



Bhubanananda Orissa School of Engineering

COMMUNICATION ENGLISH LECTURE NOTES

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UNIT - V

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Unit 5

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

Actually nothing happens in professional world without communication, though it is only a means, and not the end. Still it is communication that propels the management process and serves as the lubricant for its smooth operation. It helps professionals in their five major managerial tasks, namely planning, organizing, executing, staffing and controlling. Since every organization is a social system that involves interaction among people working at different levels, proper communication among them becomes necessary for achieving the goals of an organization. In a way, it is communication that the existence of an organization in contemporary times. When communication crumbles, the organized action comes to an end. Communication thus is vital to the survival, sustenance and growth of an organization. Living in an atomic world, we are well past an age when the blow of a sword would pose any considerable threat to us. Today, verbal blows appear mightier than the physical ones. Not just that, words - both written and spoken - have acquired a significantly crucial and an almost decisive force in contemporary times. Essentially, ours is a society that moves on the wheels of communication. Particularly in the professional world, it is communication and its related skills that decide a person's career curve. The better one's communication skills, the higher are the chances for him/ her to touch the zenith of success. The poorer one's communication skills, the greater is the possibility of not achieving one's goals.

Definition of Communication

Communication, the buzz word in today's world, originates from the Latin word *communico* or *communiare*, which means 'to share'. Various researchers and analysts define the term 'communication' in their own way. Despite their different versions, it can be briefly summed up that 'communication essentially means the transfer of ideas, feelings, plans, messages, or information from one person to another'. Obviously however, communication is considered effective only when it gets the desired action or response. Let us explain some of the essentials of communication with the help of the discussion that follows.

PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

However, sometimes there occurs a hindrance in the communication process, which is called noise. Noise can be defined as an unplanned interference in the communication environment, the one that causes hindrance to the transmission of the

message. It may mainly occur due to two reasons : disturbance in the channel / medium and / or some kind of error in the message sent. Communication is a process whereby information is encoded, channelled, and sent by a sender to a receiver via a medium. The receiver then decodes the message and gives the sender a feedback. All forms of communication require a sender, a channel, a message, a receiver, and the feedback that effectively winds up the process. Communication requires both the sender and the receiver to have an area of communicative commonality. Before we go further, it is important for us to understand how general purpose communication differs from professional communication.

FEATURES OF SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

Since communication matters a lot in the professional world, it is quite important for us to get acquainted with the most important features of successful professional communication. Communication is a two - way process by which information is transmitted between individuals and / or organizations so that an understanding develops among them. Communication is a continuous process of meaningful interactions among persons in an organization that results in meanings being perceived and understood in a desired way. The role of the receiver and the sender keeps changing in the entire communication activity. Communication skills are generally understood to be an art or technique of persuasion through the use of oral, written, and non - verbal features. Communication broadly includes both verbal and non-verbal forms. Therefore, it also includes lip reading, finger- spelling, sign language, and body language used in face - to - face communication. It is a process which transmits and disseminates important ideas, thoughts, feelings, plans, etc.

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

The following factors make communication indispensable in the world of business.

Understanding and Cooperation - If there exists good communication between the management and employees, it will bring about an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence. Only when the employees know exactly what is expected of them can the management utilize their potentialities and make up for their limitations. Through effective communication, employees get job satisfaction and develop a sense of belongingness with the enterprise which ultimately helps the organization grow well.

Complexity - This is an age of specialization and therefore, even in a single organization different activities, such as planning, production, sales, stores, advertising, financing, accounts, welfare, etc., are handled by different departments. If these departments do not communicate with one another as well as with the management, there will be coordination among them. For instance, when production is fully geared up, stores may report shortage of raw materials. Similarly, the finance department has to apprise the other departments regarding its constraints, which might have been the result of recent fluctuations in the

market. In fact, all the departments and units of an organization have to go hand in hand to achieve its goals and for that, they need to keep communicating with one another.

Competitiveness - Items of common consumption, such as tea, cigarettes, soaps, blades, clothes, etc., are available in a dozen brands today. Marketing research suggests that firms which communicate better sell better. The better the communication skills of a salesperson, the larger the number of customers he / she can attract. Salesmanship is primarily an art of communication. Besides, companies keep competing with one another through advertisements and other propagandist strategies for securing a higher position in the market. All this involves communication at every step.

Harmony - Trade unions believe in bargaining with the management and insist on the protection of the rights and dignity of the workers. The management and such unions share a delicate relation and without a proper communication between the two, on harmony can be expected to exist in an organization.

Growth - Due to the emergence of multinational companies, large business houses usually operate both within and outside the country. The head office of a large corporate maintains a through and up - to - date knowledge of the various activities at each of its branch offices. It keeps them well - acquainted with the activities of all the centres, which in turn establishes a link among its various branches and leads to the growth and smooth running of the entire business.

PURPOSE OF PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

Professional communication aims at achieving the following objectives :

Advising - However competent a professional may be, he / she cannot have specialized knowledge of all the branches such as licensing, taxation, publicity, engineering, etc. To succeed in his / her job, he / she will have to seek frequent advice. Also, the junior employees need to be advised by the supervisory staff on how to go about doing their jobs. A proper and timely interaction with experts in the related areas helps the management take wise steps and grow.

Persuading - Persuading may be defined as an effort to influence the attitudes, feelings or beliefs of others or to induce action based on that. Buyers have to be persuaded to buy products. In factories or offices, the lazy, the incompetent, and the disgruntled workers have to be persuaded to do their work. It is effective communication alone that can inspire indolent and uninterested people and keep them persuaded towards achieving the common objectives of an organization.

Counselling - Even an efficient employee may become slow and indifferent if he / she is facing personal problems at home. Such employees are encouraged to consult the counselling department. Through effective communication, employees and workers share their concerns, ventilate their problems and thus are restored to their mental and physical health.

Providing instructions - Instruction is a particular type of order in which the subordinate is not only ordered for a particular job, but also given guidance on how to go about doing it. All instructions are orders, but all orders need not be instructions. Regardless of the fact that the management intends to give instructions or issue orders, effectiveness in communication is mandatory if the right impact is desired to be created.

Giving orders - Order is an authoritative communication. It is a directive to somebody, always a subordinate, to do something, to modify or alter the course of something he / she is already doing, or not to do something. Whatever be the nature and size of an organization, orders are absolutely essential. Ordering without bullying however, is an art that requires effective communication skills.

Marketing - Just as marketing is crucial to all business, effective communication holds the key to marketing itself. Since the entire function of marketing rests on communication, it is hard to imagine any of its operations getting through without effective communication. Sometimes companies hire consultants also for obtaining right suggestions related to its various operational aspects. If not properly communicated, suggestions can be turned down.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE COMMUNICATION

What are the factors that influence communication ?

Factors that influence communication are message, code, channel or medium & barriers etc. The source has to decide what information to convey & creates the message or content to be conveyed by using words or other symbols which can be understood by the intended receiver. The process of putting the idea into symbols is called encoding; in order to encode, the sender has to select suitable symbols which can represent the idea, & can be understood by the receiver. The sender also chooses a suitable channel or medium like mail, e-mail, telephone, face to face talk by which to send the message, availability & effectiveness of a medium, & the relationship between the two communicants.

The receiver becomes aware that message has arrived when he perceives it with his senses. The process of translating the symbols into idea & interpreting the message is called decoding. Obstacles that prevent a message from reaching the intended recipient may be outside & beyond the control of the persons concerned. Some can be controlled because they are in the environment. Language is our most important & powerful tool of communication; & Yet it is a tricky tool that needs skill in handling. Technical terms can be a barrier to communication. More importantly, semantic barriers arise because words mean different things to different persons.

NEED FOR COMMUNICATION

Sociologists describe human beings as social animals as members of society, they have to constantly interact with their fellow beings. They have feelings emotions like love and dislikes - all of which they have to convey. In other words whatever the environment

in which they are placed they have feelings emotions and to build links and establish relationship. The need for communication arises from their desire to express a meaningful manner. As stated earlier communication is the modus operandi of social intercourse. As a member of the family a social group and as part of a work-term, he needs to communicate with others.

The Message - The Information that the sender wants to convey in physical form which can be understood by the receiver is known as message. The message depends upon the sender's idea and the receiver's perception. These may alter the meaning of the message altogether.

Code - Code is the symbolic form of any message or information. In communication system, The sender sends messages to the receiver and receiver also gives the feedback to the sender. In this process coding is necessary. For coding, the sender and receiver can understand the sent text of each other. Coding is of two types. 1st is encoding mentioned by the sender and 2nd is Decoding done by receiver.

Verbal communication

We use words when we speak or write. The same words sometimes mean different things to different people and elicit different reactions. This is because language and word have two distinct meanings, namely, the denotative meaning and the connotative meaning. The denotative meaning refers to what a word literally refers to. For example, a dog, denotative meaning is associated with its general appearance and characteristics. It is a canine animal with two paws, a tail and it barks etc. The communication mode which we rely on most often to carry meaning from one person to another is the verbal mode. Anyone who has never thought about it has come to the insight, however, that there are enormous difficulties in sole reliance on this mode of communication. History is replete with examples of misunderstandings among people who were relying on words to carry meaning perhaps the most significant learning that has come out of this experience has been that words themselves do not have meaning. People have the meaning, and words are simply tools that we use trying to convey meaning that is idiosyncratic. These words of one person are carried into the idiosyncratic meaning system of the other person. One of the difficulties with words is that we attach to them different experiential and emotional connotations. Words are not always associated with similar experiences or similar feelings on the part of the listener and speaker.

While there are some differences between people on what they believe a dog to be, usually there's little argument. When you talk about a dog most people will understand what you are referring to. But the difference in comprehension usually comes in the second type of meaning i.e; the connotative meaning. The connotative meaning of something has to do with the word suggests to the individual based on that person's experiences and emotional reactions and judgements associated with the word or what it refers to. Two people may understand what the word 'dog' denotes. However, one of them may have grown up with dogs around and learned to enjoy their company. The

other may have been attacked by a dog when young or sometime in life, and so she/he associates with the word 'dog' with very unpleasant emotions and judgements. So, the meaning of the word dog bears different connotations for each of them. Hence, when you say that "In bringing my dog to your house"; one person may welcome the idea while the other person may react negatively, if not vehemently to the idea of having a dog in the house.

Other difficulties encountered in using the verbal mode include the use of jargon, the use of clichés and the use of specialized vocabularies. It is often said that words have meaning only in context; it can be better said that words only have meaning when they are associated with people in context. It is not uncommon to observe people attempting to find the right words to say what they mean. It is easy to hypothesize that there are some people who, instead of experiencing feelings and sensation more often experience language; that is, their experience parameters are defined by their vocabularies and their ability to be articulate. The psychologists describe cognitive development in children, saying that we go through three phases: concrete, imagic, and abstract. When a little baby first experiences the world he is incapable of differentiated emotional or sensational experience. He experiences only distress or delight, and his major inputs are concrete; that is, he touches, tastes, sees, hears and smells things. As it becomes necessary for him to interact with the world and significant others in his environment in order to have his needs met, he develops a fantasy life, an imagic experience.

Non- Verbal Communication

Communication that does not use language is known as non-verbal communication.

A fourth form of symbolic communication to other people is cosmetics, or makeup. We associate meanings with different ways women apply makeup to themselves. The one who uses a great many cosmetics is giving out a symbolic message about the meaning that his world has for him. A fifth symbolic mode is the choice of automobiles. The business executive who drives a sports car giving out a different set of messages to the world than his colleague who drives a luxury sedan or an ordinary family car. A sixth symbolic mode is the choice and location of our houses. Seventh, the geography of our living spaces is a form of symbolic communication. If you sit behind your desk in your office interviewing somebody who is on the other side of the desk, you are giving out a fundamentally different set of messages than if the two of you sit face-to-face without intervening furniture. So we are giving out a continuous stream of signal about our meaning to other people through the symbols that we choose to surround ourselves and invest ourselves with. These symbols are essentially passive. They are, however, a real part of our communication. When we are talking, when we are not talking, and when we are sleeping, our postures emit passive symbolic signals.

We say a great deal to each other about who we are how we experience each other and the rest of the world through symbolic means. The symbolic communication mode is essentially passive, and messages emitted in this way are very easily misinterpreted. First of all, our choice of clothes can tell a great deal about who we are, what our values are, what our status is how conservative or liberal we are. We associate differences in occupational status with different uniforms. The banker wears a suit, the farmer wears dhotis, and so on. The second set of symbols with which we often associate meaning is hair. The type of hairdo, length and colour of hair, and the presence or absence of facial hair say a great deal about who we are. However, these signals are often highly ambiguous. A third symbolic form is jewellery. Married people often wear wedding rings, some people do not wear a watch, some people wear highly expensive jewellery, and so on. These are passive messages that are given out continuously to other people. A flag in the lapel, a red ribbon, an earring in one ear or in the nose convey many things to other people. Colour, space, silence and time are also powerful non-verbal symbols. Colours are very important and powerful means of communication as they are associated with different moods, feelings, classification and identification.

Though space does not make any sound the immediate environment and its contents communicate. It creates meanings in our mind and in the minds of others. Researchers have identified various spaces like personal space, fixed space and what we arrange in it. In fixed space the physical features such as walls, room sizes and capacity are unchangeable. They are permanent structures. And in semi-fixed space physical features are partially changeable. You can change the carpet, drapeery, furniture etc. Silence can also communicate very effectively. Positive withdrawal or suspension of speech in a face to face situation is full of meaning. People are silent when they want to convey feelings like anger or displeasure. Sympathy is best expressed by silence. Sometimes negative silence can be embarrassing. It projects nervousness or discomfort or even unpreparedness. Time is the meaning we give to a particular time of non-verbal communication we can only perceive it and symbolize it. Time management is an important factor in today's. We should reconcile to other people's time language. Punctuality and meeting deadlines communicate very favourably. Concepts of time vary across cultures, countries and social setups.

Non-verbal Communication: Body Language

Our bodies sometimes express our feelings and emotions better than words can. The body uses reflexive and non-reflexive movements, postures and positions to convey its message to anyone who would care to receive it. Our pupils dilate when we are excited. Our eyes narrow when we are concentrating. We slump when we are tired. The science of non-verbal communication is called kinesics. One's non-verbal communication, or body language, is usually involuntary and also has symbolic meaning.

LANGUAGE OF BODY

Oculistics	- Communicates eyes behaviour.
Paralanguage	- Communicates the value of vocal behaviour ; the meaning of how something is said.
Haptics	- Tactile communication/ touching behaviour.
proxemics	- Communication aspects of the use of space.
Chronemics	- Communicates aspects of the use of time
Olfronemics	- Communicates aspects of smells.
Kinesics (body language)	- The communicative ability of gestures and body movements.

Touching is perhaps the most powerful non-verbal communication form. The skin is the body's largest organ and through the skin we take in a variety of stimuli. We can communicate very potently through touch, trust, tenderness, warmth, and a variety of other emotions very potently though touching people differ, however, in their willingness to touch and be touched. Some people give out nonverbal signals in their willingness to touch and be touched. Some people give out nonverbal body signals in a way that they do not want to be touched, and there are other people who describe themselves and are described by others as "touchy feely," learn about their own personalities and self concepts through exploring reaction to touching and being touched. There are a number of forms of body language. Ambulation is a first form. We associate different meanings to different ways people carry their bodies from one place to another. How one carries his/her body, whether he/she glides, strides, stomps, etc. tells a great deal who he/she is and how he/she is experiencing her environment. Eye contact is a third form of non-verbal communication. We tend to judge each other up in terms of trustworthiness through reaction to each other's eye contact. You can try little experiments with yourself. Con artists and salespeople understand the power of eye contact and use it to good advantage. Counsellors understand that eye contact is a very powerful way of communicating understanding and acceptance. Speakers understand that eye contact is important in keeping an audience interested in one's subject.

Tics constitute a fifth form of non-verbal communication. The involuntary nervous spasms of the body can be a key to one's being threatened. A number of people stammer or jerk when they are being threatened. But these mannerisms can be easily misinterpreted.

Posturing is a fourth form of non-verbal communication. How one postures the body when seated or standing constitutes a set of potential signals that may communicate how one's legs are often said to be defensive. It is sometimes observed that a person under

severe psychological threat will assume the body position of a foetus. The seductive person opens his body to other people and postures himself so that his entire body is exposed to the other person.

Gesturing is an eighth form of non-verbal communication. It is said that if we tie a Frenchman's hands, he is mute. We carry great deal of meaning through the use of gesture. But gestures do not mean the same thing to all people sometimes people attach a different emphasis to our words and we attempt to clarify our meaning through the use of gestures. Gestures can be either ambiguous or unambiguous. point at water and then point to your mouth. This is an example of an unambiguous gesture. Another person watching you is almost certain understand that you want to drink water. There is hardly, Any chance of misinterpretation here. In our everyday life, we frequently use a combination of words, gestures and facial expressions to express our full meaning. calling someone an "idiot" with an accompanying smile is different from saying it without a smile. In addition, gestures often have different meanings in different circumstances, depending upon various factors: cultural, geographical, social, etc. For instance, if you nod by moving your head up and down, in India it means a concurrence, a "yes", whereas the same gesture in, say, Kuwait would mean the exact opposite, a dissent, a "no". Sub-vocals constitute a sixth form of non-verbal communication. we say uh,uh, when we are trying to find a word. we say a lot of non-word things in order to carry meaning to another person; we stammer, we hum, we grunt, we groan and so on. These sub-vocal noises are not words but they carry meaning.

Distancing is a seventh form of non-verbal communication. Each person is said to have a psychological space around him /her. If another person invades that space, he/she may become somewhat tense, or alert, or jammed up. we tend to place distance between ourselves and others according to the kinds of relationship that we have and what our motives are towards each other. These reasons for establishing distances are often not displayed openly, but the behaviour is, nevertheless, interpreted. Vocalism or inflection constitutes a ninth form of non-verbal communication. As an example, take the sentence, "I love my children." That sentence is meaningless unless it is pronounced. The way that sentence is packaged vocally determines the signal that it gives to another person. For example, the emphasis is on the first word, "I love my children," the implication is somebody else doesn't. If the emphasis is on the second word "I love my children," the implication is that someone else's children do not receive the same affection. If the emphasis is placed on the final word "I love my children," a fourth implication may be drawn, that is, that there are other people whom I do not love. So, the way we carry our words vocally often determines the meaning that another person is likely to infer from our message.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is generally classified into the following types

- Extrapersonal communication
- Media communication
- Non- verbal communication
- Interpersonal communication
- Written communication
- Mass communication
- Verbal communication
- Intrapersonal communication
- Oral communication

Let us briefly get acquainted with some of these varieties of communication.

Verbal Communication

Since a professional has spend a large amount of his / her working time is speaking and listening to others besides reading and writing, most of the time he / she has to use language as a vehicle of communication . This type of communication is termed as verbal communication.

Verbal communication thus stands both for the spoken and the written word used in the communication process. It can further ne divided into oral and written communication.

Extrapersonal communication - Communcation does not take place only among human beings. If we observe carefully, we find that sometimes we do communicate with non-human entities, such as a animals, birds, etc. For instance, whenever we command our pet dog or cat sit, stand, or go , they immediately follw our orders. Whenever we caress them pet dog or cat on their back for doing something good, they are elated and they start wagging their tails. This type of communication is known as extrapersonal communcation.

Mass Communication - This is generally identified with tools of modern mass media, which include books, the press, cinema, television, radio, the internet, etc,. IT is a means of conveying messages to an entire populace. This also includes the speeches delivered by a prophet or a policial leader.

Written communication - In this type of communication the sender uses the written mode to transmit his / her message. Reports, proposals, books, handbooks, letters, emails, etc. come in this category. Written communicationis routinely used for documentaion purpose in business and government organizations.

Non - verbal Communication - When a message is communicated without using a word the process requires non - verbal cues to be transmitted and received. Non-verbal communication forms an important part in the world of professional communication. It can be furhter categorized into two parts body language and paralinguistic features. Body language involves aspects such as personal appearance, walk, gestures, facial expressions, hand movements, posture, and eye contact. The paralinguistic features include a person's voice, volume, pitch, rate, pauses, articulation, voice modulation, etc.

Oral communication - A face - to face interaction between the sender and the receiver is called oral communication. In this type of communication, there could be two or more than two persons who use spoken language as a medium of communication. For instance, whenever we make presentations, deliver speeches, participate in group discussions, appear for interviews, or simply interact with somebody we are involved in oral communication.

Intrapersonal Communication - This implies individual reflection, contemplation, and meditation. So, whenever communication takes place within one's own self, it is termed as intrapersonal communication. One example of this form of communication is transcendental meditation. It is also believed that this type of communicating with the divine and with spirits in the form of prayers and rites and rituals.

Media Communication - It includes communication that takes place only with the help of electronic media, such as computer, cell phones, LCD, video, television. etc. Of these, the internet has become a major means for all sorts of official or personal communication.

Intrapersonal communication - This is a direct, written, or oral communication that occurs between two or more persons. The oral form of this type of communication, such as a dialogue or a conversation between two or more people, is personal and direct and permits maximum interaction through words and gestures. Regardless of the type of communication involved, communication remains an evercontinuing process that keeps ticking all the time. It is as important to human life as is our any other day - to day activity, such as breathing, eating, and sleeping.

COMMUNICATION NETWORK IN AN ORGANIZATION

Communication serves as instrument to measure the success or growth of an organization. The success of an organization is recognized by the quality and quantity of information flowing through its personnel. In today's business enterprises, information must flow faster than ever before. Even a little delay might cause a great loss. In large organizations, to keep oneself informed about the smooth operation of the various departments and for performing excellently in the market, it is essential for professional, who plays a key role in the organization, to know and understand the different forms of communication that constitute the network in an organization.

Different Types of Communication Flow

Communication in a professional organization flows at different layers and levels which regulate, guide, and propel its flow. The different types of communication flow in an organization are as follows :

Upward Downward Corsswise Spiral Horizontal Vertical

If the management circulates a copy of new bonus and incentive scheme among all the employees, it will be called spiral communication in the organization. Sometimes however, communication flows between persons who belong to different levels of

hierarchy and who have no direct reporting relationships. This is used generally to quicken the information flow, improve understanding and coordinate efforts for the achievement of organization objectives. Such a movement of an information is termed as diagonal communication. The information flow in an organization can be seen with the help of which shows the communication flow that streams in various directions within an organization. Communication may flow horizontally, i.e., among people of the same rank in an organization. This is for better coordination among various departments and for effective decision-making purposes. In order to achieve the production target for a particular month, the discussion held between the production manager and the supply manager will certainly be a perfect instance of horizontal communication. However, when the production manager imparts certain instructions to the workers and supervisors for the same purpose, it will be downward communication. Here the information moves from the higher authority to its subordinates. And in the same context, if the supervisor reports to the production manager regarding the present state of production, it will be case of upward communication.

Variation in language – Sometimes certain words and idiomatic expressions are culture specific. If we do not use them appropriately in the respective cultural context, it might lead to miscommunication or non-communication. For instance, what is called sidewalk in the US, in Britain it is called pavement, whereas in India, it is called platform. Similarly, it is apartment in the US, flat in Britain, and house in India. In the same way, we find in Britain to table a proposal means to act on it, whereas in America it means to postpone. Therefore, if we use such expressions indiscriminately, it would lead to confusion and consequently may lead to the breakdown of communication.

Selection of a wrong variety of language – For various human interactions, we choose different varieties of expressions. Imagine a lawyer flaunting his courtroom gambits and exploiting his argumentative skills to convince his wife to give him a cup of tea! The chances are that he won't get that! The reason's is obvious : it is a wrong variety of language chosen and hence it fails to elicit the desired reply. Because of a wrong variety of language, even a strategy, otherwise effective and useful, may fail miserably. In the convoluted world of communication, at times it is the selection of a wrong variety of language that leads to failure as the speaker fails to get the feedback of his / her own liking.

Grape vine communication - In organizations, informal communication permeates the personal and professional lives of employees. This informal flow of communication is called grapevine. For instance, rumours about the company's expansion, promotion of an employee, relations between two colleagues are some of the examples of grapevine. It flows in all directions. Grapevine may create both negative and positive impact on the environment within an organization.

Semantic gap – Semantic gap or distortion might be deliberate or accidental, for example, an advertisement saying, 'We sell for less,' raises the question, 'Less than what?' Is the product sold the less number of people or offered at a less price? Thus, a message such as this may have different connotations and may leave the recipient of the message wondering about the real intention of the message. Thus, whenever there is a gap between the message sent and the message received, it might have arisen due to the language employed and the way it has been interpreted.

Differences in perception of a message – Different people perceive a particular situation in different ways. This clearly means that all the people cannot perceive a single message in the same way. Consider a situation wherein there occurs a dispute between a worker and his / her superior and a third person is asked to inquire into the matter. During investigation, it is very likely that both the worker and the superior will not recall the situation in exactly the same way. This is mainly because their perception levels are not the same. To overcome this problem, one needs to communicate on various perspectives, try to verify the matter from different points of view, and then come to a conclusion. Similarly, in a business situation, one should be very careful in the choice of words. It is because like many things in the world we utter are also open to a variety of interpretations. For instance, if the director of a company instructs the general manager to find out whether the company premises can afford to have a 'large parking space', the manager will not be able to answer unless the director defines what he means by 'large parking space', specifying its area. Likewise, words such as good, bad, proper, inappropriate, character, nature and a large number of other words are essentially subjective in nature and can be interpreted in various ways and hence need to be used carefully in order to avoid ambiguity in the message.

Badly encoded or wrongly decoded messages – The sender may have clarity about the message that is to be conveyed, but it may still not reach the receiver because the message might have been improperly expressed. Choice of wrong words, absence of punctuation marks or wrongly - timed pauses, poor organization of ideas, use of unnecessary jargon, etc. bring vagueness in the message. It is not just that the speaker may put ideas into coherent and properly worded expressions; it is at times even the listeners who may contribute to the messy world of misinterpretation by decoding the message in a startlingly different way. Let us consider the following situation. The Manager of Sieve International refers to the report submitted by his Marketing Trainee as bombastic. The young amateurish employee with a limited vocabulary assumes from the form of the word that it must mean something like fantastic and bursts into a grateful Thank you very much, Sir! So a badly or wrongly decoded message can lead to a hilarious situation for the onlookers but an embarrassing one for the people involved.

Non- verbal Barriers – Apart from the basic aspects of communication stated earlier, one needs to keep in mind the non - verbal aspects too in order to be considered adept in communication skills. Moreover, when verbal and non - verbal messages clash, receivers tend to trust the non - verbal messages. Sometimes even flashing eyes, rolling eyes, quick movements or very slow movement, or avoiding eye contact may also cause non - verbal barriers to effective communication. Raising eyebrows constantly suggests that the speaker is not convinced about the information that he / she has shared. Bulging eyes leave the audience alienated as the speaker unnecessarily sounds arrogant. Even when a presenter keeps his / her hands or thumbs constantly in the pockets of his / her trousers, he/ she will certainly appear snobbish, scared, or deceptive to his/ her audience. Similarly, if some awkward gestures are constantly used by the speaker, these will create blocks in the smooth flow of communication. Chapter 10 on non- verbal communication deals with the topic in greater detail.

Listening barriers – Poor listening results in incomplete, incorrect, and inconsistent responses. Sometimes people do not listen to others properly and patiently because rather than listening to others' views, they may just be waiting anxiously for the speaker to keep quiet so that they may articulate their own views. Experience suggests that those who listen to others with dwindling attention fail to speak properly as well. It is so because listening is the mother of all speaking. Listening requires concentration, patience, and focus ; the turbulence characterizing a quintessential twenty- first century mind, however, renders the whole task extremely challenging. And although we all pretend to listen to others while sitting in a meeting or attending some oral presentation, we usually are occupied with the idea of speaking at the earliest opportunity. It is so because speaking is a human urge, while listening is a compulsion. We all aspire to be speakers but not necessarily all of us crave to be a listener. That is why, there are many speakers but just a few listeners. Moreover, listeners interrupting the speakers or avoiding an eye contact with them also causes barriers to effective listening. Besides the above, the following reasons may also cause listening barriers in the communication environment :

- Topping the speaker's story with one's own set of examples
- Forgetting what is being discussed
- Asking too many questions for the sake of probing
- Making the speaker feel as though he / she is wasting the listener's time.
- Being distracted by something that is not part of the ongoing communication.
- Getting ahead of the speaker and completing his / her thoughts

These barriers have been elaborately discussed in Chapter 9 on developing effective listening skills.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Write the text of a speech on global warming. Ask the best speaker in your class to deliver it. Let his/ her speech be followed by the most mediocre speaker in your class. Although the text is the same, do you think that the impact that each speaker creates would also be the same? Not really. Even if both the speakers speak the same thing, they will not speak it in the same way. The best speaker would use his/ her mental agility, voice, and body to communicate to you the essence of the message. The mediocre speaker, however, would not really make such an effort. Does it mean that the real difference between a good speaker and a poor one is the difference in the manner of speaking? Yes, it does mean that. In fact, in most of the situations, the speakers do not stand out because of an outstanding text, but because of the manner in which the text is put before the audience. It is so because when people communicate they do not merely share some words, but also bring into play the subtle aspects of their voice and body to play an important part in communicating their ideas. Those who do it well realize their objective of being successful communicators, and those who are clumsy at it fail to register an impact. Therefore, as we prepare ourselves for a professional career, let us be perceptive about how the human body- through gestures, posture, expressions, hand movements, appearance and eye contact- communicates the entire range of emotions, expressions, moods and attitudes. For example, when you see passengers sitting at the airport waiting for their flight, candidates sitting in the foyer waiting to be called in for interview, players getting ready to replace or join their teammates playing on the field, or a friend or yours waiting for his/her turn to express his/her view during a group discussion, you can figure out that their obvious actions underline similar emotions such as restlessness, boredom, fatigue or agitation. For displaying these emotions, no words are required. It is their sitting or standing posture, their hand or leg movements, their eyes or facial expressions which tell us in no unclear terms that they are going through the ordeal of waiting. The language that shares the unspoken emotion in a silent way is called body language, and together with the other paralinguistic features and proxemics, forms an integral part of non-verbal communication.

Body Language - Body language refers to all the expressions that we share by means of our body movements and not through words. Interestingly, the vocabulary of body language is universally common as it is interpreted and understood with the help of universally acknowledged body signs, cues, and symbols. The study of body language is known as kinesics. Since body language acquires a universal appeal and impact, it becomes imperative on our part to attain a certain level of proficiency in this. In fact, just like any other language, body language too needs to be improved with conscious efforts, especially because it is more trustworthy than any number of spoken or written words. Let us take a look at some of the important elements of body language.

Personal Appearance : A person's external appearance is as important as the exterior of house. Do you think you would be impressed with a house or its people if you found the exterior is not well kept, most of us are likely to conclude that the house is not well maintained. Similarly, a speaker who does not seem to be maintaining himself/ herself well is not likely to win the appreciation of the audience. Now, what is it that can make or mar our personal appearance? Let us have a close look at the nuances of the term and understand how to score well on this front.

Dress, make-up shoes, and hair style:- Nothing in the professional world happens by chance. Professionals make their own choices. Therefore, if the choices go wrong, one cannot expect the right results. For example, if you choose to wear a rumpled dress on the day you are being interviewed, it is sure to spoil your chances of landing into a job. However, in the professional world there is something more than a job at stake. Therefore, it is important that you select a dress that is neatly washed, properly ironed and fits you well. Being properly dressed does not mean being fashionably or glamorously dressed. Dressing well and keeping a good posture is not something you should do only on special days to make an impression on someone. It is something you have to cultivate, because if you dress sloppily in your everyday life and then one fine day decide to dress to kill, chances are that you won't succeed. Therefore, make it a habit to dress well. Posture refers to the way we sit, stand and carry ourselves, our posture communicates the way we visualize the world around us. For instance, what do you think of a person who keeps his /her head down while walking? Certainly not. Most of them actually seem to be scared of being noticed. Some others appear to be lost in deep thought and contemplation. Such people are either mocked at or ignored. On the other hand, the person who stands, sits and walks up right commands respect and attention. Therefore, a professional has to cultivate and maintain elegance in his/her sitting standing and walking posture. Given below are some important tips following which you can maintain an impressive posture during professional meetings, interviews, group discussions, presentations, and other formal occasions.

- Avoid crossing your legs while sitting or standing before your audience.
- Avoid leaning on the lectern or reclining against the back of the chair.
- Keep shifting your body weight as you stand before your audience.
- Feel and communicate ease through your sitting and standing posture and also the way you carry yourself at professional gatherings.
- Avoid keeping your feet at attention or parallel.
- Look straight while walking, avoid looking down at the floor outside the window or door, or up at the ceiling.

- Don't let your shoulders droop.
- Lift your feet clearly off the floor while walking; avoid dragging them.
- Avoid being too slow or aggressively fast while walking up to the podium or dais.
- Don't slouch while walking or sprawl while sitting.

Gestures and Hand Movements - Just as a picture can silently speak a thousand words, a gesture can communicate all that the speaker feels consciously or unconsciously. Common gestures and their commonly understood meanings

- *Crossed arms indicates submissiveness, defence and negativity.*
- *Hands on knees indicates readiness.*
- *Locking hands behind one's back indicates one's arrogance.*
- *Rubbing the eye indicates doubt and disbelief.*
- *Waving indicates saying hello or goodbye.*
- *Clenching a fist indicates anger.*
- *Thumbs up shows appreciation or agreement.*
- *Pointing means showing something.*

A speaker or listener's gestures and hand movements can support and emphasize their state of mind. Imagine a speaker who keeps rubbing his/ her palms while delivering speech; imagine a listener who sits cross-legged and also clamps his/ her arms against the chest; think of a communicator who keeps rubbing his/ her face. What do you make of them? Do these people create a favourable impression on others? Clearly, they don't. It is so because, though the gestures do not overtly convey anything, the impact created by them is telling enough. Therefore, it is advisable to use gestures and hand movements appropriately; so that the impact created by them is graceful and suits the occasion.

Given below are a few tips which should be borne in mind while using gestures and other hand movements.

- Don't lean on to a lectern; it reveals lack of confidence.
- Avoid playing with key rings, etc; it distracts your listeners.
- Avoid playing with key rings, etc it distracts your listeners.
- Don't wring your hands or play with rings on your fingers.
- Don't tug on your shirt-sleeves or shirt collars; it reveals your discomfort.
- Don't scratch or crane your neck; it reveals uncertainty and doubt.
- Don't let your arms wave below your waist or allow them to loosely move about.
- Use graceful and socially acceptable gestures.

- Avoid aggressive and provoking gestures.
- Don't keep your arms folded against your chest; it suggests lack of confidence and uncertainty.
- Don't keep your arms folded against your chest; it suggests evasion and fear.
- Don't keep your hands locked behind you; it suggests concealment of your true personality.
- Avoid twitching or rubbing your nose.
- Don't scratch your forehead, or eyebrows, or head; it suggests that you are unsure of yourself.

Eye Contact : Eyes are the windows to soul. They truthfully convey the emotions and feelings one goes through. In fact, it is believed that you can tell lies with words but your eyes will give away the truth. Therefore, looking into a person's eye is the best way to understand his/her attitude or reaction to all that you speak. Hence, maintaining an eye contact with your speaker and listen is the most important part of your non-verbal communication skills. As a professional speaker, try to look into the eyes of the people in front of you. At times, the crowd that we face is huge and we feel nervous and hence start avoiding eye contact. Remember however, that it is bound to spoil all the impact of your otherwise well-written and well-articulated speech. Similarly, if you avoid eye contact during a job interview, you are more likely to lose rather than gain. It is so because someone who is not able to look into the eyes of their interviewers is considered edgy, nervous, and lacking in self-confidence. Even during group discussions and other meetings, the speakers become increasingly conscious of those who do not look at them as they speak. Again speakers who do not look into the eyes of their listeners during meetings and other discussions are also likely to lose their credibility. In fact, in any human discourse, eyes play a very significant role, and avoiding eye-contact is seen as an indication of evasion is equal to digging one's own grave. Therefore, regardless of your position in any human interaction, learn to look into the eyes of your co-communicators. Here are a few suggestions, following which you will be able to use your eyes to support your efforts in communicating your ideas effectively.

Facial Expression - Just as eyes are regarded as the windows to the soul, the face is considered an index of our mind. If there are unpleasant, sad, and gloomy expressions on your face, you are likely to create a very negative impact on your listeners or speakers. In the entire communication process, it is the person's face that we get to see most of the time. Therefore, if a face reflects negativity of any type and expresses dejection, irritation, indifference, fear, confusion, inhibition, vulnerability, or doubt, it is likely to severely affect the effectiveness of communication.

Since your face gives an indication of what you experience while communicating with others, it is of great significance to all the people involved in the process of communication. Therefore, use your face for expressing your confidence and ease. Start with a smile; a smile can light up your face. A smile is more often than not likely to help you establish a rapport with your co-communicators. You may have noticed that speakers who spoke to you with a smile on their faces were well accepted and better listened to. If a smile can work wonders, there are in contrast many negative expressions also which may completely wreck your communication with others. Think of a face that has a three-day stubble or a perpetual frown or smirk. Would you, as an audience, associate with such a person who runs you down or doubts you through his/her facial expressions? No way. Hence it is important to present a pleasant disposition through your facial expressions. Let there be emotions of confidence, zeal and enthusiasm. Let your face reveal a heart that is willing to associate and communicate; express this attitude both while being a speaker and a listener.

- Exude confidence through your eyes.
- Feel warmth for your fellow listeners/speakers; it is likely to improve your eye contact with them.
- Feel and express a willingness to connect and communicate through your eyes.
- Maintain good eye contact with your listeners.
- While addressing a large gathering, ensure that you keep looking in all directions.
- While others speak, observe them carefully and try to understand the non-verbal cues they emit.

Given below are some tips which may help you maintain proper facial expressions while speaking or listening to others;

- Avoid being dull in the face; express confidence and ease.
- Avoid expressing dejection, sadness, or indifference.
- Avoid reflecting strong emotions on your face.
- Let your face suggest your honesty, integrity and conviction in what you say.
- Don't smirk; it suggests arrogance.
- Don't express any kind of disrespect or contempt for your listeners.
- Let your face suggest a willingness to associate yourself with others.
- Start with a smile but don't keep smiling throughout.
- Don't have a frown on your face; it suggests arrogance.
- Avoid raising your eyebrows while speaking or listening to others.
- Don't purse your lips while speaking or listening to others.
- Don't narrow your eyebrows; this too suggests your lack of trust in others.

Paralinguistic Features - Just as we can communicate various attitudes through our gestures, posture, expressions, and body movements, eyes, and hands, we can express emotions and feelings with the help of different aspects of our voice. Though we cannot radically change our voice, there are different aspects of voice which can be carefully worked on to create the right type of impact on our listeners while we deliver a speech, make a presentation, participate in a group discussion, or appear for a job interview.

Pitch/Intonation/Cadence/ Voice Modulation - Pitch refers to the rise and fall in human voice. Just like the other aspects of voice, pitch too plays a crucial role in communicating your ideas to others. In fact, it is the pitch- the rise and fall- in your voice which can express all the emotions that are to be conveyed. So that you do not confuse volume and pitch, let us understand the difference between the two. All of us listen to songs on our stereos, CD players, iPods, etc. When is it that you lower? Is it the pitch or the volume? Obviously, it is the volume of a song that you can decrease or increase, but you cannot increase or decrease the pitch. However, what characterizes a song is not its volume, but the pitch which the gifted singers so meticulously vary. And not just singers, but all speakers need to effectively employ various pitch patterns in their speeches. Pitch is something that adds colour and lustre to your voice, and hence plays an important role in the overall communication process.

Since pitch can express and convey all our moods, emotions, and sentiments, it becomes really important for us to carefully employ the desired pitch patterns. Quite often, we find the speech of a person quite boring because he/she does not use the variety of pitch patterns as per the requirement of the situation. In order to understand this, listen carefully to those songs in which the singer keeps singing in a solemn way until he/she reaches the crescendo. The change in the initial note and the later part is the change in the pitch patterns. The changes and varieties of pitch patterns can be observed even while we continue to listen to the song at the same volume. It is, therefore, suggested that you employ the variegated pitch patterns quite judiciously in order to keep your listeners engaged and interested in your expression. It is, in fact, the variations on the pitch which provide colour and lustre to a singer or a speaker's voice.

Pronunciation and Articulation - Pronunciation plays an important role in expressing our ideas. As discussed earlier, English is not our native language and hence the pronunciation of Indian speakers of English is different from that of the native speaker. An effort should constantly be made to make our speech as close to standard English as possible. In terms of pronunciation, we should stick

to RP English as it is recognized as the standard pronunciation of English worldwide. The chapter on phonetics discusses the different RP sounds of English and also gives you sufficient information regarding word stress, weak forms, and intonation patterns. Following which you can make your spoken English intelligible to a native listener.

Articulation is also as important as pronunciation. To highlight the difference in these two commonly confused terms, let us consider the following words and expressions: 'psychology' 'mythology' 'rendezvous' 'clerk' 'sample', etc: all such words and many more in English are pronounced in different ways, but the person's articulation that is at fault.

Articulation refers to our ability to speak different sounds distinctly.

Proxemics/Space distance - Have you ever observed lions and tigers in a zoo? Do they appear to be comfortable with their caged existence? Don't you often find them moving restlessly inside their cage? Tigers and lions- and none of the other animals or birds- seem to be happy inside a cage. Therefore, they appear to be restless and disquieted most of the time. The situation gets worse if many of them are put inside the same cage. You often see them attacking and mauling each other. Why does it happen? And it is not just animals or birds but also humans that detest being inside cages. We all love our freedom and want to protect it at any cost. Observed closely however, it seems that it is not just freedom but also space that matters to us. Physically, all of us are free. But when we see a crowded place, we do not feel comfortable. We do not want to board a crowded bus or train; sit on a waiting bench where others are sitting stand in a long sleep in a room that seems crammed and crowded with things. In fact these are only a few instances which suggest how we all want our own territory and space to feel relaxed and enjoy a comfort that is lost if we are surrounded by things or people.

While communicating in formal situations, therefore, it becomes quite important for us to understand and respect the territories of other professionals, and see to it that they never feel intruded. In fact, if you stand too close to people while speaking to them in formal situations, they are likely to resist and resent your presence. Like all animals, humans too have a psychologically defined territory and not many are welcomed beyond a certain point.

Standing or sitting too far away from your listeners or speakers on the other hand, is also not all that advisable. Just as standing or sitting too close to others may make them feel intruded upon and violated or choked, standing or sitting too far away may communicate a sense of alienation and lack of warmth. Therefore, it becomes important for us to understand the different zones in to which the psychological territories of human beings can be divided. How we can appreciate the various psychological zones maintained by most of us is given below.

Signs – This includes the mechanical communication such as use of signal flags, the 21-gun salute, horns, and sirens.

Symbols : This is the type of communication that makes use of religious, status, or ego-building symbols.

Kinesics – Kinesics is the name given to the study of the body's physical movements. In other words, it is the way the body communicates without words, i.e. through various movements of its parts. As is well said by Warzlawick and his associates, 'You cannot not communicate.' You communicate just by being. Nodding the head, blinking eyes, shrugging shoulders, waving the hands, and other such physical activities are all forms of communication. Some kinesic behaviours are deliberately intended to communicate. For example, you nod your head for acceptance. Understanding non-verbal cues will develop your ability to use them more effectively during your presentations.

