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Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur, Odisha
Established by an Act of Government of Odisha.

DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT

DIM-8

**Business
Communication
and Soft Skills**

Block

2

Business Communication

Unit – 1

Oral and Written Communication

Unit – 2

Business Presentation



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Unit – 1

Oral and Written Communication



Learning Objectives

After completion of the unit, you should be able to:

- Understand use oral and written communication for business purposes
- Describe advantages and disadvantages of oral and written communication.
- Use oral and written communication skills for business.

Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Definitions
- 1.3 Oral Communication Skills
- 1.4 Written Communication Skills
- 1.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Oral and Written Communication
- 1.6 Let's Sum-up
- 1.7 Key Terms
- 1.8 Self-Assessment Questions
- 1.9 Further Readings
- 1.10 Model Questions

1.1 Introduction

Communication is the essence of business life and a pre-requisite to effective corporate management. The list of its multi-purpose functions is very long. It not only makes business interaction possible but also directs the flow of information and knowledge for the guidance of executives, policy makers, technocrats, and others in their professional activities. It stimulates business entrepreneurs and corporate leaders to act to achieve individual as well as organizational objectives and develops information and understanding essential for effective group functioning. Moreover, it leads to unification between the activities of individuals as a work team and helps to foster positive attitudes required for motivation, co-operation and other important organizational processes. Finally, it ensures free exchange of

information and ideas and promotes a positive business culture and maintenance of good professional relations.

Communication in the business environment takes place orally and in writing, using formal/informal channels. Both oral and written forms are extremely important.



1.2. Definitions

Oral communication is the process of expressing information or ideas by talking. It is predominantly referred to as speech communication. Speech is for others to understand. The confusion and misunderstanding in conversation are due to ineffective, faulty and vague speech. Speaking a language intelligibly is essential because speech is effective only if the listener has understood it. In an organisational situation, speech is used in conversations, discussions, and for addressing the public/ large gatherings.

According to Ricky W. Griffin, “Oral communication takes place in face-to-face conversations, group discussions, telephone calls and other circumstances in which spoken word is used to express meaning.”

According to Bovee and others, “Oral communication expresses ideas through the spoken word.”

According to S. K. Kapur, “Oral communication takes place when spoken words are used to transfer information and understanding from one person to another.”

Thus, when messages or information is exchanged or communicated orally is called oral communication. It is word based communication system but in oral form. Most of the time, people prefer oral communication. Executives spend 60 to 90 percent of their time talking to people. Face to face conversations, group discussions, counseling, interview, radio, television, telephone calls etc. is used to express meaning in oral communication.

Written communication involves any type of message that makes use of the **written** word. **Written communication** is the most important and the most effective of any modes of business **communication**. Examples of **written communications** generally used with clients or other businesses include letters, proposals, advertisements emails, internet, website etc... written communication within an organisation includes circular

letter, inquiry letter, order letter, collection letter etc. all these letters serve important and multidimensional business purposes.



Written communication is a form of verbal communication. The communication which is performed through various written documents is called written communication. It is a word based communication that takes place in a written form. The instruments of this type of communication are follows:

- Letter
- Memos
- Written Instruction
- Notes
- Reports
- Journal etc. (business dictionary)

Wikipedia defines writing as a medium of human communication that represents language and emotion through the inscription or recording of signs and symbols. In most languages, writing is a complement to speech or spoken language.

Writing is a method of representing language in visual or tactile form. Writing systems use sets of symbols to represent the sounds of speech, and may also have symbols for such things as punctuation and numerals. (omniglot.com)

Steven Roger Fischer argues that no one definition of writing can cover all the writing systems that exist and have ever existed. Instead he states that a 'complete writing' system should fulfill all the following criteria:

- it must have as its purpose communication;
- it must consist of artificial graphic marks on a durable or electronic surface;
- it must use marks that relate conventionally to articulate speech (the systematic arrangement of significant vocal sounds) or electronic programming in such a way that communication is achieved.



According to William and Chaney, written communication involves any type of interaction that makes use of the written word. Communication is a key to any endeavor involving more than one person. Communicating through writing is essential in the modern world and is becoming ever more so as we participate in what is now commonly called the information age.

Thus, written communication is a systematic way of recording or documenting ideas, opinions, thoughts and events for immediate or future communication.

1.3. Oral Communication Skills

Oral communication describes any type of interaction that makes use of spoken words, and it is a vital, integral part of the business world, especially in an era dubbed the information age. "The ability to communicate effectively through speaking as well as in writing is highly valued, and demanded, in business," Herta A. Murphy, Herbert W. Hildebrandt, and Jane Thomas wrote in their book *Effective Business Communications*.

"Knowing the content of the functional areas of business is important, but to give life to those ideas—in meetings or in solo presentations—demands an effective oral presentation." The types of oral communication commonly used within an organization include staff meetings, personal discussions, presentations, telephone discourse, and informal conversation. Oral communication with those outside of the organization might take the form of face-to-face meetings, telephone calls, speeches, teleconferences, or videoconferences.

Conversation management skills are essential for small business owners and managers who often shoulder much of the burden in such areas as client/customer presentations, employee interviews, and conducting meetings. For oral communication to be effective, it should be clear, relevant, tactful in phraseology and tone, concise, and informative. Presentations or conversations that bear these hallmarks can be an invaluable tool in ensuring business health and growth. Unclear, inaccurate, or inconsiderate business communication, on the other hand, can waste valuable time, alienate employees or customers, and destroy goodwill toward management or the overall business.

The following are the basic oral communication skills that a manager needs to possess:



1. Conversation skills
2. Discussion skills
3. Telephonic communication skills
4. Presentation skills

1. Conversation Skills

A manager has to converse with people on a day to day basis. For this conversation skills are needed. The situation is usually, face-to-face. For involving others in a good conversation, a manager needs social skills as well. Knowledge without social skills makes conversations boring and tight. Good social skills also include smart body language such as smiling, making eye contact and a firm handshake.

For effective conversations following points can be of great help-

Introductions

- □ Rise when introducing or being introduced
- □ Offer a firm handshake to indicate you are confident and assertive
- □ Repeat the person's name when introduced so you can recall it later.
- □ Provide information that will inspire conversation
- □ Address someone by his or her title and last name
- □ Present a younger person to an older person
- □ Present a nonofficial person to an official person
- □ Present a junior executive to a senior executive
- □ Present a colleague to a customer or client
- □ Present a peer in your organization to a peer in another organization

Conversation Control

- Ability to notice other person's body language and get hints of likes and dislikes
- Listening actively to understand other's perspectives
- Interpreting signs and signals of others
- No cross talking or arguments



- Reflection of similar information, thoughts, ideas and feelings
- Showing assertiveness
- Appropriate turn taking by giving others a chance to speak
- Showing empathy
- Sense of time to end the conversation

2. Discussion Skills

Two very important skills required for a Group Discussion are speaking skills and listening skills. Other parameters may include reasoning skills, leadership skills, initiation, assertiveness, flexibility, awareness etc.

The skills required for a group discussion are-

Articulation or language skill – what one thinks is expressed through verbal interaction and the non-verbal cues used.

The verbal part or the language displays the clarity of thought of a person, and whether the same is communicated to others. Aptness of language is also judged through articulation or language skills. The non-verbal part includes ones expressions and body language. Many a times individuals get angry if they do not get a chance to speak or if their viewpoint is not agreed upon. One should remember that in a business environment discussion is meant to take decisions and not create conflict. So, one should not display anger by shouting, thumping the desk or any similar act.

2. Listening skill – The ability of a person to listen to others is very important in a discussion. So, one should try to avoid interrupting others. Also, one should maintain eye contact with the speaker to demonstrate that one is listening. This also help in getting cues about when is the speaker going to stop. This will hel avoid cross talking and facilitate turn taking. Speaking without listening to others makes a person a bad team player and thus such a person is difficult to work with.

3. Reasoning skills – One has to speak relevant to the topic of discussion. Talking unnecessarily will waste time and no conclusion can be drawn.

4. Leadership skills – A person, who is able to maneuver the flow of the discussion, is named the leader. A leader also encourages opinions from all the members. She/he should be able to motivate the other members during the discussion.

5. Initiation – Initiative taken by a person shows his/her inclination to do work. .

- 6. Assertiveness** – A person should make his/her point in a convincing manner so that others buy the point.
- 7. Flexibility** – Many speakers just stick to their argument and dismiss others' opinions. In order to work in a group, a person should be flexible. Moreover, a discussion is done to elicit the best course of action. Therefore, if someone makes a better point than another, the other person should be flexible enough to accept it.



These skills of discussion are used in meetings, conferences, and other decision making events where a group communicates together.

3. Telephonic communication skills

While speaking over the phone the following points are to be borne in mind

- Ensure Friendly Voice, Variation in pitch, Controlled Speaking Speed, Vocal Emphasis and Pleasant Voice Quality
- Greet, introduce yourself, company or office and find out the purpose of the call
- Be considerate while putting the caller on hold
- Keep up the call back promise

- Listen, do not dominate
- Use time efficiently
- Use effective posture and gesture
- Keep notepad and pen handy
- Answer promptly
- Pay attention
- Transfer call when necessary
- Follow-up promptly
- Be positive
- Listen Actively
- Be alert
- Stop talking
- Put the talker at ease
- Show the talker that you want to listen
- Remove distractions
- Be patient; hold your temper
- Go easy on arguments and criticism
- Ask questions whenever needed



4. Presentation skills

The public presentation is generally recognized as the most important of the various genres of oral business communication. Business presentations tend to have one of three general purposes: to persuade, to inform or instruct, or to entertain. These ideas should be researched thoroughly and adapted to the needs of the audience.

The ideas should then be organized to include an introduction, a main body or text, and a summary or conclusion. Or, as the old adage about giving speeches goes, "Tell them what you're going to tell them, tell them, and tell them what you told them."

Visual aids can be a useful component of some presentations. Whether they are projected from a PC, displayed on chalkboards, dry-erase boards, or flip charts visual aids should be meaningful, creative, and interesting in order to help the speaker get a message across. The key to successful use of visual aids is that they should support the theme of the presentation. Once the presentation has been organized and the visual aids have been selected, the speaker should rehearse the presentation out loud and revise as needed to fit time constraints.

The delivery of effective oral presentations requires a speaker to consider his or her vocal pitch, rate, and volume. It is important to incorporate changes in vocal pitch to add emphasis and avoid monotony. It is also helpful to vary the rate of speaking and incorporate pauses to allow the listener to reflect upon specific elements of the overall message.

Nonverbal elements such as posture, gestures, and facial expressions are also important factors in developing good oral communication skills. "Your outward appearance mirrors your inner mood," Hildebrandt, Murphy, and Thomas say. "Thus good posture suggests poise and confidence; stand neither at rigid attention nor with sloppy casualness draped over the podium, but erect with your weight about equally distributed on each foot." Some movement may be helpful to hold listeners' attention or to increase emphasis, but constant shifting or pacing should be avoided. Likewise, hand and arm gestures can be used to point, describe, or emphasize, but they should be varied, carefully timed, and adapted to the audience. Finally, good speakers should make frequent eye contact with the audience, let their facial expression show their interest in the ideas they are presenting, and dress in a way that is appropriate for the occasion.

These skills of presentation make a manager an effective oral communicator.



1.4. Written Communication Skills

Written communication is the most common form of business communication. It is essential for managers to develop effective written communication skills and to encourage the same in all employees. The information age has altered the ways in which we communicate and place an increasing emphasis on written communications.

To make written communication skills appropriate and effective, one needs to use the 7 C's of communication.

1. 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 has following features:

- Complete communication develops and enhances reputation of an organization.
- ◆ Moreover, they are 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 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.

2. Conciseness - Conciseness means wordiness, i.e, communicating what you want to convey in least possible words without forgoing the other C's of communication. Conciseness is a necessity for effective communication. Concise communication has following features:

- ◆ It 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.



- ◆ Concise message is more appealing and comprehensible to the audience.
- ◆ Concise message is non-repetitive in nature.

3. Consideration - Consideration implies “stepping into the shoes of others”. Effective communication must take the audience into consideration, i.e, the audience’s view points, background, mind-set, education level, etc. Make an attempt to envisage your audience, their requirements, emotions as well as problems. Ensure that the self-respect of the audience is maintained and their emotions are not at harm. Modify your words in message to suit the audience’s needs while making your message complete. Features of considerate communication are as follows:

- ◆ Emphasize on “you” approach.
- ◆ Empathize with the audience and exhibit interest in the audience. This will stimulate a positive reaction from the audience.
- ◆ Show optimism towards your audience. Emphasize on “what is possible” rather than “what is impossible”. Lay stress on positive words such as jovial, committed, thanks, warm, healthy, help, etc.

4. Clarity - Clarity implies emphasizing on a specific message or goal at a time, rather than trying to achieve too much at once. Clarity in communication has following features:

- ◆ It makes understanding easier.
- ◆ Complete clarity of thoughts and ideas enhances the meaning of message.
- ◆ Clear message makes use of exact, appropriate and concrete words.

5. Concreteness - Concrete communication implies being particular and clear rather than fuzzy and general. Concreteness strengthens the confidence. Concrete message has following features:

- ◆ It is supported with specific facts and figures.
- ◆ It makes use of words that are clear and that build the reputation.
- ◆ Concrete messages are not misinterpreted.

6. Courtesy - Courtesy in message implies the message should show the sender’s expression as well as should respect the receiver. The sender of the message should be sincerely polite, judicious, reflective and enthusiastic. Courteous message has following features:



- ◆ Courtesy implies taking into consideration both viewpoints as well as feelings of the receiver of the message.
- ◆ Courteous message is positive and focused at the audience.
- ◆ It makes use of terms showing respect for the receiver of message.
- ◆ It is not at all biased.

7. **Correctness** - Correctness in communication implies that there are no grammatical errors in communication. Correct communication has following features:

- ◆ The message is exact, correct and well-timed.
- ◆ If the communication is correct, it boosts up the confidence level.
- ◆ Correct message has greater impact on the audience/ readers.
- ◆ It checks for the precision and accurateness of facts and figures used in the message.
- ◆ It makes use of appropriate and correct language in the message.

Awareness of these 7 C's of communication makes one an effective communicator.

Writing skills include the following:

1. Understanding Purpose, Style and Format
2. Using proper mechanics of writing
3. Using the correct format
4. Making the right impact

1. Understanding Purpose, Style and Format

Lesikar introduces the necessity of audience-centric writing. This means writing for specific audience keeping in view their respective profiles.

The purpose of language is to inform, enquire, attract, influence, regulate, and entertain. The following can be cited as examples:

- “The earth moves round the sun, so it is called a planet of the sun. There are other planets of the sun such as Venus, Jupiter, Mars and others.” (**The purpose is to inform**)
- “Where are you going?” (**The purpose is to enquire**)
- “Free! Free! Free! Avail free gifts at GMG stores.”(**The purpose is to attract**)



- “200 bike accidents in 20 days...a record...a history. The average age of the drivers is 15...Minors biking out in the streets without proper traffic training is what is creating this dreadful scene. Isn’t it time to say, ‘Enough is enough?’ Don’t you think it’s time to stop our children from venturing before there is another accident? (**The purpose is to influence**)
- “Take a left turn from here and go straight until you reach the end of the road. Take a right turn from there to reach the station square.” (**The purpose is to regulate**)
- Ram: Shyam, why isn’t your watch working today?

Shyam: Because today is Sunday. (**The purpose is to entertain**)

Language is also used to seek permission, request, greet, console, persuade, record etc... There are different styles of writing depending on the need purpose and audience. Some styles include creative style for literature, communicative style for business, persuasive style for marketing and sales, legal style for law and journalistic style for media. In fact, within business style there are methods like KISS, BIF, BILL and FEEL that are important to address different needs of the receiver.

2. Mechanics of writing

The written document consists of the words, the structure and the punctuation. These elements provide the document a meaningful shape. The basics of English language is given below-

Part of speech	function or “job”	example words	example sentences
Verb	action or state	(to) be, have, do, like, work, sing, can, must	I like football. I play football every day.
Noun	thing or person	pen, dog, work, music, town, India, teacher, Kevin	This is my teacher. He teaches in my school.



Adjective	describes a noun	a/an, the, 69, some, good, big, red, well, interesting	My dog is big. I like big dogs.
Adverb	describes a verb, adjective or adverb	quickly, silently, well, badly, very, really	I eat quickly. When I am very hungry, I eat really quickly.
Pronoun	replaces a noun	I, you, he, she, some	Tara is an Indian. She is beautiful.
Preposition	links a noun to another word	to, at, after, on, but	We went to school on Monday.
Conjunction	joins clauses or sentences or words	and, but, when	I like dogs and I like cats. I like cats and dogs. I like dogs but I don't like cats.
Interjection	short exclamation, sometimes inserted into a sentence	oh!, ouch!, hi!, well	Ouch! That hurts! Hi! How are you? Well, I don't know.

3. Creating the right impression

Writers, in the business context, must always consider their target public and respect the four most important rules of writing. These four rules are related to the KISS principle (Keep It Short and Simple), BIF principle (Big Idea First), BILL principle (Big Idea Little Later) and FEEL principle (Factual, Emotional, and Empathetic Language)

The KISS principle of writing encourages simple and short sentences so that the communication is effective between the communicators. It is important that before one begins writing, there should be some focus on “who, what, when, where and why”. This approach helps keeping the text to the point. For example in the following case:



We have long yearned to create a marketing program full of energy and vigour that would remain in the minds of the customers and position our product as the product to end all products in our industry which should give us a good competitive edge since everyone else in our industry has cut their marketing budgets which means this is a good time for us to forge ahead and make some new customers now while everyone is either sleeping or afraid. **(This is inappropriate)**

Now is the time to create a marketing program full of energy and vigour. This program would keep our name in the minds of our customers, position our product as the ultimate product in our industry, and give us the competitive edge.

In these tough times, our competitors are cowering in their offices and cutting their marketing budgets. By being aggressive and forging ahead, we will make new customers and corner a greater share of the market. **(This is appropriate)**

The BIF style focuses on the Big Idea First. In fact, it insists that if good news is to be delivered, let the main idea be written in the beginning. Good news should never be given in a roundabout or a camouflaged manner. The reader feels delighted to receive good news messages that are direct and emphatic.

(Inappropriate)



Dear Sir,

We bring to your notice that, the Insurance of your vehicle expires on date... Mishap strikes without a notice. Please be informed that, Maruti Udyog Limited is providing unbelievable insurance facility for its Maruti owners. Irrespective of Insurance Company you have had during the preceding year, you can renew under the Maruti Insurance and you can enjoy the unsurpassed benefits. All facilities including No Claim Bonus **(NCB) can be extended to the customer who are renewing under Maruti Insurance.

This is indeed an unbelievable Insurance facility; which Maruti is providing to its privileged & valued customers, what we call it as one stop solution. Here is some of the highlights of the said Insurance.

In case of claim:

- i. You needn't to go to Insurance office.
- ii. You needn't to hunt for Insurance surveyor.
- iii. You needn't to pay total cost of repair(pay only depreciation amount and take back the vehicle)

The following documents are required to renew the Insurance Policy.

- i. Old Insurance policy of the preceding year.
- ii. Xerox copy of the Registration Certificate

For any clarification regarding Insurance renewal of your vehicle, please feel free to contact on phone No.....

It will be prudent decision of you part to renew your Insurance Policy under Maruti Insurance

Thanking you and assuring our best service at all times.

Yours faithfully



Appropriate (BIF Style)

Dear Sir,

Add value to your vehicle insurance with a handsome No Claim Bonus as Maruti Insurance provides you a life-time tension-free driving experience.

In a few days time, your vehicle insurance is to expire. Renew it under Maruti Insurance, which is exclusively meant for the proud owners of Maruti like YOU. If you have already experienced our services, you may like to strengthen our bond by renewing the insurance. In case, we haven't served you till date, give us a chance to prove our commitment by renewing the policy under Maruti Insurance. We promise you all facilities including No Claim Bonus. All you have to do is to keep the following documents ready.

1. Old Insurance policy of the preceding year.
2. Xerox copy of the Registration Certificate

Mishap strikes without a notice. God forbidden, in case of a claim, you only pay the depreciation amount and not the total repair cost. We take care of rest all claim related services like contacting the insurance office immediately, getting the Insurance surveyor at no additional cost. We call it a one stop solution. Indeed it is an unbelievable Insurance facility!

Now call us at no....., and our insurance consultant will come and collect it from you.

Please feel free to contact us at no. *** or email us @... for any other clarification.

Remember, you get dedicated services and tension-free claim settlement only at Maruti Insurance. Your safety is our strength!

We look forward to serving you

With warm regards,

“BILL” means “Big idea a little later”. In case of a bad news, this formula prepares a reader to take the shock by cushioning the first part; the next part is the regret statement, and finally the minor points with a touch of empathy. This done to maintain the human touch that is so vital for communication. Thus, BILL style is useful while communicating bad news like inability to do something, unhappiness,

displeasure and so on. However, this method should not be confused with issuing of a warning letter that is for official record.



Inappropriate

Sponge Iron Company

Dear Sir,

We are in receipt of your letter dtd: _____ regarding the goods for delivery for the month of June 2009. We regret to inform you that at present, we do not have the capacity in our firm to supply the material.

Yours faithfully

Appropriate

Sponge Iron Company

Dear Sir,

Thank you for showing interest in our organisation by placing your order for the material. We are deeply indebted to you.

However at present, due to over demand, we are unable to take up the challenge of supply you with the materials.

We are sure that in the near future, we will be able to satisfy your orders.

Yours faithfully

Managing Director

FEEL is a style where one appropriately matches the readers' opinions, feelings and rationale. This style helps in writing message that are in line with the emotions of the readers and appeals to their logic as well. FEEL refers to Factual, Emotional, and Empathetic

Language. It means that the writer needs to understand the expectation of the reader and match the same. This style is useful when it comes to addressing complaints and grievances. In such kind of correspondence, the reader looks for right logic and appropriate emotions. Following is an example of a letter that exhibits FEEL style.



Dear Sir,

Ref: Your letter dated.. regarding our Orange Cream biscuits 100g pkd.

11/04 and batch no: 28 B

Your patronage of our products is greatly appreciated. The unfortunate experience you had with one of our products is an exception rather than the rule. We thank you for bringing this incident to our attention.

Permit me to inform you that we, here at Parle, are doing our utmost to maintain the high standard of our products and we always look towards our customers' satisfaction.

It would have helped us immensely if you had sent us the biscuits with which you were dissatisfied for our thorough investigation whereby we could have pin-pointed the cause of your dissatisfaction.

Please accept 4 packets of our Orange Cream biscuits to replace the one you had purchased and were not fully satisfied with.

Hope you do not mind the delay in response.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

1.5. Advantages and Disadvantages of Oral and Written Communication

Good communication should be complete, concise, clear, concrete, correct, considerate, and courteous. More specifically, this means that communication should: answer basic questions like who, what, when,



where; be relevant and not overly wordy; focus on the receiver and his or her interests; use specific facts and figures and active verbs; use a conversational tone for readability; include examples and visual aids when needed; be tactful and good-natured; and be accurate and nondiscriminatory. Unclear, inaccurate, or inconsiderate business communication can waste valuable time, alienate employees or customers, and destroy goodwill toward management or the overall business.

However, oral and written communications have some advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages of Oral Communication

- There is high level of understanding and transparency in oral communication as it is interpersonal.
- There is no element of rigidity in oral communication. There is flexibility for allowing changes in the decisions previously taken.
- The feedback is spontaneous in case of oral communication. Thus, decisions can be made quickly without any delay.
- Oral communication is not only time saving, but it also saves upon money and efforts.
- Oral communication is best in case of problem resolution. The conflicts, disputes and many issues/differences can be put to an end by talking them over.
- Oral communication is an essential for teamwork and group energy.
- Oral communication promotes a receptive and encouraging morale among organizational employees.
- Oral communication can be best used to transfer private and confidential information/matter.

Disadvantages/Limitations of Oral Communication

- Relying only on oral communication may not be sufficient as business communication is formal and very organized.
- Oral communication is time-saving as far as daily interactions are concerned, but in case of meetings, long speeches consume lot of time and are unproductive at times.
- Oral communications are not easy to maintain and thus they are unsteady.
- There may be misunderstandings as the information is not complete and may lack essentials.



- Oral communication is less authentic than written communication as they are informal and not as organized as written communication.
- It requires attentiveness and great receptivity on part of the receivers/audience.
- Oral communication (such as speeches) is not frequently used as legal records except in investigation work.

Advantages of Written Communication

- Written communication helps in laying down apparent principles, policies and rules for running of an organization.
- It is a permanent means of communication. Thus, it is useful where record maintenance is required.
- It assists in proper delegation of work and responsibilities.
- Written communication is more precise and explicit.
- Effective written communication develops and enhances an organisation's image.
- It provides ready records and references.
- Legal defense depends on written records as it provides valid records.

Disadvantages of Written Communication

- Written communication does not save upon the costs. It costs huge in terms of stationery and the manpower employed in writing/typing and delivering letters.
- Also, if the receivers of the written message are separated by distance and if they need to clear their doubts, the response is not spontaneous.
- Written communication is time-consuming as the feedback is not immediate. The encoding and sending of message takes time.
- Effective written communication requires great skills and competencies in language and vocabulary use. Poor writing skills and quality have a negative impact on organization's reputation.
- Too much paper work and e-mails burden is involved.

Face to face communication (meetings, lectures, conferences, interviews, etc.) is significant so as to build a rapport and trust. But writing is more unique and formal than speech. Effective writing involves careful choice of words, their organization in correct order in sentences formation as well as cohesive composition of



sentences. Also, writing is more valid and reliable than speech. But while speech is spontaneous, writing causes delay and takes time as feedback is not immediate.

1.6. Let's Sum-up

Oral communication implies communication through mouth. It includes individuals conversing with each other, be it direct conversation or telephonic conversation. Speeches, presentations, discussions are all forms of oral communication. Oral communication is generally recommended when the communication matter is of temporary kind or where a direct interaction is required. Face to face communication (meetings, lectures, conferences, interviews, etc.) is significant so as to build a rapport and trust.

Written communication has great significance in today's business world. It is an innovative activity of the mind. Effective written communication is essential for preparing worthy promotional materials for business development. Speech came before writing. But writing is more unique and formal than speech. Effective writing involves careful choice of words, their organization in correct order in sentences formation as well as cohesive composition of sentences. Also, writing is more valid and reliable than speech. But while speech is spontaneous, writing causes delay and takes time as feedback is not immediate.

1.7. Key terms

Oral communication

Speech

Conversation

Presentation

Discussion

Written communication

Mechanics of writing

1.8. Self-Assessment Questions

1. How is oral communication used in an organization?



- 2. How is written communication used in an organization?**
- 3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of oral communication?**
- 4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of oral communication?**

1.9. Further Readings

Bovee, Courtland, L., John V. Thill and Barbara E. Schatzman. **Business Communication Today.** Delhi: Pearson Education (Singapore) Pte. Limited, 2003.

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Lesikar, Raymond V. and Marie E. Flatley. **Basic Business Communication.** New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill, 2005.

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Subramanian, Sharmila. **Essentials of Communicative English.** Delhi: Vrinda Publications. 2013

1.10 Model Questions

- 1. Elucidate the mechanics of writing.**
- 2. What are the essentials of a business discussion? Explain.**
- 3. As a manager of a factory, write a letter to your transporter rejecting his proposal to enhance the transport tariff.**
- 4. While making a telephonic call, what are the things that a manager should remember?**
- 5. A manager should have good writing skills. Do you agree? Why?**

Unit – 2

Business Presentation



Learning Objectives

After completion of the unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning and definition of business presentation.
- Describe importance of business presentation.
- Know the various skills of business presentation.

Structure

- 2.1. Introduction
- 2.2. Definitions
- 2.3. Importance of Business Presentation
- 2.4. Essentials for making a Business Presentation Work
- 2.5. Use of power point slides for making a business presentation
- 2.6. Let's Sum-up
- 2.7. Key Terms
- 2.8. Self-Assessment Questions
- 2.9. Further Readings
- 2.10. Model Questions

2.1. Introduction

Management is the art of getting things done. A Presentation is a fast and potentially effective method of getting the message through to people. In managing any project, presentations are used as a formal method for bringing people together to plan, monitor and review its progress. Effective presentations and public speaking skills are important in business, sales and selling, training, teaching, lecturing, and generally feeling comfortable speaking to a group of people.

Developing the confidence and capability to give good presentations, and to stand up in front of an audience and speak well, are also extremely helpful competencies for self-development and social situations.

The formats and purposes of presentations can be very different, for example: oral (spoken), multimedia (using various media - visuals, audio, etc), powerpoint presentations, short impromptu presentations,

long planned presentations, educational or training sessions, lectures, and simply giving a talk on a subject to a group on a voluntary basis.



2.2. Definition

A presentation is a means of **communication** which can be adapted to various **speaking** situations, such as talking to a group, addressing a meeting or briefing a team. To be effective, step-by-step preparation and the method and means of presenting the information should be carefully considered.

The web dictionary defines presentation as a speech or talk in which a new product, idea, or piece of work is shown and explained to an audience.

Merriam Webster dictionary defines presentation as a descriptive or persuasive account (as by a salesman of a product).

A presentation is the process of presenting a topic to an audience. It is typically a demonstration, introduction, lecture, or speech meant to inform, persuade, or build good will. The term can also be used for a formal or ritualized introduction or offering, as with the presentation of a debutante. (Wikipedia)

A business presentation is a formal tutorial or introduction of business practices or products. A business presentation is typically carried out using audio/visual presentation material, such as projectors and statistical documents created with presentation software, or more rudimentary materials such as flip charts and whiteboards. (wisegeek.com)

Companies and organizations often utilize business presentations as a means of selling an idea or product, for training purposes, or to motivate the audience. (Anna Windermere)

A formal business presentation is divided into two broad categories: **Presentation Skills** and **Personal Presentation**. These two aspects are interwoven and can be described as the preparation, presentation and practice of verbal and non-verbal communication. (G. Blair)

Thus, business presentation can be defined as a formal speech communication about a product, service or an organisation or any business proposal/ report, intended to inform or persuade the audience. A business presentation may use various aids to make the

idea incorporated in the speech more explicit. These aids could vary from flipcharts to white boards, from audio-visuals to power-point.



2.3. Importance of Business Presentation

Business presentations are used by companies to persuade their customers and investors or to simply inform other stakeholders about their products, services, achievements and so on. Therefore, business presentations are extremely important for business managers. The following points explain the importance of business presentation-

1. Business Presentation is Important for Individual Success of a manager

For many individual managers the first important presentation they deliver might be to get selected in an organisation. It might be labeled as a "job interview" but it is really a presentation. Success rides on their presentation outshining the competition. In most organizations, day-to-day business entails teamwork. That means presenting to the team or on behalf of the team. Career growth necessitates presenting ideas to others. If one wants to be promoted, he/she needs to train others to handle their old job. If a manager wants to fast track the career, he/she has to volunteer to work on projects and deliver more presentations.

2. Presentations are Important for Business Success

Having superior product is never enough to guarantee business success. Apple is acknowledged as offering leading edge technology and Steve Jobs is often modeled as a superior presenter. Business leaders are often expected to present their message with confidence and clarity to staff, clients, partners, investors and sometimes the public. Millions of rupees can ride on these presentations.

3. Presentations are Important for Stress Reduction

The financial cost of stress to organizations can be devastating. Work related stress can be demoralizing to staff, management and executives. Effective presentation skills reduce miscommunication, which is likely the biggest cause of work related stress. Better presentation skills also reduces the stress on presenters which means they will be more willing to present and more effective with their communication. The principles and techniques of presentations apply to other methods of communication.



4. Presentation Skills are Important for Time Management

Many presentations take too long and thus waste time - because the presenter tries to fill the time period. Better presenters get their message across in less time because they respect time, focus on the message and use the most effective techniques to communicate. Better presenters can deliver their 30 minute presentation in 5 minutes or 90 seconds when needed. Better presenters also save time while preparing because they prepare their presentation more efficiently. They know where they are going and how to get there faster.

5. Presentation Skills are Important for Leadership

Winston Churchill was praised for his inspiring presentations which helped England fight back against Nazi Germany. Narendra Modi ji is considered to be a great presenter and a communicator. Leadership in community, association or organization demands effective presentation skills. Every cause needs a leader. Every leader needs to be able to stand up and deliver a clear and inspiring message. The team and followers will often judge the leader and the cause on the presentation skills of that spokesperson. Often the best presenter leads.

6. Presentation skills are Important for Public Image & Opinion

It might seem unfair, but people will often judge a manager, an organization and the product/ service on how the manager, the staff or executive deliver a presentation. People tend to remember the extremes - really bad or really good. Remember that perception is relative to how everyone else presents. Better presentations don't guarantee success but they give a stronger chance of success. Almost everything a manager wants to accomplish is a battle. Therefore, managers need to improve the presentation skills for themselves and for their team.

2.4. Essentials for making a Business Presentation Work

The single most important objective of communication is not the transmission but the reception of the message. The whole preparation, presentation and content of a speech must therefore be geared not to the speaker's convenience but to the audience's requirement. The presentation of a perfect project plan is a failure if the audience does not understand or are not persuaded of its merits. A customer's tour is a waste of time if they leave without realizing the full worth of your

product. The objective of communication is to make your message understood and remembered. The presentation is to appeal to the audience and to hold their attention long enough to sell the point.



A. The Plan

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of careful preparation. Five minutes on the floor in front of senior management could decide the acceptance of a proposal of several months duration for the manager and the whole team. With so much potentially at stake, the presenter must concentrate not only upon the facts being presented but upon the style, pace, tone and ultimately tactics which should be used. As a rule of thumb for an average presentation, no less than 1 hour should be spent in preparation for 5 minutes of talking.

Formulate your Objectives

The starting point in planning any speech is to formulate a precise objective. This should take the form of a simple, concise statement of intent. For example, the purpose of the speech/ presentation may be to obtain funds, to evaluate a proposal, or to motivate a team. No two objectives will be served equally well by the same presentation; and if the manager is not sure at the onset what he/she is trying to do, it is unlikely that the plan will be achieved

Identify the Audience

The next task is to consider the audience to determine how best to achieve the objectives in the context of these people. Essentially this is done by identifying their aims and objectives while attending the presentation. If the presenter can convince them that they are achieving those aims, he/she will find a helpful and receptive audience.

Structure

All speeches should have a definite structure or format; a talk without a structure is a woolly mess. If the presenter does not order the thoughts into a structured manner, the audience will not be able to follow them. Having established the aim of the presentation, the presenter should choose the most appropriate structure to achieve it. For instance, the structure will determine the style, aids and script to be used while making a presentation.



Sequential Argument

One of the simplest structures is that of sequential argument which consists of a series of linked statements ultimately leading to a conclusion. However, this simplicity can only be achieved by careful and deliberate delineation between each section. One technique is the use of frequent reminders to the audience of the main point which have proceeded and explicit explanation of how the next topic will lead on from this. Thus, in sequential argument it is useful to summarize each section at its conclusion and to introduce each major new section with a statement of how it lies in the hierarchical order.

Hierarchical Decomposition

In hierarchical decomposition the main topic is broken down into sub-topics and each sub-topic into smaller topics until eventually everything is broken down into very small basic units. These basics units are explained and illustrated to the audience for better understanding.

Question Orientated

The aim of many presentations given by managers is to either explain a previous decision or to seek approval for a plan of action. In these cases, the format can be question orientated. The format is to introduce the problem and any relevant background, and then to outline the various solutions to that problem listing the advantages and disadvantages of each solution in turn. Finally, all possible options are summarized in terms of their pro's and con's, and either the preferred solution is presented for endorsement by the audience or a discussion is initiated leading to the decision.

The Meaty Sandwich

The simplest and most direct format of presentation is the meaty sandwich. This is the simple **beginning-middle-end** format in which the main meat of the exposition is contained in the middle and is preceded by an introduction and followed by a summary and conclusion. This is really the appropriate format for all types of presentations. If the talk is short enough, or the topic simple enough, it can indeed form the entirety of the presentation.



B. The Beginning

Get their attention

Presenters have a limited time and every minute is precious so, from the beginning the audience's attention needs to be trapped.

Establish a theme

This can be done by a statement of the main objective. Audience will have some experience or opinions on this and at the beginning the presenter must make them bring that experience into their own minds.

Present a structure

If the presenter explains briefly at the beginning of a talk how it is to proceed, then the audience will know what to expect. This can help to establish the theme and also provide something concrete to hold their attention. Ultimately, it provides a sense of security in the promise that this speech too will end.

Create a rapport

Presenter should plan exactly how he/ she wishes to appear before the audience and use the beginning to establish that relationship.

Administration

When planning the speech presenter should make a note to find out if there are any administrative details which need to be announced at the beginning of the speech.

C. The Ending

The final impression presenter makes on the audience is the one they will remember. Thus it is worth planning the last few sentences with extreme care. As with the beginning, it is necessary first to get their attention, which will have wandered. This requires a change of pace, a new visual aid or perhaps the introduction of one final culminating idea.

D. Visual Aids

Most people expect visual reinforcement for any verbal message being delivered. It is useful to understand what the audience is accustomed to, for two reasons: firstly, THE presenter can meet their expectations

using the overhead projector, a slide show, or even a video presentation; secondly, if the presenter departs from the framework of a square picture flashed before their eyes, and use a different format, then that novelty will be most absorbing



E. The Delivery

The presenter has the power both to kill the message and to enhance it a hundred times beyond its worth. A manager's job is to use the potential of the presentation to ensure that the audience is motivated and inspired rather than disconcerted or distracted. There are five key facets of the human body which deserve attention in presentation skills: the eyes, the voice, the expression, the appearance, and how you stand.

The Eyes

The eyes are said to be the key to the soul and are therefore the first and most effective weapon in convincing the audience of the honesty, openness and confidence in the objectives of presentation. During presentations, it is important to hold the gaze fixed in specific directions for five or six seconds at a time. Shortly after each change in position, a slight smile will convince each person in that direction that the presenter has seen and acknowledged them.

The Voice

After the eyes comes the voice, and the two most important aspects of the voice for the public speaker are projection and variation. It is important to realise from the onset that proper voice modulation, intonation and pitch can help make the presentation effective.

Expression

The audience watches your face. If the presenter is looking listless or distracted then they will be listless and distracted; if the presenter is smiling, they will be wondering why and listen to find out. The presentation is enhanced by facial reinforcement. Thus in a speech one must compensate both for stage nerves and for the distance with the audience.



Appearance

There are many guides to management and presentation styles which lay heavy emphasis upon the way one needs to dress for a presentation. When giving a presentation, one must dress for the audience, not for oneself. Thus, a formal dress code is preferable.

Stance

A presenter has to adopt a distinct posture or stance to deliver the presentation. It follows therefore the stance and posture will convey a great deal about the presenter. Therefore, the stance should not convey boredom; at best, whole body of the presenter should act as a dynamic tool to reinforce his/her rapport with the audience.

The perennial problem is what to do with the hands. These must not wave aimlessly through the air, or fiddle constantly with a pen, or (worst of all visually) juggle change in the trouser pockets. The key is to keep the hands still, except when used in unison with the speech.

Following points should help using right techniques of Speech-

- 1. Make an impression**
- 2. Repeat key points**
- 3. Draw to explain, if need be**
- 4. Use humour, if need be**
- 5. Plain speech is also welcome**
- 6. Make it short and sweet i.e. manage time**
- 7. Write the script for narration**
- 8. Practice, practice and practice**
- 9. Rehearse**
- 10. Relax during the presentation**
- 11. Conclude with main points of the presentation**

2.5. Use of power point slides for making a business presentation

Power point presentations have become an integral part of business presentations. Thus, a presenter should know how to design a power point presentation. The following is an illustration of making a power point presentation.

1. OPENING SLIDE



The Art of Holding your Audience

Presentation Skills

2. ELEMENTS OF PRESENTATION



Three Elements of a Great Presentation

- **Content- Research and organisation of material**
- **Design- Architecture of the graphical and slide representation**
- **Delivery- Voicing your message**



3. DELIVERY TIPS



Delivery Tips

- Audience information
- Topic knowledge
- Occasion
- Use of Audio-Visual aids
- Synchronizing verbal and nonverbal cues
- Fluency and Confidence
- Authority in speech
- Openness in interaction

4. THE MOM PRINCIPLE-

You must present the presentation that you have been asked to for say 10 minutes.

You ought to present the focus points or gist or the most important aspect, if the time is short, say 5 minutes

You may present additional information if the time is extended, say 15 minutes.

5. THE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK



Time Management

- What you **MUST** present
- What you **OUGHT TO** present
- What you **may** present



Delivery Framework

- **Opening**
- **Middle**
- **Ending**
- **Feedback**



6. EFFECTIVE POWER POINT PRESENTATION



Effective Power Point Presentation

- **Make it Big**
- **Keep it Simple**
- **Make it Progressive**
- **Keep it Consistent**
- **Make it Clear**



. MAKE IT BIG



Effective Power Point Presentation

Make it Big!

This is Arial 12

This is Arial 18

This is Arial 24

This is Arial 32

This is Arial 36

This is Arial 44



7. KEEP IT SIMPLE



Effective Power Point Presentation

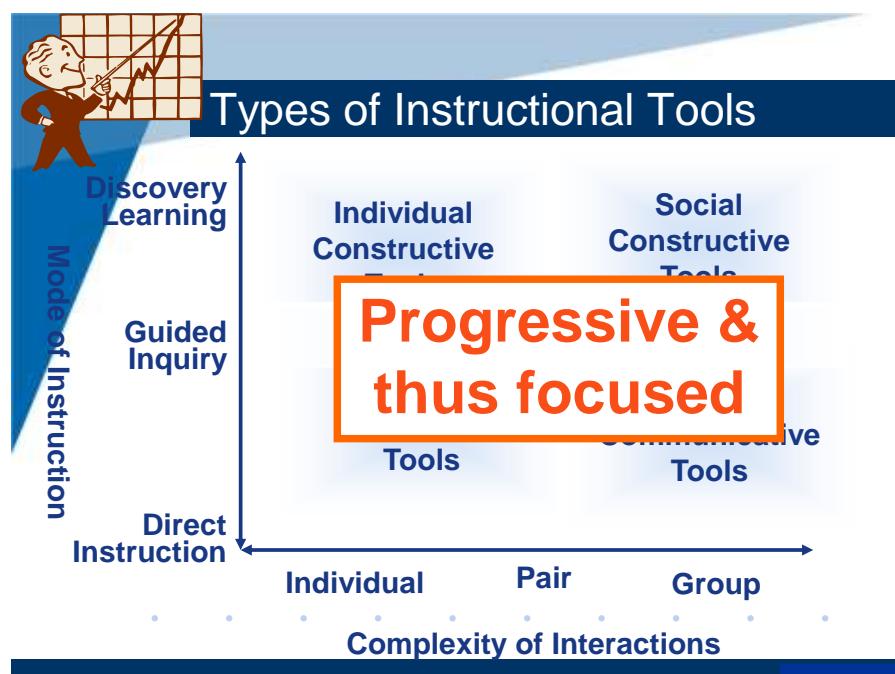
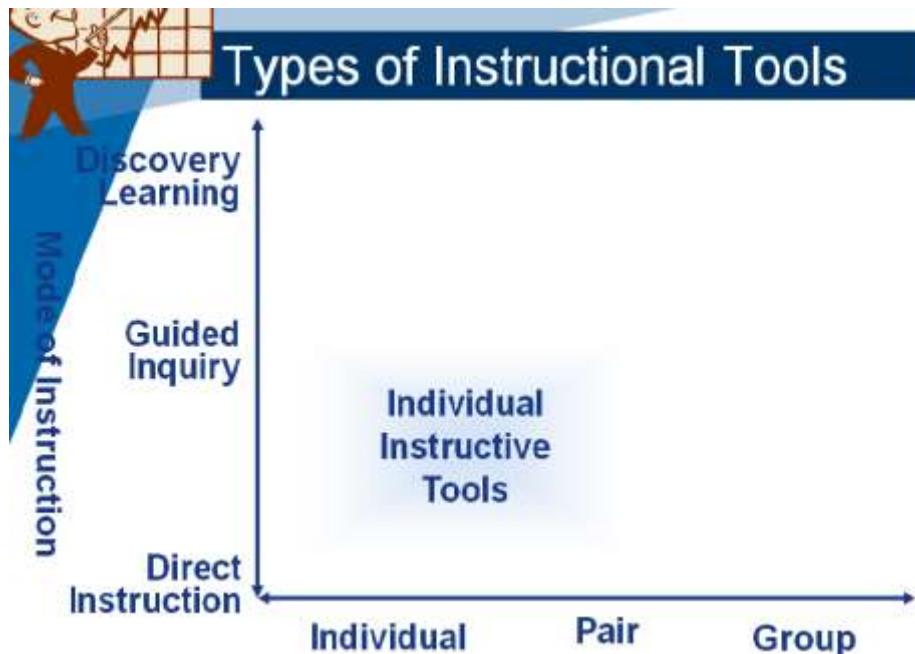
Keep it Simple!



- **Too many colours**
- **Too Many Fonts and Styles**
- **The 6 x 7 rule**
 - No more than 6 lines per slide
 - No more than 7 words per line
 - Too many pictures



8. MAKE IT PROGRESSIVE- Do not present all the items at one go. Use animation and present it one by one.



9. MAKE IT CLEAR



Make It Clear (Fonts)

- **Serif fonts are difficult to read on screen**
- **Sanserif fonts are clearer**
- ***Italics are difficult to read on screen***
- **Normal or bold fonts are clearer**
- **Underlines may signify hyperlinks**
- **Instead, use colours to emphasise**



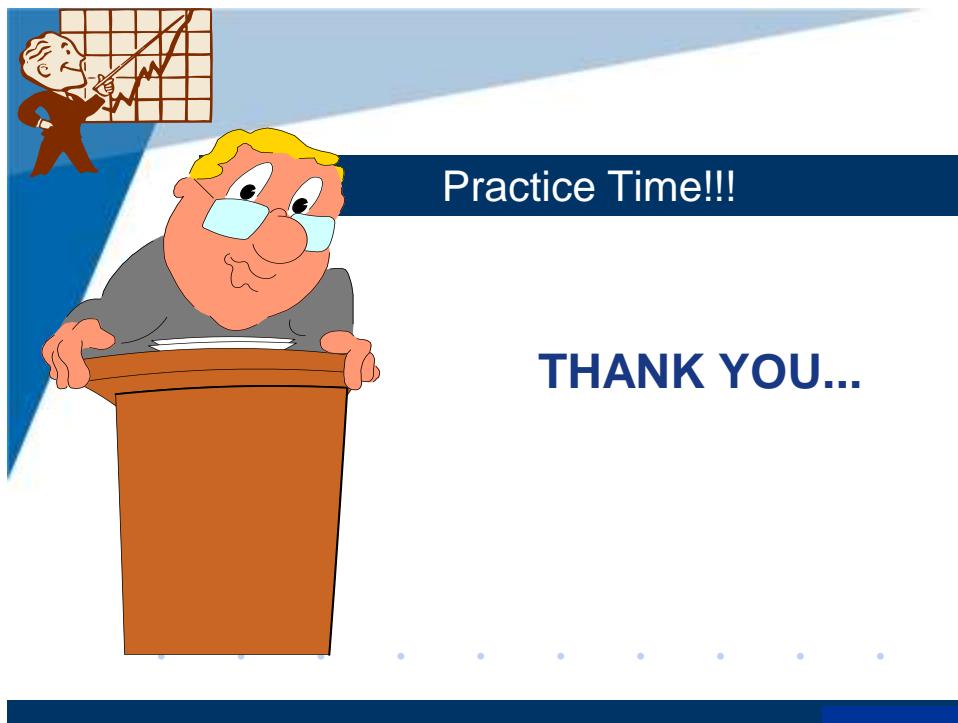
Make It Clear (Numbers)

Use numbers for lists **with sequence
For example:**

How to put an elephant into a fridge?

1. **Open the door of the fridge**
2. **Put the elephant in**
3. **Close the door**

10. ENDING



These illustrations can help preparing good business presentation slides for an effective business presentation.

2.6. Let's Sum-up

A Presentation is a fast and potentially effective method of getting the message through to people. In managing any project, presentations are used as a formal method for bringing people together to plan, monitor and review its progress. Effective presentations and public speaking skills are important in business, sales and selling, training, teaching, lecturing, and generally feeling comfortable speaking to a group of people.

Most important aspects of making a presentation includes-

- 1. Be prepared**
- 2. Practice**
- 3. Stay calm**
- 4. Plan and word your presentation appropriately**
- 5. Take care of your body language**
- 6. Use the tell-them principle (tell them what you are going to tell- tell them- tell them what you have told)**



2.7. Key Terms

Audience
Business presentation
Opening
Delivery
Ending
Power point presentation
Speech
Stance

2.8. Self-Assessment Questions

1. What is business presentation? How is it defined?
2. What are the important aspects of business presentation?
3. Design a power point presentation on the topic- Barriers to Communication.
4. How is body language vital to a presenter?
5. As a manager, what are the situations where you can make a presentation? Explain.

2.9. Further Readings

Bovee, Courtland, L., John V. Thill and Barbara E. Schatzman. Business Communication Today. Delhi: Pearson Education (Singapore) Pte. Limited, 2003.

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Subramanian, Sharmila. Essentials of Communicative English. Delhi: Vrinda Publications. 2013

2.10. Model Questions

- 1. Elucidate the importance of business presentation.**
- 2. Business presentation can be used to inform or persuade. Explain with examples.**
- 3. Design a presentation COMMUNICATION PROCESS. Explain what aids will you use and why?**
- 4. Audience is important for any presentation. Do you agree? Justify.**
- 5. While making a presentation about your organisation to investors, what points will you consider and why?**
- 6. A manager should be a good presenter. Do you agree? Why?**