

PRESENTATION & COMMUNICATION SKILLS – STAGE-3**Q. 2 (a) Ensuring Legal Communication:**

In addition to ethical guidelines, business communication is also bound by a wide variety of laws and regulations, including the following areas:

Promotional Communication:

Marketing specialists need to be aware of the many laws that govern truth and accuracy in advertising. These laws address such issues as false and deceptive advertising, misleading or inaccurate labels on product packages, and “bait and switch” tactics in which a store advertises a lower-priced product to lure consumers into a store but then tries to sell them a more expensive item.

Contracts:

A contract is legally binding promise between two parties, in which one party makes a specified offer and the other party accepts. Contracts are fundamental to virtually every aspects of business, from product sales to property rental to credit cards and loans to professional service agreements.

Employment Communication:

A variety of local, state, and federal laws govern communication between employers and both potential and current employees. For example, job descriptions must be written in a way that doesn't intentionally or unintentionally discriminate against women, minorities, or people with disabilities.

Intellectual Property:

In an age when instant global connectivity makes it effortless to copy and retransmit electronics files, the protection of intellectual property has become a wide-spread concern. **Intellectual property (IP)** includes patents, copyrighted materials, trade secrets, and even internet domain names. Bloggers need to be particularly careful about IP protection, given the care-free way that some post the work of others without offering proper credit. For guidelines on this hot topic, that the free *Legal Guide for Bloggers* at www.eff.org/bloggers/lg.

Financial Reporting:

Finance and accounting professionals, particularly those who work for publicly traded companies (those that sell stock to the public), must adhere to stringent reporting laws. For instance, a number of corporations have recently been targets of government investigations and shareholder lawsuits for offering misleading descriptions of financial results and revenue forecasts.

Defamation:

Negative comments about another party raise the possibility of **defamation**, the intentional communication of false statements that damage character or reputation. (Written defamation is called libel; spoken defamation is called slander.) Someone suing for defamation must prove (1) that the statement is false, (2) that the language is injurious to the person's reputation, and (3) that the statement has been published.

If you have any doubts about the legality of any message you intend to distribute, ask for advice from your company's legal department. A small dose of caution can prevent huge legal headaches and protect your company's reputation in the marketplace.

PRESENTATION & COMMUNICATION SKILLS – STAGE-3**(b) Understanding the Listening Process:**

Listening is a far more complex process than most people think. As a consequence, most of us aren't very good at it. Given such complexity, it's no wonder most of us listen at or below a 25 percent efficiency rate, remember only about half of what's said during a 10-minute conversation, and forget half of that within 48 hours. Furthermore, when questioned about material we've just heard, we are likely to get the facts mixed up.

Why is such a seemingly simple activity so difficult? The answer lies in the complexity of the process. Listening follows the same sequence as the general communication process model, with the added burden that it happens in real time. To listen effectively, you need to successfully complete five separate steps:

1. Receiving:

You start by physically hearing the message and acknowledging it. Physical reception can be blocked by noise, impaired hearing, or inattention. Some experts also include nonverbal messages as part of this stage because these factors influence the listening process as well.

2. Decoding:

Your next step is to assign meaning to sounds, which you do according to your own values, beliefs, ideas, expectations, roles, needs, and personal history.

3. Remembering:

Before you can act on the information, you need to store it for future processing. Incoming messages must first be captured in short-term memory, and then they are transferred to long-term memory for more permanent storage.

4. Evaluating:

With the speaker's message captured, your next step is to evaluate it by applying critical thinking skills. You separate fact from opinion and evaluate the quality of the evidence.

5. Responding

After you've evaluated the speaker's message, you react. If you're communicating one-on-one or in a small group, the initial response generally takes the form of verbal feedback. If you're one of many in an audience, your initial response may take the form of applause, laughter, or silence. Later on, you may act on what you have heard.

If any one of these steps breaks down, the listening process becomes less effective or even fails entirely. As both a sender and a receiver, you can reduce the failure rate by recognizing and overcoming a variety of physical and mental barriers of effective listening.

PRESENTATION & COMMUNICATION SKILLS – STAGE-3**Q. 3 (a) Developing an Audience Profile:**

Before your audiences will take the time to read or hear your messages, they need to be interested in what you're saying. They need to see what's in it for them: How will listening to your advice or doing what you ask help them, personally or professionally? The more you know about your audience, their needs, and their expectations, the more effectively you'll be able to communicate with them.

If you're communicating with someone you know well, audience analysis is relatively easy. You can identify the person's needs and predict his or her reaction to any given message without a lot of research. On the other hand, your audience could be made up of strangers – potential customers or suppliers you've never met, a new boss, or new employees. In these situations, you need to learn more in order to adjust your message appropriately. For an example of the kind of information you need to compile in an audience analysis. To conduct an audience analysis, take the following steps:

(a) Identify Your Primary Audience:

For some messages, certain audience members may be more important than others. Don't ignore the needs of less influential members but make sure you address the concerns of the key decision makers.

(b) Determine Audience Size and Geographic Distribution:

A message aimed at 10,000 people spread around the globe will probably require a different approach than one aimed at a dozen people down the hall.

(c) Determine Audience Composition:

Look for similarities and differences in culture, language, age, education, organizational rank and status, attitudes, experience, motivations, and any other factors that could affect the successful reception and decoding of your message.

(d) Gauge Audience Members' Level of Understanding:

If audience members share your general background, they'll probably understand your material without difficulty. If not, your message will need an element of education, an deciding how much information to include can be challenge. Include only enough information to accomplish the specific purpose of your message; and if the members of your audience have various levels of understanding, gear your coverage to your primary audience.

(e) Understand Audience Expectations and Preferences:

Will members of your audience expect complete details or just a summary of the main points? Do they want an e-mail message, or will they expect a formal report? In general, the higher up the organization your message goes, the fewer details people want to see, simply because they have less time to read them.

(f) Forecast Probable Audience Reaction:

As you'll read late in the chapter, audience reaction affects message organization. If you expect a favourable response, you can state conclusions and recommendations up front and offer minimal supporting evidence. If you expect scepticism, you can introduce conclusions gradually and with more proof.

PRESENTATION & COMMUNICATION SKILLS – STAGE-3**(b) Letter Writing:**

No fixed answer to this question can be framed. Various examinees would treat the task differently.

Letters are used for written messages to individuals outside an organization and also used to communicate formal written messages to employees within an organization. Most letters contain seven standard parts:

- ☐ Heading
- ☐ Inside address
- ☐ Salutation
- ☐ Body
- ☐ Complimentary close
- ☐ Signature block
- ☐ Reference initials

Q. 4 (a) Types of Résumé:

To focus attention on your strongest points, adopt the appropriate organizational approach for your résumé, based on your background and your goals.

The Chronological Résumé:

In a 'chronological résumé', the work experience section dominates and is placed in the most prominent slot, immediately after your name and address and optional objective. Develop the section by listing your jobs sequentially in reverse order, beginning with the most recent position. Under each listing, describe your responsibilities and accomplishments, giving the most space to the most recent and most relevant positions. If you're just graduating from college and have limited professional experience, you can vary this chronological approach by putting your educational qualifications before your experience, thereby focusing attention on your academic credentials.

The chronological approach is the most common way to organize a résumé, and many employers prefer it. This approach has three Key advantages: (1) Employers are familiar with it and can easily find information, (2) it highlights growth and career progression, and (3) it highlights employment continuity and stability. As vice president with Korn/Ferry International, Robert Nesbit speaks for many hiring managers and recruiters when he says, "Unless you have a really compelling reason, don't use any but the standard chronological format. Your résumé should not read like a treasure map, full of minute clues to the whereabouts of your jobs and experience. I want to be able to grasp quickly where a candidate has worked, how long, and in what capacities.

The chronological approach is especially appropriate if you have a strong employment history and are aiming for a job that builds on your current career path.

The Functional Résumé:

A 'functional résumé', sometimes called a skills résumé, emphasizes your skills and capabilities while identifying employers and academic experience in subordinate sections. This pattern stresses individual areas of competence, so it's useful for people who are just entering the job market, who want to redirect their careers, or who have little continuous career-related experience. The functional approach also has three advantages: (1) without having to read through job descriptions, employers can see what you can do for them; (2) you can emphasize earlier job experience; and (3) you

PRESENTATION & COMMUNICATION SKILLS – STAGE-3

can de-emphasize any lengthy unemployment or lack of career progress. However, you should be aware that because the functional résumé can obscure your work history, many employment professionals are suspicious of it—and some assume that candidates who use it are trying to hide something. In fact, Monster.com lists the functional résumé as one of employers' "Top 10 Pet Peeves." If you don't have a strong, uninterrupted history of relevant work, the combination résumé might be a better choice.

The Combination Résumé:

A "combination résumé" includes the best features of the chronological and functional approaches. Nevertheless, it is not commonly used, and it has two major disadvantages: (1) It tends to be longer than a chronological résumé, and (2) it can be repetitious if you have to list your accomplishments and skills in both the functional section and the chronological job descriptions.

As you look at a number of sample résumés, you'll probably notice variations on the three basic formats presented here. Study these other options; if you find one that seems like the best fit for your unique situation, by all means use it—but always apply the principles of effective business communication you've learned in this course.

(b) Letter Writing:

No fixed answer to this question can be framed. Various examinees would treat the task differently.

Letters are used for written messages to individuals outside an organization and also used to communicate formal written messages to employees within an organization. Most letters contain seven standard parts:

- ☐ Heading
- ☐ Inside address
- ☐ Salutation
- ☐ Body
- ☐ Complimentary close
- ☐ Signature block
- ☐ Reference initials

Q. 5 (a) Distinguish between Informational Reports, Analytical Reports and Proposals:

The nature of reports varies widely, from one-page trip reports that follow a standard format to detailed business plans and proposals that can run hundreds of pages. Reports fall into three basic categories:

Informational Reports:

Informational reports offer data, facts, feedback, and other types of information, without analysis or recommendations.

Analytical Reports:

Analytical reports offer both information and analysis, and they can also include recommendations.

PRESENTATION & COMMUNICATION SKILLS – STAGE-3**Proposals:**

Proposals offer structured persuasion for internal or external audiences.

Categories of Analytical Reports:

Analytical reports fall into three basic categories:

1. Reports to Assess Opportunities:

Every business opportunity carries some degree of risk and also requires a variety of decisions and actions in order to capitalize on the opportunity. You can use analytical reports to assess risk and required decisions and actions. For instance, 'market analysis reports' are used to judge likelihood of success for new products or sales. 'Due diligence reports' examine the financial aspects of a proposed decision, such as acquiring another company.

2. Reports to Solve Problems:

Managers often ask for 'troubleshooting reports' when they need to understand why something is not working properly and what needs to be done to fix it. A variation, the 'failure analysis report', studies events that happened in the past, with the hope of learning how to avoid similar failures in the future.

3. Reports to Support Decisions:

'Feasibility reports' are called for when managers need to explore the ramifications of a decision they are about to make, such as switching materials used in a manufacturing process. 'Justification reports' explain a decision that has already been made.

Writing analytical reports presents a greater challenge than writing informational reports because you need to use your reasoning abilities and persuasive skills in addition to your writing skills.

(b) Report Writing:

No fixed answer to this question can be framed. Various examinees would treat the task differently.

- ☐ Format
- ☐ Description of products;
- ☐ Cost breakup of products;
- ☐ Increasing percentage of costs in tabular or graphical form;
- ☐ Factors affecting costs;
- ☐ Suggestions for cost controlling/cost reduction

PRESENTATION & COMMUNICATION SKILLS – STAGE-3**Q. 6 (a) Overcoming Anxiety: (Any ten points)**

If you are nervous about facing an audience, you are not alone: Even speakers with years of experience feel some anxiety about getting up in front of an audience. Polished speakers know how to use that nervous energy to their advantage. For starters, think of nervousness as an indication that you care about our audience, your topic, and the occasion. If your palms get wet or your mouth goes dry, do not think of it as nerves—think of it as excitement. Such stimulation can give you the extra energy you need to make your presentation sparkle. Here are some ways to harness your nervous energy to become a more confident speaker:

Prepare more Material than Necessary:

Combined with having a genuine interest in you topic, having extra knowledge will reduce your anxiety.

Practice:

The more familiar you are with your material, the less panic you will feel.

Think Positively:

See yourself as polished and professional, and your audience will, too.

Visualize Your Success:

Use the few minutes before you actually begin speaking to tell yourself you are on and you are ready. Visualize mental images of yourself in front of the audience, feeling confident, prepared, and able to handle any situations that might arise.

Take a few Deep Breaths:

Before you begin to speak, remember that your audience wants you to succeed, too.

Be Ready:

Have your first sentence memorized and on the tip of your tongue.

Be Comfortable:

Dress appropriately for the situation but as comfortably as possible. Drink plenty of water before your scheduled presentation time to ensure that your voice is well hydrated (bring a bottle of water with you, too). If possible, adjust the temperature in the room to your personal preference. The fewer physical distractions you have, the better you will perform.

Do not Panic:

If you sense that you are starting to race—natural response when you are nervous—stop for a second and arrange your notes or perform some other small task while taking several deep breaths. Then start again at your normal pace. If you feel that you are losing your audience, try to pull them back by involving them in the action; ask for their opinions or pause for questions.

Concentrate on Your Message and Your Audience, not on Yourself:

When you are busy thinking about your subject and observing your audience's response, you tend to forget your fears.

PRESENTATION & COMMUNICATION SKILLS – STAGE-3

!

Maintain Eye Contact with Friendly Audience Members:

When your presentation is under way, be particularly careful to maintain eye contact with your audience, shifting your gaze periodically around the room. Looking directly at your listeners will make you appear sincere, confident, and trustworthy. It also helps you get an idea of the impression you are creating.

Keep Going:

Things usually get better as you move along, with each successful minute giving you more and more confidence.

(b) Letter Writing:

No fixed answer to this question can be framed. Various examinees would treat the task differently.

Letters are used for written messages to individuals outside an organization and also used to communicate formal written messages to employees within an organization. Most letters contain seven standard parts:

- ☐ Heading
- ☐ Inside address
- ☐ Salutation
- ☐ Body
- ☐ Complimentary close
- ☐ Signature block
- ☐ Reference initials

THE END