

Unit – 3 Technical Communication

3.1 Public Speaking

Public speaking need not necessarily mean that the speech we deliver in front of many people. Presentation, GD, and seminar are involved in public speaking. To perform well in these situations, demand you to plan, visualize, organize, draft, and organize your speaking. Good public speaking essentials are:

- A) Clarity of purpose: Know whether you want to inform, persuade, or entertain the audience.
- B) Audience awareness: Find about who will be your audience their background, age, gender, education, status, interest.
- C) Familiarity with the location: Know where you need to deliver the speech - the audio equipment, lighting, etc.
- D) Collection and selection of content: collect as much material as possible for your topic and select according to the focus of the topic and the time given.
- E) Outlining: Frame topics and subtopics for your speech.
- F) Organization of content: Introduction, main body, conclusion.
- G) Suitable mode of delivery: Extempore, reading from text, speaking from memory.
- H) Effective use of body language, voice, and visual aids.
- I) Objectivity: Be present a balanced point of view.
- J) Planning and preparation: After drafting the speech, go for one or two rehearsals in front of your friends and get the comments.
- K) Answering questions: Listen patiently and answer.

Drafting the speech

A beginner in public speaking needs to write down the entire speech. Preparing the first draft of a speech may be the most challenging task. One must prepare first draft and then final one.

Next part is public speaking practices. One has to give mock presentations and speech before the final one.

3.2 Group Discussion

Introduction

Nowadays the importance of teamwork and group communication has increased in almost all organizational set ups. Members of an organization communicate in groups to achieve any of the purposes listed below:

- To share and exchange information and ideas
- To collect information
- To discuss the problem/topic
- To solve the problem/issue
- To come to conclusion

Depending upon the purpose and structure, *group communication takes various names, such as meeting, seminar, group discussion, symposium, panel discussion, conference, convention*, etc. They differ slightly in terms of their purpose, structure, characteristics, and procedure.

GROUP DISCUSSION

In group discussion, approximately 3 to 8 people meet face to face and originate, share, and discuss the ideas to arrive at a decision through oral discussion.

Group discussion is used

- for decision making and problem solving
- as personality test for evaluating several candidates
- to shortlist candidates for final interview
- to select the employees for positions of responsibility
- to select the students for admission to professional courses

The Indian defense forces were the first to tap the potential of group discussions and incorporate them into their battery of tests for recruitment of officers.

The techniques of Group Discussion

1. Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a method for generating a variety of ideas and perspectives. A brainstorming session follows the steps given below:

- A group of six to twelve people sit around a table
- The group leader states the problem so that participants can understand it
- Members then suggest alternatives and the views can be noted down
- No criticism is allowed

There are two types of brainstorming technique:

Storyboarding

In storyboarding, participants identify major issues, problems, and brainstorm each of them. It is often used to solve complex problems.

Lotus Blossom

In the lotus blossom technique, a core/main thought is presented, and participants provide eight ideas surrounding it like the petals of a lotus. Then each of these ideas becomes a core/main thought to be surrounded by another set of eight ideas. And later reach to solution.

In brief, Brainstorming is a process for generating ideas only.

2. Nominal Group Technique

Nominal Group Technique consists of group members who are physically present as it is in traditional committee meeting. They work/operate independently. Here the problem is presented and following steps take place:

- Members meet as a group, but before any discussion takes place, each member independently writes down his or her ideas on the problem.
- Then each member presents his/her idea in turn. No discussion takes place until all ideas have been recorded or noted down.
- The group now discusses the ideas for evaluation.
- Then group members rank the ideas discussed
- The final decision is determined by the idea with the highest aggregate ranking

The main advantage of this technique is that it promotes formal meeting and independent thinking.

3. Delphi Technique

The Delphi Technique is more complex and time consuming. It is similar to Nominal Group Technique, but it does not require the physical presence of group members. This technique never allows the group members to meet face to face. The following are the characteristics of Delphi Technique:

- The problem is identified, and members are asked to provide potential solutions through series of carefully designed questionnaires
- Each member completes the questionnaire
- The results are compiled, and each member receives the copy of results
- The members are again required to offer the criticism.
- The steps may get repeated till consensus is reached

Delphi Technique can be used for decision making in geographically scattered groups. This technique has its drawbacks because the method is extremely time-consuming and frequently not applicable. Moreover, ideas that might be inspired by face-to-face interaction may never arise.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GROUP DISCUSSION

Group Discussion has become an integral part of most selection processes today. Typically, in group discussion, candidates are given a topic or case for discussion. Normally groups of 8 to 10 candidates are formed into a leaderless group and given a specific situation to analyze and discuss with time limit of about 30 minutes.

Depending upon the infrastructure at the venue, the group is asked to sit in circle, block, or U-shaped arrangement. The panel there comprises of technical executives and HR executives of the company. They observe and evaluate the members of group. The rules of the GD are explained after the initial introduction by the panel. Thereafter, the panel gives the topic or case to be discussed. The selection panel observes the discussion either directly or from behind the screen.

Group discussion is an important aspect of the recruitment process especially for management trainees and executive positions.

Group discussion is simulated managerial setting. Most group discussions for selection purposes assess your individual traits, group behavior, and leadership qualities that are needed to succeed in your profession.

Basic Components for Evaluation

1. Knowledge

This refers to the depth and range of your knowledge as well as analytical and organizational abilities. You should be able to grasp the situation and analyze it not just at a mundane level, but from the widest perspective. The greater your knowledge of the subject, the more interested, enthusiastic and confident you will be, and also the more fluent and forceful your contribution will be to the discussion.

2. Communication Skills

During a group discussion, you will be assessed in terms of active listening, clarity of thought and expression, apt language, and appropriateness of body language.

3. Group Behavior (Team Spirit)

Your group behavior is reflected in your ability to interact with other members of the group on brief acquaintance. Emotional maturity and balance promote good interpersonal relationships. You are expected to be more people centric and less ego centric.

4. Leadership Skills

The success of any team depends, to a large extent, on its leader. Though there is no appointed leader in a group discussion for selection, a leader will emerge as the discussion proceeds. The candidate who possesses both functional ability and coordinating ability will emerge as the leader.

Tips for Success in Group Discussion

- Be thorough with current issues
- Always participate in GD with pen and a piece of paper

- Listen to the topic carefully
- Note down as many ideas as you can in first few minutes
- Try to dissect the topic and explore it
- Organize your ideas before speaking
- Initiate topic if you have something sensible to say
- Try to contribute meaningfully and substantially every time you speak
- Identify your supporters and opponents
- Keep track of time and share time fairly
- Have an open mind set and listen to others' views
- Maintain eye contact
- Do not indulge in parallel conversations
- Use and add sense of humor
- Display the spirit of cooperation and an accommodative nature
- Find out the silent members and encourage them to speak
- If things go chaotic, take the initiative to restore order
- Attempt to arrive at a consensus or conclusion

3.3 Effective Presentation Strategies

INTRODUCTION

It is said that “Half the world is composed of people who have something to say and they cannot say and the other half, who have nothing to say and they keep on saying it”. The ability to make effective and memorable oral presentations is one the most important qualities you need to develop for a successful career. And constant practice would help you acquire this skill.

The more successful your career, the more often you will be called upon to make presentations for a variety of situations and audiences.

DEFINING PURPOSE

The purpose of presentation is generally to put forward the aims and objectives of any given task. It decides the style, content, and targeted audience. It also requires lots of “on-the-spot” thinking skills and in-depth knowledge of the subject. The speaker should be flexible enough to adjust to new input and unexpected audience reactions.

ANALYZING AUDIENCE AND LOCALE

Audiences have one thing in common. They are the receivers. They may be your friends, foes, clients, colleagues or unfamiliar faces. The nature of your audience has a direct impact on the strategy you devise for your presentation. Hence it is necessary to have some prior knowledge of the audience, and its level and cultural background so that your presentation can be effective and acceptable.

Understanding of audience would help the presenter (speaker) to

- Build support
- Anticipate problems
- Consider Strategies
- Tune the approach
- Competent delivery of content

Moreover, speak with confidence and conviction, demand the questions from audience that in turn would make you acceptable. In addition to that you should check the place and the facilities of the auditorium for effective presentation.

ORGANIZING CONTENTS

People vary in their ability to speak confidently in public. When you face an audience, you should expect to feel a little nervous. Always prepare more material than required, as this will help you feel confident. Arrange the contents of your presentation into three major parts namely **(1) introduction, (2) middle part and (3) conclusions**. In other words, *say what you want to say; say it; then say what you have already said.*

Introduction

Introduction comprises the opening statement, the aim and the objectives of presentation. The beginning can be with a sincere greeting, question, quotation, anecdote, a short story, analogy so as to grab the attention of the audience.

A good introduction is a vehicle to lead the audience into the main body of the speech with smooth transition.

Middle Part

The main body or discussion supports your aim or specific purpose of presentation. The major points highlighted in introduction would be expanded here. There are different patterns of organizing the content in the middle part. They are

- Chronological
- Categorical
- Cause and Effect
- Problem Solving
- Persuasive

Speaker can make this part of presentation authentic by providing facts, figures, examples, illustrations, statistics, testimony, analogy or definition. Speaker is always advised to avoid too many points. Devote enough time to each point so that you can convince the audience what you are saying.

Conclusions

You can conclude the presentation by reviewing the main points. And do give the signal to an end and then do not extend the presentation. Because *a speech is like a love affair, any fool can start one but to end it requires considerable skill*. Conclude your presentation with quotation, anecdote, a short story, analogy and so on.

3.4 Interviews

INTRODUCTION

An interview is a psychological and sociological instrument. It is an interaction between two or more persons for a specific purpose, in which the interviewer asks the interviewee specific questions in order to assess his suitability for recruitment, admission, or promotion, or for an opinion. Hence interviews need a lot of preparation.

OBJECTIVES

Generally, interviews are conducted to achieve some of the following objectives:

- To select a person for a specific task

- To monitor performance
- To collect information
- To exchange information
- To counsel

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Depending on their objective and nature, interviews can be categorized into the following types:

- Job** The candidate wants to learn about the position and the organization; the employer wants to learn about the applicant's abilities and experience. But hope to make a good impression and to establish rapport.
- Information** The interviewer seeks facts that bear on a decision or contribute to basic understanding. Information flows mainly in one direction. E.g., doctor-patient, boss-subordinate.
- Persuasive** Persuasive interviews often aim to convince about/for something by imparting due information.
- Exit** The interviewer tries to understand why the interviewee is leaving the organization or transferring to another department or division.
- Evaluation** A supervisor periodically gives an employee feedback on his or her performance. The supervisor and the employee discuss progress towards predetermined goals and evaluate the areas that require improvement.
- Counseling** A supervisor talks with an employee about personal problems that are interfering with work performance. The interviewer is concerned with the welfare of both the employee and the organization.
- Conflict-resolution** Two competing people or groups of people with opposing points of view explore their problems and attitudes. The goal is to bring the two parties closer together so as to create productive climate.

Disciplinary A supervisor tries to correct the behavior of an employee who has ignored the organization's rules and regulations knowingly or unknowingly.

Termination A supervisor informs an employee of the reasons for the termination.

JOB INTERVIEWS

Job interviews can be either face to face or telephonic.

1. FACE TO FACE

Employer's Expectations/Factors leading to success in interview

Your prospective employer might be looking for the following qualities in you when you appear for an interview:

Disposition – includes appearance, clothes, facial expressions etc. These are the components that may leave lasting impression on the interviewer.

Appearance The way you appear leaves a deep impact on others, especially the ones who judge you both subjectively as well as objectively. Appearance in general includes clothes, hairstyle, facial expression, the way you walk/enter/sit/turn back/leave the interview hall. Because *“When you meet a person, you judge him by his clothes; when you leave, you judge him by his heart”*. The famous psychologist Sigmund Freud said that *“A good appearance that pleases you before a mirror is likely to please all those who look at you”*.

Clothes	<p>Well tailored & formal clothes with suitable tie</p> <p>Clean and well ironed</p> <p>Avoid wearing the new pair of clothes as it may give discomfort</p> <p>“Eat what you like but wear what other like”</p>
Shoes	<p>Clean and well-polished</p> <p>Matched socks/fresh/washed</p> <p>Do not wear a new pair of shoes/avoid very tight shoes</p> <p>Tie the lace properly</p>
Hair Style	<p>Neatly combed</p> <p>Avoid haircut just before the interview as it changes the appearance of the face for some time and can make you feel edgy and uncomfortable.</p> <p>Avoid excessive color</p>
Facial Expressions	<p>Be pleasant in your manner and smile while wishing the members of interview board because if your expressions are serious then the proceedings will be tense for you as well as for the board.</p>
Way of entering/walking	<p>Close the door behind you with one hand without turning your back towards the interview board</p> <p>Dashing forward with an upright military bearing is the perfect way to walk for showing fearlessness.</p>
Way of sitting	<p>When you are asked by the chairman to take your seat, pull the chair towards you. Do not sit facing the interviewer directly. You should pull the chair at an angle and sit keeping a distance of about one meter from the interviewer’s desk. Avoid touching or leaning on the interviewer’s desk. Sit back comfortably in a relaxed way. Do not droop or sprawl into your chair.</p> <p>Avoid changing position repeatedly.</p>

	Avoid seating on the edge of the chair
	Avoid looking at only one/two person/s
Leaving interview hall	Walk out confidently leaving behind an impression of alert self-assurance by conveying the words of thanks.
	Maintain energetic posture.
	Calmly leave the chair and put it back in its proper place.
Career Objective –	includes the clarity of career objective which the interviewee wants to pursue.
	Be clear with your aims and objectives of career and where would you like to see yourself after 5 years or so.
Subject Knowledge –	include the competence of the candidate over the subjects which he/she has studied with good presentation.
General Knowledge –	A good general awareness is the primary requisite of a candidate aspiring for a job today. The employer tries to assess your curiosity about what's happening all around you.
Communication Skills –	The employer will try to assess how effective you are in communicating your ideas both verbally and non-verbally.
Mental Agility –	This quality implies quick thinking, presence of mind, and quick response. The interviewer may judge your mental ability/agility by asking an odd question or by making a tricky remark.
Self – Confidence –	Self-confidence means trust in yourself. This generates self-esteem and self-respect. By possessing will power, socializing, identifying your shortcomings, having positive approach can boost the self-confidence of the candidate.

2. TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

The telephone has a great deal of power. The first contact many people have with you is over the phone. They will probably form a lasting impression of you on the basis of that conversation.

So, a telephone interview is also an interview and not just a phone call, and hence, it has to be treated with all the respect given to a face-to-face interview. Telephonic interview can broadly be classified into:

- Initiation of call from the candidate
- A revert call from company
- A further communication by both

Points to be taken care of:

- Take a surprise call in your stride
- Always refer to the interviewer by the first name
- Beware of giving yes/no answers
- Speak distinctly
- Take notes

3. VIDEOCONFERENCE INTERVIEWS

It is an extension of audio or telephonic interviews. It saves times and money. This type of interview is conducted for recruiting very senior and high-profile candidates.

Points to be taken care of:

- Be in an interview ready mode
- Control view on the other side
- Microphone Management
- Use two monitors or pic-in-pic option on your monitor
- Eye contact with the camera

General Questions

Good interviewers always ask difficult questions to check the potential of the candidate.

A few questions to ponder over:

- 1 Tell us about yourself in detail/brief
- 2 Where do you see yourself in five years?
- 3 Are you willing to relocate?
- 4 Are you willing to travel?
- 5 Do you have problem working overtime?
- 6 Have you ever owned your business?
- 7 Do you mind if I contact your references?
- 8 What are your greatest strengths?
- 9 What are your greatest weaknesses?
- 10 Do you perform best working alone or as part of a team?
- 11 Are you organized?
- 12 Do you consider yourself to be a risk taker?
- 13 Do you think being a self-starter helps?
- 14 Have you ever experienced unfair criticism from supervisors/managers and how have you reacted to it?
- 15 Can you handle change?
- 16 Do you hate doing a lot of routine work?
- 17 How do you handle disputes with coworkers?
- 18 Do you read books? What books are you reading these days?
- 19 Do you watch movies? Tell us about the last movie that you saw.
- 20 Tell us about your hobbies and interests.
- 21 What do you watch on TV and why?
- 22 How do you balance your career and family?
- 23 What will you do if you are not selected?
- 24 Why should I employ you?
- 25 How did you prepare yourself for this interview?
- 26 Why do you want to leave the present job?
- 27 What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?
- 28 If you had to live your life again, what would you change?
- 29 How do you describe your ideal job?
- 30 What goals do you have in your career?

- 31 How do you plan to achieve these goals?
- 32 How do you evaluate success?
- 33 What motivates you?
- 34 If I were to ask one of your professors to describe you, what would he or she say?
- 35 What changes would you make at your school/college?
- 36 What were your favorite classes? Why?
- 37 Who were your favorite professors?
- 38 Do you have any plans for further education?
- 39 What do you know about our company?
- 40 Why are you interested in our company?
- 41 Is money important to you?
- 42 How much money do you need to be happy?

Factors leading to failure in interview

There are many reasons why you could be turned down for a job. The following are ten common reasons for a candidate being rejected:

1. Arrogance
2. Apathy
3. Uninhibited nervousness
4. Equivocation
5. Lack of concentration
6. Lack of crispness
7. Lack of social skills
8. Lack of firmness
9. Inadequate quantitative skills
10. Unsuitable personality

Steps to Prepare for Interview

Successful interviews begin with preparation. It includes:

- Go through a mock interview
- Gather adequate information
- Dress appropriately
- Be prepared
- Memorize your resume
- Know about the company
- Carry a briefcase or folder to keep relevant papers
- Be polite
- Do not chew anything
- Show interest
- Do not answer if you do not know
- Be good in communication: verbal & nonverbal
- Be punctual
- Be relax

Preparatory Steps & Guidelines

- Greet the interviewer with enthusiasm
- Introduce yourself properly
- Answer in due detail and avoid negations
- Articulate your strengths
- End the talk with the words of gratitude
- Keep all your documents within easy reach of the phone for ready reference
- Have a note pad and pen to take notes
- Be careful listener and answer consciously
- Be audible and consistent without gaps and hesitation
- Keep other audio-visuals off
- Be in a comfortable posture

3.5 Negotiation Skill

Negotiation is a method by which people settle differences. It is a process by which compromise, or agreement is reached while avoiding argument and dispute.

In any disagreement, individuals understandably aim to achieve the best possible outcome for their position (or perhaps an organization they represent). However, the principles of fairness, seeking mutual benefit and maintaining a relationship are the keys to a successful outcome.

Specific forms of negotiation are used in many situations: international affairs, the legal system, government, industrial disputes or domestic relationships as examples. However, general negotiation skills can be learned and applied in a wide range of activities. Negotiation skills can be of great benefit in resolving any differences that arise between you and others.

Stages of Negotiation

In order to achieve a desirable outcome, it may be useful to follow a structured approach to negotiation. For example, in a work situation a meeting may need to be arranged in which all parties involved can come together.

The process of negotiation includes the following stages:

1. Preparation
2. Discussion
3. Clarification of goals
4. Negotiate towards a Win-Win outcome
5. Agreement
6. Implementation of a course of action

1. Preparation

Before any negotiation takes place, a decision needs to be taken as to when and where a meeting will take place to discuss the problem and who will attend. Setting a limited timescale can also be helpful to prevent the disagreement continuing.

This stage involves ensuring all the pertinent facts of the situation are known to clarify your own position. In the work example above, this would include knowing the 'rules' of your organization, to whom help is given, when help is not felt appropriate and the grounds for such refusals. Your organization may well have policies to which you can refer in preparation for the negotiation.

Undertaking preparation before discussing the disagreement will help to avoid further conflict and unnecessarily wasting time during the meeting.

2. Discussion

During this stage, individuals or members of each side put forward the case as they see it, i.e., their understanding of the situation.

Key skills during this stage include questioning, listening and clarifying.

Sometimes it is helpful to take notes during the discussion stage to record all points put forward in case there is need for further clarification. It is extremely important to listen, as when disagreement takes place it is easy to make the mistake of saying too much and listening too little. Each side should have an equal opportunity to present their case.

3. Clarifying Goals

From the discussion, the goals, interests, and viewpoints of both sides of the disagreement need to be clarified.

It is helpful to list these factors in order of priority. Through this clarification it is often possible to identify or establish some common ground. Clarification is an essential part of the negotiation process, without it misunderstandings are likely to occur which may cause problems and barriers to reaching a beneficial outcome.

4. Negotiate Towards a Win-Win Outcome

This stage focuses on what is termed a 'win-win' outcome where both sides feel they have gained something positive through the process of negotiation and both sides feel their point of view has been taken into consideration.

A win-win outcome is usually the best result. Although this may not always be possible, through negotiation, it should be the ultimate goal.

Suggestions of alternative strategies and compromises need to be considered at this point. Compromises are often positive alternatives which can often achieve greater benefit for all concerned compared to holding to the original positions.

5. Agreement

Agreement can be achieved once understanding of both sides' viewpoints and interests have been considered.

It is essential to for everybody involved to keep an open mind in order to achieve an acceptable solution. Any agreement needs to be made perfectly clear so that both sides know what has been decided.

6. Implementing a Course of Action

From the agreement, a course of action must be implemented to carry through the decision.