an effective headline of the topic so that even if the concerned person does not read the whole text, he can at least get idea about the subject matter.
- Therefore, if one is able to do it, one must simply fill in the gaps, i.e., develop these ideas into small paragraphs and interconnect them.

## **7. Habitual Sessions:**

- According to many proficient writers, a person can improve his writing skills by practicing it as possible and by taking care of the language as well.
- By doing this, one may improve his writing skills.
- However, the idea is not to write many pages in one sitting but to do it on a regular basis.
- The writers must concentrate on it and must keep all the rules in mind; no matter whether a person uses computer system or a pen and paper to write.

## **8. Re-writing:**

- When a person becomes habitual in writing and prefers to spend more time in it, he may use the method of rewriting his own texts or somebody else's.
- It can provide big benefits to the writer by providing the chance to re-look at the same concept from different perspectives and one may also get a chance to change the length of a certain sentences or replace certain words with more appropriate words.
- It helps a writer to become more confident, relaxed about his writing thus helps in coming out of the writer's block.

### **9. Looking for Details:**

- A good writer always tries to go beyond the face value and his descriptions are always deep, comprehensive, and charming.
- This happens all the time whether the writer is at his desk or not, e.g., if one says ‘This man’s voice is good’, it would be termed as nice but if one says ‘This man’s voice is deep and rumbling with a tremor of exhaustion’, it would be termed as nicer.
- The more specific information a writer provides, more professional he is considered as it reflects that the writer has done sufficient research on the topic.

## **QUESTION BANK**

### **Answer the following very short type question**

1. Define Listening.
2. What is comprehensive listening?
3. Explain sympathetic and empathetic listening.
4. What do you mean by self-awareness?
5. What is active listening?
6. Define writing communication.
7. What are writing skills?
8. What are business letters?
9. Write a note on circular and memo.

### **Answer the following short type of questions**

1. “Listening is a crucial aspect of effective communication.” Comment.
2. List the elements of effective listening.
3. State the objective of listening.
4. Mention the guidelines for becoming an active listener.
5. How to listen in difficult situation?
6. How to improve self-awareness of listening.
7. What amount of discussion required for writing?
8. What do you mean by shades of meaning?
9. How to use formal communication for better writing?
10. How to listen in difficult situation.

### **Answer the following short note type’s questions.**

1. Explain the types of listening.
2. Discuss the process and importance of listening.
3. Describe the barrier of listening. How to overcome from listening barriers?
4. What are the principles of effective writing?
5. Write a note of your audience.
6. What do you mean by subject lines? State the guidelines for writing subject lines.
7. Explain the organization of message.

**ALL THE BEST**