

Business Communication

MBA I YEAR / I SEMESTER

Laboratory Manual

Prepared By:

M. SURESH
Assistant Professor
English Department
Pallavi Engineering College

COURSE CONTENT FOR BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

I UNIT

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION & WRITING 3-13

II UNIT

BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE 14-27

III UNIT

INSTRUCTION 28-40

IV UNIT

BUSINESS REPORTS & PROPOSAL 34-41

V UNIT

CAREERS & RESUMES 42-58

I UNIT

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION & WRITING

INTRODUCTION

The word communication is derived from the Latin word, *communis*, which means *common or to share*. Communication, therefore, is an act by which a person shares knowledge, feelings, ideas and information, in ways such that each gains a common understanding of the meaning, intent and use of the message. Sociologists, educationists and psychologists have defined communication according to the disciplines to which they belong. Some definitions are given below:

“It is a process by which two or more people exchange ideas, facts, feelings or impressions in ways that each gains a common understanding of the message. In essence, it is the act of getting a sender and a receiver tuned together for a particular message or series of message”.

Leagans

“It is a process by which information, decisions and directions pass through a social system, and the ways in which knowledge, opinions and attitudes are formed or modified”. Loomis and Beegle

HOW COMMUNICATION TAKES PLACE:

Communication can occur without words. Our four senses, audio, visual, touch and smell, communicate. The ring of the alarm tells us it's time to wake up, the eyes gaze at the window and check for the time of day or weather, the touch of the wind on our skin tells us if it is hot or cold and the smell from the kitchen tells us what is cooking. When a message is sent from a source to a receiver, a specific mental or physical response (communication) occurs.

The medium can be a face-to-face conversation, telephone call, e-mail, or written report. The receiver *decodes* the received message into meaningful information. *Noise* is anything that distorts the message. Different perceptions of the message, language barriers, interruptions, emotions, and attitudes are examples of noise. Finally, *feedback* occurs when the receiver responds to the sender's message and returns the message to the sender.

Feedback allows the sender to determine whether the message has been received and understood.

For written media, an administrator or other organization member may choose from memos, letters, reports, bulletin boards, handbooks, newsletters, and the like. For verbal

media, choices include face-to-face conversations, telephone, computer, public address systems, closed-circuit television, tape-recorded messages, sound/slide shows, e-mail, and so on. Nonverbal gestures, facial expressions, body position, and even clothing can transmit messages. People decode information selectively.

COMMUNICATION IS A TWO-WAY PROCESS:

It has a transmitter and a receiver. Therefore, it is essential for facts to be transmitted in such a manner that the meaning intended is conveyed and the receiver understands the use of the message. It becomes a two-way process. There are many different types and methods of communication. For example, in India, people fold their hands in greeting. In Japan, people bow from the waist. Simple gestures are an effective means of communication. An effective and culturally sensitive communicator is able to read feelings and reactions through these gestures.

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION:

There are many barriers to communication. These barriers can distort communication, therefore, attention must be paid to overcome these barriers. Communication barriers can be classified into three main groups:

Judgmental attitude may be reflected through excessive analysis, bossiness, name calling, ridiculing, making value-based comments and judgments, moralizing or ignoring. This is often the single most powerful barrier in communicating with.

“Know it all” attitude may be reflected through advising, moralizing, ordering, patronizing, threatening or lecturing. This form of behaviour often inhibits people from sharing their concerns and experiences. When communicating with youth, this kind of behaviour/communication should be avoided.

Unconcerned attitude may be reflected through voicing platitudes, diverting the issue, using excessive logic, offhanded assurances, half-listening, not making eye contact or being flippant. Concern, empathy and confidentiality are valued components of communication on sensitive subjects.

BARRIERS TO RECEIVING MESSAGES:

Human beings can receive messages subject to certain limitations. These limitations are called filters. Anything below or above the range of these filters is usually left out:

Physical filters: The inherent structure of our senses limits our capacity to perceive. For example, we can only see certain colours from a spectrum of colours. We can only hear between certain frequencies – 20Hz to 20,000 Hz. All frequencies higher or lower are

filtered out.

Psychological filters enable people to look/view the same things differently. Our attributes, expectations, past experiences, and knowledge influence what we perceive and

how we perceive it. These perceptions change during the course of life and greatly influence the way we communicate.

DISTORTIONS IN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Communication can be blocked or result in undesired impacts. This may happen because of many reasons that are known as distortions. Distortions can occur because of the following:

§ *A very long transmission chain (message is passed from one person to another and goes through a long chain of receivers and senders).*

§ *A very long message.*

§ *A complicated and poorly organized message.*

§ *Non-availability of feedback at appropriate time.*

§ *The sender and the receiver have different mindsets.*

§ *Inappropriate use of media and medium (i.e., method and language).*

§ *Lack of common perceptions between the sender and the receiver.*

§ *Hurried and uninsured transmission (you send the message without checking if it has actually reached the intended person).*

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

The basis of communication is the interaction between people. Verbal communication is one way for people to communicate face-to-face. Some of the key components of verbal communication are sound, words, speaking, and language. At birth, most people have vocal cords, which produce sounds. As a child grows it learns how to form these sounds into words. Some words may be imitative of natural sounds, but others may come from expressions of emotion, such as laughter or crying. Words alone have no meaning. Only people can put meaning into words. As meaning is assigned to words, language develops, which leads to the development of speaking. Over 3,000 languages and major dialects are spoken in the world today.

Verbal Communication is further divided into:

Oral Communication (Speaking)

Written Communication

Aural Communication (Listening)

Reading

ORAL COMMUNICATION:

In oral communication, Spoken words are used. It includes face-to-face conversations, speech, telephonic conversation, video, radio, television, voice over internet. In oral communication, communication is influence by pitch, volume, speed and clarity of speaking.

Advantages of Oral communication are: It brings quick feedback. In a face-to-face conversation, by reading facial expression and body language one can guess whether he/she should trust what's being said or not.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

In written communication, written signs or symbols are used to communicate. A written message may be printed or hand written. In written communication message can be transmitted via email, letter, report, memo etc. Message, in written communication, is influenced by the vocabulary & grammar used, writing style, precision and clarity of the language used. Written Communication is most common form of communication being used in business. So, it is considered core among business skills. Memos, reports, bulletins, job descriptions, employee manuals, and e-mail are the types of written communication used for internal communication.

Advantages of written communication includes: Messages can be edited and revised many time before it is actually sent. Written communication provide record for every message sent and can be saved for later study. A written message enables receiver to fully understand it and send appropriate feedback.

Types of Communication Based on Purpose and Style

Based on style and purpose, there are two main categories of communication and they both bears their own characteristics. Communication types based on style and purpose are:

Formal Communication

Informal Communication

Formal Communication: In formal communication, certain rules, conventions and principles are followed while communicating message. Formal communication occurs in formal and official style. Usually professional settings, corporate meetings, conferences undergoes in formal pattern. In formal communication, use of slang and foul language is avoided and correct pronunciation is required. Authority lines are needed to be followed in

formal communication.

Informal Communication: Informal communication is done using channels that are in contrast with formal communication channels. It's just a casual talk. It is established for societal affiliations of members in an organization and face-to-face discussions. It happens among friends and family. In informal communication use of slang words, language is not restricted. Usually, informal communication is done orally and using gestures. Informal communication, unlike formal communication, doesn't follow authority lines. In an organization, it helps in finding out staff grievances as people express more when talking informally. Informal communication helps in building relationships.

Written media have a number of advantages over oral media:

- They allow you to plan and control your message.
- They offer a permanent, verifiable record.
- They help you reach an audience that is geographically dispersed.
- They minimize the distortion that can accompany oral messages.
- They can be used to avoid immediate interactions, including emotional confrontations when communicating controversial messages.

Disadvantages of written media include the following:

- Many are not conducive to speedy feedback.
- They lack the rich nonverbal cues provided by oral media.
- They often take more time and more resources to create and distribute.
- Elaborate printed documents can require special skills in preparation and production.

Main Stages of Writing Business Messages:

First Draft: The first draft of message should be prepared by choosing proper words to express ideas, mistakes of grammar, punctuation and spelling should be ignored for the time being.

Revising and Editing: The draft should be read paragraph by paragraph, sentence by sentence and word by word to check the continuity of ideas and grammatical, punctuation and spelling mistakes. While revising and editing the message it must be ensured that the message meets all the principles of good business communication.

Proof Reading: A careful proof reading is essential after the revised and edited message has been finally typewritten. Before it is mailed, it should be read by responsible and reliable person, because errors, if left un-corrected, may result in loss of goodwill, sales, income and even lives. Proof reading for everything at once is hard to do. A better practice

is to proof read separately for:

a. Context: Does the statement mean what the writer meant to say? Does the message possess all the qualities of effective communication?

b. Accuracy: Is the language free from errors of spelling, punctuation, grammar, capitalization? Are figures, diagrams and other marks accurate?

c. Form and Appearance: Is the layout correct? Does it look good?

Proof reading may be done in different ways:

ü Foreword reading.

ü Backward reading.

ü Asking another person to read.

ü Reading with another person.

PLANNING STEPS:

Ø Knowing the purpose of the message.

Ø Visualizing the reader (receiver).

Ø Choosing the ideas to be included.

Ø Getting all the facts to back up the ideas.

Ø Outlining and organizing the message.

To produce good writing, you have to make the information fit the document and style that best communicates to readers. Technical and business writing consists of special documents such as memos, reports, manuals, and instructions. It usually requires several stages of text development:

- Brainstorm what the communication must include.
- Cluster your ideas into topics.
- Outline your topics, including subtopics.
- Write a rough draft.
- Revise by editing your work.
- Proofread carefully.
- Produce the final draft.

Reader Sensitivity

Be positive: Being reader-friendly means treating readers well. You can do this by putting readers in a positive spotlight as much as possible. Minimize use of negative language, especially toward your readers. Use positive language instead.

Be polite: Politeness means being courteous, civil, considerate, and respectful to the

reader. Politeness is achieved by using proper language when addressing the reader. The appropriateness of the language used is really a factor of the relationship that exists between writer and reader.

If the writer and reader do not have a personal relationship, then, in most situations, courtesy titles are used, such as Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Dr. These titles should be used if the communication is external--the writer is communicating with someone outside his/her organization. If the writer and reader are part of the same company or organization, then polite language depends upon their respective positions in the hierarchy. Superiors can more easily address subordinates on a first-name basis, ignoring courtesy titles.

Subordinates should have a personal relationship with superiors before addressing them without using courtesy titles.

Be fair: Successful companies are aware of the diversity of the world marketplace and the importance of being inclusive of groups that comprise their customers. From a purely capitalistic perspective, avoiding all types of discrimination in company language makes good business sense because it appeals to as many customers as possible. Therefore, it is good practice to avoid making assumptions about gender-specific social roles, to include information about race and age only when it is relevant to the purpose of the message, and to avoid stereotyping people with disabilities and diseases.

Readability: Too many passive sentences should be avoided in business writing. An analysis of well-written business letters and memos reveals that about 80 percent of the verbs are active. In other words, only one out of five sentences should be passive. If your work contains more than 20 percent of passive sentences, please revise the sentences using active verbs. In general, the active voice is more effective in business communications than the passive voice for two reasons: (1) The sentences are usually more concise. (2) The writing is more interesting because the subject of the sentence is taking the action implied in the verb.

AURAL COMMUNICATION - LISTENING

Listening is the highest form of communication. When consider communication, people tend to think more of speaking and less of listening. We rarely receive any training on how to listen but reading, writing and speaking are taught in abundance. Always remember that the responsibility for ensuring that the listener gets the message lies with the sender. To introduce new material to an audience we must tap into known material. The new material should be linked to what they already know or have experienced.

There are 5 main forms of listening

Ø “*Ignoring*” listening occurs when the listener is not attentive to the message, as s/he is otherwise preoccupied and unwilling to receive a message.

Ø “*Pretending*” listening occurs when the speaker is in a higher position and the listener cannot ignore him/her. S/he pretends to listen, even when the message is boring or irrelevant.

Ø *Selective listening* occurs when the listener picks up only those parts of the message that interest him/her and ignores the rest of the message.

Ø *Attentive listening* occurs when the listener not only listens and is able to answer questions, but also understands the significance of the message.

Ø *Empathic listening* occurs when the listener does not necessarily agree with the speaker, but deeply understands that person emotionally and intellectually. This is the highest form of listening and is often referred to as being in “someone’s shoes”.

READING COMPREHENSION:

Identifying words on a page does not make someone a successful reader. When the words are understood and transcend the pages to become thoughts and ideas then you are truly reading. Comprehension therefore is the capacity for understanding those thoughts and ideas. Applying what you have read and understood becomes the successful conclusion. Good readers are *flexible* readers. Once they determine their purpose for reading, they adjust their rate to fit the type of material they are reading.

NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Communication without using words called non-verbal communication. In this type of communication there is no use of either words or written message. Here message conveyed through body movements, paralanguage or by facial expressions. In the words of Thill and Bovee, “Non verbal communication is the process of communicating without words. “ Lesikar and Pettit said that, “Non verbal communication means all communication that occurs without words”

Non verbal communication can be divided into four categories: *aesthetic, physical, signs, and symbols.*

Aesthetic communication occurs through creative expression. This would include all the arts: music, dance, theatre, crafts, art, painting, and sculpture. Ballet is a great example of

this, as there is dance and music, but no spoken or sung words. Even in an opera, where there are words, there are still facial expressions, costumes, posture, and gestures.

Physical communication covers the personal kind of communication, and includes a smile or frown, wink, touch, smell, salute, gesture, and other bodily movements. Social conversation uses a lot of these physical signals along with the spoken words.

Signs are a more mechanical kind of non verbal communication, which includes signal flags or lights, a 21 gun salute, a display of airplanes in formation, horns, and sirens.

Symbols of communication are used for religious or personal status reasons, as well as to build self esteem. This includes jewelry, cars, clothing, and other things to communicate social status, financial means, influence, or religion.

IMPORTANCE OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION:

According to A. Barbour, author of *Louder Than Words: Nonverbal Communication*, the total impact of a message breaks down like this:

7 percent verbal (words)

38 percent vocal (volume, pitch, rhythm, etc)

55 percent body movements (mostly facial expressions)

Functions of Non-Verbal Communication:

Used to repeat the verbal message

Often used to accent a verbal message

Often complement the verbal message but also may contradict.

Regulate interactions

May substitute for the verbal message

Different Types of Non Verbal Communication

We can express our feelings by our facial expression, eye movement, body movement or simply by touching others. So it can be observed that there are different types of non verbal communication.

STEPS TO EFFECTIVE MESSAGES

§ **Know your target audience** – who are they, what do they need, how can you reach them?

§ **Set clear objectives** – what do you expect from the message, how will you measure it, when will it happen?

§ **Work for approval** – your audience should chose your message over the others that are also coming its way

§ **Be strategic** – use words, images and sounds that are acceptable to your audience,

because your main purpose is to make them listen.

§ **Work for acceptance** – is your message credible, do people believe your message and the communicator, who and what will people believe?

§ **Work for recall** – the message should remain with the audience, make it catchy, make it funny, repeat if necessary, use different types of media

§ **Review and re-plan** – are you reaching the intended audience, are you achieving the objectives, do you need to change, do you need a new message?

Direct Approach & Indirect Approach

Direct Approach

When you use the direct approach, the main idea (such as a recommendation, conclusion, or request) comes in the "top" of the document, followed by the evidence. This is a deductive argument. This approach is used when your audience will be neutral or positive about your message. In the formal report, the direct approach usually mandates that you lead off with a summary of your key findings, conclusions, and recommendations. This "upfront" arrangement is by far the most popular and convenient for business reports. It saves time and makes the rest of the report easier to follow. For those who have questions or want more information, later parts of the report provide complete findings and supporting details. The direct approach also produces a more forceful report. You sound sure of yourself when you state your conclusions confidently at the outset.

Indirect Approach

In the indirect approach, the evidence is presented first, leading therefore to the main idea. This is an inductive argument. This approach is best if your audience may be displeased about or may resist what you have to say.

At times, especially if you are a junior member of an organization or if you are an outsider, writing with an extremely confident stance may be regarded as arrogant. In such cases, or if your audience will be skeptical or hostile, you may want to use the indirect approach: Introduce your complete findings and discuss all supporting details before presenting your conclusions and recommendations. The indirect approach gives you a chance to prove your points and gradually overcome your audience's reservations. By deferring the conclusions and recommendations, you imply that you've weighed the evidence objectively without prejudging the facts. You also imply that you're subordinating your judgment to the audience, whose members are capable of drawing their own conclusions when they have

access to all the facts.

Although the indirect approach has its advantages, some readers will always be in a hurry to get to "the answer" and will flip to the recommendations immediately, thus defeating your purpose. Therefore, consider length before choosing the direct or indirect approach.

In general, the longer the message, the less effective an indirect approach is likely to be. Furthermore, an indirect argument is harder to follow than a direct one.

Because both direct and indirect approaches have merit, businesspeople often combine them. They reveal their conclusions and recommendations as they go along, rather than putting them first or last. As a result, the approach strategy of business reports can sometimes be hard to classify.

II UNIT

BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

INTRODUCTION

Business correspondence is being defined as a way of communication through the exchange of letters. These are the letters written or received by two or more parties which may come in the form of letters, memos, emails, text messages, voicemails, notes or post cards. Up until the introduction of cell phone calls to other cities and abroad, millions of people wrote letters to their friends, family members and loved ones in an attempt to keep in touch. This practice however was stopped in the late 70s as more and more people found that telephoning was a much better way to be in touch as it involves immediate response.

Letter writing remained the standard form of correspondence in the field of business mainly because a letter is a legal document which can be used as evidence in court in the case of a dispute. Business letters and the letters we still must write to people we do not know in order to complete a transaction are quite formal. How formal they are depends on the receiver and our relationship with him or her. In any case, all letters keep to a basic format which is outlined below.

Parts of a letter:

Ø *Opening (reference to past communication)*

Ø *Main Message (presentation of the present situation and request for action)*

Ø *Close (reference to future communication)*

Modern formal letters tend to be short and to the point, rather than lengthy reports using very formal language. However, there are some simple rules that apply to all types of letters nowadays.

1. The layout:

Ø The main message, which is the reason for writing should not be too lengthy.

Ø Different paragraphs are used to show different subjects.

Ø The language used should be as clear as possible.

2. Conventions:

Date: Before you start writing a the date in India and most of Europe 06/09/09 means the sixth of September 2009 but in the United States the same thing (06/09/09) means the ninth of June 2009. Because you can't be certain how the person you're corresponding with

will read the date, it is better to write, **6 September 2009**, and there will be no misunderstandings.

Subject Heading: This is a very clear way of showing what the letter is about. The use, or not, of subject headings in real life usually depends on a company's or an organization's standard practice. Usually, subject headings help the person who receives the letter if the letter is about a particular order/invoice.

Planning the paragraphs: Make a rough draft on your notebook/rough paper with what each paragraph should contain and the order in which it should go. At this stage you must be careful to include all the points asked by the task and in the correct order. Check that you know what action you are going to ask people to take as a result of your letter.

The opening and the close: Salutation may depend on the relationship between the two people involved as this often changes the tone of the letter/email to a more personal one.

Ø When you open... Dear Sirs/Sir/Madam Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. you should close ... Yours faithfully Yours sincerely

Ø When you open... Dear Ben, you should close ... Best wishes/Best regards/Kind regards

The 1st sentence of paragraph 1: The opening of a formal letter depends on whether you are asking or giving information...

v *I am writing to enquire about your letter of 15 May regarding....*

Whether you had previous contact with the person you are writing to....

v *I am writing in connection with your email message of today concerning...*

v *I am writing with reference to our telephone conversation of 10 June about...*

v *With reference to your letter of 6 June*

v *In connection with ... our telephone conversation earlier today*

Whether this is an answer letter....

v *Thank you for your letter (enquiring) about...*

v *phone call of 10 May concerning...*

v *fax asking if...*

v *e-mail message enclosing...*

The 2nd sentence of paragraph 1: You have now set the tone of your letter.

v *I am interested in and I would like to know*

- v We are a firm of ... we are examining the possibility ...
- v We are in the process of buying... are thinking of (...-ing)
- v I would like to receive/book/order/apply ...

The close: The way you close a formal letter depends on the way you open it. Below, there are some examples of different ways to close a letter.

- v I hope that the information will help you.
- v Please, do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information.
- v Please, feel free to contact me if you have any questions.
- v I look forward to receiving your reply/order.
- v to hearing from you
- v (I'm) looking forward to hearing from you soon (INFORMAL)

The main message:

Here are some standard ways of saying things in modern correspondence:

1. Giving good news

- ü I am happy to tell you
- ü I am delighted to inform you that...
- ü I am pleased to announce

2. Giving bad news

- ü I am sorry to tell
- ü I regret to inform you that...

3. Requesting action

- ü Please could you give me some further details about ...
- ü I would be grateful if you could let me know about/if ...
- ü I would appreciate it if you could (possibly) inform me about...
- ü I would like to know if
- ü I would be grateful if you could...
- ü I would appreciate it if you could...

4. Giving the reason

- ü This has been/is because of ...
- ü as a result of ...
- ü due to ... (the fact that) ...
- ü owing to ... (only for bad news)
- ü This has been due to unforeseen circumstances.

PRINCIPLES OF A WRITING A BUSINESS LETTER

You will have to develop the art of writing good business letters to communicate effectively at the written level. Almost every one of us has written a letter at some point of our life. A business letter is slightly different from other letters. In today's age of technology, e-mail, a kind of letter sent via the electronic machine also comes under the purview of letter writing. However, we will not discuss letter writing in general but business letters only in this section. We will discuss some principles that are essential for writing a good business letter. Let us start with a quick look at the layout of a business letter.

Layout: There is no fixed layout for writing a business letter as different organizations may have their own prescribed layouts to be used in business letters sent from their organization. However, we can discuss a common layout that is generally followed while writing a business letter.

The following things are to be included in a business letter:

v ***Letterhead:*** The company's name and full address should be included in this section.

v ***Date:*** The date is written before the inside address of the recipient.

v ***Inside Address:*** This includes the address of the recipient. The address should include the name and the full address of the recipient.

v ***Salutation or Greeting:*** The way you write the salutation depends on the relationship you share with the recipient. If you do not know the gender and name of the recipient it is best to use a neutral, "Dear Sir/ Madame."

v ***Letter Body:*** The body of your letter should be clearly written with not more than three paragraphs. The purpose of every paragraph should be clear.

v ***Closing:*** The closing comes after the last paragraph of the letter. The closing again depends on the relationship you share with the recipient and hence the degree of formality.

v ***Signature:*** This comes after the closing. You will have to include your signature, printed name and position (strictly in that order) here.

Reasons for writing business letters

v *to persuade*

v *to recommend*

v *to accept/reject offers*

v to apologize

v to inform

v to request

v to remind

Here are some principles you should remember while writing a business letter:

Start from the end. Figure out the purpose. Try to find out the goal you want to achieve through the letter.

Make a list of the things you have to say and allot a paragraph each to the main points.

Add an introductory paragraph and a concluding paragraph.

Get to the point early. Do not beat around the bush! The reader is not interested in reading the plot of a story but the purpose of the letter.

Be logical and coherent in your approach. This will reflect in the way you write the letter.

Identify the reader and your relationship with him or her. You may address the reader with a simple Dear Mr./ Ms/ Miss X (the First and last name) if you are familiar with the person. However, if you are not familiar with him or her, Dear Sir/ Madam will be all right. You are also supposed to write Dear Sir/Madam if you do not know the gender or name of the reader.

Avoid repetitions.

Avoid camouflaged verbs. For example, "Announcement of the decision made him relieved" is using the noun form of the verb and lacks power. Instead, use "He was relieved to announce his decision."

Use familiar words.

Avoid using vague and abstract words. Always be precise and concrete. Instead of 'immense benefit in all respects' or 'significant gain', it would help if you use '25% gain' or 'benefit in terms of cost, production, performance'.

Use adverbs and adjectives sparingly. Do not be too judgmental or passionate in your use of words. Words like 'breathhtaking', 'absolutely', and 'fantastic' are best avoided.

Avoid jargons and clichéd sentences. That will make your letter natural.

Use adjectives appropriately. Do not use them too much neither should you be too stingy in using them. Strike a balance.

Use active voice as much as possible.

Use simple and short sentences. You cannot waste your time by writing things that do

not serve the real purpose but makes your letter long and complicated.

End it with what should be the action taken by the reader or you.

Try to be friendly. You should not appear rude in an attempt to be too straightforward.

You can be straightforward and friendly at the same time.

Close with a simple and plain closing phrase. "Yours sincerely" or "Sincerely" and your signature can be a good closing phrase.

Take care of the layout and format of the letter.

Never write a business letter in anger. You may regret it later.

Always end it with an action step if required. Do not leave it vague or leave the reader wondering what you expect from him or her.

E-mails: Formatting Business Email

E-mails are more common nowadays than a letter sent by post. The principles to be followed here would remain the same as the ones for a regular business letter. However, you should keep in mind the following things while writing business e-mails:

Use a simple subject line but one that stands out in the pile of incoming mails in the recipient's email box. If you are sending a status report, mention it in the subject line. If you are discussing a point, mention the point in the subject line.

If possible, mark the urgency of the email so that the reader knows the urgency and responds accordingly.

Always check your spelling before sending the email.

When attaching a document, always mention the document name in the body of the letter so that the reader knows what to expect.

Repeat the subject line in the body of the e-mail as it may be lost if the recipient takes out a printout of your e-mail.

Avoid using hyperlinks within the body of the text as it distracts the reader. You may provide links at the end of the letter.

Your typed name should come in place of your signature.

MEMORANDUM

A memo, short for the word memorandum, comes from the Latin word *memorandus*, which means, "to be remembered." Once acted upon, a memo is often thrown away. Not so with business memos. Unlike letters, the external communications of a company, business memos are an internal form of communication and it is standard practice to save them.

Their objective is to deliver information or instructions and their scope should be limited to a single topic so that the reader will "get the message" quickly and, if necessary, take an action.

Confined to a single topic, each interoffice, interdepartmental and company wide memo becomes part of the institutional memory of an organization. They record daily activities and eliminate the need for time-consuming meetings. As historical documents they are often referred to when writing reports or resolving disputes regarding past activities. In short, they speed up the daily business of doing business.

Structure of a Memo: A memo is a hard-copy (sent on paper) document used for communicating inside an organization usually short contains To, From, Date, Subject Headings and Message sections does not need to be signed, but sometimes has the sender's name at the bottom to be more friendly, or the sender's full name to be more formal.

Memos should have the following sections and content:

Ø A 'To' section containing the name of the receiver.

Ø A 'From' section containing the name of the sender.

Ø A 'Date' section.

Ø A Subject Heading.

Ø The message. Purpose – Problem – Solution/Action

Ø Politeness

Ø Signature

Phrases for Business Letter:

When we make a request:

[more formal]

[less formal]

I would be grateful if you could

Could you possibly ... ?

I would appreciate (it) if you could

Could you please ... ?

When we agree to a request someone has made:

[more formal]

[less formal]

I would be delighted to

I will be happy to

(delighted means very happy)

When apologising:

[more formal]

[less formal]

I apologise for the delay in replying.

Sorry for the delay in replying.

I/We apologise for the inconvenience.

Sorry for the inconvenience.

I/We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Sorry for any trouble caused.

Please accept our/my sincere apologies.

I/We are very sorry

When giving bad news:

[more formal]

[less formal]

I/We regret that

Unfortunately

I/We regret to inform you that

I am sorry to have to tell you that

I am afraid that I must inform you of/that

I am sorry to have to tell you that

When complaining:

(The following phrases may be used as the opening line of the letter or email.)

[more formal]

[less formal]

I/We wish to draw your attention to

I wanted to inform you about

I am writing to complain about

I would like to complain about

I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with

[none]

(The following phrase may be used as the closing line of the letter or email.)

[more formal]

[less formal]

I would appreciate your immediate attention to the matter.

I would appreciate if you could sort it out as soon as possible.

Request for information

I am writing to inquire about . . .

I am writing in reference to . . .

I read/heard . . . and would like to know . . .

Could you please send me . . .

at the address below/above

Thank you for your assistance.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Response to request

Thank you for your interest/inquiry

Enclosed is the information you requested.

You can learn more about this at . . .

If you have further questions,

If you require assistance, please contact:

If I can be of more help, please feel free to contact me at . . .

Sample Sentences: Requests

Could you please send me your most recent brochure?

Could you fax me the results of the market survey?

I would like to order ten copies of the book, *Touchy Situations*.

I would be very grateful if you could send me this information.

Please return the enclosed envelope with your payment.

Sample Sentences: Goodwill

Thank you for your hospitality.

I enjoyed having lunch with you last week while I was in New York.

Congratulations on your promotion to General Manager.

I want(ed) to congratulate you on your new position.

I was happy to hear that contract negotiations went well.

Sample Sentences: Introduction of Product/Service.

I am writing to tell you about . . .

(Our new product) is coming out next month.

This product/service is designed to (help you) . . .

Sample Sentences: Reference

I am writing in regard to . . .

I am writing in reference to . . .

Please refer to the enclosed invoice/brochure.

I hope you have had a chance to look over the materials we sent.

Sample Sentences: Confirmation

I am writing to confirm . . .

I would like to confirm what we discussed last Friday.

I would just like to confirm the main points we discussed . . .

Sample Sentences: Notification

I am writing to let you know that . . .

Please be aware/informed that . . .

I would like to inform you of a recent policy change.

I am happy to inform

you that . . .

Your request for funding has been approved.

Sample Sentences: Offering Assistance

We would be happy to . . .

If we can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sample Sentences: Collection

According to our records . . .

Our records show that . . .

Your monthly installment is past due.

Please send payment as soon as possible.

When you're initiating email contact with someone new

Very formal

"Might I take a moment of your time..." (to begin the email)

"Please may I introduce myself..." (to begin the email)

"Many thanks again for your time." (to end the email)

More informal/friendly

“I’m just emailing to ask...” *(to begin the email)*

“I’m a friend of Bob’s...” *(to begin the email)*

“Just let me know if you have any questions.” *(to end the email)*

“Drop me an email, or give me a ring, if you want any more information.” *(to end the email)*

When you’ve answered someone’s question(s)

Very formal

“I trust the above resolves your queries. Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.”

More informal/friendly

“I know that’s a lot to take in, so let me know if anything I’ve said doesn’t make sense.”

“Hope the above helps, but email again if you’re still having any difficulties.”

When you’re asking the recipient to take some action

Very formal

“I would appreciate your help in this matter.”

More informal/friendly

“Could you look into this?”

“Would you mind checking it out for me?”

“Thanks in advance.”

“Can you get back to me once you’ve had a chance to investigate?”

“I’d love to hear your advice on this one.”

When you need a response (but not necessarily any action taking)

Very formal

“I await a response at your earliest convenience.”

More informal/friendly

“Can you drop me a quick word so I know you’ve received this?”

“Look forward to hearing from you.”

When you’ve heard nothing back and want to chase up a reply

Very formal

“In reference to my email of June 20th ...”

More informal/friendly

“Just wondered if you got my email (June 20th)?”

“When you get a moment, could you drop me a line about my last email?”

Do you have any favorite stock phrases that you use in your work emails? Add yours in the

comments!

1. **Return Address:** If your stationery has a letterhead, skip this. Otherwise, type your name, address and optionally, phone number. These days, it's common to also include an email address.

2. **Date:** Type the date of your letter two to six lines below the letterhead. Three are standard. If there is no letterhead, type it where shown.

3. **Reference Line:** If the recipient specifically requests information, such as a job reference or invoice number, type it on one or two lines, immediately below the **Date** (2). If you're replying to a letter, refer to it here. For example,

· Re: Job # 625-01

· Re: Your letter dated 1/1/200x.

4. **Special Mailing Notations:** Type in all uppercase characters, if appropriate. Examples include

· SPECIAL DELIVERY

· CERTIFIED MAIL

· AIRMAIL

5. **On-Arrival Notations:** Type in all uppercase characters, if appropriate. You might want to include a notation on private correspondence, such as a resignation letter. Include the same on the envelope. Examples are

· PERSONAL

· CONFIDENTIAL

6. **Inside Address:** Type the name and address of the person and/or company to whom you're sending the letter, three to eight lines below the last component you typed. Four lines are standard. If you type an **Attention Line** (7), skip the person's name here. Do the same on the envelope.

7. **Attention Line:** Type the name of the person to whom you're sending the letter. If you type the person's name in the **Inside Address** (6), skip this. Do the same on the envelope.

8. **Salutation:** Type the recipient's name here. Type Mr. or Ms. [Last Name] to show respect, but don't guess spelling or gender. Some common salutations are

· Ladies:

· Gentlemen:

· Dear Sir:

· Dear Sir or Madam:

· Dear [Full Name]:

· To Whom it May Concern:

9. **Subject Line:** Type the gist of your letter in all uppercase characters, either flush left or centered. Be concise on one line. If you type a **Reference Line (3)**, consider if you really need this line. While it's not really necessary for most employment-related letters, examples are below.

· SUBJECT: RESIGNATION

· LETTER OF REFERENCE

· JOB INQUIRY

10. **Body:** Type two spaces between sentences. Keep it brief and to the point.

11. **Complimentary Close:** What you type here depends on the tone and degree of formality. For example,

· Respectfully yours (very formal)

· Sincerely (typical, less formal)

· Very truly yours (polite, neutral)

· Cordially yours (friendly, informal)

12. **Signature Block:** Leave four blank lines after the **Complimentary Close (11)** to sign your name. Sign your name exactly as you type it below your signature. Title is optional depending on relevancy and degree of formality. Examples are

· John Doe, Manager

· P. Smith

Director, Technical Support

· R. T. Jones - Sr. Field Engineer

13. **Identification Initials:** If someone typed the letter for you, he or she would typically include three of your initials in all uppercase characters, then two of his or hers in all lowercase characters. If you typed your own letter, just skip it since your name is already in the **Signature Block (12)**. Common styles are below.

· JAD/cm

· JAD:cm

· clm

14. **Enclosure Notation:** This line tells the reader to look in the envelope for more. Type

the singular for only one enclosure, plural for more. If you don't enclose anything, skip it. Common styles are below.

· Enclosure

· Enclosures: 3

· Enclosures (3)

15. **cc:** Stands for **courtesy copies** (formerly **carbon copies**). List the names of people to whom you distribute copies, in alphabetical order. If addresses would be useful to the recipient of the letter, include them. If you don't copy your letter to anyone, skip it.

III UNIT – INSTRUCTIONS

Introductions:

On-the-job training often involves showing rather than telling. The presenter not only must demonstrate an operation, but also must teach techniques and ideas, present information, and persuade the audience to follow directions. The key to effective oral instructions is planning.

Planning involves

- ü Analyzing the audience
- ü Researching the subject
- ü Organizing
- ü Making notes
- ü Preparing visuals
- ü Practicing

ANALYZE THE AUDIENCE – consider the age, experience, attitude, and needs of your audience. You must more carefully plan instructions for 30 people than you would for 3 people.

RESEARCH THE SUBJECT – If there are any gaps in your knowledge of your subject, consult manuals, experts, or other sources to fill in those gaps. Remember, your audience may ask questions, and you want to give accurate answers. Nothing is more important in giving instructions than accuracy. Double-check accuracy by asking someone who is not familiar with the subject to follow your instructions. Note places where this person had questions or made errors; then revise the instructions accordingly.

ORGANIZE –The listener should be able to follow your directions easily. Present information in the order the audience will use it as they carry out the instructions.

MAKE NOTES – Since it is important to present instructions in the proper order, outline your presentation or prepare note cards so you don't forget an important fact or step. The presentation will be more effective if you occasionally refer to notes as you talk, instead of reading word for word from a page.

PREPARE VISUALS – Since the most highly developed sense is sight, most people learn more from seeing than from hearing. Whenever possible, show rather than tell. Whether your visuals are actual tools or equipment that you are using, a drawing or diagram, or some other type of illustration, make sure that the visual is large enough and is clearly

visible to everyone in the audience.

PRACTICE – The most important benefit to practicing your presentation is that it will give you confidence and relieve your anxiety about having to speak publicly. Practice as though your audience were there. Don't just think the words; talk out loud. Use your visuals as you practice. If you find that you occasionally need to pause and think—Source: Communicating for Success, Thomson/South-Western, 3rd edition—that's OK. Do not fill brief silences with umm, all right, and similar expressions.

GIVE THE PRESENTATION – Guard against performing the process without talking; an effective presenter describes the steps as they are being performed. Do not rush through your demonstration and remember to talk clearly and loudly enough to be heard in the back of the room. If you don't mind interruptions, let your audience know that they can ask you questions during your presentation. Otherwise, ask if they have any questions when you finish the instructions.

Location Instructions

Location instructions explain how to get from here to there. Only the simplest instructions may be given orally, since the human brain is able to remember only a limited amount of information at one time. A clear map will sometimes be sufficient. At other times written or oral instructions with a map will be most effective. The complexity of the directions and careful audience analysis will guide you.

TIPS FOR GIVING LOCATION INSTRUCTIONS – When giving location instructions, follow these guidelines:

- ü 1. Identify the starting point and destination.
- ü 2. Give the distance between the starting point and the destination in terms of space (two miles or blocks) or time (about five minutes).
- ü 3. Indicate the general direction between the starting point and the destination. If appropriate, use compass points (northeast, south).
- ü 4. Give specific, step-by-step directions in chronological (time) order. Note landmarks and places where mistakes might occur. Include enough detail to make the instructions easy to follow, but eliminate unnecessary detail that may only confuse your audience.

USING MAPS TO GIVE INSTRUCTIONS – A clear, accurate, well-designed map is often the

most effective way to present location instructions. If you cannot find a suitable map, you may have to draw one yourself. Drawing a simple map does not take artistic ability, but it does take time and patience. As in all instructions, accuracy is the most important factor.

The Content of Instructions

Effective instructions are complete and easy to follow. Most instructions include:

- *title*
- *introduction*
- *definitions*
- *necessary preparations*
- *warnings and precautions*
- *steps, and*
- *sometimes a closing*

Each section of the instructions except the title and introduction may have its own heading so that the audience can find needed information quickly.

TITLE – The wording of the title informs the audience about the purpose of the instructions. Center your title on the top of your page, and use capital letters.

THE INTRODUCTION – Often serves several functions: it can provide an overview of the task being explained, give the purpose of the task, explain a process, or encourage the reader to read and follow the instructions. Your subject and the characteristics of your audience will determine the information appropriate for your introduction.

DEFINITIONS – Let your intended audience be your guide. If you are not 100 percent certain that your audience will understand a technical term, define it. Give the definition immediately after using the term for the first time.

PREPARATIONS – What will the audience need to do before following the steps? For example, are certain conditions necessary, such as strong light, a 60- to 70-degree room temperature, or a dust-free environment, to begin that task? What tools, equipment, and materials are needed? For written instructions, if more than two are required, list them down the page. Unless the exact order matters, use bullets instead of numbers.

WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS can prevent safety hazards, injuries, ruined materials, broken equipment, and other problems. It is your responsibility to ensure the safety of your audience as they follow your instructions.

STEPS – Include enough detail to eliminate any confusion about what to do. To test your

instructions, ask a person unfamiliar with the task to read them and offer feedback. Are there any unexplained gaps or steps that could be interpreted more than one way? Explain how as well as what to do. In written instructions, steps presented in a numbered list should describe just one action for each numbered item.

THE CLOSING may be needed to tell the audience how to test the results of following the instructions, to summarize the main steps, or to mention other methods of carrying out the task. The closing should be brief.

Business Commands:

All but one of the following instructions is not written as commands. Instead, they describe or explain—rather than direct—action. Edit the instructions as commands. Begin each sentence with a verb, the word in the sentence that expresses the action. In the first two sentences, the base form of the verb is underlined>. For the one instruction that is correctly written, key command.

Example:

“Everyone should complete this Practice today” is not a command.

“This Practice is due today” is not a command.

“Complete this Practice today” is a command. Complete is a verb.

1. It is a good idea to ask questions if you don't understand the instructions.
2. The board should be clamped to the bench.
3. All employees must fill out an insurance form.
4. They should lower the bar before sawing.
5. The X-rays need to be examined immediately.
6. Safety glasses must be worn by all electricians.
7. Take the time to make the customer feel comfortable.
8. The lines need to be drawn more carefully.
9. Customers should be listened to.
10. All phone calls must be returned promptly.

Audience Analysis

Communication is complete only when the receiver understands the message in the same sense and spirit that sender intends to convey. However, communication does not take place completely because of the illusion that it has been accomplished. The great cause of illusion is sender's inability to understand the audience. Without analysing audience, the chances of effectiveness of the communication decrease.

Understanding the audience is fundamental to the success of any message. The sender needs to analyse the audience and then adapt the message to their goals, interests and needs. Audience like to listen the message that suits their interests, familiar with their level of knowledge and understanding, and seems true and credible.

Types of Audience:

1. Primary Audience
2. Secondary Audience
3. Initial Audience
4. Gatekeeper Audience
5. Watch dog Audience

· **Primary Audience:** The primary audience is the audience who have to decide whether to accept the sender's message and his recommendations and to act on the basis of that message. For example - in case of advertisement campaign of interior decoration, the primary audience is prospective customers.

· **Secondary Audience:** The secondary audience consists of people who may be asked to comment on the message after it has been approved. For example - in case of advertisement campaign of interior decoration, the existing users are the secondary audience as the potential buyers ask them about their opinion.

· **Initial Audience:** is the audience that receives the message first and routs it to oter audiences. Sometimes, the initial audience guides the sender regarding designing of the message. For example,

1. Censor Board which has to permit to broadcasting of films act as the initial audience.
2. The editors of the newspapers also act as the initial audience as they edit the message before publishing in the newspaper.

· **Gatekeeper Audience:** has power to stop the message before it reaches the primary audience. For example - the secretary to the minister acts as gatekeeper audience as he scrutinizes the letters before minister's approval.

· **Watch dog Audience:** is the audience that has political, social and economic power to influence the primary audience's decision to act upon the sender's message. Though such type of audience has power to stop the message yet they influence a lot on primary audience's action. For example,

1. The Industrial reviewers, who read the reports and comment upon them, act

as Watch dog audience.

2. The Auditor, who attests the authenticity and accuracy of financial statements, act as Watch dog audience when he gives his expert opinions.

Importance of Audience Analysis: Audience is center to the communication process. The purpose of communication is to transfer the message with transmission of understanding among the audience. Therefore good communication is always audience-centered. It is the audience that determines how one achieves the objectives of communication.

If the communicator fails to analyse the attitude, interests and knowledge of the audience, he is likely to be failure. Why certain why certain politicians with bad records can grab the votes? it is because their message strict to the waves of that time as well as wavelength of the public and consequently they can manage to manipulate public sentiments to their advantage.

Therefore, audience analyses is essential before designing the message. Communication can take place only when the message is received in the same sense and spirit that sender intends to carry. Therefore, the sender has to devise some common ground between him and the audience. He has to choose the information that audience needs and finds interesting. He should encode the message in words and other symbols that audience will understand easily. Lastly, he should transmit the message along a channel that the audience will attend to.

UNIT IV – BUSINESS REPORTS & PROPOSALS

Introduction

A business report is a formal report designed to convey technical information in a clear and easily accessible format. It is divided into sections which allow different readers to access different levels of information. This explains the commonly accepted format for a technical report; explains the purposes of the individual sections; and gives hints on how to go about drafting and refining a report in order to produce an accurate, professional document.

Objectives:

Ø *Learn to convey technical information in a clear and easily accessible format.*

Ø *Learn to prepare various types of technical reports.*

Ø *To develop logical sequence of grouped ideas.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Writing reports for business is a little different than preparing essays. There are similarities however. This report will outline some of the elements of an effective business report. Keep in mind there are different ways to present your information. It's best to listen to your teacher and read the handouts given to you in class. The first element is the use of headings. In this report you'll see underlined side headings. In longer reports you might also see centered headings. These are done to break up the monotony of a lengthy document and allow the reader to go directly to subjects of their interest. This executive summary should include the key points and conclusions of your entire report. Assume a busy executive only has time to read this section. Let's get started.

Table of Contents

A table of contents is a good idea for longer reports. When creating headings apply a heading style to each. Then insert the table of contents. It will be created using the headings. In Word 2007 use the references tab.

Spacing and Margins

You will notice this report is double-spaced. This is easier on the eyes and allows the teacher to put comments between lines. You can use single-spacing for lists or longer quotes. Two spaces follow a colon, unless you mention the time of day when there are no spaces. Don't click enter at the end of any line unless it's to end a paragraph. Let the computer fit the words to a line. This is called "word wrap." Don't leave a heading at the bottom of a page. Finally, try to maintain a one-inch (2.4 cm) margin around each page.

Page Numbering, Headers and Footers

Page numbers are necessary in any report longer than a couple of pages. They can be included in a header or footer. Headers are information appearing on the top of every page in the report. Footers appear at the bottom. It's a good idea to put your name and the report title in one of these. Start the page numbers on the page after the title page.

In Word 2007, click on Insert, Header or Footer and format the information you need. Notice the header in this report and the page number at the bottom. Make sure to click on the page setup icon and select different first page. This allows you to start the header in the body and not on the title page. Also, format the page number to start at 0. This way the title page won't count.

References

Most of your reports will involve research. Using information from any source means you have to give credit to the source. The method we will use is known as APA or American Psychological Association. When using information obtained from a source, you will place a short reference in brackets afterwards, known as an in-text citation. This citation should include the author, year and page number if applicable. If using an electronic source such as a website, try to enter as much of the following: author, article title, website, year format. Inserting a hyperlink allows the reader to go directly to the source if desired.

If doing the citations manually you must produce the works cited or bibliography manually. The Works Cited page may also be called Bibliography or References. Alternatively, sites such as bibme.org allow easy creation of the Works Cited page. If using Microsoft Office 2007 or later, insert the in-text citations using the reference tab. The Works Cited page can be created using the information inputted when inserting the citations. This is the preferred method.

Graphics

Graphics are a terrific way to add emphasis to your report. They include charts, pictures, clip art and more. If you are using data obtained from elsewhere, make sure to place a small reference to its source, usually underneath it.

Plagiarism

Using someone else's work and calling it your own is called plagiarism and is not allowed. This includes changing a few words. You must write the report yourself, in your own words. You are, after all, claiming the report to be your own!

It's tempting to use Internet sites to obtain ready-made reports or essays. Beware, your teacher is quite able to distinguish your writing abilities from others. We even have software that tells us what portion of a report is plagiarized!

The penalties for plagiarism are usually quite harsh. The first time may be met with a zero on the report. Subsequent attempts at plagiarism will be met with more severe penalties, such as suspension. If you're not sure, ask!

Wrapping Up

Separate the report into sections. If longer than a few pages, use the Table of Contents feature. Use the standard Intro-Body-Conclusion format unless told otherwise. For senior classes I prefer to see an Executive Summary at the beginning of the report. This is a summary of your key findings. It's getting you ready for the real world, where the boss may not have time to read the whole report.

Use a variety of sources, to give your report credibility. Don't be wordy. Say what you mean in a clear and concise manner. Keep to the length specified by your teacher. Use spell checks, thesaurus and grammar check but don't over rely on these features. There are pitfalls in all of them. Have a friend read your report before you submit it. It's often difficult to see your own mistakes.

Conclusion

The ability to communicate is very important. You are judged by what you say and what you write. Above all, do your best and learn from your mistakes. And don't be afraid to ask for help, before and after you hand in the big report!

Report Writing Laws

Four general requirements must be met to produce good reports: clarity, conciseness, continuity and objectivity.

Clarity

The purpose of a technical report is to transmit conclusions and their supporting evidence. To do this, your report must convey your exact meaning to the reader. The text must be clear and unambiguous, mathematical symbols must be fully defined, and the figures and tables must be easily understood.

Conciseness

Most of your intended readers are busy. Therefore your reports should be concisely written. That is, your story should be told with the fewest possible words and illustrations. Help your readers by omitting everything irrelevant to the results and

conclusions. Do not be disappointed if a report that describes a lengthy program is only a few pages long: Report quality is often inversely related to report length. Your readers will be interested in your conclusions and the supporting evidence and will want to get these as quickly as possible. Include all details needed to understand the current report. In short, make your reports brief but comprehensible.

Continuity

Reports should tell a complete story as logically and interestingly as possible. This requires continuity between succeeding sentences, paragraphs, and sections and between the written text and the figures and tables. Transitional words, phrases, sentences, or even paragraphs may be needed to lead your readers through the story. But overusing transitions can slow the pace of your narrative. Carefully choose the places at which you refer to figures and tables to limit distraction. Making these references at the beginning or end of a discussion is usually preferable.

Objectivity

Technical reports should be objective and show restraint. They expect you to evaluate the data honestly. Do not try to hide deficiencies in your research. No technical report is better than the research on which it is based. Tell your readers frankly what your assumptions were, what your probable errors are, and what you may not understand about the results.

In addition to being honest, be tactful. Your readers will be persuaded by facts, but they may become irritated if you attempt to impress them with your cleverness or to claim credit for accomplishments. Write to express, not to impress.

Types of Reports:

Informal Reports: Memoranda, Brief Analysis, Trip Report, Laboratory Report, Field Report, Inspection Report etc.

Formal Reports: Committee Reports, Institution Report, Reprints, Project Report, State-of-the Art Report, Status Reports, Trend Reports, Progress Report, Annual Report, Project / Letter Report, Analytical Report, Feasibility Study, Position Paper, Damage Report, Maintenance Report , Project Proposal etc.

The Format

A technical report should contain the following sections; Section Details

Title page: Must include the title of the report. Reports for assessment, where the word length has been specified, will often also require the summary word count and the

main text word count.

Executive Summary: A summary of the whole report including important features, results and conclusions.

Contents: Numbers and lists all section and subsection headings with page numbers

Introduction: States the objectives of the report and comments on the way the topic of the report is to be treated. Leads straight into the report itself.

Contents: Numbers and lists all section and subsection headings with page numbers

This section which makes up the body of the report divided into numbered and headed sections. These sections separate the different main ideas in a logical order

Conclusions: A short, logical summing up of the theme(s) developed in the main text

References: Details of published sources of material referred to or quoted in the text.

Bibliography: Other published sources of material, including websites, not referred to in the text but useful for background or further reading.

Acknowledgements: List of people who helped you research or prepare the report, including your proofreaders

Appendices: Any further material which is essential for full understanding of your report (e.g. large scale diagrams, computer code, raw data, specifications).

How to Write a Corporate Report

Corporate reports comprise an essential component of information sharing -- the lifeblood of an organization's decision-making process. Effective corporate reports require a wellorganized writing style that addresses the interests, knowledge and reading level of its intended audience. This is the suggestion of "The Plain Language" movement advocates. Enhance the communication value of a report with relevant graphics such as charts and tables for data or process diagrams. A good corporate report does not distract readers with poor grammar or spelling errors.

Instructions

Identify the audience for your report and its purpose. Use your understanding of the audience to control word choice, amount of technical detail, report length and coverage. Use the report's purpose to select tone, style, and placement of key information.

Find out if your organization has a required format for corporate reports and use it.

If not, create an outline of the topics that follow a logical order such as general-to-specific, specific-to-general, process steps, timeline, or most important, to least

important.

Collect the data needed to write all sections of the report.

Create a list of key points for each report section. Place the points in order following the logic of the total document. For example, if the document order is a timeline of events, organize each section in chronological order.

Draft each section of the report. Read the draft for completeness and adherence to the chosen style and tone.

Write a summary or abstract and a conclusion. It works best to do this after drafting the report's content.

Read the entire report for clarity and consistency. Use either a word processing program or a dictionary to check spelling.

Ask someone to review the report for grammar and readability.

Edit the corporate report using feedback from reviewers.

For corporate reports exceeding 8 to 10 pages, number the pages and add a table of contents, list of tables and list of figures .

Create a cover page that includes the title, author, date and purpose. Depending on your organizational culture, you may add a distribution list to the cover page.

How to Write a Business Proposal

A business proposal is perhaps one of the most critical documents you need to learn how to write. It is what spells the difference between success and failure, whether you're a freelancer or you have a company of your own.

In today's cut-throat business world, entrepreneurs find themselves spending hours upon hours submitting business proposals to potential clients, and not get any results. On the other hand, there are those that are like snipers, able to get the contract after just submitting one business proposal.

The Basics of a Business Proposal

Before you even go and start writing that business proposal, you must first understand what it is and learn the basics.

A business proposal is a written document that offers a particular product or service to a potential buyer or client. There are generally two kinds of business proposals: **solicited business proposals** (which are submitted in response to an advertisement published by the buyer or client) and **unsolicited proposals** (submitted or given out to potential buyers or clients even though they are not requesting for one).

Business Proposal vs. Business Plan

Quite often, the terms “business proposal” and “business plan” are used interchangeably, giving you the impression that they are one and the same. But they are not. A business proposal is created to offer a product or service to a buyer or client. On the other hand, a business plan is a “formal statement of a set of business goals” and how these would be achieved. The latter is only part of what is included in a business proposal.

Winning Business Proposal

The secret behind writing a winning business proposal and one that will just be set aside is the presence of what we call the 3 Ps: **problem statement**, **proposed solution**, and **pricing information**.

Problem Statement

A successful business proposal must be one that is able to describe to the client what their needs are in a plain and simple manner. This is extremely vital because how can you expect the client to believe that you can help them solve their problems if you don't even know are these problems?

Here's an example of a well-written problem statement of a business proposal:

With the presence of social media in today's advancing world, Puffin Media Inc. hesitated to make the leap from traditional marketing to social media marketing.

Their marketing tactics seem to be losing effectiveness and the company feels as if they are missing out on a large segment of their market. In addition, their competition has began acquiring the majority of the business in the market and have brought Puffin Media's growing revenues to a halt.

Proposed Solution

The main objective of submitting a business proposal is to offer a solution to a problem faced by a prospective client. This part should be as detailed as possible, and able to address each and every need you have discovered.

Here's an example:

The solution that is recommended for Puffin Media Inc. is to deploy their company on all of the major social media channels; however, there is a major difference in creating social media platforms versus creating a brand you can promote on those platforms.

A marketing campaign must be created utilizing these media channels and creating immediate engagement with your audience. In order for this to be successful, you know how to make sales. Initially, acquire some fans, followers, subscribers, and connections and

invite them to join you in particular discussion or attend a specific event.

The purpose of this is not only to promote Puffin Media Inc, but also to solicit feedback from the target audience.

Pricing Information

For many clients, the pricing information is what will make them decide whether they would offer you the contract or not.

V UNIT

CAREERS & RESUMES

Introduction:

The skills gained on a business studies degree allow you to build commercial awareness and start contributing to your chosen employer quickly and effectively. A business and management studies degree prepares you for a career in business, which may stretch across any sector or industry. Your career options are therefore varied. Decide on the area you want to work in and try to get relevant work experience. This may be in the form of a structured work placement, part-time job, voluntary work or even a period of work shadowing. Some courses include a placement in industry. Use this time to develop your skills further and to establish contacts within the industry.

Prospects

Around two-thirds of business studies graduates are in full-time employment six months after graduation. Of this number, around a fifth work as business and finance professionals in areas such as chartered accountancy, business consultancy, tax, banking, city markets and insurance.

Industries as diverse as chemicals, utilities, fashion, health, grocery and construction all require functional managers with a clear understanding of systems, efficiency and operational issues. Opportunities exist in management and analysis roles with employers in the private, public and voluntary sectors.

Graduate training schemes offered by large employers frequently focus on 'commercial' roles and may be of interest to business studies graduates. Many give experience in several departments but others encourage specialisation from the outset. These recruitment schemes are advertised in directories available free from your careers service as well as online.

Jobs directly related to your degree

A degree in business studies prepares you for a variety of jobs including:

- Management consultant
- Retail banker
- Risk manager
- Chartered accountant
- Chartered certified accountant
- Chartered management accountant

- Corporate investment banker
- Insurance underwriter

Jobs where your degree would be useful

You could also apply the skills from your business studies degrees to positions such as:

- Human resources officer
- Logistics and distribution manager
- Marketing executive
- Retail manager
- Systems analyst

Resume:

A resume (or curriculum vitae) is a brief summary of your abilities, education, experience, and skills. A successful résumé will review, summarize, and present your training, experience, and achievements clearly and concisely. Its main task is to convince prospective employers to contact you for an interview. Resumes are used for most jobs and are generally 1-2 pages. Curriculum vitae are used in academics and can be longer.

Types of Resumes:

- 1. Chronological Resume*
- 2. Functional Resume*
- 3. Combination Resume*
- 4. Targeted resume*

Chronological Resume: A chronological resume starts by listing your work history, with the most recent position listed first. Your jobs are listed in reverse chronological order with your current or most recent job, first. Employers typically prefer this type of resume because it's easy to see what jobs you have held and when you have worked at them. This type of resume works well for job seekers with a strong, solid work history.

Functional Resume: A functional resume focuses on your skills and experience, rather than on your chronological work history. It is used most often by people who are changing careers or who have gaps in their employment history. The body of a functional resume highlights your major skill areas. Emphasis is placed on your skills, not on work experience. Job titles, dates, or name of employers may be left out. However, other sections may include a job objective, information on education, a summary of abilities, and memberships and

other work-related associations. You may label the section describing your skills in a variety of ways, such as:

Skills

Abilities

Accomplishments

Experience

Areas of Competence

Combination Resume: A combination resume lists your skills and experience first. Your employment history is listed next. With this type of resume you can highlight the skills you have that are relevant to the job you are applying for, and also provide the chronological work history that employers prefer.

You have a steady and progressive employment history.

You are applying for a position for which the chronological resume is expected but you also want to highlight qualifications from earlier positions.

You are writing a targeted resume and need an effective way to match your skills to the job requirements.

Targeted Resume: A targeted resume is a resume that is customized so that it specifically highlights the experience and skills you have that are relevant to the job you are applying for. It's well worth the effort, especially when applying for jobs that are a perfect match for your qualifications and experience.

You know the title of the position you are interested in and have a good idea of the qualifications that will be required for entry into this position.

You are applying in response to an employment advertisement.

You are applying to a specific company.

You have several different specific career objectives and want a different resume for each one.

Resume Structure: The resume structure is important in more than one way. The ideal resume structure gives the resume a professional outlook while displaying a career-oriented attitude of the applicant. Also it influences the flow of the resume and thereby affecting its readability. Hence, constructing your resume perfectly will improve your chances of gaining that important interview call. Each applicant decides on the structure of

the resume as per his strengths, capacities and the expectations of his prospective employer and hence, every resume tends to differ from the other.

A resume is divided in three sections:

1. Introduction 2. Primary Section 3. Secondary Section

1. Introduction:

As the name suggests this section introduces the document to the employer. It includes only two sub sections namely header and objectives.

Header: This includes name and contact details of the applicants. The document opens up with these details. Highlight your name in bold form in an eye catching way. Do not use numbering or bullets to write information like address, email id or telephone number.

Objectives: The objective holds the ambitions and career plans of the applicant. The employer tries to figure out the candidate's potentials, his expectations from the job and how he plans to shape up his own career with this job. The objective should be so well written that it interests the employer in knowing more about your credentials.

2. Primary Section:

This is the most important part of the resume. The employer spends maximum time reading this section and thus the contents, the look and the flow of this section has to be perfect. Adopt the reverse chronology for all the subsections. Ideally, the experience section should get more prominence and therefore should come first. Nevertheless applicants can put forth educational qualification section prior if they wish to stress on it more.

Experience: This section includes your work history with details like your designation, where you worked, the total work duration and the responsibilities you handled during your working period. Using bullet format and action words is a good way of emphasizing the work done by you within the responsibilities section. Elaborate this section wisely to bring out the best of your capacities.

Educational Qualifications: This includes the qualifications gained by you. This section should also include the name of the awarding body, year of passing and the grades scored so that the employer has better understanding of your qualifications.

Certifications: This section includes the skills and abilities acquired by attending courses,

internships, workshops or training sessions etc. Certifications help you understand your area of work better by teaching you more whereas the licenses give you the authority to perform that particular work.

Achievements: This includes the awards and the accolades won by the applicant during his course of work or studies. Include a maximum of 4 achievements to avoid making it look immodest.

3. Secondary Section

Personal Details: These details help the employer in knowing you better beyond your professional status. It includes family background, marital status, age, hobbies etc. In reality, these details do not matter to the employer.

References: This includes the name and contact details of people you have worked with or studied under the guidance of. However, the practice of writing references is slowly thinning down and concluded in only one sentence, 'available upon request.' The references should always come last in the resume.

Resume Presentation

General editing and proofreading: A fresh eye can spot any mistakes you may have missed, and another reviewer may also notice when there is a better way of saying something, a clearer way to make a point. Many a time resumes are rejected by employers for misspellings.

Resume Parsing Services: “Resume Parsing Systems” Computer programs, if any, actually filter through resumes utilizing key words to choose resumes that have a set percentage of and / or match the key words.

Key words from the job posting: Since a Parsing Service may be utilized, it is useful to include actual wording from the job posting within your resume.

Titles are important: Be sure that the job titles on your resume match the job position for which you are applying.

Don't use the Page Header and Footer Features: Your resume will probably not make it past the Parsing Service if you put your contact information, etc. as a header or footer. Using a page header or footer on your resume is a good way not to get noticed.

Legible and attractive: Stay with the traditional Times New Roman, Verdana, Arial, or

Courier. The font size for the content could be between 11 and 12 points, and for headers could be between 12 and 14. Anything smaller is difficult for some people to read; anything larger is unnecessary. The content should be in black, however for the sake of highlighting headers, one can use dark gray, and a deep navy blue color too. As for weight and size, with the computer you are able to call attention to words that highlight important elements — including your name and contact information — by sparingly using bold, italic and larger type for emphasis.

Creative white space: Much as with effective print advertising, a relatively simple, uncluttered look best projects your message. In most all cases there is elegance in simplicity, to make your unique qualities stand out on the printed page.

Final formatting: Always check the job posting requirements to be sure you are submitting your resume in the preferred format. Whether you submit your resume as an email attachment, inline in an email, or hard copy via postal mail or fax, it is important to send it in a format that is simple for the receiving end to use.

Preferred file format for email attachments: Check to see what attachment format, if any, is listed. The most commonly preferred format is Microsoft Word.

Your resume's file name: As the file name (save as name) of your resume, use your name and the position for which you are applying.

Summary: By conveying your truth in creating both the look and content of your resume, your unique skills will make it to the desk of the employer. Hopefully the interview will be the next step.

Cover Letter

The cover letter will give splendid look to your resume. The letter basically consists of a request or you can say self-recommendation on the basis of what work experience you have garnered and how and why do you think the recruiter or employer should give you preference over other candidates applying for the same post. Cover letters are short and should have the post applied for, written clearly and also from where you have come to know of the vacant position in that particular organization.

It is best to personalize the letter for maximum impact on the reader, whoever it be, whether a recruiting agency or the employer directly. You have to give factual statements of your achievements if that is your plus point. Else, you could mention what you think of the company that is making you apply for working with them and how do you think it

would benefit you as well as the company with the mutual association. We anticipate that furnished information regarding the cover letter will be useful for you in creating a cover letter for your resume in an efficient way.

Cover Letters Format: A cover letter mainly consists of three paragraphs. The three paragraphs should be written separately. Each paragraph has its own importance. These three paragraphs are written in a way that you can inform about yourself, and request the employer for an interview. The three paragraphs should be precise but very clear and impressive. A cover letter should not be too descriptive, that the employer gets bored reading it. You just need to mention the skills in a short and an impressive manner to get an interview call, and thus your purpose gets solved.

Cover Letter Catch Phrases

- Please accept this letter and resume as my application...
- Please accept this letter as my application for the position of...
- Please accept this letter as my enthusiastic application for the position.
- I learned of this opportunity from...
- I am very interested in pursuing this exceptional opportunity.
- My keen interest in this position stems from...
- My professional experience is solid and well-rounded.
- My primary focus involved...
- This position represents a tremendous opportunity to continue my clear and committed career path...
- I believe the combination of my education and experiences have prepared me...
- As you can see from my resume...
- As indicated by my resume...
- As a result of these experiences, not only am I qualified for this position, I will thoroughly enjoy it!
- Beyond my enthusiasm for this opening, I offer all the essential elements it requires.
- I firmly believe my experience, education and background would enable me to make a significant contribution.
- It is a challenging position for which I believe I am well qualified.
- ... help to ensure optimum effectiveness.
- My interest and knowledge in this area was further enhanced by...

- My particular area of effectiveness is...
- Although I have found my current position to be professionally rewarding...
- My professional experiences are supplemented by...
- My goal is...
- ... provides the opportunity to accomplish this goal.
- Let me thank you in advance for your consideration.
- Thank you for considering me for this very important position.
- Thank you for your time and consideration of my resume and qualifications.
- I look forward with enthusiasm to an opportunity for an interview.

CV and Resumes – Useful Phrases

ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT

- Acted as a point of contact within the department for ...
- Co-ordinated and implemented ...
- Delegated tasks, placing emphasis on individual strengths
- Deputised different roles, as and when required
- Deputised in absence of manager
- Designed and executed efficient filing system, helping to reduce the summer backlog
- Designed, delivered and evaluated...
- Involved in project meetings to monitor progress
- Liaised with senior management and staff to ensure the successful completion of the project within given time frame
- Maintained and updated all data systems in office
- Maintained company policies, procedures and documentation
- Managed and motivated staff
- Managed bookings
- Managed diary
- Manned the switchboard when required
- Organised and scheduled meetings....
- Organised payment of outstanding invoices and employee wages
- Organised staff rota, recorded holidays, sick leave and time en-lieu for staff.
- Organised travel, accommodation, and itinerary for ...
- Organised work rotas
- Performed administrative duties, provided assistance to customers

- Performed general office duties
- Planned and attended
- Prepared weekly reports
- Provided a high quality confidential secretarial and administrative support
- Provided technical and project management expertise to
- Represented department at regular meetings
- Responsible for financial management and funding
- Responsible for product innovation as well as attracting new business
- Responsible for induction and supervision of new staff
- Responsible for the initial project set-up, report creation as well as client presentations
- Selected, sorted and distributed mail, sending it to appropriate departments
- Undertook a range of administrative duties
- Updated accounts/customer details on the in-house database

CUSTOMER RELATIONS

- Acted as a direct link between the client and the company
- Advised and informed clients
- Built up contacts and positive working relationships with...
- Dealt with customer queries and complaints in a professional manner
- Developed and maintained good working relationships with...
- Ensured customer satisfaction, developed rapport with customers and worked effectively and calmly under pressure
- Handled queries in a professional and courteous manner
- Liaised with customers in relation to taking orders and dealing with customer requests
- Liaised with management and clients
- Provided a friendly and professional customer service
- Provided assistance to customers
- Worked in a multidisciplinary team...in a pressurised environment

RETAIL/CATERING

- Advised and informed customers regarding specific menu items
- Advised and informed interested parties about specifics of various product items/ranges
- Assisted clients with product selection
- Co-ordinated delivery of supplies and services
- Dealt with customers in a polite and friendly manner and delivered orders swiftly and

efficiently

- Encouraged product sales, increased brand awareness and identified various business opportunities
- Ensured customer satisfaction levels at regular intervals
- Ensured maximum capacity for restaurant by efficient table planning and time estimation
- Ensured stocks were replenished appropriately
- Entrusted with securing premises at end of day trading
- Handled a range of complaints and queries in a professional manner
- Handled a range of financial transactions on a daily basis
- Handled customer complaints in a courteous manner
- Maintained high standards of hygiene and food preparation, developed rapport with regular customers

and worked efficiently and calmly under pressure.

- Monitored and updated sales display areas
- Monitored deliveries and processed invoices checking for quality and quantity
- Monitored incoming goods for quantity and quality
- Performed general housekeeping duties
- Promoted new and existing products and services to clients
- Provided excellent customer service to customers
- Regulated stock levels and promoted products
- Responsible for target sales and the care of customers in a busy retail environment
- Priced, stacked and displayed items for sale and kept store tidy and attractive
- Acted as an assistant buyer for annual buying trips
- Successfully met sales targets
- Distributed a range of promotional materials on behalf of...
- Involved in the launch of a range of new products
- Responsible for all aspects of shop floor management, including space management analysis, merchandising, etc.

TEACHING/TRAINING

- Booked training venues, identified instructors and organised training materials for workshops
- Created a fun learning environment by using a variety of facilitation techniques
- Delivered lessons on exam preparation and technique, corrected scripts

- Developed and promoted inter-departmental links
- Organised art excursions, careers exhibitions, sporting activities
- Planned and revised curriculum
- Prepared and devised lesson plans tailored to the needs of students
- Presented curriculum coherently and succinctly to the class
- Produced innovative and appropriate induction programmes for new staff at all levels within organisations
- Responsible for in-house training of new employees
- Responsible for the development, implementation and facilitation of training programmes
- Supervised social education projects
- Supported students through pastoral advisory role

SKILLS

Team work:

- Enjoy working independently or part of a team.
- Participated in team projects in college and in previous employment.
- Have experience in a number of leadership roles...
- Successfully participated in and motivated teams to research and prepare presentations for class seminars.
- Co-ordinated and consulted with other committee members in French society to make decisions, share ideas and plan events.
- Leadership skills developed through involvement in politics, community development and voluntary work
- Adopted an inclusive approach to decision making situations.

Communications:

- Effective communication skills developed through delivering regular presentations, giving and receiving feedback, writing reports, case studies, press releases
- An accomplished public speaker and have debated at all-Ireland level
- Good oral and written skills developed through delivery of presentations, debating, giving and receiving feedback, writing press releases and articles
- Communication skills developed through course presentations, dealing with customers in a tactful and diplomatic way and giving clear and precise instructions to suppliers.

- Written communication skills gained from course assignments and final year extended essay.
- Developed good written communication skills through project work and writing laboratory reports. Have delivered several presentations in class
- Speak clearly, deliver presentations to key audiences
- Communicate effectively with a wide range of staff including...
- Good interpersonal skills, able to employ tact and to build relationships. Can deliver presentations to target audience.
- Articulate and adept in communications with others. Able to convey and persuade others towards a particular viewpoint.
- Excellent communicator developed through academic and work-based presentations and writing essays and reports.
- Confident presenter. Able to explain and sell ideas to clients and colleagues. Strong editorial and proof reading ability producing accurate and high quality work.

Interpersonal:

- Can get on with a wide range of people, good motivator and able to support others
- Good listener with developed sense of intuition and timing. Identify, develop and support the talent of others through workshop facilitation and teaching
- Strong networking ability
- Patient, able to inspire trust, good listener and lead by example

Problem Solving:

- Enjoy problem solving scenarios. Have strong analytical and numerical skills.

IT:

- Familiar with, proficient in, working knowledge of...
- Proficient in Microsoft Office suite. Use internet and e-mail on a regular basis
- Familiar with social networking sites. Member of linkedin discussion groups related to...Regularly follow blogs related to..

INTERESTS

Travel:

- Keen interest in foreign culture and history. Have travelled widely, for example...
- Enjoy experiencing new cultures, learning new languages and working in different working environments
- Inter-railed extensively in US and Europe. Enjoy meeting new people and experiencing new cultures

Reading:

- Keep up with current affairs through reading newspapers and magazines. Enjoy novels and biographies.
- Consult newspapers to keep up to date with current affairs and increase business awareness.

Drama:

- Played various roles in school and in university musicals and plays
- Acted in
- Co-produced
- Performed in
- Developed community workshop on...

Music:

- Have an eclectic taste in music.
- Keen interest in all types of music. Play the drums and enjoy going to concerts.
- Friend of the National Concert Theatre
- Keep up with developments in the music industry by consulting music websites and music magazines.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Student of the Year
- Active member of...
- Awarded various medals for
- Awarded x prize for
- Captained
- Class Representative
- Co-hosted...
- Delivered numerous presentations at

- Elected officer
- Elected spokesperson
- Holder of
- Invited expert
- Nominated for
- Received honorary scholar award
- Scholarship to
- Student member of (professional body)

Electronic Resume:

To create a résumé which will look consistently good when e-mailed, scanned, or viewed on a web browser, you should use the simplest formatting possible. This may mean sacrificing the features of your favorite word processor such as tables, paragraph borders, and custom fonts. If you plan to post your résumé to the Internet, it is a good idea to keep two versions of it. Use the on-line version for e-mail and Internet postings. Save your fully formatted résumé for interviews and for giving to employers who have already shown an interest. Follow these steps to create a résumé that will look good no matter where you send it. These directions will work for most word processing programs:

- ü Open your résumé in your word processor.
- ü Save the résumé as TEXT ONLY. (This feature is usually available by choosing Save As from the File menu)
- ü Close the résumé and reopen the new text-only version in Notepad or a similar plain text editor.
- ü Edit your résumé following the formatting suggestions below. Save the document.
- ü To send your résumé in an e-mail or post it to the Internet, Select the résumé text, Copy it, and Paste it into the e-mail or web page.

Formatting suggestions

Use a non-proportional font such as Courier so that each full line of text appears as the same width on the page.

Do not use tabs. They are often ignored by web browsers, and behave unpredictably in e-mail reader programs.

Avoid trying to indent or center text using the spacebar. Keep all lines justified to the left side of the page, and use line breaks ("Enter" key) to separate headings and sections.

Don't rely on exact positioning of text using spaces or specific fonts. The font that you use to create your résumé is not necessarily the same font that will be used to display it on the Internet or in an employer's e-mail program.

To emphasize a word or words, use ALL CAPS rather than bold, or surround the text using *****asterisks***** or **#other characters#**.

For bulleted lists, use the asterisk (*), hyphen (-), plus sign (+) or a similar common character. Keep in mind that long lines of text may wrap incorrectly underneath the bullets. To avoid this problem, keep list items under 60 characters wide.

Don't try to control the width of each line in a long paragraph by using carriage returns. Just put a single carriage return at the end of the paragraph to allow your text to wrap normally. It will then look consistently good even if the browser or email reader window is resized.

Video Resume:

A video resume is a short video created by a candidate for employment that describes the individual's skills and qualifications and is typically used to supplement a traditional resume. It's important to keep in mind that a video resume isn't going to get you a job.

However, it can assist you in marketing yourself to prospective employers - if it's done right. Done poorly, it can, at best, hinder your chances of getting an interview. At worst, it can knock you out of contention and embarrass you.

Before you start working on your video resume, review resume video samples. Take a look at other resume videos and learn from them, considering both what works, and what doesn't.

How to Create a Video Resume

v Dress professionally in business attire, just as if you were going to an in-person interview.

v Keep your video resume short: one - three minutes.

v Look at the camera not at the desk or table below you.

v Don't speak too fast.

v Make sure there isn't any background noise and that the wall behind you isn't too busy.

v Practice what you're going to say ahead of time.

v Start by mentioning your name (first and last).

v Focus on your professional endeavors, not your personal ones.

v Discuss why you would be a good employee and what you can do for the company that hires you.

v Thank the viewer for considering you for employment.

Video Resume Don'ts

Don't mix your personal life with your professional one. If you have information on your MySpace or Facebook page that you'd prefer employers don't see, don't link your video resume.

Don't expect your video resume to replace your traditional resume. Not all employers are interested and others are worried about discrimination issues i.e. hiring candidates because of how they look and sound rather than your qualifications. However, a well done video can bolster your candidacy for employment.

Know Yourself: Self-Assessment

Self-assessment activities can help you create a clearer picture of yourself. With increased self-understanding, you're in a better position to recognize and choose educational and career opportunities that will more likely "fit" and be rewarding. Consider the following self-assessment activities:

ü Increase self-awareness through reflection.

ü Plan time to reflect upon your experience.

ü Describe your interests, skills and abilities, attitudes, personality, values, motivations, and other characteristics.

ü What do you naturally enjoy? Dislike? Wonder about?

ü What are your strengths?

ü Do you prefer working independently or with people? Or a combination of both?

ü Would you rather work with people, ideas, data or things? Or a combination?

ü How do you want to live now and in future? What's important to you for satisfaction?

ü How have your answers to any of these questions changed over time?

Complete a career assessment and critically review results. For a more structured

approach to increasing self-awareness, consider completing a career assessment--for example, an inventory to identify interests or values related to career satisfaction.

Develop a portfolio: A portfolio is a collection of artifacts--for example, essays, reports, photos, letters, CDs, articles, websites for providing evidence of your learning in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities, and attitudes. Developing a portfolio can help you recognize your strengths (e.g., knowledge, skills and abilities), motivations and other important factors related to career satisfaction. Reflecting upon portfolio artifacts can inform you about potentially rewarding directions to pursue.