BBA 2308
Business Communication
Study Module

স্কুল অব বিজনেস

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

বাংলাদেশ উন্মুক্ত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
BANGLADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Business Communication

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Course: BBA 2308 Business Communication

Credit Hours: 3, Level: Undergraduate

Course Objectives: This course will provide the learners with practice in occupational writing, correspondence, and reports. Half the course deals with correspondence, particularly developing standard communication groundwork, employment letters, customer relations, and sales messages. The remaining units focus on report preparation, with practice writing descriptions, instructions, progress reports, and proposals.

Course Outline:

1. **Introduction:** Meaning, Nature of Communication, Business Communication, Requirements of Effective Communication, Purpose of Communication, Functions of Communication, Importance of Communication, The Role of Communication in Management, How Management is Related to Communication.

2. **The Communication Process (System):** Meaning of the Communication Process, Essential Elements, Necessity of Feedback, Principles of Giving Feedback, One-way Versus Two-way Communication, Necessity of Two-way Communication, Communication Models, Difference between the Communication Process and Model, Usefulness/Importance of Communication Models.

3. **Channels (Media) of Communication:** Meaning of Channels of Communication, Media of Communication, Verbal Communication, Written Communication, Oral Communication, Electronic (Computer Based) Communication, Non-Verbal Communication

4. **Direction of Communication:** Downward Communication, Upward Communication, Horizontal Communication, Diagonal Communication, Cross-Channel Communication, External Communication, Internal Communication.

5. **Formal and Informal Communication:** Formal Communication, Informal Communication (The grapevine).

6. **Communication Barriers:** List of Barriers, Overcoming Barriers

7. **Business Letters:** Meaning, Features/Essential Conditions, Purpose of a Business Letter, Functions of a Business Letter, Planning a Business Letter, Steps of Planning, The Layout and Format of Letters, Types of Business Letters.

8. **Job Letters:** Job Application, Types of Application Letters, Methods of Writing, The Forms and Contents of an Application Letter, The Resume (Bio-Data), Constructing Your Resume, Specimens of Application Letters, Interview Letters, Letters of Recommendation, Joining Letters, Resignation Letters.

9. **Business Reports:** Meaning, Characteristics of a Business Report, Purpose of Reports, Importance of Reports, Essential Qualities of Good Reports, Types of Reports, Difference between a Long Report and Short-Report, Difference between an Informal and a Formal Report, Selecting a Suitable Report Type, Preparatory Steps to Writing Reports.

Text Book:

Lesikar, R. V., & Flatley, M. E. *Basic business communication* (Latest ed.).

Recommended Books:

Thill, J. V., & Bovee, C. L. *Excellence in business communication* (Latest ed.).

Ficks, B. R., & Gow, K. F. *Business communication* (Latest ed.).

Pal, R., & Korlahalli, J. S. *Essentials of business communication* (Latest ed.). S. Chand & Sons.

Bowman, J. P., & Branchaw, P. P. (2018). *Business communication: Process and product* (9th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Unit 1 Introduction to Business Communication

Overview

This unit will look into the Meaning, Nature of Communication, Business Communication, Requirements of Effective Communication, Purpose of Communication, Functions of Communication, Importance of Communication, The Role of Communication in Management, and How Management is related to Communication.

There is, without a doubt, a well-organized collection of study resources on communication in the workplace that are available to BBA students.

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Introduction to Business Communication

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Unit Highlights

➢ Understand business communication.
➢ Requirements; purposes; functions; importance of communication.
➢ The role of communication in management.
➢ How management is related to communication.

Technologies Used for Content Delivery

❖ BOUTUBE
❖ BOU LMS
❖ WebTV
❖ Web Radio
❖ Mobile Technology with MicroSD Card
❖ BTV Program
❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: Introduction to Business Communication

After completing this unit, students will be able to:

➢ Define business communication and explain its role in organizational success.
➢ Identify the key elements in the communication process.

Introduction to Communication

Communication at work is when people in the same company share information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings. It is vital to make sure that workers, managers, and other parties can work together, coordinate, and cooperate effectively.

The Latin term *communicare* or the verb *communis*, which means "to share," is where the word "communication" comes from. It is sending communication from one person to another via a medium and ensuring the message is interpreted as intended. You may talk to someone, write to them, or use body language, gestures, or pictures to communicate. Thus, communication is the exchange of information between individuals through a shared system of symbols, signals, or behavior. It is the act of articulating facts, opinions, ideas, or emotions. The term "communication" has been defined in a variety of ways.

Definition of Communication

The Latin term communicare, which means "to share," is where "communication" comes from. It is sending communication from one person to another via a medium and ensuring the message is interpreted as intended. You may talk to someone, write to them, or use body language, gestures, or pictures to communicate.

Communication is transmitting information, ideas, thoughts, opinions, or feelings between individuals or groups. It involves a sender, a message, a medium, and a receiver. Effective communication ensures that the message is understood as intended.

It is an essential component of human connection and is important in various contexts, including personal, social, and professional ones. In the business world, communication is necessary to ensure that operations run smoothly, make decisions, and sustain relations.

Communication in the workplace is described as the delivery of messages via multiple channels to meet corporate goals and objectives. It includes both spoken and nonverbal interactions, as well as written, oral, and visual modes of communication.

Nature of Communication

Communication is a complex, dynamic, and multifaceted process with the following characteristics:

a. **Systematic and Two-Way Process:** Communication is not just speaking but also listening. Effective communication requires feedback to confirm understanding. Follows a structured process involving various steps like encoding, transmitting, decoding, and feedback. It involves interaction between the sender and receiver.

b. **Continuous Process:** It does not stop after one message; ongoing interactions shape relationships. Continuous updates, meetings, and reports are regularly conducted in business to maintain the workflow.

c. **Dynamic state:** Communication is an ongoing process that keeps evolving. Communication styles change based on culture, technology, and relationships. A manager's tone with an employee differs from that with a client.

d. **Purposeful:** Every communication has an objective—to inform, persuade, instruct, or entertain. Business communication is goal-oriented (e.g., sales pitches, policy announcements). Occurs in all aspects of life and every organizational function.

e. **Interdisciplinary:** Draws from psychology (how people interpret messages), sociology (group communication), and linguistics (language structure). Management studies focus on organizational communication strategies.

f. **Contextual:** Depends on the context, which includes the environment, the relationship between communicators, and cultural norms.

Definition of Business Communication

The term "business communication" refers to the process of transferring information, ideas, instructions, and feedback methodically both inside and outside of a company in order to accomplish business goals. It includes all kinds of communication, such as spoken, unspoken, written, and digital, that help people make decisions, operate more efficiently, build connections with stakeholders like workers, customers, suppliers, investors, and regulatory authorities, and keep those relationships strong.

So, *Business communication* is different from regular communication because it is organized, goal-oriented, and professional; this ensures that everything is clear, efficient, and follows the law. It is central to how a business works, affecting leadership, marketing, customer service, and the company's culture.

Therefore, it can be said that *Business Communication* refers to the exchange of information within and outside an organization to achieve business goals. It encompasses a variety of forms, including verbal, non-verbal, written, and electronic communication.

Key Characteristics of Business Communication

Business communication involves the exchange of information among individuals both within an organization and beyond, all aimed at reaching shared professional objectives. Clear and effective communication within a business is crucial for making informed decisions, tackling challenges, and ensuring that everything runs smoothly. Here are some important characteristics that shape the way we communicate in the business world:

a. **Clarity and Conciseness:** The message must be straightforward, easy to understand, and devoid of confusion. It is best to avoid jargon unless you know your audience is already familiar. Utilize clear and straightforward language to promote comprehension.

   Effective business communication often thrives on clarity and conciseness, ensuring that messages are delivered in a straightforward manner. It is best to avoid extraneous details that could divert attention from the core message.

b. **Complete, Correct, and Courteous:** The message must encompass all the essential details, enabling the recipient to grasp the content and take appropriate action fully. When crucial details are overlooked, it can create misunderstandings or result in choices that may not be the best ones. The information we share must be precise, grounded in facts, and devoid of errors, whether grammatical, spelling-related, or related to data inaccuracies. It significantly boosts both credibility and professionalism. Information shared in business communications should be accurate and dependable to maintain credibility and trust.

   Communication needs to be conducted politely and respectfully, showing consideration for others in every interaction. Creates meaningful connections and nurtures a supportive professional atmosphere.

c. **Concrete and Coherence:** It is important for messages to be clear and precise, backed by solid evidence, and to stave off any ambiguous statements. Fosters a sense of trust and dependability. The message ought to be organized in a way that makes sense, allowing for a seamless progression of thoughts and ideas. Make sure that the recipient can easily understand and follow the conversation.

d. **Professional Tone:** Maintaining a professional tone is crucial, even in informal communications. This helps in building and maintaining a professional image.The tone should convey a sense of assurance while maintaining humility. Fosters a sense of trust and inspires individuals to take action.

e. **Goal-oriented or Purposeful:** Business communication is often goal-oriented and aimed at achieving specific business objectives. Whether to inform, persuade, or request action, the purpose should be clear to all parties involved.In every instance of business communication, a clear purpose exists behind the message, whether to inform, persuade, instruct, or motivate the audience. The message ought to resonate with the desired objective.

f. **Formal and Informal, Structured and Non-structured:**Business communication can be formal depending on context. Informal communication can be relaxed and friendly, like chatting with a colleague during a break or sharing a laugh by the water cooler. Each contributes significantly to the way communication flows within an organization. Structured formats like reports, memos, and presentations are standard. This can be both structured and unstructured.

g. **Audience-Centric:** Understanding the audience is essential. Tailoring the message to meet the audience's needs, expectations, and understanding level ensures effective communication. The message should be thoughtfully crafted to resonate with the audience's unique needs, understanding, and anticipations. It contributes to enhancing the effectiveness and persuasiveness of communication.

h. **Multidirectional:** Flows in multiple directions within the organization (upward, downward, and horizontal). Due to its pervasive nature, communication strands must be sent in various directions within and outside the organization.

i. **Timeliness:** Information should be shared promptly to ensure that decisions and actions can be taken on time. Communication must occur at the appropriate moment to truly resonate and be impactful. When messages are delayed, it can result in missed opportunities or create inefficiencies in our processes.

j. **Use of Multiple Channels or Mediums:** Business communication can occur through various channels such as emails, meetings, reports, presentations, and phone calls. Choosing the appropriate channel is vital for the effectiveness of the communication. Formal communication involves utilizing multiple established pathways to convey information effectively. It is important to select the most suitable communication channel—email, a phone call, an in-person meeting, or a video call—depending on the situation. Guarantees that the message is not only delivered but also comprehended in a meaningful way.

k. **Feedback-Oriented:** Effective business communication often involves feedback. This ensures that the message has been understood correctly and allows for adjustments if needed. Clear and effective communication in the business world fosters an environment where feedback is welcomed, helping to ensure that everyone is on the same page and truly comprehending the message being conveyed. Contributes to enhancing future conversations and clearing up any misunderstandings that may arise.

l. **Cultural Sensitivity:** In a global business environment, being aware of and sensitive to cultural differences is important to avoid misunderstandings and foster good relationships.

m. **Ethical:** Business communication should adhere to ethical standards, including honesty, transparency, and respect for confidentiality. In business communication, it is essential to respect and follow the laws that govern data privacy and anti-discrimination while also upholding ethical standards that guide our interactions. Avoids legal complications while upholding the values and integrity of the corporation.

Requirements of Effective Communication

Consider business communication to be the "operating system" of a company. A company requires communication to carry out its plans, get people involved, and get things done, much as a computer needs software to work. Several requirements need to be fulfilled to make communication effective. These requirements are stated below:

Clarity: The message should be clear and easily understandable.

Conciseness: Be brief and avoid unnecessary details.

Consistency: Messages should be logical and consistent.

Feedback: Encourage feedback to ensure the message is understood correctly.

Appropriate Medium: Use the right medium for the message.

Timeliness: Deliver messages at the right time.

Cultural Sensitivity: Be aware of and respect cultural differences.

Active Listening: Engage in active listening to understand the receiver's perspective.

Purposes of Business Communication

Communication in business is the most important way for companies to reach their goals, work together, and keep things running smoothly. It does more than provide information; it serves numerous important strategic, psychological, and social purposes necessary for a company's success. Here is a more in-depth look at its primary goals:

a. **Sharing Information:** Making things more transparent and easier to understand. The focal purpose of corporate communication is to provide essential information that helps people make decisions and take action. This includes:

b. **Operational Updates:** Letting people know about rules, procedures, and workflow changes.

c. **Strategic Direction:** Sharing information about the company's objectives, the market, and performance.

d. **Problem-Solving:** Giving information and analysis to help with problems. Businesses risk being less efficient, not being on the same page, and missing opportunities if information does not flow in an organized way.

e. **Persuasion:** Changing people's thoughts and actions. One of the main goals of corporate communication is to alter people's views and get the results you want, such as:

   i. **Marketing and Sales:** Getting people to buy things or use services.
   ii. **Leadership Messaging:** Getting employees to support new projects.

   Negotiating with stakeholders means getting investors, partners, or regulators on the same page as the company's goals. To get people to act, persuasive communication uses logic (facts, rewards) and emotion (stories, appeals to values).

f. **Motivation:** Giving teams the drive and energy, they need. By doing the following, effective communication raises morale, engagement, and productivity:

   i. **Recognizing Achievements:** Giving public praise or prizes to employees for their work.
   ii. **Vision Casting:** Leaders tell teams about an exciting future to get them excited.
   iii. **Encouraging Ownership:** Giving workers authority via open communication. Intentional communication helps employees become more inventive, devoted, and resilient.

g. **Control:** Setting up order and holding people accountable. Communication is a way to keep things consistent and make sure everyone follows the rules:
   i. **Setting Expectations:** Clear job descriptions, key performance indicators (KPIs), and rules of behavior.
   ii. **Feedback on performance:** regular reviews to help employees grow.

h. **Policy Enforcement:** Reminders of regulations, such as safety requirements and moral norms. Without this feature, businesses would be in turmoil, inconsistent, and have less discipline.

i. **Emotional Expression:** Giving meaning to human experience. Workplaces are more than simply locations to do business; they are social ecosystems where people talk to one another.

   Gives Venting Avenues: Safe ways for workers to discuss problems or worries. Leaders who recognize the problems their teams are having (for example, during crises) can build empathy.

j. **Honors Culture:** Shared traditions, such as team meals and recognizing milestones.

   Ignoring emotional demands makes people less interested but meeting them makes them more loyal and healthier.

k. **Social Interaction:** Building Stronger Relationships. Communication builds relationships that make working together possible by:
   i. Networking is getting to know people who work in different departments or levels of an organization.
   ii. **Conflict Resolution:** Talk things over to clear up any confusion.
   iii. **Community Building:** Helping hybrid and remote teams feel like they belong and trust one another.

   Strong connections improve cooperation, keep people in the company, and improve the company's culture.

Purposes that are linked to one another. These goals do not stand alone; they support and build on each other. For instance:

a. A motivating speech could simultaneously give forth strategic information.
b. A team-building activity may also be a way to show how you feel.
c. The best communicators combine several goals into a single, clear message.

Business communication is a tool that may educate, persuade, motivate, control, empathize, and connect. Its goals show how complicated life in an organization can be: finding a balance between efficiency and compassion and between structure and flexibility. Companies that do these things right create a clear, aligned, and vibrant workplace culture.

Functions of Communication

Communication in the workplace includes the following functions:

a. Informative Function: provides stakeholders with information, instructions, updates, and feedback.
b. Expressive Function: communicates ideas, emotions, views, and attitudes to establish rapport.
c. Directive Function: involves issuing instructions, directions, guidelines, and regulations to govern activities and behaviors.
d. Social Function: promotes employee connection, cohesiveness, and a feeling of belonging.
e. Control Function: involves monitoring, assessing, and regulating actions to correspond with corporate goals.
f. Regulatory Function: controls and regulates behaviors.
g. Persuasive Function: influences and persuades others.
h. Integrative Function: promotes unity and coherence within the organization.
i. Management Function: facilitates planning, organizing, leading, and controlling.

Importance of Communication

Communication is the most important thing that keeps contemporary businesses going and growing. In today's complicated, fast-paced, and linked business world, effective communication is more than just sharing information; it is the key to an organization's success. The many important roles that communication plays in every part of an organization and at every level provide value in many profound ways:

a. **Decision Making:** Communication gives organizations the basic knowledge they need to make good decisions at all levels:

   i. Data Dissemination: sends essential information, data, and market knowledge to those who make decisions.
   ii. Point of view Sharing: Includes different points of view from different departments and levels of the organization.
   iii. Risk Assessment: Helps with a complete discussion of options so that they may beevaluated entirely.
   iv. Consensus Building: Helps everyone agree on the best course of action
   v. Ensuring Clarity: Ensures the available choices are understood and conducted correctly

Organizations with ineffective communication systems risk making bad decisions because they do not have all the information they need or because their priorities are out of order.

b. **Coordination:** Ensures distinct parts of the organization work together harmoniously. Effective communication is like the nervous system of a company, making sure that distinct parts work together:

   i. Workflow Integration: Makes sure that actions that rely on one another are done similarly across departments.
   ii. Resource Allocation: Makes it possible to distribute staff, finances, and supplies best.
   iii. Timeline Management: Makes sure that project deadlines and milestones are coordinated.
   iv. Quality Control: Keeps standards the same by using explicit specifications.
   v. Crisis Response: Helps people respond quickly and in a coordinated way during situations

When communication breaks down, it may lead to redundant work, missed deadlines, or operational bottlenecks that slow production.

c. **Efficiency:** Streamlines processes and improves efficiency. Strategic communication directly improves the effectiveness of an organization by:

   i. Process Optimization: Clear procedures get rid of unnecessary steps
   ii. Time Management: Cuts down on pointless meetings and email threads
   iii. Error Reduction: Clear instructions help cut down on errors.
   iv. Technology Leverage: Getting the most out of digital technologies by getting the proper training
   v. Sharing knowledge: documentation stops people from producinginnovative solutions.

Companies that communicate well always do better than their rivals regarding operational metrics and resource use.

d. **Conflict Resolution:** Helps in resolving misunderstandings and conflicts. Communication is the main way to find, deal with, and settle workplace issues:

   i. Early Detection: It finds problems before they become worse.
   ii. Perspective Bridging: Helps people see things from other people's points of view.
   iii. Emotional Venting: Gives people organized ways to vent their anger.
   iv. Solution Crafting: Makes it easier for people to work together to solve problems.
   v. Repairing Relationships: Builds trust by talking openly.

Companies that encourage open communication have far lower turnover and happier employees.

e. **Relationship Building:** Fosters strong relationships among employees and with external stakeholders.Effective communication helps build long-lasting professional partnerships by:

   i. Building credibility: A consistent, honest message develops a good name.
   ii. Developing empathy: Listening carefully makes people feel comfortable in their minds.
   iii. Cultural Cohesion: Teams come together via shared language and stories.
   iv. Engaging stakeholders: Customized communication keeps customers and investors happy.
   v. Networking Expansion: Making more professional relationships opens up more doors.

The quality of business connections is strongly related to how much time and effort you put into communicating.

f. **Innovation:** Encourages the sharing of ideas and innovations. Communication channels serve as critical conduits for innovation by:

   i. Idea Cross-Pollination: Combines perspectives from different specialties.
   ii. Brainstorming Facilitation: Structures creative problem-solving sessions. Feedback Loops: Refines concepts through iterative input.
   iii. Knowledge Management: Captures and disseminates best practices
   iv. Change Adoption: Eases the implementation of new systems and processes

Innovation leaders consistently demonstrate superior communication capabilities in fostering collaborative environments where ideas flourish.

> **_Example: Unilever Bangladesh's Internal Memos_**
>
> _Unilever Bangladesh uses structured email communication to ensure all employees understand new policies. In 2022, a miscommunicated memo about remote work led to confusion, highlighting the need for precise language and follow-up confirmations._

Summary

In an economy centered on knowledge, communicating well has gone from being a soft skill to a hard, competitive edge. Companies that are adept at both the art and science of business communication enjoy the following: faster decision-making, improved operations alignment, more staff members more involved, improved customer relationships, flexible cultures, and maintaining market leadership. Things like how well a business does in the future will depend on how much it spends on communication now. As digital transformation accelerates and workplace habits change, companies concentrating on, evaluating, and consistently improving their communication abilities will stand out as leaders in their fields.

Discussion Questions:
1. Define communication. Examine the nature of communication.
2. As a student of business, how would you characterize business communication?
3. For people in the business world, what are the purposes that make business communications inevitable?

Lesson 2: Business Communication and Its Relation to Business

After completing this unit, students will be able to:

➢ Analyze how communication supports management functions (planning, organizing, leading, controlling).
➢ Evaluate the impact of ineffective communication on business operations.

Introduction

Communication is the most crucial activity that human beings engage in, and it is also a condition that is necessary for continued life. The process of communication is a two-way street. There must be a minimum of two individuals to complete the procedure. One individual assumes the role of a transmitter, while another assumes the role of the receiver.

When someone communicates to engage in some commercial activity, such as providing products or services, intending to generate profits, this type of communication is called business communication. In the words of Scott, "Administrative communication is a process that involves the transmission and accurate replication of ideas, which is ensured by feedback for eliciting action that will accomplish organization goals." The significance of communication to an organization, especially to a business organization, cannot be overstated. This is especially true among commercial organizations. Not only does it connect the various parts of the organization, but it also connects the organization's internal world with the world outside the organization. Developing abilities in effective writing and public speaking is quite necessary if one wants to achieve an elevated level of proficiency in corporate communication. Should they not be present, it is possible that commercial prospects would be lost. Because of this, most business schools across the globe include a substantial amount of instruction on business communication in their programs. In addition, it is common for famous organizations to consider possessing outstanding communication skills a prerequisite for employment throughout the recruiting process.

The Role of Communication in Management

Communication has to play certain specific roles in the different actions of management. These are:

a. **Planning:** Communicating plans and objectives clearly to ensure understanding and execution.
b. **Organizing:** Sharing information about roles, responsibilities, and workflows.
c. **Leading:** Motivating and guiding employees through effective communication.
d. **Controlling:** Communicating standards, monitoring performance, and providing feedback.

How Management is Related to Communication

a. Decision-Making: Managers rely on accurate and timely information to make decisions.
b. Leadership: Effective leaders use communication to inspire and motivate their teams.
c. Team Management: Communication is essential for team building and collaboration.
d. Conflict Management: Resolving conflicts through open and honest communication.
e. Change Management: Communicating changes effectively to ensure smooth transitions.

> *Example 2: Garment Factory Strike Due to Miscommunication*
> *A Dhaka-based RMG factory faced a worker strike when supervisors verbally communicated a pay cut instead of issuing an official notice. The lack of written documentation escalated tensions, showing the risks of informal messaging.*

Summary

Effective communication is fundamental to business success and managerial effectiveness. It encompasses several types, follows specific principles, and serves multiple organizational

purposes and functions. Understanding and mastering communication skills are essential for all business professionals to enhance organizational performance and achieve strategic goals.

Business communication is essential for every firm, enabling the sharing information, ideas, and decisions among stakeholders. It embraces digital, written, verbal, and non-verbal interactions. Effective corporate communication must be concise, simple, cohesive, and respectful, guaranteeing correct transmission and comprehension of communications.

Bangladesh Case Study: Rahimafrooz's Communication Strategy

Rahimafrooz, a leading battery manufacturer, implemented a multi-channel communication system (emails, town halls, WhatsApp groups) to bridge gaps between management and factory workers: these reduced misunderstandings and improved operational efficiency by 20%.

Discussion Questions:

1　How does poor communication affect organizational efficiency?
2　What are the key differences between internal and external communication?
3　How can managers ensure clarity in business communication?
4　Why is feedback crucial in the communication process?
5　Explain how communication aids in conflict resolution.
6　Explain the role of Communication in Management.
7　Identify the relation between Communication and Management.

The Communication Process (System)

Unit Highlights

➢ Critically analyze the phases of communication.
➢ Communication process
➢ Digital shifts in communication and its impact in business and personal issues.

Technologies Used for Content Delivery

❖ BOUTUBE
❖ BOU LMS
❖ WebTV
❖ Web Radio
❖ Mobile Technology with Micro SD Card
❖ BTV Program
❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: The Communication Process (System)

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Illustrate the steps in the communication process using models like Shannon-Weaver or Berlo's SMCR.
➢ Compare one-way vs. two-way communication with real-world examples.
➢ Explain the importance of feedback and apply principles for giving constructive feedback.
➢ Diagnose communication breakdowns using process models.

Introduction

The world is getting increasingly linked, so people are sending more and more messages and using a wider range of emerging social media sites, e.g.,*X,* Facebook, Threads, Instagram, and such. However, the way people talk to each other has not changed, even though they are used to e-mails and instant messaging through Facebook Messenger and other microsites like WhatsApp*,* Ratuken Viber, Snapchat, and WeChat.

"Transmission of information and meaning from a sender to a receiver" is a straightforward way to describe conversation. Meaning is the most important part of this description. The process only works if the person who receives the idea understands it like the sender.

Meaning of the Communication Process

The *communication process* is the sequence of steps by which a message is transmitted from a sender to a receiver. It involves creating, sending, receiving, and interpreting messages. Effective communication ensures that the intended message is accurately conveyed and understood.

The communication process involves both parties exchanging ideas and moving them toward a direction or objective that is agreed upon.
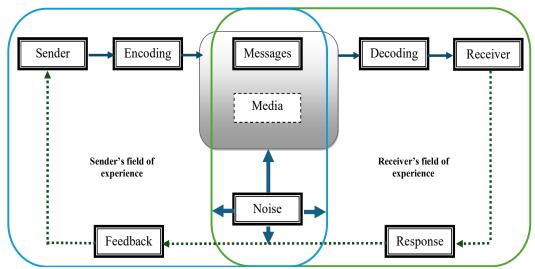
Essential Elements of the Communication Process

Exchange and advancement of ideas toward a mutually agreed-upon course or objective characterize communication as a two-way process. The fundamental components of communication must be determined for this process to occur.

1. Sender: *The message's originator who encodes and transmits it.* The person beginning communication is the Sender. He encrypts ideas from his data bank and delivers them as a message. The sender, or encoder, has to manage every correspondence. His blend of images, words, and phrasing gets the audience interested. This process consists of numerous components, among which knowledge of the recipient and their needs counts. Messages that fit recipient expectations are more likely to be welcomed.

A consultant wants to speak with the HRD manager of a firm. Projects, including personnel training consultancy, are sought. The consultant has to match their objectives so that the HRD manager may interact with them. He has tough homework. The management has seen several consultants. Why should he give this consultant's advice any thought? In this scenario, a great approach is to extend the proposal and make it specific for the firm. One might focus on sales increase. If professionally written, the correspondence would help the HRD manager.

2. Message: *The content or information that the sender wants to communicate.* The encoded concept delivered by the sender is the message. The message's formulation is crucial as a wrong patterning might render the recipient hostile or cause them to lose interest. Right now,

the sender must be somewhat careful. In which sequence does he want to introduce his ideas? Assume he wants five points. Would he (a) display them in the stereotypical style or (b) want to be creative and go forward uniquely?

In the first scenario, the probability is excellent; in the latter situation (b), he could hit an incorrect location and get monotonous. How, therefore, should the message be developed and delivered? As said before, the ordering should be determined by the audience's needs so that its importance is readily understood. The minute the recipient discovers his objectives reflected in the communication, he sits up, listens, and answers. The message has thus had an effect.

3. Encoding: *Converting the message into symbols, such as words, images, or gestures.* To communicate with another person, we use various methods, including words, pictures, body motions, and so forth. Each of them is referred to as a symbol.

Illustration 1: Encoding Messages: Wrinkle Free Face Cleanser Advertisement, Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=xG5F4AnFQ9E

Encoding refers to the process of turning our thoughts into symbolic representations. The following advertisement depicts a face that is covered with wrinkles. You then read the headlines, which state that the product is wrinkle-free. Encoding is the term used to describe this kind of communication.

4. Channel: *The medium through which the message is transmitted (e.g., email, phone, face-to-face).* A further crucial component of communication is the channel or medium used. It might be nonverbal, oral, or verbal. The media channel should be determined before the message is composed. Every medium has a unique set of guidelines and norms. For instance, one may afford to be casual in oral communication; nevertheless, all communication norms must be followed in the written form. Remember that anything written is meant for recordkeeping or distribution to all relevant parties.

5. Receiver: *The person or group to whom the message is directed.* The receiver searches for meaning after receiving a message that has been concealed. People go through this process while considering their workplace and the value of their work environment. Knowing what the author intended to say helps the reader to interpret a message; this simplifies the message's interpretation. The writer's vocabulary is the same as almost all the words used to decipher the message. The HRD manager in the preceding scenario is more receptive to the consultant's proposal and more eager to share when he realizes it will result in something beneficial.

6. Decoding: *The process by which the receiver interprets and makes sense of the message.* The process of understanding the information starts as soon as we get it. For example, the wrinkly face in the image makes you understand how bad it looks. The result is that if your clothes do not have any wrinkles, they will look just as bad as they do now. When you look for "wrinkle-free," the same thing happens. Pictures of different fragments of clothes, like a shirt and pants, may come up. You can tell immediately that the ads might be for ready-made clothes when you see them.

7. Feedback: *The receiver's response to the message, indicating whether it was understood as intended.* To communicate effectively, this is crucial. Effective communication occurs solely in response to feedback. Lack of feedback causes the many mistakes and defects seen in corporate environments. The usual reactions of those engaged in misunderstanding might be, "This is not what I meant," "This is not what I said," or "This was not my intention." If comments are sought for every instance, this mistake may be reduced or probably eliminated. Lack of confirmation via feedback and disparity between the message delivered and the interpreted messageled to fallacious assertions or erroneous conclusions.

8. Noise: *Any interference that distorts or interrupts the message.*Most of the time, noise is what stops people from communicating. Background noise is annoying and makes it hard to communicate. We might get the word wrong sometimes if our channel device is broken. Sound confusion or a problem with words can also make it hard to communicate clearly. Along with noise, the sender's attitude, biases, assumptions, mood, or use of the wrong tone can sometimes get in the way of conversation. In the same way, the past, biases, and the ability of the listener to understand the information as meant also affect how well communication works. Besides these problems, conversation fails because of things like speaking problems, confusing body language, hardwiring that cannot be read, and so on.
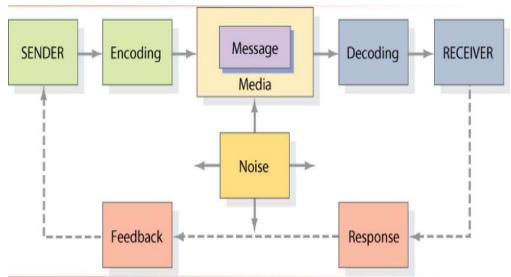
Figure 2: Elements of the Communication Process

Necessity of Feedback

Feedback is crucial in the communication process as it:
  i. Confirms receipt and understanding of the message.
  ii. Clarifies any misunderstandings.
  iii. Provides the sender with the receiver's response.
  iv. Enhances mutual understanding.
  v. Ensures the effectiveness of the communication.

Principles of Giving Feedback

Providing appropriate feedback to demonstrate that the message has been received, decoded, comprehended, and acted upon is imperative. Consequently, providing sufficient and consistent feedback with certain fundamental principles is customary. Enumerated below are these principles:
  i. *Be Specific*: Provide clear and specific information about what needs to be improved or was done well.
  ii. *Be Timely*: Give feedback after the event or behavior as soon as possible.
  iii. *Be Constructive*: Focus on improvement rather than criticism.
  iv. *Be Balanced*: Include both positive and negative aspects.
  v. *Be Respectful*: Deliver feedback with respect and empathy.
  vi. *Be Focused on Behavior*: Address behaviors rather than personal attributes.

One-way Versus Two-way Communication

One-way Communication: Involves the sender transmitting a message without expecting or receiving feedback from the receiver; this is advantageous as it is a faster and less time-consuming way of communication. However, there are some disadvantages too; there are situations when it can be less accurate, with higher chances of misunderstandings, and no feedback loop.

Two-way Communication: Involves exchanging messages where feedback is given and received; the bright side can be more accurate, scope for clarification, and buildingrelationships for the communication being held. However, the disadvantages are vital too; it can be more time-consuming andrequire active participation from both parties.

Necessity of Two-way Communication

Two-way communication is essential because:

- It ensures mutual understanding and reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings.
- It allows for immediate clarification and adjustments.
- It fosters engagement and collaboration.
- It builds trust and improves relationships.
- It enhances problem-solving and decision-making.

> *Example: BKash's Customer Service Feedback Loop*
>
> *BKash, Bangladesh's leading mobile financial service, uses two-way SMS surveys after transactions to gather customer feedback, improving service quality.*

Communication Models

Communication models are theoretical representations that explain the communication process. Common models include:
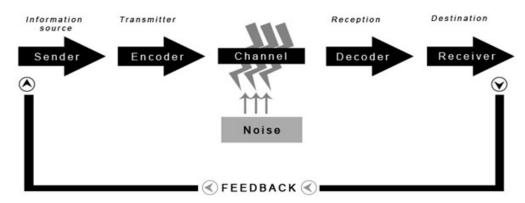
Linear Model:

Components: *Sender, message, channel, receiver.*

Characteristics: *One-way process, no feedback.*

Example: *Shannon-Weaver Model.*

Shannon, an American mathematician and electronic engineer, and Weaver, an American scientist, wrote "A Mathematical Theory of Communication" in the "Bell System Technical Journal" in 1948.

This model is tailored to improve sender-receiver communication. They also uncover "Noise" elements impacting communication. The concept was first created to improve technical communication. It was commonly used in communication later. The model covers information source, transmitter, noise, channel, message, receiver, channel, information destination, encode, and decode.

SHANNON-WEAVER'S MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

Figure 3: Shannon-Weaver's Linear Model of Communication

<u>**Sender**</u>*:* The message's creator or the information source chooses the desired message.

<u>**Encoder:**</u> Signals that are produced from the message by the transmitter

<u>**Note:**</u> The communications from the sender are translated into compatible signals, such as waves or binary data, for transmission across satellites or cables. For instance, the voice is transformed into wave signals and sent via wires in a telephone.

Decoder: Signal-receiving site that translates signals into messages. An encoder process in reverse

Note: The receiver does a pleasant and intelligible conversion of such binary data or waves into a message. Should this not occur, the recipient will be unable to understand the precise message, and the efficient communication between the sender and the receiver will be harmed.

Receiver: Where the sender intended to transmit the message. The recipient returns feedback to the sender based on the decoded message. Sender and receiver communication will be hampered if noise diverts the message.

Noise: Channels carry the messages from the encoder to the decoder. The communication flow may be hampered, or the recipient may not get the right message throughout this process if physical noises like horn sounds, thunder, and crowd noises distract or alter the communication.

Note: The approach evidently only addresses external sounds that impact signals or messages from outside sources. For instance, should any issues arise with the network that directly impact mobile phone connectivity or divert messages

Interactive Model:

Components: *Sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback.*

Characteristics: *The two-way process includes feedback.*

Example: *Schramm's Model*

In 1954, Wilber Schramm introduced the communication model. Information is only helpful if it is well-written and communicated. Encoding is crucial because it turns thinking into material and starts communication. The primary responsibility of the recipient is to comprehend the speaker's intended message when the information reaches them. Thus, encoding and decoding are the most crucial elements of effective communication, without which information cannot move. Schramm's model follows this approach.

Schramm's model states that efficient communication involves two crucial processes: coding and decoding.

He also stresses that communication is complete with the receiver's input. Imagine telling a buddy anything and getting no response. Is communication complete? No. According to Schramm, conversation goes both ways, from one person to the other. Using an example, let us have a better understanding.

"Will you accompany me to a movie?" Helen asked Samantha.

The contact between Samantha and Helen needed to be completed since Samantha did not answer. Samantha may have informed Helen of her disinterest in the film.

Schramm's concept states that the receiver must provide feedback and let the speaker know whether they obtained the message as intended. Any questions or doubts must be addressed with the speaker. Thus, the listener deciphers the speaker's message and delivers it back to the speaker after comprehending it, completing the cycle.
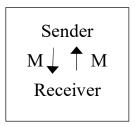
Figure 4: Schramm's Model of Communication

M stands for messages.

Schramm felt that communication heavily depends on a person's knowledge, experience, and cultural background. People with various origins, religions, or cultures tend to understand the message differently.

Transactional Model:
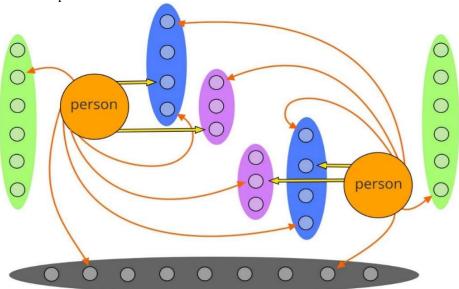
Components: *Communicators (each person acts both as the sender and receiver), message, channel, feedback, context, noise.*

Characteristics: *Simultaneous sending and receiving, dynamic and continuous process.*

Example: *Barnlund's[1] The Transactional Model of Communication says that sending and getting information work both ways; this means that both the writer and the listener are responsible for how the connection works and what it does.*

Meanings are not just sent from one person to another and then back again. They need to agree on what the message means.

Noise, the surroundings, and both spoken and unspoken hints from people are also part of the message. Barnlund divided communication into two types: interpersonal and intrapersonal. Interpersonal communication means messaging with yourself, and intrapersonal communication means messaging with someone else. Besides that, he set up seven communication postulates.

Barnlund's model of interpersonal communication. The orange circles represent the communicators. The other colored areas symbolize different types of cues. Communication takes place by decoding cues (orange arrows) and encoding behavioral responses (yellow arrows).

Barnlund's model of communication. (2023, August 22). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barnlund%27s_model_of_communication

Figure 5: Barnlund's Model of Transactional Communication

Key Components: Senders, Receivers, Messages, Channels, Feedback, Context
The transactional model emphasizes the significance of context in communication by furnishing the requisite antecedent information to understand the message and influencing how it is interpreted and responded to.

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1 Barnlund, D. (1962). Toward A Meaning-Centered Philosophy Of Communication. Journal of Communication.12.4 197-211.

Difference between the Communication Process and Model

Communication Process: The sequence of steps for communication in realtime.

Communication Model: A simplified, theoretical representation of the communication process used to understand and analyze how communication works.

Usefulness or Importance of Communication Models

Simplification: Break down complex communication processes into manageable components.

Analysis: Helps identify and analyze barriers and areas for improvement.

Understanding: Provides a clear framework for understanding how communication works.

Training: Useful in teaching and training practical communication skills.

Improvement: Guides the development of better communication strategies.

Summary

Understanding the communication process and its elements is fundamental to effective business communication. Feedback plays a crucial role in ensuring messages are understood correctly. Models of communication provide valuable insights and frameworks for analyzing and improving communication within organizations. Emphasizing two-way communication enhances accuracy, engagement, and collaboration.

Discussion Questions

1. With the help of an illustration, discuss the communication model that you feel is appropriate for conducting an academic session in a real-life classroom. What factors made you choose the model?

2. Can you differ between communication models and processes? Why is it important for a business communication situation?

Lesson 2: Necessity of Understanding the Communication Process (System)

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Review of corporate communication and how it helps organizations succeed.
➢ Why it is important to know how communication works and what models are.
➢ Understand how to utilize these frameworks to make communication at work better.

Introduction

This lesson's primary objective is to encourage students to engage in critical thinking regarding the phases of communication and their significance within the broader context of the process. The goals of this chapter are to define, compare, and use communication models, with a focus on best practices. Every successful business is built on good communication. Clear and orderly communication makes it easier for people to work together, follow leadership orders, and talk to customers. This keeps operations running smoothly and strategies in line. This lesson looks at the basic ideas behind corporate communication processes and models, how they are different from each other, how they may be used in real life, and how to make them better.

Characteristics of Communication Process

There is a systematic flow of information both within and outside of a company, and this is what is meant by the term "business communication process." In order to guarantee that the information is effectively communicated and comprehended, it might be broken down into many phases. Before getting a deeper understanding of why the process and models are essential, let us rewind on the elements of the communication process.

Essential Elements:
- Sender: The message's initiator, often known as the sender.
- Encoding: Encoding entails transforming ideas into a legible form (like an email).
- Channel: The media used, such as an email, a meeting, or a report.
- The receiver's interpretation of the message is called decoding.
- Feedback: Feedback is the answer that shows how well the message was comprehended.
- Noise: Any impediment to communication (such as interruptions or technical terms) is considered noise.

Features:
- Driven by a purpose such as educating, convincing, or informing.
- More formal or informal, like informal conversations vs. organized reporting.
- Ongoing (that is, contact is never really terminated).

Characteristics of Business Communication Models

Communication models provide structured frameworks to understand how information is exchanged. They help identify potential breakdowns and improve effectiveness.

Characteristics of Models:
- Simplify complex interactions.
- Highlight key elements (sender, message, receiver).
- Help diagnose communication failures.

Why Good Communication Is Crucial for Businesses

Strong communication procedures result in improved collaboration since teams are able to work together more effectively when information flows without any interruptions. As a result of clear communication, misconceptions and delays are reduced, which results in faster decision-making. Transparent leadership strengthens trust and motivation among employees, resulting in increased employee engagement. Consistent messaging has the ability to boost the reputation of a business, resulting in stronger customer relationships.

Poor communication may result in misaligned objectives and wasted resources, which are both undesirable outcomes. Insufficient morale as a result of ambiguous expectations. The misunderstanding that occurred resulted in lost commercial chances. For example, a customer email that is badly phrased might result in contract conflicts, but a letter that is well-structured can improve ties.

> **"Kaizen" Approach in Toyota**
> The "Kaizen" approach at Toyota involves constant feedback loops to improve procedures. All staff members share ideas, fostering open communication.
> Results: Efficiency and inventiveness improved.

Strategies for Enhancing Communication in the Business World:

The world of business is continuously evolving and transforming. Thus, the practitioner's discovery innovative ways to enhance their efforts for achieving better Communication goals. Primarily, they need to pick the right model for the job or task at hand. For conducting formal messages linear models can be handy. On the contrary, transactional models would work better while communicating with the members within a team.

In this age of technology and artificial intelligence, it is obligatory to use technology wisely. *Slack*, *Zoom*, and *Trello* are examples of tools that make communication easier. One has to ensure that their digital messages are clear, so they are not misread. Another way to stay limit might be to ask for feedback and listen carefully when it comes in. As a result, all the team leaders need to be trained so that they can ask for feedback and performs actions as required of them.

Business needs to encourage meetings for having two-way communication as this will ward off the chances of miscommunication. An organization that aspires to achieve its deals and contracts, has to develop skilled workforce that is adept in communications. To foster workforce's skill, the organization can arrange communication training workshops on how to write clearly, speak in front of a group, and solve problems. These workshops can be more entertaining and successful if role-playing games are initiated to practice real-life situations.

Summary

It is not enough to just send messages for business communication to work. You also need to make sure they are received, understood, and acted on. Organizations can boost productivity, teamwork, and overall success by using the right models and improving their processes. Different models suit distinct purposes (transactional versus linear). Efficiency and engagement are enhanced by effective communication. It is imperative to provide ongoing feedback and instruction.

Discussion Questions

1. Which model would you use in a crisis, and why?
2. How can companies balance digital and face-to-face communication?
3. What steps can managers take to reduce "noise" in team discussions?

Channels (Media) of Communication

3

Unit Highlights
- ➢ Critically examine the various channels used for communication.
- ➢ Communication process
- ➢ Digital shifts in communication and its impact in business and personal issues.

Technologies Used for Content Delivery
- ❖ BOUTUBE
- ❖ BOU LMS
- ❖ WebTV
- ❖ Web Radio
- ❖ Mobile Technology with MicroSD Card
- ❖ BTV Program
- ❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: Channels (Media) of Communication

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Classify communication channels (verbal, non-verbal, written, electronic) and their appropriate uses.

➢ Demonstrate the effective use of non-verbal cues (e.g., body language, visuals) in professional settings.

➢ Critique the advantages/disadvantages of digital communication tools (e.g., email, chatbots).

➢ Design a multi-channel communication strategy for a Bangladeshi business scenario.

Introduction

"*Channels of communication*" refers to the many channels or mediums by which messages are carried from the sender to the recipient. The proper channel selection is of the utmost importance to guarantee efficient communication. The strengths, limits, and appropriate circumstances for the usage of each channel are unique to that channel.

Meaning of Channels of Communication

Information may move freely inside an organization as well as between people via the channels of communication that are in place. When interpreting and comprehending communications, these channels, which may be official or informal, have an enormous impact.

Media of Communication

Media of communication encompasses the tools and platforms used to convey messages. These include verbal, written, oral, electronic, and non-verbal communication. Media selection depends on the message's complexity, urgency, confidentiality, and the intended audience.

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is using spoken words to convey information, ideas, and emotions from one person to another. It involves using language and vocal sounds to communicate thoughts, feelings, and intentions.Direct (face-to-face) or indirect (phone calls, video conferences).

Advantages: Some of the more common advantages of verbal communication are:

• Immediate feedback

• Personal touch and emotional expression

• Effective for detailed discussions

Disadvantages:

• No permanent record

• It can be misunderstood if not clear

• Ineffective in noisy environments

Applications: The following are some fields where verbal communication can be utilized.

• Meetings

• Interviews

• Presentations

Written Communication

Written communication uses written symbols, such as letters, emails, reports, and memos, to convey messages.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Provides a permanent record	• Lacks immediate feedback
• Can be reviewed and revised	• Can be misinterpreted without verbal cues
• Suitable for detailed and complex information	• Time-consuming to produce

Applications:
- Formal reports
- Official correspondence
- Policy documents

Oral Communication

Oral communication is a subset of verbal communication that involves explicitly spoken words. It can take place in person or via electronic means.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Personal interaction	• No record unless recorded
• Immediate feedback	• Can be influenced by the speaker's tone and delivery
• Effective for persuasive communication	• Miscommunication due to accent, speed, or volume

Applications:
- Team briefings
- Customer service
- Negotiations

Electronic (Computer-Based) Communication

Electronic communication refers to the transmission of information using digital devices and platforms. This includes but is not limited to instant messaging, video conferencing, social networking, and electronic mail. This kind of communication enables individuals to interact and exchange information instantaneously, irrespective of any geographical boundaries that may separate them.

Advantages:
There are numerous advantages of e-commerce. Some of the most prominent are listed here:
- Fast and efficient
- Can reach a large audience
- Allows for multimedia messages (text, audio, video)

Disadvantages:
Whatever comes has boons that can be enumerated, for some banes. Thus, some disadvantages of e-commerce are:
- Digital divide (not everyone has access to technology)
- This can lead to information overload
- Less personal than face-to-face communication

Applications:
- Corporate communications
- Remote team collaboration
- Marketing and social media engagement

Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication involves the transmission of messages through body language, facial expressions, gestures, posture, and eye contact.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Conveys emotions and attitudes • Enhances verbal communication • Universally understood cues	• Can be ambiguous • Cultural differences in interpretation • Limited in conveying complex information

Applications:
- Enhancing presentations
- Building rapport
- Signaling agreement or disagreement

Summary

Understanding the various communication channels and their appropriate use is crucial for effective message transmission. Verbal and oral communication are excellent for immediate and interactive exchanges, while written communication is indispensable for creating permanent records. Electronic communication has revolutionized the speed and reach of message delivery, and non-verbal communication plays a vital role in conveying emotions and reinforcing verbal messages.

Graduates must be adept at selecting and utilizing the proper channels to enhance their professional communication effectiveness.This lesson comprehensively overviews the different communication channels andtheir advantages, disadvantages, and applications.

Discussion Questions

1. There are so many different types of channels of communication these days. Which one do you prefer to use regularly? Why?
2. While using your preferred communication channels, do you face any difficulties? How do you try to overcome these challenges?
3. In the fast-paced worlds of business and politics, which channels are frequently used? Can you identify the reasons behind the choices of the business leaders? What are the reasons for the political leaders?
4. Do you think, the way in which the business institutions communicate in Bangladesh is a good choice? Justify your answer.

Directions of Communication

4

Unit Highlights

➤ Comprehend the varying direction in which communication flows in, out and about.
➤ Communication Process
➤ Decide on the appropriate direction for any target audience for communication.
➤ Assess the impact of the directions for different groups that are going to communicate with one another.

Technologies Used for Content Delivery

❖ BOUTUBE
❖ BOU LMS
❖ WebTV
❖ Web Radio
❖ Mobile Technology with MicroSD Card
❖ BTV Program
❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: Direction of Communication

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Differentiate between downward, upward, horizontal, and diagonal communication flows.
➢ Assess the challenges of upward communication in hierarchical organizations (e.g., Bangladeshi corporations).
➢ Propose solutions to improve cross-departmental (diagonal) communication.

Introduction

There are diverse ways for communication to run in groups; each is used for a different reason and makes it easier for various kinds of relationships. Figuring out the communication method makes sending information easier and makes a group more successful.

Downward Communication

Downward communication flows from higher levels of the organizational hierarchy to lower levels. This includes instructions, explanations, policies, and feedback from supervisors to employees. Downward communication refers to the flow of information from higher levels of the organizational hierarchy to lower levels. This type of communication has multiple purposes, like providing clear instructions, excellent regulations, decent policies, relevant comments, and corporate news.

Example: A CEO emails all employees announcing a new company policy.

Figure 1: An Example of Downward Communication

Characteristics:
- Authoritative and instructional
- Helps in clarifying tasks and expectations
- This can sometimes lead to a lack of feedback if not managed properly

Challenges:
- Risk of miscommunication as messages pass through multiple levels
- This may lead to a sense of alienation if communication is too hierarchical

Some of such **purposes** are mentioned below:
- To provide instructions and guidelines.
- To communicate policies and procedures.

- To share feedback and performance evaluations.
- To announce organizational changes and updates.

Advantages	Disadvantages
- Ensures consistent and standardized information. - Clarifies roles and responsibilities. - Reinforces organizational goals and values.	- It can be slow and bureaucratic. - This may lead to information overload. - Potential for distortion as information passes through multiple levels.

To make this better understandable, here are some **examples** for the learners:
- Memos from management to employees.
- Company newsletters.
- Training manuals.

Upward Communication

Communication moves upward from lower levels of the organizational structure to higher ones in an upward direction. The following are examples of reports, comments, ideas, and concerns that workers have communicated to their managers.

The term "upward communication" describes the process by which information moves from lower levels of the organizational hierarchy to higher areas of the hierarchy.

Example: An employee submits a monthly performance report to their manager.

Figure 2: An Example of Upward Communication

Characteristics:
- Encourages employee participation and feedback
- Helps in identifying issues and areas for improvement
- Can lead to positive changes and innovations

Challenges:
- Employees might fear negative consequences for providing honest feedback
- Communication may be filtered or altered as it moves upward

The key **purposes** of upward communication are listed below:

Purpose:
- To provide feedback to management.
- To report progress and problems.
- To suggest ideas and improvements.
- To express concerns and grievances.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Encourages employee involvement and engagement. • Provides management with valuable insights. • Facilitates better decision-making.	• Maybe hindered by fear of repercussions. • It can be filtered or altered by intermediaries. • Often slower than downward communication. • Here are some situations where this type of communication might occur:

Applications:
- Employee surveys.
- Progress reports.
- Suggestion boxes.

Horizontal Communication

Horizontal communication occurs between individuals or departments at the same hierarchical level within the organization. This communication occurs between persons or departments at the same organizational hierarchy level. It is common for this kind of communication to include collaboration and offer assistance in coordinating operations.

> *Example: Marketing and Sales departments holding a joint meeting to plan a product launch.*

Figure 3: An Example of Horizontal Communication

Characteristics:
- Promotes teamwork and collaboration
- Facilitates the exchange of ideas and information
- Helps in problem-solving and decision-making

Challenges:
- This can lead to conflicts if there are misunderstandings or a lack of alignment
- It may require strong interpersonal skills to be effective

The key **purposes** of this type of communication are:
- Coordinate activities and tasks.
- To share information and resources.
- To foster teamwork and collaboration.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Improves coordination and collaboration. • Reduces misunderstandings and duplication of efforts. • Encourages a sense of teamwork.	• This can lead to conflicts if roles and responsibilities are not clear. • It may be informal and lack documentation. • Potential for information to be distorted or lost.

Applications:
- Meetings between department heads.
- Collaboration between team members.
- Informal chats and emails.

Diagonal Communication

Diagonal communication crosses functional and hierarchical boundaries, involving individuals from various levels and departments. Communication between personnel in various departments and at diverse levels is known as diagonal communication. The dissemination of information in this manner contributes to the dismantling of silos within an organization.

> *Example: An HR executive communicates directly with a Sales team member regarding training needs.*
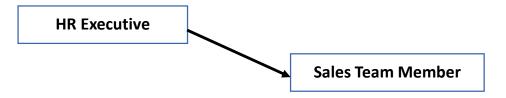
Figure 4: An Example of Diagonal Communication

Characteristics:
- Encourages a more integrated approach to organizational communication
- This can lead to quicker problem resolution by bypassing hierarchical structures
- Fosters a more inclusive communication environment

Challenges:
- It may be not noticeably clear if not responsibly managed
- This can be perceived as bypassing the chain of command

This type of communication helps in:
- To speed up information flow.
- To solve problems that requires cross-functional input.
- To foster innovative ideas and solutions.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Breaks down silos within the organization. • Enhances flexibility and responsiveness. • Encourages creative problem-solving.	• It can bypass traditional authority lines. • It may not be noticeably clear if not appropriately managed. • Potential for information overload.

Application:
- Project teams with members from different departments.
- Cross-functional task forces.
- Collaborative problem-solving meetings.

Cross-Channel Communication

Cross-channel communication uses multiple channels (verbal, written, electronic) simultaneously or sequentially to convey messages.Crossing messages over many different communication channels is called cross-channel communication. Consequently, this guarantees the message is sent to the audience via various channels.

> *Example: A company announcement is shared via email, posted on the company intranet, and discussed in team meetings.*

Figure 5: An example of Cross-Channel Communication

Characteristics:
- Increases the reach and effectiveness of communication
- Ensures that important messages are not missed
- Can cater to different communication preferences

Challenges:
- Requires consistency across all channels to avoid mixed messages
- It can be resource-intensive to manage multiple channels

This type of communication assists managers:
- To ensure message consistency across different platforms.
- To reach a wider audience effectively.
- To reinforce messages through multiple touchpoints.
- Example: BRAC's Cross-Departmental Meetings

> *BRAC holds monthly inter-departmental forums to align development projects, avoiding duplication of efforts.*

Advantages	Disadvantages
- Enhances message reach and impact. - Reduces the risk of miscommunication. - Allows for a combination of strengths from different channels	- It can be resource-intensive. - Requires careful coordination to avoid inconsistencies. - Potential for message fatigue if overused.

Applications:
- Announcing a new policy via email, intranet, and face-to-face meetings.
- Marketing campaigns use social media, print, and television.
- Crisis communication using press releases and live updates.

Summary:

Effective business communication requires understanding and utilizing various directions and methods to ensure information is accurately and efficiently shared within and outside the organization. Each type of communication has its unique characteristics, benefits, and challenges that must be managed to achieve organizational success.

Downward and upward communication ensures hierarchical information exchange, while horizontal and diagonal communication facilitates coordination and problem-solving. Cross-channel communication leverages multiple media for greater impact.

Discussion Questions
1. How can businesses minimize communication bias?
2. Why is upward communication often weak in Bangladeshi corporations?
3. How can managers encourage diagonal communication?
4. What tools improve horizontal communication in remote teams?
5. Analyze a case where poor downward communication caused operational failure.

Lesson 2: External, Internal and Grapevine Communication

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Develop a feedback mechanism to enhance external communication.
➢ Analyze the risks of misinformation in informal networks and strategies to mitigate them.

Introduction

There are diverse ways for communication to run in groups; each is used for a different reason and makes it easier for various kinds of relationships. Figuring out the communication method makes sending information easier and makes a group more successful.

External Communication

External communication occurs between the organization and external entities such as customers, suppliers, investors, and the public. External communication helps serve several purposes. As part of the external communication process, some exchanges occur between the business and external entities, including consumers, suppliers, investors, and the general public.

Example: A company issues a press release to announce a new product launch.

Figure 6: An Example of External Communication

> *Example: Miscommunication in a Bank's Loan Approval Process*
>
> *A private bank in Dhaka faced delays when loan officers relied only on emails without follow-up calls. Introducing a hybrid (email + call) system reduced processing time by 30%.*

Characteristics:
- Aims to build and maintain positive relationships with external stakeholders
- Critical for marketing, public relations, and corporate reputation
- Must be clear, professional, and aligned with the company's values

Challenges:
- Requires careful management to ensure consistency with internal communications
- Potential for miscommunication or public relations crises

The**purposes** served by external communication can be:
- To build and maintain relationships.
- To promote products and services.
- To manage the organization's public image.
- To handle inquiries and feedback from external stakeholders.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Enhances the organization's reputation. • Attracts customers and investors. • Build partnerships and alliances	• Requires careful management to avoid negative publicity. • It can be affected by external factors beyond the organization's control. • It may involve legal and regulatory considerations.

Applications:
- Advertising and public relations campaigns.
- Customer service interactions.
- Investor relations and annual reports.

Internal Communication

Internal communication occurs within the organization among employees and management.When talking about internal communication, we refer to exchanging information inside a company amongst people, teams, and departments. A perfect example of such communication can be an internal newsletter that updates employees on company news and other recent events.

> *Example: Apex Foods' Safety Suggestion Box*
>
> *Workers anonymously submit safety concerns, leading to a 30% reduction in factory accidents.*

Characteristics:
- Facilitates collaboration, coordination, and a positive workplace culture
- Essential for aligning employees with the company's goals and values
- Can include formal (memos, reports) and informal (chats, discussions) methods

Challenges:
- Ensuring information is accessible and understood by all employees
- Maintaining transparency while protecting sensitive information.

This is a successful means of communication. There are several **purposes** of Internal Communications also help in resolving work issues. These are:
- To share information and updates.
- To facilitate collaboration and teamwork.
- To build a cohesive organizational culture.
- To address employee concerns and feedback.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Enhances employee morale and engagement. • Improves coordination and efficiency. • Supports change management and implementation.	• It can be affected by organizational hierarchy and culture. • This may lead to information overload if not appropriately managed. • Requires effective channels and tools.

Applications:
- Internal newsletters and emails.
- Intranet and internal social media platforms.
- Team meetings and briefings.

Summary:

For any individual or organization, internal and external communication focuses on building relationships within and outside the organization. Mastering these communication directions enhances organizational performance and employee engagement.

Bangladesh Case Study: Dutch-Bangla Bank's Rocket Service

Initially, customers complained about transaction errors due to poor communication. The bank introduced automated SMS confirmations and a helpline, reducing complaints by 40% in six months.

Discussion Questions

1. When is external communication essential? How should it be conducted to benefit the organization?
2. For a firm that operates with both local and foreign traders, what will be your suggestions for them for minting internal and external communications?

Formal and Informal Communication

5

Unit Highlights

- ➢ Formal communications, its channels, types and its characteristics.
- ➢ Informal communications, its channels, types and its characteristics.

Technologies Used for Content Delivery

- ❖ BOUTUBE
- ❖ BOU LMS
- ❖ WebTV
- ❖ Web Radio
- ❖ Mobile Technology with MicroSD Card
- ❖ BTV Program
- ❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: Formal Communication

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Understand what formal communication is and how it works.
➢ Explain the different channels of formal communication.
➢ Comprehend the characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages of formal communication.
➢ Differentiate between downward, upward, horizontal, and diagonal communication flows.
➢ Assess the challenges of upward communication in hierarchical organizations (e.g., Bangladeshi corporations).
➢ Propose solutions to improve cross-departmental (diagonal) communication.

Introduction

The primary goal of this lesson is to cultivate in the minds of students some reflective thoughts regarding the communication process and the sequence of various steps that comprise it.

Business communication is vital to organizational success, encompassing various forms and channels through which information is exchanged. Understanding the diverse types of business communication is essential for effective management, marketing, and operational efficiency.

This unit categorizes business communication into two distinct types based on its adherence to organizational protocol: formal and informal communication.

Formal communication adheres to official protocols and is often recorded. It is organized when talking about business and formal communication is when people in an organization share information in an organized, legal way that follows set rules. It follows rules, norms, and orders most of the time. Formal communication aims to get information across clearly, briefly, and professionally, ensuring the message is suitable for the business and often keeping records.

Formal communication is sharing data via officially assigned contact channels within an entity. This kind of communication follows accepted hierarchies and guidelines, thus securing the correct information flow in a controlled and orderly format.

Formal organization communication is produced by sending communications via specified and controlled routes. The communication covers everything related to the organization, work, and related topics. Formal communication may be spoken, nonverbal, written, letters, telephone, radio, printed, or internal. Formal communication may include certain gestures. Authorized persons deliver messages via official channels to those obligated to reply, who may be humans or robots.

Most organizations record all official talks in their evidence. Do the sender, receiver, and any organization workstations that must be aware of and preserve the information have copies? Official messages include work directions, financial data, sales and inventory records, company regulations, and position descriptions.

Over the last two decades, managers have had more communication channels. Video conferencing, mobile technologies, electronic bulletin boards, and fax machines are new possibilities. As their companies grow, managers can no longer rely on face-to-face interactions to communicate. Managers nowadays struggle to choose a communication channel for effective communication.

Important Things about Formal Communication:

1. **Official Channels:** Sticks to set paths, such as communicating downwards from superiors (bosses) to subordinates or upwards from subordinates to supervisors.

2. **Record keeping:** Formal communication, like business emails, notes, and reports, is often written down and saved for later use.
3. **Organized:** The writing and material are usually betteredited, more official, and follow specific patterns (like templates or forms).
4. **Authority-driven:** A lot of the time, this means that the flow of information follows the organization's structure.

Notations (notes) and advertising exemplify formal communication styles; other prevalent types of official communications include contract documents, court/hearing papers, meeting minutes, emails, business letters, memos, and reports.

Characteristics of Formal Communication:

A formal system of duties is established following the organization's hierarchical structure, resulting in formal channels applied to develop the formal communication network. The ideal network has communication channels from the bottom up, downwards, and horizontally. There are many instances in which horizontal communication is either lacking or inefficient, and as a result, the accuracy of the information suffers. The circumstance occurs due to a lack of experts in organizational communication or permanent circulation of information between departments, even though this is essential for the organization when competition is present. The characteristics of this type adhere to the following:

1. Structured and organized;
2. Follows organizational hierarchy;
3. Documented for future reference, and
4. Clear and specific.

> *Example: Misinterpreted Email at a Dhaka Law Firm*
> *A poorly worded email about a client's case deadline led to legal penalties.*
> *The firm now uses follow-up calls to confirm critical instructions.*

Formal channels include –

a) **Vertical Communication:** Vertical communication denotes the transmission of information across several tiers of the organizational hierarchy, both upward and below. Communication between managers, bosses, and workers includes sending and receiving notes, orders, comments, and reports. There are two distinct variations. These are:

b) **Downwards communication**: When the instructions and directions flow from the top to the bottom levels, i.e., from the superior to the Subordinates. These are in written form.

c) **Upwards communication:** The information flows upwards through feedback,i.e., from subordinates to superiors. These may be oral or written.

d) **Horizontal or lateral communication**: When communication flows between employees of the same level in different departments.

e) **Diagonal:** The transfer of information between people who are neither in the same department nor on the same level of organizational hierarchy is called diagonal communication. For example, when the assistant marketing manager communicates with the account clerk directly.

Advantages of Formal Communication

- **Clarity and Precision**: The structured format of formal communication ensures clarity in message delivery.

- **Accountability**: Since formal communication is often documented, it promotes accountability and can serve as a reference in case of disputes or misunderstandings.
- **Coordination**: Facilitates the proper coordination of activities, as each department is aware of its role through well-defined communication channels.
- **Legal Protection**: Documentation of formal communication can provide legal backing in case of contractual issues or regulatory requirements.

Disadvantages of Formal Communication

- **Rigidity**: The rigid structure may slow communication, especially in large organizations.
- **Lack of Flexibility**: Adhering to strict protocols can limit spontaneous or creative problem-solving approaches.
- **Possibility of Distortion**: When messages pass through several layers of hierarchy, they risk being misinterpreted or distorted.

Summary

Formal communication in the workplace ensures consistency, clarity, and professionalism. It ensures that all employees get the message and comprehend its significance. This type of communication is often systematic and frequently documented to ensure accuracy and accountability.

Discussion Questions

1. Enumerate what you understand as formal communication.
2. Explain the characteristics and formality required for official communication.
3. When is written communication preferable over oral?
4. How does non-verbal communication impact business negotiations in Bangladesh?
5. What are the risks of relying solely on electronic communication?
6. Compare the effectiveness of emails vs. video calls in remote teams.

Lesson 2: Informal Communication

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Develop a feedback mechanism to enhance internal communication.
➢ Contrast formal communication (official channels) with informal communication (grapevine).
➢ Analyze the risks of misinformation in informal networks and strategies to mitigate them.
➢ Design a formal communication policy for an organization.
➢ Evaluate how managers can leverage the grapevine positively.

Introduction

Without formal channels, workers instinctively communicate informally with one another. Personal or social interactions frequently characterize it and are spontaneous.

Informal communications are defined as *Informal communication is a type of interaction that occurs in casual settings and may include conversations, social gatherings, or unstructured interactions. These do not occur through formal, structured channels.* Informal communication is an integral component of the organizational process. In all organizations, informal communication, or "the **grapevine**," is prevalent. It lacks formal recognition and is not structured. However, it is unavoidable due to the inherent human propensity to express emotions, grievances, etc. In reality, the grapevine is being promoted throughout all organizations to obtain prompt feedback on all organizational matters. Amid the U.S. Civil War, the term "grapevine" was coined to describe the loosely suspended intelligence telephone wires from tree to tree, which frequently resulted in the distorting of the message sent.

Therefore, any allegation was considered to have originated from the grapevine. In the present day, the term encompasses all informal communications. Informal communication is how individuals within an organization engage in social, non-programmed activities within the formal boundaries of the unit in question.

Important Strategies of Informal Communication:

To maximize the benefits of informal communication, organizations can implement several strategies. By demonstrating the value of informal communication, leaders can create an environment where employees feel empowered to contribute and collaborate.

a) Many modern offices create informal spaces for interaction, such as lounges or break rooms, to facilitate employees engaging in casual conversations and building relationships. Team-building activities and social events are regularly organized by corporate houses to facilitate informal exchanges and strengthen team cohesion.

b) Businesses leverage technology to support informal communication in today's digital landscape. Tools such as instant messaging platforms and collaborative software facilitate employees' real-time communication and knowledge sharing. Many organizations encourage using social media for informal interactions, allowing employees to connect and share ideas beyond the confines of formal meetings.

c) As leadership plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of informal communication, Leaders within business are motivated to pursue open communication behaviors and encourage employees to share their thoughts and ideas freely.

Characteristics of Informal Communication

Informal communication is essential for how organizations work. It makes it easier for information to move between departments and levels, breaking down the walls that make it hard for people to work together. It must be remembered that information literacy is tied to

excellent business writing, which usually comes from casual conversation, and that this can make communication in organizations more effective overall.This relationship encourages informal communication, which may lead to stronger writing abilities and information sharing. In addition, informal communication can make employees happier and more engaged. When workers feel free to talk about their ideas and thoughts casually, they are more likely to feel respected and involved in making decisions. This feeling of connection can make people more motivated and productive, which is good for the company as a whole. Dhanapala says that sharing information and ideas is important for the success of any company. He also says that effective communication plans that use official and informal methods must be effective.

The characteristics of this type adhere to the following:

Unstructured and spontaneous;
Can spread quickly;
It may be less accurate, and
Often based on personal relationships.

Formal channels include –
a. **Vertical Communication:** Vertical communication refers to the flow of information between different levels of an organization's hierarchy.
b. **Downwards communication:** When the instructions and directions flow from the top to the bottom level, i.e., from the superior to the Subordinates. These are in written form.
c. **Upwards communication:** The information flows upwards through feedback,i.e., from subordinates to superiors. These may be oral or written.
d. **Horizontal or lateral communication:** When communication flows between employees of the same level in different departments.
e. **Diagonal:** The transfer of information between people who are neither in the same department nor on the same level of organizational hierarchy is called diagonal communication. For example, when the assistant marketing manager communicates with the account clerk directly.

Advantages of Informal Communication
Informal communication can also be crucial in fostering relationships and enhancing team dynamics, as it often leads to spontaneous idea-sharing and collaboration.
 i. **Clarity and Precision**: The structured format of formal communication ensures clarity in message delivery.
 ii. **Accountability**: Since formal communication is often documented, it promotes accountability and can serve as a reference in case of disputes or misunderstandings.
iii. **Coordination**: Facilitates the proper coordination of activities, as each department is aware of its role through well-defined communication channels.
iv. **Legal Protection**: Documentation of formal communication can provide legal backing in case of contractual issues or regulatory requirements.

Disadvantages of Informal Communication
Despite its advantages, informal communication is not without challenges.
 i. **Flexibility:** Has both its pros and cons; despite speeding up communications, the informal manner may, at times, slow down communication, especially in large organizations.
 ii. **Ambiguity:** There is a high potential for misinformation or ambiguous information to spread rapidly through informal channels, leading to confusion and conflict within the

organization. Thus, the chances of accessing legal protection can be difficult without proper security measures for this type of communication.

iii. **Less Aligned:** Organizations must monitor informal communication to ensure accurate information is shared and employees are aligned with organizational objectives.

iv. **Exclusion of Participants:** Informal communication can sometimes lead to excluding specific individuals or groups, particularly if cliques form within the workplace. This exclusion can create a divide among employees and hinder collaboration. To address this issue, organizations should promote inclusivity and encourage diverse participation in informal communication settings.

Organizations can enhance the effectiveness of informal communication by fostering an environment where all employees feel comfortable contributing.

> *Example: Daraz's Live Chat Support*
> *Daraz uses AI-powered chatbots for instant customer queries, reducing response time from 24 hours to 5 minutes.*

Understanding the "Grapevine" System:

Informal communication may be defined as passing information outside the official channels. The *Grapevine* is one such informal channel of communication. It has some distinctive features. Primarily, it is a channel of horizontal communication, and it can flow even vertically and diagonally.These are:

i. It forms a lease of informal lease between two or more individuals.
ii. It is not planned and organized, or acquaintances.
iii. It may be both official and personal
iv. It is based on friendship

Under such circumstances, examples can be employees chatting in the canteen or pub. It can affect the future of the business, particularly if theformal system has broken down.

Types of Grapevines:

There are some specific types of grapevines, and the way of identifying them is mentioned below:

i. Single Strand: One person tells another, and it continues in a single line.
ii. Gossip Chain: One person tells many others.
iii. Probability Chain: One person tells a few randomly selected individuals.
iv. Cluster Chain: One person tells a few, then tells a few more.

Summary

Informal communication occurs naturally among employees outside the official channels. It is spontaneous and often involves personal or social interactions.

Bangladesh Case Study 1: Grameenphone's Multichannel Strategy

Grameenphone balances call centers, social media, and USSD codes to serve rural customers, increasing customer satisfaction by 25%.

Bangladesh Case Study 2: Grapevine Frontiers in the RMG Sector

After a violent protest sparked by rumors causing road blockades, vandalism of public transport, and millions of Takasin losses, following days of break, one of the factories at Gazipur introduced bilingual (Bangla + English) notice boards to ensure clarity. Thus, the misunderstanding and misrepresentation ended without further chaos.

Discussion Questions

1. What is informal communication? When and in which situations is this type of communication preferred?
2. With appropriate examples, discuss the types of informal communication that continuously occur around you.
3. Comprehend the advantages and disadvantages of informal communication.
4. How can managers use the grapevine to their advantage?
5. What are the dangers of over-relying on informal communication?
6. Compare formal and informal channels in crisis management.
7. How can businesses ensure clarity in multilingual communication?

Communication Barriers

Unit Highlights

- ➢ Barriers in business communication
- ➢ Strategies to overcome the barriers in business communication

Technologies Used for Content Delivery

- ❖ BOUTUBE
- ❖ BOU LMS
- ❖ WebTV
- ❖ Web Radio
- ❖ Mobile Technology with MicroSD Card
- ❖ BTV Program
- ❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: Communication Barriers

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Identify common barriers (language, psychological, and physical) in business communication.
➢ Comprehend the different types of barriers in business communication.

Introduction

Barriers to business communication can prevent the effective exchange of information. These barriers can cause misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and a lack of clarity, hindering decision-making and productivity. Here are the main types of barriers faced in business communication:

The primary goal of this lesson is to instill in students an awareness of barriers and gateways in corporate communication, allowing them to prevent the development of communication events that cause communication gaps.

Communication is an essential function in any firm. No company can function without efficient communication. Communication is a management skill required for successful leadership and employee engagement at work. A manager who can communicate effectively will be able to elicit cooperation from subordinates to achieve the organization's goals.

Barriers frequently arise, regardless of the effectiveness of an organization's communication system. There are a lot of potential causes for this, but the most common ones include language difficulties, organizational, emotional, and psychological obstacles, and physical limitations.

The only way for communication to be considered appropriateis for the recipient to comprehend the message that the sender is attempting to express. If your message is not comprehended indisputably, you need to be aware that your message is encountering a barrier.

Types of Barriers Experienced in Business Communication

Business communication encounters several barriers posing disruption in its course of action and flow in various ways. These barriers are listed as follows:

1. Physical barriers are environmental obstacles that prevent communication (e.g., noise, distance).
2. Psychological barriers include mental and emotional problems (such as stress and distrust).
3. Language barriers refer to linguistic or jargon differences.
4. Cultural barriers refer to differences in cultural origins and behaviors.
5. Organizational barriers include hierarchical structures and rules that limit communication.
6. Technological barriers include problems with communication technologies (for example, obsolete systems).
7. Attitudinal barriers focus on the issues arising due to stringent mindset this can included racial and gender discrimination, inferiority or superiority complex, etc.

Now, let us look at these barriers and get a better understanding.

1. Physical Barriers

The physical setting in which communication occurs is the source of these barriers. They may affect the message's efficacy and intelligibility.

a. Distance: Long distances between communicators can lead to delays and reduce the effectiveness of message transmission.

b. Noise: Background noise in an office or during virtual meetings can distract and reduce focus on the message.

c. Poor Infrastructure: Poor phone connectivity, slow internet connections, or inadequate communication or networking technology can disrupt communication.

d. Time Zone Differences: In global business, time zone differences can lead to delays and difficulties in coordinating meetings and communication.

2. Psychological/Emotional Barriers

Psychological considerations may influence how a communication is received and understood by both the sender and recipient.

a. Stress and Anxiety: Elevated levels of stress or anxiety can make it difficult for individuals to communicate clearly or interpret messages accurately.

b. Emotional State: Emotions like anger, frustration, or excitement can distort the clarity of communication and affect how the message is received.

c. Perception and Prejudices: Different perceptions or preconceived notions about a person or topic can create biases in interpreting the message.

d. Lack of Motivation: When individuals are not interested or motivated, they may ignore valuable information or fail to convey messages properly.

3. Language Barriers

Distinctions in language and linguistics may lead to misconceptions, particularly in corporate settings that are multilingual and multicultural.

a. Jargon and Technical Language: Using industry-specific terminology or technical language can confuse those unfamiliar with it.

b. Language Differences: In international business, different languages and dialects can lead to misinterpretation of words or phrases.

c. Ambiguity and Vagueness: Vague or ambiguous language can cause confusion and uncertainty about the message's meaning.

d. Poor Grammar and Syntax: Mistakes in grammar, spelling, or sentence structure can change the meaning of a message and lead to misunderstandings.

> *Example: Rural Microfinance NGO's Pictorial Manuals*
> *Some agri-business-focused NGOs use illustrated guides for farmers who cannot read.*

4. Cultural Barriers

Individuals' customs, attitudes, and communication styles may all be influenced by cultural differences, which can also affect how individuals communicate.

a. Different Norms and Practices: What is considered respectful or appropriate in one culture may be perceived differently in another.

b. Nonverbal Differences: Gestures, body language, eye contact, and other nonverbal cues can have different meanings across cultures.

c. Attitudes toward Hierarchy: In some cultures, communication with superiors is formal and reserved, while in others, it may be more open and direct.

d. Language Idioms and Expressions: Idiomatic expressions that make sense in one culture may not be understood in another, leading to confusion.

5. Organizational Barriers

Organizational procedures and structure may sometimes operate as barriers to knowledge flow.

a. Hierarchical Structure: In organizations with many layers, messages may get distorted as they pass through diverse levels of authority.
b. Lack of Clear Channels: When there is no clear path for communication, it can result in messages being lost or delayed.
c. Bureaucracy: Excessive formalities, paperwork, and procedures can slow communication.
d. Status Differences: Employees may hesitate to communicate openly with higher-ups due to perceived status differences.

6. Semantic Barriers

These are called semantic barriers when people have trouble understanding what words and signs mean.

a. Different Interpretations: The same word or phrase can have different meanings to different people, depending on their experiences and background.
b. Use of Abstract Terms: Using abstract or complex terms can lead to confusion, as diverse people may interpret them differently.
c. Misunderstanding Symbols or Gestures: Misinterpreting visual symbols, images, or gestures can be confusing, especially in cross-cultural communication.

> *Example: Unilever's "Plain English" Policy*
> *Unilever Bangladesh banned jargon in emails after a misunderstood instruction caused a production halt.*

7. Technological Barriers

As people rely increasingly on digital tools for conversation, technology hurdles can also be a problem.

a. Software Compatibility Issues: Different software platforms and tools may not be compatible, leading to difficulties in sharing files or communicating.
b. Technical Failures: Problems such as server outages, software glitches, or device malfunctions can interrupt communication.
c. Lack of Familiarity with Technology: Employees who are not proficient with communication technology may struggle with using tools like video conferencing, collaboration platforms, or email effectively.

8. Attitudinal Barriers

Attitudes and mindsets impede effective communication, which in turn creates these obstacles.

a. Lack of Trust: A lack of trust between communicators can result in a reluctance to share information openly.
b. Resistance to Change: People who resist the latest ideas or methods may be less open to messages that suggest changes.
c. Close-mindedness: A fixed mindset can prevent individuals from being receptive to others' viewpoints or the latest information.
d. Poor Listening Skills: Failure to listen actively can result in misunderstandings and missed information.

Summary

Effective commercial communication requires the surmounting of several barriers, including physical, psychological, linguistic, cultural, organizational, semantic, technical, and attitudinal barriers. By identifying and mitigating these obstacles, companies may promote superior communication, resulting in greater comprehension, improved cooperation, and increased production.

Discussion Questions

1. What barriers might one encounter while working in the business world?
2. Comprehend the language and cultural barriers.
3. How does the hierarchical culture in Bangladesh create communication barriers?

Lesson 2: Overcoming Barriers to Business Communication

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➤ Apply strategies to overcome language barriers in multicultural workplaces.
➤ Critique the role of technology in reducing or exacerbating communication barriers.
➤ Develop a training module on active listening for employees.

Introduction

Effective communication is crucial to the smooth operation of any company; hence, it is incumbent upon management to remove these obstacles. Even while these obstacles may be impossible to remove completely, the proper management moves in this area might lessen their impact to a point where accurate and impartial data can flow both ways.

Overcoming Barriers to Business Communication

Overcoming communication barriers is essential for improving an organization's clarity, efficiency, and collaboration. Here are strategies to address and overcome the diverse types of barriers faced in business communication:

1. **Overcoming Physical Barriers**
   a) Create a conducive environment by designing workplace spaces with soundproof meeting rooms and quiet places for concentrated work. Sound-absorbing materials may help to reduce background noise in workplaces.
   b) To overcome geographical and time zone variations, use digital technologies for remote communication, such as video conferencing, instant messaging, and project management.
   c) Consider Time Zones: When working with multinational teams, organize meetings at times that are convenient for all participants. Time zone converters or flexible hours may help accommodate diverse locations.

2. **Overcoming Psychological/Emotional Barriers**
   a) Promote a Positive Work Environment: Encourage an open atmosphere where workers feel comfortable expressing their ideas and concerns without fear of judgment. This helps to alleviate tension and anxiety in conversation.
   b) Demonstrate Empathy: Managers and team members must attempt to relate to each other's emotional states and perspectives. Empathy may help to clarify communications and avoid misunderstandings.
   c) Offer stress management programs: Stress management courses or mental health assistance may help workers control their emotions, resulting in better communication.
   d) Encourage input: Regularly solicit input from workers on communication techniques and difficulties they encounter. Addressing these difficulties may assist in improving communication efficiency.

3. **Overcoming Language Barriers**
   a) Use Simple and Clear Language: Avoid jargon and technical language when interacting with those who do not understand the terms. Use basic language so that everyone understands.
   b) Language Training: Provide language training sessions to personnel who operate in multicultural settings or with customers from various linguistic origins.
   c) Use Visual Aids: Diagrams, charts, and pictures may assist in clarifying complicated concepts and make communication more understandable, particularly for non-native speakers.

d) Encourage clarification. Create a culture in which asking questions for clarification is encouraged; this helps to avoid misunderstandings caused by imprecise or confusing wording.

4. ` **Overcoming Cultural Barriers**
   a) Cultural Awareness Training: Train personnel to grasp various cultural conventions, values, and communication styles; this allows them to speak more successfully with colleagues from various backgrounds.
   b) Respect cultural differences. Encourage workers to be polite and aware of cultural differences, such as gestures, personal space, and how they approach one another.
   c) Use Inclusive Language: Avoid using idiomatic terms, cultural allusions, or jokes that individuals from other cultures may not understand or enjoy.
   d) Adapt Communication Styles: Be adaptable in altering communication styles to the cultural context of the listener, whether formal or casual, direct or indirect.

5. **Overcoming Organizational Barriers**
   a) Optimize Hierarchical Structures: Enhance communication efficiency by minimizing superfluous hierarchy levels; this may facilitate a more direct flow of information and reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation of messages.
   b) Establish Unambiguous Communication Channels: Implement explicit channels for communication, including specified email threads, reporting hierarchies, and escalation protocols. This assists staff in understanding the appropriate channels and methods of communication.
   c) Promote Transparent Dialogue: Cultivate an atmosphere where workers are at ease expressing thoughts and recommendations to all tiers of management. This may aid in surmounting the communication obstacles imposed by hierarchical disparities.
   d) Minimize Bureaucratic Redtaping/Obstacles: Reduce superfluous documentation and procedures that impede communication. Utilize digital instruments to automate procedures wherever feasible.

6. **Overcoming Semantic Barriers**
   a) Define Terminology: Develop a glossary of industry-specific words and provide accessibility for all personnel inside the business. This aids in the standardization of word meanings.
   b) Check Understanding with Feedback: In communication, pose inquiries to verify comprehension. For instance, "Does this resonate?" or "Could you kindly encapsulate your understanding?"
   c) Prevent the Use of Ambiguous Words: Utilize exact terminology and provide illustrations when conveying intricate or complicated concepts. This diminishes the likelihood of varied interpretations.
   d) Deliver Instruction on Proficient Writing Abilities: Provide staff with the ability to compose clear, succinct, and compelling emails, reports, and other written communications.

7. **Breaking through Technological Barriers**
   a) Invest in Dependable Technology: Ensure the business employs contemporary communication solutions that are interoperable across various devices and platforms, including video conferencing software, cloud-based document sharing, and collaborative platforms.
   b) Facilitate Training on Communication Instruments: Consistently instruct staff on the proficient use of communication tools to facilitate their navigation of software and platforms.
   c) Formulate a Contingency Strategy: Anticipate technological failures by ensuring alternate communication options, such as telephone calls or messaging applications, are accessible in case of primary system malfunctions.
   d) Consistently Update and Maintain Systems: Ensure that software and hardware are current to prevent communication interruptions due to obsolete systems or technical malfunctions.

8. **Overcoming Attitudinal Barriers**
   a) Foster Trust among Teams: Promote openness and integrity among team members. Team-building exercises may foster trust and diminish communication hurdles.
   b) Foster Open-mindedness: Advocate for a development mentality and inspire staff to embrace novel ideas and viewpoints. This may diminish resistance to change and enhance communication.
   c) Enhance Active Listening Proficiencies: Offer instruction on active listening methodologies, including sustaining eye contact, refraining from interruptions, and articulating summaries of the received information.
   d) Recognize and Reward Proficient Communication: Appreciate workers who are honest in their conversation and offer helpful feedback, encouraging others to behave the same way.

For a firm to run without barriers, organizational policy has to be clear and plain, supporting the flow of information so that individuals at all levels understand the whole importance of it. The organizational policy should state unequivocally that the company supports enhancing communication within the company.

Summary

Effective communication is important for the smooth flow of information, but that should not always be stressed. For standard types of information, communicating through the right routes does what it needs to do. Nevertheless, when and if the situation calls for it, this should not be taken into account, and everyone concerned should be made aware that not all situations require a focus on the right routes.

The subject of conversation should also be part of this strategy. This does not mean that the words used in communication should be limited. Instead, the list should only serve as an example, and it should be made clear that the company should decide what the communication is about.

Bangladesh Case Study: Language Barrier at the Chattogram Seaport

Due to poor communication with international merchants, particularly those from China and Myanmar, Bangladesh's main seaport, Chittagong Port, experienced problems receiving products on schedule. Expensive setbacks occurred due to misunderstandings in documentation, clearing customs, and negotiating logistics.

The inability of the port personnel who spoke Bengali and the merchants who spoke Mandarin or Burmese to communicate effectively caused paperwork errors and shipping delays. Workplace tensions escalated due to cultural differences in communication styles.

In order to do the following, the port administration hired professional translators proficient in Bengali, Burmese, and Mandarin. This allowed individuals to communicate with each other more easily while discussions are going on andEnsured accurate translation of shipping documents and contracts.

Intercultural etiquette should be a core competency for all staff members. There will be a 40% reduction in import delays within six months, and less room for error on invoices and customs paperwork. Greater satisfied traders lead to greater business. When dealing with foreign trade, effective communication is crucial. Investing in cultural training and linguistic support can help you overcome operational challenges, leading to more efficient work and better stakeholder interactions.

Discussion Questions
1. What strategies can overcome language barriers in MNCs?
2. Analyze a case where technology solved a physical barrier.

Business Letters

Unit Highlights

- ➢ Forms of written communication
- ➢ Formats of business letters

Technologies Used for Content Delivery

- ❖ BOUTUBE
- ❖ BOU LMS
- ❖ WebTV
- ❖ Web Radio
- ❖ Mobile Technology with MicroSD Card
- ❖ BTV Program
- ❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: The Basics of Business Letters

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Describe the essential components of a professional business letter.
➢ Compare different formats (block, modified block) and their appropriateness.

Introduction

The learners will better understand the relevance, purpose, and successful writing practices by reading this lesson, which reviews business letters.

Meaning of Business Letters

A business letter is a formal written correspondence sent between companies, people, or organizations to transmit messages about corporate operations. Requests, questions, orders, complaints, thanks, and other business-related information may all be sent formally using these letters. Establishing professional contacts and preserving openness between people depend much on business letters.

Example: The vendor might send a business letter to a store to confirm the arrival of goods and give specifics about the package, payment terms, and future sales.

Essential Features of Business Letters

Business letters have specific characteristics that guarantee clarity, professionalism, and efficient communication. These encompass:

- **Clarity:** The language must be plain and unambiguous, eschewing any vagueness. Each idea should be articulated in straightforward and uncomplicated language.
- **Conciseness:** Maintaining brevity while including all essential facts is crucial. Extraneous information should be omitted.
- **Courtesy:** A courteous tone is crucial in professional communication. Politeness must be maintained even while expressing grievances.
- **Correctness:** Grammatical precision, factual integrity, and compliance with relevant legal or organizational standards are essential.
- **Appropriate Formatting/Formality:** A professional arrangement, including regular margins, spacing, and alignment, improves the letter's appearance.
- **Coherent:** The content may flow logically since the structure usually includes an introduction, body, and conclusion.

```
Clarity <--> Conciseness
      \           /
Formality <--> Correctness
       \     /
      Courtesy
```
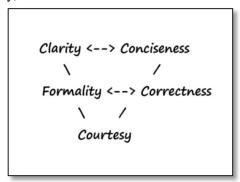
Figure 1: Features of a Business Letter

Example: When writing a complaint letter regarding a defective product, clarity in explaining the defect and politeness in requesting a replacement are key.

Purposes of Business Letters

Business letters are not just a formality—they serve specific purposes that help keep businesses running smoothly. Here are some of their main uses:

- **Making Requests**: Need details about a new product or want to arrange a service? Business letters help you ask for what you need clearly.
- **Sharing Information**: Sometimes, you must formally inform stakeholders about changes or updates, like policy adjustments or new product launches.
- **Building Trust**: A well-crafted letter can strengthen client, partner, or employee relationships.
- **Keeping a Record**: Business letters often become official documents that can be referred back to later, especially in legal or financial matters.

On a general note, the following can be a list of purposes served by business letters:
- To inform;
- To congratulate;
- To enquire;
- To order;
- To request;
- To collect dues;
- To complain;
- To adjust or settle a claim, and
- To sell a product, service, or scheme.

Example: A proposal letter introducing a new service can help a business persuade potential partners to consider a collaboration.

The Functions of a Business Letter

A well-crafted business letter may fulfill several functions, much like a Swiss Army knife! These are listed below:

Informational Function: To apprise the receiver of certain occurrences, modifications, or updates.

Transactional Function: To execute or verify transactions, such as order placements or payment processing.

Legal Function: Business correspondence may be legal proof of communication between parties.

Relationship Development: Cultivating and sustaining professional connections with stakeholders.

Decision-Making: Offering information or insights that aid recipients in making business choices.

Example: A thank-you letter to a client after a successful project can leave a positive impression, encouraging future collaborations.

The Key to Writing a Great Business Letter

Writing a business letter without a plan is like planning a road trip without a map. You need to know your destination before you start. Here is what to consider:

Know Why You are Writing: Ask yourself: what do you want to achieve with this letter? It will guide the content.

Understand Your Audience: Consider who will read your letter; this influences your language and tone.

Organize Your Thoughts: Make a quick list of the points you must cover. It helps avoid missing anything important.

Set the Right Tone: Whether formal or friendly, the tone should match your relationship with the recipient.

Pick a Format: Decide whether you will use a formal block style or a more relaxed format, depending on the situation.

Steps of Planning:

Purpose --> Audience --> Content --> Draft --> Revise

1. Identify Purpose: Understand the reason for writing.
2. Know the Audience: Consider the recipient's background and expectations.
3. Organize Content: Structure the information logically.
4. Draft the Letter: Write a preliminary version.
5. Revise and Edit: Review for clarity, conciseness, and correctness.

Figure 2: Steps of Planning a Business Letter

Example: When drafting a recommendation letter, knowing the recipient's priorities helps you highlight the candidate's most relevant qualities.

How to Write a Business Letter

Here is a straightforward process to ensure your business letter gets the job done:

Step 1: Define Your Purpose: What is the main point you want to communicate? This helps you stay focused.

Step 2: Gather Your Info: Collect documents or details to support your message.

Step 3: Draft an Outline: Include the structure—introduction, body, conclusion—so your thoughts flow smoothly.

Step 4: Write a Rough Draft: Do not worry about perfection yet; get your ideas down.

Step 5: Edit and Refine: Tweak your wording, fix errors, and ensure your tone is appropriate.

Step 6: Format Properly: Use professional formatting so your letter looks polished and ready to impress.

Example: When negotiating a better rate in a service contract, planning your key arguments can make the letter more persuasive.

What Does a Professional Business Letter Look Like?

The structure of a business letter is like a recipe—it needs the right ingredients in the proper order:

Sender's Address: Placed at the top of the letter, including the address and contact details.

Date: The date of writing the letter.

Recipient's Address: The recipient's name, title, and address.

Salutation: A formal greeting such as "Dear Mr./Ms. [Last Name]".

Subject Line: (Optional) A brief line summarizing the letter's purpose.

Body: The main content is typically divided into an introduction, details, and a closing paragraph.

Closing: A formal sign-off, such as "Yours sincerely" or "Best regards."

Signature and Name: The sender's signature and printed name.

Enclosures: (If any) A list of additional documents included with the letter.

Example: A job offer letter will clearly outline the role, salary, and other terms in a structured format, ensuring no confusion.

Different Types of Business Letters

Not all business letters are the same—they come in several types, each with its own purpose:

Inquiry Letters: Perfect when you need more information about a product or service.

Order Letters: Used when placing an order with suppliers.

Complaint Letters: Help express dissatisfaction professionally and seek resolutions.

Adjustment Letters: Written in response to complaints, offering solutions or explanations.

Sales Letters: Designed to promote products or services and attract potential clients.

Employment Letters: This includes job application, offer, and resignation letters.

Recommendation Letters: Written to endorse someone's skills or character for a job or academic opportunity.

Thank-You Letters: Show appreciation for assistance, business, or support.

Example: A complaint letter about a delayed shipment would describe the problem clearly and request prompt action for resolution. A letter proposing a new product to potential distributors would aim to persuade them to carry it.

Summary

A formal written correspondence, a business letter, is sent between companies, individuals, or organizations to communicate information regarding corporate operations. These formal letters may be used to send requests, inquiries, orders, complaints, gratitude, and other business-related information. Business letters are crucial for establishing professional connections and keeping communication open.

Discussions Question

1. What is a business letter? Enumerate the essential features of business letters.
2. Why are business letters essential? Write in detail about the purposes and functions of business letters.
3. Identify and describe the essential components of a business letter.

Lesson 2: The Various Types and Formats of Business Letters

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Evaluate cultural considerations in international business correspondence.

➢ Recognize the process of writing business letters

➢ Understand the essential formats of business correspondence.

Introduction

A business letter is a formal document often used for professional correspondence between organizations, clients, employees, and other stakeholders.

Business letters can be written in various formats, each with a specific structure and style to suit different purposes. Here are the most common formats of business letters:

Block Style Business Letters

The block format is the predominant style for business letters because of its simplicity and professional aesthetic. In this style, all letter components are aligned to the left margin, with no indentations at the commencement of paragraphs. Its parts are:

Sender's Address: Placed at the top of the letter.

Date: Below the sender's address, left-aligned.

Inside Address: Address of the recipient, left-aligned.

Salutation: Example: "Dear Mr. Rahim,"

Body: All paragraphs are aligned to the left without indentations.

Closing: Example: "Sincerely,"

Signature: Typed name with a handwritten signature above.

Enclosures (if applicable): Example: "Enclosures: Resume"

[Your Address]

[Date]

[Recipient's Address]

Dear [Recipient's Name],

I am writing to express my interest in the position...................................
....
....

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Figure 1: Block Style Letter

Modified Block Format

The modified block format is similar to the block format but with a few differences in the placement of certain elements. The date, closing, and signature are right-aligned, while the rest of the letter remains left-aligned. The parts of this letter are:

Sender's Address: Left-aligned.

Date: Right-aligned.

Inside Address: Left-aligned.

Salutation: Left-aligned.

Body: Left-aligned with no paragraph indentations.

Closing and Signature: Right-aligned.

However, two different formats are followed for personal and official letters,respectively. These are demonstrated in the following pages.

- **DS** = Double spacing,
- **SS** = Single spacing, and
- **VS** = Variable Spacing.

```
                          Modified block (personal letter)
                                    }1-2 1/2"
                                 234 Blake Road
                                 Yourtown, VA 12345
                                 February 27,200-


                          }variable spacing acceptable
Mr. Thomas Huffhines
Customer Relations Department        }SS
XYZ Company
678 Morris Avenue
Riverview, MA 91011
            }DS
Dear Mr. Huffhines:
            }DS
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
            }DS
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
            }DS
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
            }DS
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
            }DS
                                      Sincerely,
                  four blank lines}
                                      Lisa Wilson
```

Figure 1: Modified Block Style (Personal) Letter

```
                    Modified Block (business letter)
                           XYZ CORPORATION
                         6789 Broadway Avenue
                         Kansas City, MO 34567
                           (234)555-8910
            }DS

                                            July 20,200-
            }variable spacing acceptable
Ms. Melanie Wadsworth
Assistant Manager
ABC Publishing }SS
234 Zoar Street
Mytown, NM 10111
            }DS
Subject: New Brochures for Public Relations Department
            }DS
Dear Ms. Wadsworth:
            }DS
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
            }DS
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
             }DS
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
            }DS
                                          Cordially,

              }four blank lines

                                          Laura Blessing
                                          Manager
            }DS
Enclosure
            }DS
LB: geek
```

Figure 2: Modified Block Style Business Letter

Semi-Block Format (Indented)

The semi-block or indented format is less common but more traditional. Each paragraph is indented in this style, and the date and closing are right-aligned, similar to the modified block format. Its structure is outlined as follows:

Sender's Address: Left-aligned.

Date: Right-aligned.

Inside Address: Left-aligned.

Salutation: Left-aligned.

Body: Each paragraph is indented.

Closing and Signature: Right-aligned.

Let us have a look at one such letter:

[Your Address]

        [Date]

[Recipient's Address]

Dear [Recipient's Name],

    I am writing to express my interest in the position...

Thank you for your consideration.

      Sincerely,

      [Your Name]

Figure 3: Semi-Block Style Letter (Indented)

Full Block Format

The full block format is a variation of the block style, with a key difference that a blank line separates the paragraphs. This helps improve readability by adding more white space between letter sections. Uses of this format can be found both in personal and business communication. This type of letter maintains the following structure:

Sender's Address: Left-aligned.

Date: Left-aligned, with a space after the address.

Inside Address: Left-aligned with a space above and below.

Salutation: Left-aligned.

Body: Left-aligned with a space between paragraphs.

Closing: Left-aligned.

Signature: Typed name with a handwritten signature above.

The demonstrations of the letters are as follows:

Full Block (Personal letter)

}1-21/2"

234 Blake Road
Yourtown, VA 12345
February 27,200-

}variable spacing acceptable

Mr. Thomas Huffhines
Customer Relations Department   }SS
XYZ Company
678 Morris Avenue
Riverview, MA 91011

}DS

Dear Mr. Huffhines:

}DS

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

}DS

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

}DS

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

}DS

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

}DS

Sincerely,

}four blank lines

Lisa Wilson

Figure 4: Full Block Style Personal Letter

Full Block (Business letter)

XYZ CORPORATION

6789 Broadway Avenue

Kansas City, MO 34567

(234) 555-8910

                    }DS

July 20,200-

                        }variable spacing acceptable

Ms. Melanie Wadsworth

Assistant Manager

ABC Publishing }SS

234 Zoar Street

Mytown, NM 10111

                    }DS

Subject: New Brochures for Public Relations Department

                    }DS

Dear Ms. Wadsworth:

                    }DS

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

                    }DS

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

                    }DS

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

                    }DS

Cordially,

                        }four blank lines

Laura Blessing

Manager

                    }DS

Enclosure

                    }DS

LB: geek

Figure 5: Full Block Style Business Letter

Simplified Format

The simplified format is often used for brevity and modernity, omitting the salutation and the complimentary close. This format is particularly suitable for internal memos or when communicating with an unknown recipient. The structure of this one is:

Sender's Address: Left-aligned.

Date: Left-aligned.

Inside Address: Left-aligned.

Subject Line: Replace the salutation, stating the purpose of the letter.

Body: Left-aligned without indentation.

Signature: Left-aligned without a closing line.

[Your Address]

[Date]

[Recipient's Address]

Subject: Application for the Position of Marketing Manager

I am writing to express my interest in the position...

[Your Name]

Figure 6: Simplified Format or Memo

Administrative Management Society (AMS) Style

The AMS style is another format with a focus on simplicity. It omits the salutation and complimentary close, and it uses a subject line in uppercase letters to introduce the topic of the letter.

Sender's Address: Left-aligned.

Date: Left-aligned.

Inside Address: Left-aligned.

Subject Line: In uppercase.

Body: Left-aligned without indentations.

Signature: Typed name with a signature.

```
[Your Address]

[Date]


[Recipient's Address]


SUBJECT: APPLICATION FOR MARKETING MANAGER POSITION


I am writing to express my interest in the position...


[Your Name]
```

Figure7: Administrative Management Society Style

Business Letter Formats at a Glance

Table 1: Summary Business Letter Formats

Format	Alignment	Paragraphs	Salutation	Closing	Usage
Block	Left	Not indented	Yes	Yes	Most common, professional
Modified Block	Left/Right	Not indented	Yes	Yes	Formal but slightly less rigid
Semi-Block	Indented	Indented	Yes	Yes	Traditional, less common
Full Block	Left	Space between paragraphs	Yes	Yes	Easier readability
Simplified	Left	Not indented	No	No	Internal memos, brief communications
AMS	Left	Not indented	No, but with the subject line	No	Brief and direct

Summary

Each format has specific applications contingent upon the situation, audience, and intended tone of communication. Comprehending these formats enables professionals to choose the most appropriate style for their communication, assuring clarity and professionalism.

Discussion Questions

1. Mention the various types of business letters and demonstrate how they are written.

Job Letters

8

Unit Highlights
- ➢ Job letters
- ➢ Fields and application of various business correspondence

Technologies Used for Content Delivery
- ❖ BOUTUBE
- ❖ BOU LMS
- ❖ WebTV
- ❖ Web Radio
- ❖ Mobile Technology with MicroSD Card
- ❖ BTV Program
- ❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: Job Letters

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Structure a winning resume tailored to a specific job description.

➢ Draft a cover letter highlighting skills and aligning with the employer's needs.

Introduction

Written to secure employment, respond to job opportunities, or maintain professional communication during a recruitment process, job letters are formal correspondences. These letters are essential for establishing a favorable impression on prospective employers and demonstrating the applicant's qualifications for a specific position. They encompass job application letters, cover letters, thank-you letters, acceptance or rejection letters, and resignation letters.

Job Application

A job application is an official letter a person writes to a company to show interest in a particular job. Usually, it comes with a resume or curriculum vitae (CV), the first thing the company sees about the candidate. A job application's primary goal is to present the candidate, show their skills, and persuade the company that they are a good fit. The application should be clear, well-organized, and specific to the work description given by the company.

Types of Application Letters

Application letters can be broadly categorized into two types:

1. **Solicited Application Letters**: These are written in response to a specific job advertisement or vacancy announcement. The applicant writes this letter when they know that a position is available, and they meet the specified requirements.

   Example: A candidate writing to a company in response to a job advertisement published in a newspaper or on a job portal.

2. **Unsolicited Application Letters**: These are written when no job opening has been advertised, but the applicant is seeking employment opportunities with a particular organization. It is often referred to as a letter of inquiry, as it seeks to explore potential job openings.

   Example: A candidate reaching out to a company they admire, offering their services, and expressing interest in being considered for future opportunities.

Methods of Writing Job Application Letters

Writing an effective job application letter requires attention to detail, clarity, and a focus on the employer's needs. The methods of crafting such letters include:

1. **Tailoring the Content to the Job Description**: The application should align with the job requirements mentioned in the advertisement. This includes highlighting relevant skills, experiences, and qualifications that match the role.

2. **Using a Formal Tone and Structure**: A job application letter should maintain a formal tone throughout. It should follow a conventional structure that includes an introduction, a body where qualifications and experiences are discussed, and a conclusion expressing eagerness for an interview.

3. **Highlighting Achievements**: Specific and measurable accomplishments should be emphasized, such as successful projects, awards, or leadership roles, to make the application stand out.

4. **Conveying Enthusiasm and Interest**: The letter should reflect genuine interest in the role and the company, showcasing why the candidate is excited about the opportunity.

5. **Proofreading and Editing**: Grammar, spelling, and punctuation accuracyare critical. A well-edited letter demonstrates professionalism and attention to detail.

The Forms and Contents of Job Application Letters

A job application letter typically consists of the following elements:

Sender's Address: The applicant's address is at the top of the letter, providing contact information.

Date: The date the letter is written follows the sender's address.

Employer's Address: This includes the name, title, and address of the recipient, typically the hiring manager or HR department.

Salutation: A formal greeting, such as "Dear Mr./MS [Last Name]" is used.

Introduction: A brief paragraph where the applicant introduces themselves and mentions the job they are applying for.

Body: This section is divided into paragraphs that detail the applicant's qualifications, experience, skills, and why they are a good fit for the position. It should include examples that demonstrate competencies relevant to the job.

Conclusion: A closing paragraph reiterates the applicant's interest in the position, their availability for an interview, and a polite request for further communication.

Signature: The letter ends with a formal closing, such as "Sincerely" or "Yours faithfully," followed by the applicant's signature and printed name.

The Resume

What is a Resume?

A resume is a formal document that offers a succinct summary of an individual's professional biography, which includes their education, work experience, skills, and accomplishments. It is frequently employed to submit applications for employment opportunities and is customized to emphasize the qualifications pertinent to the particular position.

Process of Construction of Resume:

Choosing the Appropriate Format: Common formats include chronological (listing work experience in reverse order), functional (focusing on skills and competencies), and combination (a mix of both). The choice depends on the applicant's career history.

Contact Information: Includes the applicant's full name, phone number, email address, and LinkedIn profile or portfolio link if relevant.

Professional Summary: A summary or objective statement that outlines the applicant's key qualifications and career goals.

Work Experience: Lists previous job roles, company names, dates of employment, and key responsibilities or achievements in each role. Quantifiable achievements are preferred.

Education: Details of academic qualifications, including the institution's name, degree obtained, and graduation date.

Skills: Highlights relevant skills such as technical abilities, language proficiencies, or soft skills that align with the job requirements.

Additional Sections: Depending on the role, this may include certifications, awards, volunteer experience, or projects.

Bio-Data:

What is a Bio-Data? Bio-data, or biographical data, is a document that provides detailed personal information about an individual, such as their age, gender, marital status, nationality, and contact details, along with academic qualifications and work history. It is often used in job applications, particularly in countries like India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

Process of Construction of Bio-Data:

Personal Details: Includes full name, father's or spouse's name, date of birth, gender, marital status, nationality, and contact information.

Educational Background: Lists academic qualifications with details such as the name of institutions, years attended, and grades or degrees obtained.

Work Experience: A summary of past job roles, including job titles, company names, and employment dates.

Hobbies and Interests: Optional but can be included to give a well-rounded impression of the candidate.

References: Names and contact details of individuals who can vouch for the candidate's character and qualifications.

Curriculum Vitae:

What is a Curriculum Vitae? A Curriculum Vitae (CV) is a comprehensive document that outlines an individual's educational background, academic achievements, work history, publications, research, and other accomplishments in detail. It is often used when applying for academic, research, or professional positions that require extensive documentation of one's career.

Process of Construction of Curriculum Vitae:

Contact Information: The CV starts with the applicant's name, address, phone number, and email.

Professional Summary or Objective: A short section summarizing the candidate's career highlights and goals.

Academic Background: A detailed account of the applicant's education, including degrees obtained, institutions attended, and significant academic achievements.

Professional Experience: An in-depth listing of previous employment, detailing responsibilities and achievements, particularly those relevant to the role.

Research and Publications: Includes details of any research projects, published papers, articles, or conference presentations.

Certifications and Training: Highlights any professional certifications, workshops, or training sessions attended.

Awards and Honors: A section for academic or professional recognitions that the candidate has received.

References: Typically includes academic or professional references that can provide recommendations for the candidate.

Constructing Your Resume:

Envision yourself auditioning for a role in a renowned film. You exert maximum effort during your audition, achieving all objectives and presenting an exceptional performance. Consider your résumé as your audition for employment. Choose the résumé format that most appropriately aligns with the position you are pursuing.

The predominant or favored kind of résumé is the chronological résumé. This résumé is organized by presenting job experience, beginning with the most recent position. A chronological résumé emphasizes education and experience, illustrating an applicant's development and advancement throughout their career.

A functional résumé emphasizes skills and achievements rather than career history. This résumé format is intended for persons with job gaps, those pursuing full-time positions, or those re-entering the workforce after a hiatus. Functional résumés include the same information as chronological résumés. However, arranged differently.

As technology evolves, so does the method by which corporations get information about new employees. *Video résumés* represent an integral aspect of the future, allowing prospective employers to see and listen to candidates in their natural surroundings. This résumé format requires you to elaborate on the elements, specifically discussing your professional experience, skills, and competencies. This also provides the prospective employer insight into your communication abilities.

Summarizing the Characteristics of Resume, Bio-Data, and Curriculum Vitae

Let us now look at the characteristics of all three types of these documents in a tabular form. This will assist us in getting a clear understanding of them.

Table 2:Summarizing the Characteristics of Resumes, Bio-Data, and Curriculum Vitae

Aspect	Resume	Bio-data	Curriculum Vitae (CV)
Definition	A brief document summarizing professional experience, education, skills, and qualifications.	A detailed biographical document includes personal information, educational background, work history, and more.	A comprehensive document that details academic achievements, professional experience, research, publications, and qualifications.
Length	1-2 pages. Focused on being concise.	It can be more than 2 pages, including detailed personal information.	2-5 pages or more, depending on experience and achievements.
Focus	Emphasizes skills, professional experience, and achievements relevant to a specific job.	Emphasizes personal information like name, age, gender, nationality, family background, education, and experience.	Emphasizes academic qualifications, research work, publications, and detailed professional experience.
Usage	Commonly used for applying to jobs in the private sector. Suitable for most job applications.	Often used in government jobs, marriage proposals, or any application where detailed personal information is required.	Commonly used in academic, research, education, and scientific fields for teaching and research positions.
Customization	Tailored for each job application based on relevant skills and experience.	It is not typically tailored for specific job applications.	It can be updated periodically with new academic or research achievements.
Contents	Includes a summary, professional experience, education, skills, and certifications.	Personal details (like date of birth, nationality), education, work experience, and hobbies.	Includes detailed education, research experience, academic honors, publications, grants, conferences, and professional memberships.
Relevance	For candidates with experience or those focusing on industry-specific skills.	Suitable for fresher candidates or those applying where personal background is crucial.	For professionals with extensive academic or research backgrounds.
Primary Audience	Private companies, HR professionals, and recruiters in the corporate sector.	Traditional recruiters, government agencies, and matrimonial contexts.	Academic institutions, research organizations, universities, and educational institutes.

This table highlights the key distinctions between a resume, biodata, and curriculum vitae, helping to choose the appropriate format based on context and purpose.

Types of Application Letters

When applying for a job, a school, or any other opportunity that requires official requests, candidates employ application forms to express their interest. Different application formats serve specific functions and have distinct tones and structures. Each format is described in full below:

1. Job Application Letter

A job applicant uses this to express interest in a specific job opening. It introduces the applicant, provides context for their resume, and highlights their suitability for the position.

- **Format**: Typically follows a formal letter structure:
  - **Introduction**: Briefly state the position being applied for and where the job was advertised.
  - **Body**: Describe relevant skills, qualifications, and work experience, and how they align with the job requirements. This section may include a few achievements or experiences to showcase the applicant's fit for the role.
  - **Conclusion**: Express eagerness for an interview and provide contact information. Close with a polite remark like "Sincerely" or "Yours faithfully."

Example: A marketing professional applying for a marketing manager position would include specific skills like digital marketing, campaign management, and team leadership experience.

2. Cover Letter

The objective of the cover letter is to facilitate the acquisition of an interview. The résumé emphasizes previous employment, but the cover letter concentrates on future aspirations. This paper highlights your credentials, demonstrates your written communication abilities, and requests an interview. Your primary responsibility is to convey to your prospective employer the additional qualifications you can provide for the desired role. The style of this letter depends on the formality of the situation or the firm's culture, as well as the pattern of the Resume or CV. It is similar to a job application letter but often more detailed. Acover letter accompanies a resume or curriculum vitae and offers an opportunity to present one's professional story in a narrative form.

Format: A standard formal letter structure is used:

- **Introduction**: Start by mentioning the role you are applying for and how you learned about it.
- **Body**: Focuses on how the applicant's experience and skills match the job requirements. This part provides a narrative of career progression, significant achievements, and specific projects.
- **Conclusion**: A closing statement that shows interest in discussing the position further during an interview and gratitude for the opportunity.

Example: A software engineer applying to a tech company might include a story about how they contributed to developing a successful application, emphasizing their problem-solving skills.

3. Letter of Intent (LoI) / Statement of Purpose (SoP):

This is used primarily for academic purposes or research positions, and this letter expresses the applicant's intent to pursue a program, scholarship, or research project. It can also be used

when applying for a job to express interest in joining a company, even if no specific opening is available.

- **Format**: Typically follows an essay-like structure rather than a formal letter:
  - **Introduction**: The applicant's brief background and interest in the program or position.
  - **Body**: Detailed explanation of academic background, research interests, future goals, and how the program aligns with their aspirations.
  - **Conclusion**: Conclude by expressing enthusiasm for the opportunity and how it fits into long-term goals.

Example: An applicant for a master's program in economics would highlight their interest in economic research, past research projects, and how the program's curriculum will help them achieve their academic goals.

4. Email Application:

With the shift to digital communication, email applications are widely used for job applications, especially when applying directly to employers or responding to job postings online.

- **Format**: While less formal than traditional letters, an email application should still maintain professionalism:
  - **Subject Line**: Indicate the job position being applied for (e.g., "Application for Marketing Analyst Position").
  - **Introduction**: Address the recipient properly and introduce yourself, mentioning the role you are applying for.
  - **Body**: Summarize key qualifications, skills, and experiences. Attach a resume or CV if required.
  - **Conclusion**: Express hope for a follow-up and provide contact details.

Example: An email from a graphic designer might summarize their experience with various design tools and portfolio links while expressing enthusiasm for a position at a design firm.

5. Speculative Application:

It is also an unsolicited application; this format is used when there is no formal job opening. It is sent by applicants who believe they can contribute to an organization and want to express their interest in being considered for future opportunities.

- **Format**: Similar to a job application letter, but emphasizes the candidate's knowledge of the company:
  - **Introduction**: Clearly state why the candidate is approaching the company and what kind of role they are interested in.
  - **Body**: Highlight skills and experiences that make the candidate a valuable asset, even if a specific role is unavailable.
  - **Conclusion**: Express interest in staying in touch for future opportunities.

Example: A content writer might send a speculative application to a digital marketing agency, emphasizing their experience creating engaging content and understanding the company's voice and brand.

Application for Transfer/Promotion:

Written by employees within an organization who wish to be transferred to another department or apply for a promotion to a higher position.

- **Format**: Generally,it follows a formal letter format:

- **Introduction**: Mention the current position and the role/department to which they wish to transfer or be promoted.
- **Body**: Highlight achievements and contributions in the current role, along with the qualifications or skills that justify the request for transfer or promotion.
- **Conclusion**: Express gratitude for considering the request and readiness to discuss further.

Example: An HR executive may write to the HR head, requesting a transfer to another branch, emphasizing familiarity with the company's policies and readiness to support the new team.

Scholarship Application Letter:

Written by students to apply for scholarships or grants offered by educational institutions or organizations.

- **Format**: It should be detailed yet concise:
  - **Introduction**: State the scholarship being applied for and why it is needed.
  - **Body**: Describe academic achievements, extra-curricular activities, and how the scholarship will support their education and goals.
  - **Conclusion**: Express gratitude for the opportunity and a willingness to provide additional information if needed.

Example: A student applying for a merit-based scholarship might emphasize their academic achievements, community service, and aspirations in their chosen field.

These application formats serve specific purposes and have unique structures tailored to their objectives, ensuring effective communication between applicants and recipients.

Summary

Job letters are professional correspondences used to apply for employment, respond to job vacancies, or communicate with those involved in the hiring process. These letters are crucial for creating a favorable impression on prospective employers and demonstrating candidates' qualifications for a particular position. They include application, cover letters, thank-you, acceptance, rejection, and resignation letters.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do 70% of Bangladeshi graduates' resumes get rejected?
2. Differentiate among Resume, Bio-data, and curriculum vitae. Enumerate their fields and scope of application.
3. When is a good idea to prepare a video resume? What would be in your mind if you were supposed to do so?

Lesson 2: Methods of Writing Application Letters

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Compose effective complaint, inquiry, and sales letters using persuasive language.

➢ Simulate an interview follow-up letter to demonstrate professionalism.

➢ Critique common mistakes in job applications (e.g., generic resumes, typos).

➢ Compose effective complaint, inquiry, and sales letters using persuasive language.

Introduction

A well-written cover letter should clearly and formally explain your interests, expertise, and skills. Using the correct methods and format in this letter is important because it is often the first thing an employer or institute sees about you.

Methods of Application Letter Writing

The following are the most important and well-detailed ways to write application letters:

1. **Understand the Purpose of the Application Letter**

   - **Job Application Letter**: Tailored to show how your qualifications align with the requirements of a specific job. It should highlight key skills and achievements relevant to the position.

   - **Academic Application Letter**: Focuses on qualifications and aspirations related to a particular academic program, scholarship, or research opportunity.

   - **Speculative Application Letter**: Demonstrates interest in working for a company even withouta job posting. It highlights what you bring to the organization.

   - **Transfer/Promotion Application Letter**: Seeks a change in role within an organization, emphasizing contributions and readiness for new responsibilities.

Understanding the purpose ensures that you include the relevant details and approach each letter with the right tone and emphasis.

2. **Research the Recipient and Organization**

   - **Know the Recipient**: If possible, address your letter to a specific person (e.g., the hiring manager, HR director, or department head). Using a name makes your letter more personalized and indicates that you have done your research.

   - **Understand the Organization**: Research the company's or institution's values, goals, and recent developments. Tailor your application to align your skills and experiences with the organization's needs and culture.

   - **Use the Right Tone**: A formal tone is appropriate for most application letters. However, if the company has a more casual culture, you may adopt a slightly more relaxed but still professional tone.

3. **Plan the Structure of the Application Letter:**

A well-structured letter is easier to read and leaves a better impression. The structure typically includes the following sections:

   - **Header/Contact Information**:
     - **Your Contact Information**: Full name, address, phone number, and email.
     - **Date**: The date when you are writing the letter.
     - **Recipient's Information**: Name, position, company name, company address.
   - **Salutation:**
     - Use "Dear [Title] [Last Name]" (e.g., "Dear Mr. Smith" or "Dear Dr. Adams").
     - If you do not know the recipient's name, use "Dear Hiring Manager" or "To Whom It May Concern."

4. Write a Strong Introduction:

The introduction should be concise and explicitly state your purpose. It should include:

- **The Position or Opportunity**: Clearly state the job or opportunity you are applying for, including where you found the posting.
- **A Brief Summary of Your Qualifications**: Include a line or two that briefly highlights why you are an ideal candidate.

Example:

"I am writing to apply for the Marketing Manager position at XYZ Corporation, as advertised on your website. I am well-suited for this role with over five years of experience in digital marketing and a proven track record of successful campaigns."

5. Develop the Body of the Letter:

The body is where you expand on your qualifications and show how they match the needs of the role or program. Typically, it includes 1-2 paragraphs:

- **Highlight Relevant Skills and Achievements**: Focus on your most relevant skills and experiences, relating them to the requirements mentioned in the job or program description. Use specific examples to demonstrate your achievements.

Example: "In my previous role as a Digital Marketing Specialist at ABC Ltd., I led a team that increased website traffic by 40% within six months through targeted social media campaigns and SEO strategies. This experience has equipped me with the analytical skills and creativity needed for the Marketing Manager role at XYZ Corporation."

- **Showcase Your Motivation**: Explain why you are interested in the position or program. Align your goals with the organization's mission or highlight your enthusiasm for the role.

Example: "I am particularly excited about the opportunity to work with XYZ Corporation because of its innovative approach to digital marketing and a strong commitment to community engagement."

6. Craft a Convincing Conclusion:

- **Express Your Eagerness for the Next Step**: Indicate that you look forward to discussing your application further in an interview; this demonstrates your enthusiasm for the opportunity.
- **Thank the Reader**: Express appreciation for the recipient's time and consideration.

Example:

"I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how my skills align with the needs of your team in more detail. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to the possibility of contributing to XYZ Corporation."

7. Use a Professional Closing:

- End with a formal closing like "Sincerely," "Yours truly," or "Respectfully," followed by your full name.
- Leave a few spaces between the closing and your name if you plan to add a handwritten signature.

8. Attach Relevant Documents Properly:

- You have attached your resume, curriculum vitae (CV), or other required documents (e.g., portfolio, reference letters).
- Example: "Enclosed: Resume, Portfolio"

9. Proofread for Errors:

- Check for grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes. Even minor errors can create a negative impression.

- Examine the letter aloud or ask a trusted friend to review it; this helps ensure clarity and professionalism.
- Ensure that the letter is not too lengthy. Aim for 3-4 paragraphs on one page.

10. **Formatting Tips for a Professional Appearance:**
- **Use Standard Fonts**: Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri in 10–12-point size.
- **Align Text Left**: It gives a clean, professional look.
- **Spacing**: Use single spacing within paragraphs and a space between paragraphs to enhance readability.
- **Margins**: Use standard 1-inch margins around the letter.

11. **Customize for Each Application:**
- Avoid using a generic letter for all applications. Customize each letter to reflect the specific requirements and values of the organization or program you are applying for.
- Example: If applying for a teaching position, emphasize your classroom management skills and experience in creating engaging lesson plans.

12. **Follow-Up After Sending the Application:**
- If you have not received a response within a week or two, following up with a polite email or phone call reaffirming your interest in the position or opportunity is acceptable.
- Example: "I recently applied for the [Job Title] position at [Company Name] and wanted to follow up to see if there are any updates regarding the selection process."

By following these methods, you can create an application letter that effectively presents your qualifications and shows your enthusiasm for the role or opportunity. Tailoring your letter to the specific job or academic program makes it more impactful and increases your chances of moving forward in the selection process.

Specimens of Various Business Letters

For business correspondence to run smoothly, diverse types of letters are indispensable. Each category has two sample letters demonstrating the probable format and content for application letters, interview letters, letters of reference, joining letters, and resignation letters.

Specimens of some of the major types of business letters are provided below for a better understanding of the learners.

Application Letters

Example 1: Application for the Post of Marketing Executive

[Your Address]

Date: [Date]

[Recipient's Name]
[Recipient's Designation]
[Company's Name]
[Company's Address]

Subject: Application for the Position of Marketing Executive

Dear [Recipient's Name],
I am writing to express my interest in the position of Marketing Executive at [Company's Name], as advertised on [Source]. I believe I can contribute effectively to your team with a bachelor's degree in business administration, specializing in Marketing, and over two years of experience in the field.
In my previous role at [Previous Company], I successfully led marketing campaigns that increased product visibility by 20%. I have effective communication and analytical skills and am adept at using digital marketing tools such as Google Analytics and SEO strategies.
I have attached my resume for your review. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my application further.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,
[Your Name]

Example 2: Application for a Teaching Assistant Position

[YourAddress]
Date: [Date]

[Recipient'sName]
[Recipient's Designation]
[Institution's Name]
[Institution's Address]

Subject: Application for the Position of Teaching Assistant

Dear [Recipient's Name],
I am writing to apply for the position of Teaching Assistant in the [Department Name] at [Institution's Name]. I recently completed my master's degree in [Subject] and have experience in tutoring and mentoring undergraduate students.
I assisted professors with grading assignments and leading group discussions during my studies. My research skills and passion for teaching would allow me to effectively support faculty members and students.
I am eager to contribute to [Institution's Name] and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss how my background matches your needs.
Thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Interview Letters

Example 1: Interview Invitation for Junior Accountant Position

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[Company's Letterhead]

Date: [Date]

[Candidate's Name]
[Candidate's Address]

Subject: Interview Invitation for Junior Accountant Position

Dear [Candidate's Name],
Thank you for your application for the Junior Accountant position at [Company's Name]. We are pleased to invite you for an interview to discuss your qualifications and experience further.
The interview is scheduled for [Date] at [Time] at our [Location/Office Address]. Please bring a valid ID, your resume, and any relevant certificates.
We look forward to meeting you and learning more about your suitability for the role. Kindly confirm your attendance by replying to this email or contacting [Contact Number].
Best regards,

[HR Manager's Name]
[Designation]

Specimens of Letters of Recommendation

Example 2: Recommendation for Graduate School Application

[Your Address]

Date: [Date]

To Whom It May Concern,

I highly recommend [Candidate's Name] for admission to your graduate program in [Subject]. I have known [him/her/them] for [Duration] as [his/her/their] professor in [Subject/Department].
[Candidate's Name] has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to [his/her/their] studies and has actively participated in class discussions. [He/She/They] possesses excellent analytical and problem-solving skills, which make [him/her/them] a great candidate for your program.
I am confident that [Candidate's Name] will significantly contribute to your program.
Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Designation]

Example 2: Recommendation for a Job Application

[Your Address]

Date: [Date]

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to recommend [Candidate's Name] for the [Job Position] position at your organization. As [his/her/their] supervisor at [Company Name], I have witnessed [his/her/their] dedication and excellent performance.
[Candidate's Name] has been a key team member, contributing to several successful projects. [He/She/They] is highly organized, reliable, and has a strong work ethic.
I am confident that [Candidate's Name] will be an asset to your team. Please feel free to contact me if you need further information.
Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Designation]
[Contact Information]

Specimens of Joining Letters

Example 1: Joining Letter for a Software Engineer Position

[Your Address]

Date: [Date]

[Recipient's Name]
[Designation]
[Company's Name]
[Company's Address]

Subject: Acceptance of Offer and Joining Date

Dear [Recipient's Name],
I am writing to formally accept the job offer for the position of Software Engineer at [Company's Name]. I am excited to join the team and contribute to the company's growth.
My joining date will be [Joining Date], as discussed.
I look forward to working with the team at [Company's Name] and am eager to make a positive impact.
Thank you for this opportunity.
Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]

Example 2: Joining Letter for a Customer Service Representative

[Your Address]

Date: [Date]

[Recipient's Name]
[Designation]
[Company's Name]
[Company's Address]

Subject: Confirmation of Joining Date

Dear [Recipient's Name],
I am pleased to confirm my acceptance of the position of Customer Service Representative at [Company's Name]. As discussed, I will be joining on [Joining Date].
I appreciate the opportunity and look forward to joining your esteemed organization.
Thank you.
Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Specimens of Resignation Letters

Example 1: Resignation Letter with Notice Period

[Your Address]

Date: [Date]

[Recipient's Name]
[Designation]
[Company's Name]

Subject: Resignation Notice

Dear [Recipient's Name],
I am writing to formally resign from my position as [Your Position] at [Company's Name], effective [Last Working Day, typically 30 days from the date of the letter]. This decision was difficult, but I have decided to pursue a new opportunity that aligns with my career goals.
I will ensure a smooth transition of my responsibilities during the notice period. Thank you for the support and opportunities you have provided me.
Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]

Example 2: Resignation Letter Due to Personal Reasons

> **[Your Address]**
>
> Date: [Date]
>
> **[Recipient's Name]**
> [Designation]
> [Company's Name]
>
> **Subject: Resignation Effective Immediately**
>
> Dear [Recipient's Name],
> I am writing to inform you of my decision to resign from my position as [Your Position] at [Company's Name], effective immediately. Due to unforeseen personal reasons, I am unable to continue in my current role.
> I appreciate the opportunities I have had while working here and am grateful for the support from the team. I hope for a positive future for [Company's Name].
> Sincerely,
>
> [Your Name]

Summary

Modifying these samples following particular requirements and circumstances while ensuring they keep a professional tone is possible.

Bangladesh Case: Resume Workshops Reduce Youth Unemployment in Bangladesh

Bangladesh faces high youth unemployment, with many graduates struggling to secure jobs due to weak resumes and poor interview skills. Despite having qualifications, candidates often fail to present themselves effectively to employers.

A local NGO launched a free resume and interview skills workshop targeting unemployed youth. The program included:

Resume-building sessions (formatting, highlighting skills)

Mock interviews with feedback

Industry-specific guidance (tailoring applications)

After three months, some major shifts were observed among the participants, resulting in:

- 35% increase in job placements among participants.
- Stronger employer feedback on application quality. and
- Higher confidence levels in job seekers.

The principal success factors of this workshop can be listed as:

i. Practical Training – Hands-on resume writing and interview practice.
ii. Employer Insights – Workshops included tips from hiring managers.
iii. Ongoing Support – Follow-up mentorship for sustained improvement.

Simple, targeted training can significantly improve youth employability. Scaling such programs could help reduce Bangladesh's unemployment crisis.

Discussion Questions

1. Prepare your resume and a cover letter to apply for the job of Junior Executive in a corporate house.
2. How should a video resume be structured?

Business Reports

9

Unit Highlights

> ➢ Types and components of business reports
> ➢ Writing a business reports

Technologies Used for Content Delivery
- ❖ BOUTUBE
- ❖ BOU LMS
- ❖ WebTV
- ❖ Web Radio
- ❖ Mobile Technology with Micro SD Card
- ❖ BTV Program
- ❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: Understanding the Basics of Business Reports

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Understand what business reports are and why they are important.
➢ Explain the characteristics and purposes of writing business reports.
➢ Identify the qualities of a good report.

Introduction

Business administrators are frequently obligated to generate diverse types of business reports. In reality, this type of writing can be profitable, and organizations that lack the resources or need to employ a full-time manager seek out business administrators who can perform the task part-time. Consequently, if you have reviewed numerous business reports, you know they are often tedious and unengaging. They lack the necessary communication equilibrium. Although a business report does not allow for the full expression of one's creativity, it is possible to apply the principles of skillful writing to produce a document that is both reader-friendly and effectively conveys the intended message using the underlying spirit.

Business reports sometimes start with an introduction encompassing a brief historical overview and, maybe, the methodology used to get the stated results or items. Typically, readers possess this knowledge beforehand, starting with the conclusion; this may include financial resources, the actions proposed in the report, or a combination of both.

Ensure that statements and suggestions are substantiated by robust information. Historical data and methodologies may serve as supplementary information; however, they often need revision for compatibility. Business readers peruse for the needed facts. Well-crafted headlines and subheadings will direct readers to the relevant sections of the report.If feasible, compose in the first person, assuming the role of a ghostwriter. Eschew the passive voice with great fervor. Despite the prevalence of passive language in the examples provided, use the active voice; the firm will likely like it.

What is a Report?

The Latin word "*Reportare*" signifies "*to carry back*" (Re=Back, Portare=To bear). A Business Report is a *systematic* and *objective* conveyance of *factual* information that fulfills a business objective.

Characteristics of a Business Report

The reports are structured, objective, accurate, purpose-driven, and written in a formal tone, using factual data and professional language. The following are the basic characteristics of a Business Report:

1. Factual Information - Basic ingredients: events, records, and various forms of data.
2. Specific Need - Written to meet a specific need or for a logical reason.
3. Objectivity - Unbiased, reflects a fair approach of the reporter to facts presented.
4. Orderly Presentation - Reports are written in a structured manner.
5. Conventional Form - A report is presented in a more or less conventional form.

Purpose of Reports

A business report is a formal document that provides analysis, information, or recommendations based on researched data. A Business Report gradually aims at:

Informing - Providing information on a particular topic
Analyzing - Examining data and drawing conclusions.
Persuading - Recommending actions based on analysis.
Recording and Recommendation- Documenting events or conditions for future reference.
Combination of any 2 or all of the purposes named above.

Importance of Reports

Writers draft proposals for various purposes, including client products, service promotion, or funding requests. There are some quick ideas and others, long, complicated ones. A proposal may originate from a prospective client external to your organization or internal management; this highlights the significance of company reports and their role in facilitating corporate success.

1 ***Tool for deciding*** - Business reports include periods, projects, and growth histories to track success. Even if you utilize your better memory or annual income to measure your success, report data may be employed for many important purposes. It helps with budget proposals and marketing strategies for the following year. You may also discover which markets you missed and which products are most popular.

2 ***Includes Audit Trail*** - Reports help make decisions and give a paper trail for future reference. (The reports may be saved on a computer instead of piles of paper.) Sales, meetings, strategies, projects, and yearly budget reports are crucial to your company's exclusive   content.
    You will need more than your tax records for a bank loan or firm sale. If you are a single owner, be sure your heirs can access financial paperwork and reports after you die.

3 ***Highlights business strengths and weaknesses*** - Business reports highlight a company's best attributes. Management will require a well-planned strategy that addresses opportunities and obstacles to grow your firm. How can you repair problems without knowing what they are? Regular business reporting and monitoring will provide this knowledge and help you make decisions from raw data.

4 ***Showcases KPIs*** - Reports only assist if they meet the company's needs. Financial and non-financial KPIs should be used together with data analysis. Trends can help plan resources and spot issues. Reporting may also reveal which services, sectors, or consumers earn the most and least money, improving decision-making. Future period estimates and the financial effect of probable possibilities and alterations may be studied, offering immediate financial benefits from reports.

5 ***Reporting Engages Teams*** - Reporting may enhance team morale and productivity while measuring performance. Everyone is encouraged to pursue one aim. Business reports are crucial to the firm's and stakeholders' performance. A financial report detailing the company's present financial position, strategy, and long-term goals is essential to any business plan. Sharing corporate performance information is its purpose.

6. ***Promotes Transparency*** - Financial institutions cannot operate without disclosing all relevant facts. Does the reported cash flow match the actual? Stockholders and prospective supply chain partners constantly inquire. No investor will approach a firm with secret financials. You must report your company's financial condition to grow, acquire sponsors, and raise funds. Stockholders, government agencies, and other

interested parties must receive an annual financial and ownership report from publicly listed companies in several nations.

The firm may attract investors with more regular reporting and more openness. It helps compare and evaluate similar firms.

Essential Qualities of Good Reports

A brief list of the essential qualities of a good business report is enumerated as follows:

i. **Clarity:** Simple to grasp; this helps readers understand the report quickly. Avoid jargon and express goals in plain words.

ii. **Concise:** Summarizes key facts. This conserves reader time and highlights crucial information: bullet points, little repetition, and good summaries.

iii. **Accuracy:** Provides accurate facts; this aids decision-making. Nice reports assist in checking data sources and statistics.

iv. **Facts presented impartially:** when information and details are presented rationally and impartially, it helps build trust and delivers balanced information. Set aside opinions and focus on evidence.

v. **Coherence and Structure:** ensures that each part is connected and contributes to the overall message. Transitions between sections should be smooth, and the relationship between ideas should be clear to the reader. The introduction, body, and conclusion should be well laid out.

vi. **Relevance:** Topic-related information. Helps concentrate and value the report. Align content with report goals and audience requirements.

vii. **Presentation:** Well-organized and attractive. Trustworthy and serious. Fonts, headers, and charts should be consistent.

viii. Timely delivery of current data. Checks information for relevance and action. Use current data and meet deadlines.

ix. **User-friendly:** All readers can comprehend. Facilitates report use by varied audiences—clear headers and summary.

x. **Completeness:** Covers all essentials. Complete decision-making perspective. Assess all crucial elements and analyze them thoroughly.

These traits make a business report effective, trustworthy, and valuable for stakeholders.

Summary

Companies need business reports. Writing for project updates, financial reviews, and market research has to be clear, concise, and compelling. Students learn how to organize their thoughts, eliminate confusion, and adapt their message to different audiences (including managers, clients, and stakeholders) via report writing training.

Companies now make decisions based on facts. Market trends, financial performance, and SWOT analysis are standard parts of reports. Every business needsa person who knows how to work with data. Well-written reports indicate that you can think critically, are competent, and pay attention to detail, which are all important for getting a job. This strategy helps leaders think critically and solve problems, which is what they need.

Business reports are instruments for making decisions, persuading people, and analyzing data. Their mastery provides students with practical abilities in the real world and helps them get jobs.

Discussion Questions

1. What are business reports? What are the characteristics of good business reports?
2. Why do you think business reports are so important?
3. Explain the primary purpose of business reports in organizational decision-making. Provide examples.
4. Compare formal and informal reports in structure, audience, and use cases. When would each be preferred?
5. When is an informal report sufficient?

Lesson 2: Types of Business Reports

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to

➢ Outline the factors or elements essential for writing a business report.
➢ Classify types of reports (informal/formal, analytical/informational) by purpose and audience.
➢ Outline the structure of a formal report (executive summary, findings, recommendations).
➢ Apply data visualization techniques (tables, graphs) to enhance report clarity.

Introduction

Report writing has become an indispensable part of the business world. Certain factors need consideration while preparing a report. These are discussed in a step-by-step manner below:

Determination of Factors/Elements

All reports are prepared because they need to fulfill some requirements or queries. These queries can be termed as problems requiring a solution. Thus, after determining the problems, recognition of the factors is necessary. There can be numerous factors that can be the *subtopics* of the overall *topic*in discussion, e.g., production; sales and promotion; and financial statement. Factors requiring determination may be identified by following appropriate process from the ones mentioned below:

Hypothesis for Problems of the Solution - *Possible explanations of the problem may be the factors in issues that require solutions.*
Problem Statement: *Why have sales issues declined at the Bismillah Store?*
Hypothesis:

➢ Activities of other Competitors.
➢ Economic Changes in the Area.
➢ Merchandising Deficiencies.
➢ Environmental Changes.

Bases of Comparison - *For evaluative problems, the bases for evaluation are the factors.*
e.g., determine whether Company K's new location should be established in cities A, B, or C.

Comparison Bases:
1. Accessibility of Skilled Workforce.
2. Nearness to Market.
3. Transportation Facilities.
4. Availability of Raw Materials, etc.

Interpretation of the Problem

It is possible to see an issue or situation allocated in multiple ways since it is unclear.

Gathering the Information

The measures followed for collecting the necessary information are:
➢ Survey.
➢ Going to a company for information.
➢ Gathering information from reliable sources.
➢ Keep records of the information collected.
  ❖ An authorization letter from the proper authority is often requested to acquire information.

Interpretations of the Findings Made

Here we are judging or vividly discussing the acquired info by dividing them into many groups, considering their varied aspects, and critically thinking about them.

Accepting or Rejecting Acquired Info
- ✓ Going through the acquired info.
- ✓ Accepting necessary data.
- ✓ Rejecting unnecessary data.

Types of Reports

Creating Outline Patterns for a Report

There are 3 possible Outline Patterns. Based on formality, here are the types given below:

Logical Arrangement

Also called Indirect or Inductive Order, data presentation moves from known to unknown issues.

(Form: i) Introducing the Problem,
      ii) Presenting the Facts & Analysis,
      iii) Summing up or deriving a Summary,
      iv) Conclusions Made, and most importantly,
      v) Making Recommendations).

Direct Arrangement

The direct arrangement is also called the Deductive Order. The conclusion is drawn first; facts and analysis later support the decision.

(Form: i) Summary of the topic.
      ii) Conclusions, Decisions, and Recommendations.
      iii) The Facts and Analysis drawn).

Chronological Arrangement

Follows a time pattern. It maybe combined with other orders, too.

(Form: i) Introduction.
      ii) Incidents in the first-time span.
      iii) Situation followed in the next time span.
      iv) Conclusion).

- ❖ Factors involved in these arrangements are:
  - ➢ Time Span.
  - ➢ Date.
  - ➢ Data Collection Time.
  - ➢ Time of Data Implementation.
  - ➢ Time Sequence.

Arranging/Organizing the Report Information

We cannotdraft a report in whatever form we want to or feel like.The contents of a report can generally be organized by: -

1. Conventional System
2. Decimal System and
3. Some other minor Systems.

The Conventional and Decimal Systems are used in making the levels of an outline.
Outlines should usually be written to serve as tables of contents and captions.

Conventional System: -

Generally, official reports, theses, and other documents that carry research-related data are compiled in reports following the conventional format.

I Introduction	A. Purpose		I
	B. Scope		
II Findings	A. Process		II
	B. Primary Data		
	C. Pros & Cons		
III Solutions	A.		III
	B		
	C		
IV Summary	A		IV
	B		
V Conclusion	A		V
	B		

I. A	1. Uses
	2. Origin
I. B	1.
	2.
	3.
I. C	1.
	2.

Table 1: Conventional System.

Decimal System: -

1.0 First level, heading.
1.1 Second level, first part.
1.2 Second level, second part.

       1.2.1 Third level, first part.
       1.2.2 Third level, second part
           1.2.2.1…………………………... etc.

Other Minor Systems: -

i)   Geographical Location System
ii) Quantity Division
iii) Factor-wise Division
iv) Multiple Division System.

Captioning

It is the naming of the various themes focused on in the report are of two major types:

   a) Topic Caption
   b) Talking Caption.

Topic Caption	Production of Company A
Talking Caption	Lag in the supply of machineries, Increasing cost of raw materials Increasing production cost.

Conclusion (of the report)

There are a lot of other subjects that are connected with the writing or preparation of a report. We must never forget that every business report must be written in complete sentences, should not be biased, and must be written in a form matching the understanding level of the reader.

Difference between a Long Report and a Short-Report

Depending on length and formality, reports can be long or short. Thus, there are some variations based on this issue.

Long Report:

A lengthy report is detailed and comprehensive, providing an in-depth analysis of a particular subject or issue. It typically includes multiple sections such as an introduction, methodology, findings, analysis, conclusion, and recommendations. Additionally, long reports often include appendices that contain supplementary materials like charts, graphs, and reference lists, which support the report's content. They are usually used in situations that require thorough examination, such as research reports, annual business reports, feasibility studies, and project proposals. Due to their extensive nature, long reports may range from several pages to hundreds of pages.
Examples: Annual Reports, Fifth Five Year Fiscal Plan.

Short Report:

In contrast, a short report is brief and focused, concisely summarizing key information and findings. It usually aims to convey essential information quickly without delving into excessive detail. A short report often includes only the most critical sections, such as a brief introduction, a summary of findings, and a conclusion or recommendation. It is typically used for internal communication within an organization, such as progress reports, status updates, or summaries of meetings. Short reports are effective for communicating updates or addressing specific questions or issues without overwhelming the reader with information.
Examples: Memo, Medical Reports.

Difference between an Informal and a Formal Report

Based on formality, reports can be divided into two categories. These are Informal and formal reports. These are described below:

Informal Report:

An informal report is less structured compared to a formal report, often adopting a more conversational tone. It is generally used for internal organizational communication, such as memos, emails, or brief updates on specific issues. Informal reports do not require rigid formatting or strict adherence to formal writing conventions. They may include bullet points, short paragraphs, and direct language, making them suitable for sharing quick updates, summaries, or recommendations with colleagues or supervisors. Despite their informal nature, they still need to be clear and focused on communicating the intended message effectively.

To: Team [Team Name]
From: [Your Name]
Date: June 30, 2025
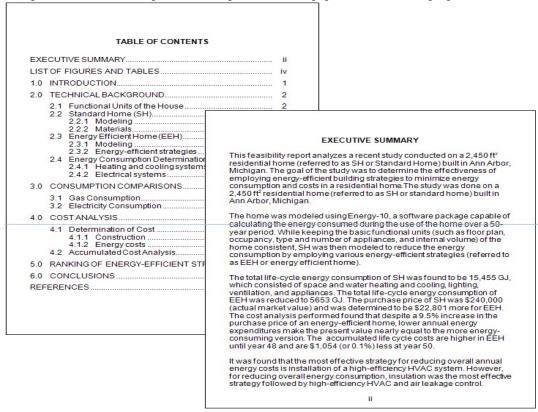*Subject: Reminder: Meeting Tomorrow*

Hey team,

Just a quick reminder about our meeting tomorrow at 10:00 AM in the conference room. We will be discussing the Q3 report and upcoming deadlines.

See you all there!

Figure 1: Example of Informal Communication

Formal Report:

A formal report, on the other hand, follows a structured format and is typically used for official and external communication. It adheres to a standard structure that may include a title page, table of contents, executive summary, detailed body, conclusions, and recommendations. The language used in formal reports is more professional and objective, avoiding personal pronouns and conversational phrases. Formal reports are often prepared for external stakeholders, such as clients, investors, regulatory bodies, or management, and serve to provide detailed analysis, research findings, or recommendations on complex issues. Examples include annual reports, audit reports, research papers, and business proposals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This feasibility report analyzes a recent study conducted on a 2,450 ft² residential home (referred to as SH or Standard Home) built in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The goal of the study was to determine the effectiveness of employing energy-efficient building strategies to minimize energy consumption and costs in a residential home. The study was done on a 2,450 ft² residential home (referred to as SH or standard home) built in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The home was modeled using Energy-10, a software package capable of calculating the energy consumed during the use of the home over a 50-year period. While keeping the basic functional units (such as floor plan, occupancy, type and number of appliances, and internal volume) of the home consistent, SH was then modeled to reduce the energy consumption by employing various energy-efficient strategies (referred to as EEH or energy efficient home).

The total life-cycle energy consumption of SH was found to be 15,455 GJ, which consisted of space and water heating and cooling, lighting, ventilation, and appliances. The total life-cycle energy consumption of EEH was reduced to 5653 GJ. The purchase price of SH was $240,000 (actual market value) and was determined to be $22,801 more for EEH. The cost analysis performed found that despite a 9.5% increase in the purchase price of an energy-efficient home, lower annual energy expenditures make the present value nearly equal to the more energy-consuming version. The accumulated life cycle costs are higher in EEH until year 48 and are $1,054 (or 0.1%) less at year 50.

It was found that the most effective strategy for reducing overall annual energy costs is installation of a high-efficiency HVAC system. However, for reducing overall energy consumption, insulation was the most effective strategy followed by high-efficiency HVAC and air leakage control.

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Figure 2: Example of a Formal Report

Summary

To guarantee professionalism, clarity, and efficient decision-making, business reports adhere to structured formats. The main categories and their structures are as follows:

1. Formal Business Reports

Title Page: Includes report title, author, date, and organization.

Executive Summary: Brief overview of key findings and recommendations.

Table of Contents: Helps navigate lengthy reports.

Introduction: States the purpose, scope, and objectives.

Methodology: Explains data collection and analysis methods.

Findings/Analysis: Presents data with charts, tables, or graphs.

Conclusion & Recommendations: Summarizes insights and suggests actions.

Appendices: Contains supplementary data (e.g., raw surveys).

2. Informal Reports (Memos, Email Updates)

Concise format (no title page or table of contents).

Direct headings (Purpose, Key Points, Action Required).

3. Analytical Reports (Feasibility Studies, SWOT Analysis)

Problem statement → Data analysis → Comparative evaluation → Final recommendation.

4. Progress Reportsare followed through progress reports, which include sections such as Work Completed, Pending Tasks, Challenges, and Next Steps.

5. Technical and research Reports adhere to academic rigor in terms of methodology, results, references, abstract, and literature review.

A well-structured report enhances readability, ensures logical flow, and improves persuasiveness—key skills for business professionals.

Discussion Questions
1. If you were to prepare a report discussion on the reasons behind the increasing price trend of rice, which format of report writing would you choose? Why so? Prepare the report and check if it pertains to the format.

2. How would you format your report in the decimal system? Prepare a demo report and discuss.

3. Differentiate between analytical reports and informational reports. Give one example of each from a Bangladeshi corporate context.

4. What are periodic reports? How do they differ from special reports? Illustrate with examples.

5. Outline the essential sections of a formal business report. Why is an executive summary critical?

6. Explain the role of appendices in a report. What type of information should be included there versus the main body?
   - How can visualization improve report clarity?
   - List and briefly explain five qualities of an effective business report (e.g., clarity, accuracy). How can a report writer ensure objectivity?

Lesson 3: Preparatory Steps to Writing Business Reports

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to

➢ Understand the elementary steps necessary for writing effective business reports.

➢ Identify and deal with the ethical concerns in report writing (e.g., avoiding data manipulation or misrepresentation).

Introduction

Business reports, a critical part of professional communication, are remarkably versatile. They provide decision-makers with organized, factual, and well-analyzed information that supports problem-solving and strategic action. The writing style, format, and structure of a report can be adapted to various situations, organizational requirements, and the purpose it is intended to serve.

For example, a manager writing a short internal progress report will use a different format than a consultant preparing a comprehensive market feasibility report for an external client. Regardless of the type, all effective reports are meticulously prepared following systematic steps, ensuring clarity, accuracy, and credibility. Generally, the writing of a report, the format used, and the steps followed while preparing the report depend on the situation, necessity, and requirements of the report.

Considerations for a Suitable Report Type

Careful consideration is required by a writer before drafting a report on some issues. There are specific considerations for writing or constructing a suitable report. These are:

1. **Objectivity**: To define the objective of the report and concentrate on the reason for writing this report in the first place. It is essential to clearly identify the main objective of the report. How can this be done? One can ask: *Why am I writing this report?* A report written without an accurate objective can become vague and unfocused.

2. **Purpose**: To distinguish the innate purpose of the report. It focuses on why this report is being prepared. Understand the motive if it is meant to inform, persuade, evaluate, or recommend a course of action? For instance, a financial report may primarily *inform*, while a project proposal aims to *persuade*.

3. **Audience**: To tailor the report to the needs and understanding of the audience. The report has to be written in a language, involving explicit levels of details, and constructed maintainingappropriate presentation style of the report suited to its readers. A technical audience may expect detailed graphs and formulas, while executives may prefer summaries, key findings, and visual highlights.

4. **Data Availability**: To ensure that the write-up cover and conveys all the necessary data. A report is only as strong as the data it contains. It is essential to ensure that sufficient, reliable, and verifiable data is available before starting the writing process. Without this, the report risks being incomplete or misleading.

Preparatory Steps to Writing Reports

Writing a high-quality business report requires planning and systematic preparation. The preparatory steps for writing reports are briefly outlined below:

1. **Define the Purpose:** This requires one to understand why the report is being written. Begin by identifying the central purpose of the report. Whether the report is to analyze a problem, evaluate performance, or recommend a solution, the purpose acts as the guiding framework for the entire document.

2. **Gather Information:** For writing a report, it is necessary to collect all the necessary data and information. The writer has to collect relevant data from reliable sources. This may include organizational records, financial statements, survey results, government publications, or expert interviews. At this stage, the writer must remain ethically

responsible—manipulating or omitting data to serve a hidden agenda can severely damage credibility.

3. **Organize the Content:** To give the report a good structure and the readers a better idea, it is essential to create an outline of the report. This calls for to prepare an outline or framework that logically arranges information, and group related data under suitable headings and subheadings. A clear structure enhances readability and ensures that no important detail is overlooked.

4. **Draft the Report:** Before finalizing, it is better to preparean initial draft. This is where you begin writing the first draft based on the outline. Focus on clarity, accuracy, and logical flow rather than perfection at this stage. The aim is to translate ideas and data into a structured document.

5. **Revise and Edit:** Before finalizing the report, it is customary to review and make necessary revisions in it. These can include, review the draft to refine language, correct errors, and improve flow. Then, it comes to editing, which involves checking for consistency in formatting (headings, fonts, numbering) and ensuring that the report is free from bias or ethical concerns.

Essential traits of reports: Two main traits define all kinds of reports are, *firstly*, they use clear, simple, and understandable language; and *secondly*, they demonstrate the significance, worth, and advantages of the goods or services under recommendation.

Types of Business Reports:

Reports can be classified in several ways. Depending on the requirement and situation it evolves from, reports might be categorized as

1. **Informal or Formal**: Informal reports are usually short, conversational, and structured as memoranda, letters, or emails. Whereas, formal reports are longer, highly structured, and follow strict formatting.

2. **Internal or External**: Internal reports are prepared to be used within an organization, while external reports are shared with outside stakeholders (e.g., investors, government bodies, or clients).

3. **Solicited or Unsolicited**: A solicited report is requested by management or an authority. On the contrary, an unsolicited report is prepared voluntarily to highlight an issue or propose a solution.

Example: An informal proposal is a type of short report often written as a memo or letter. Usually, structured as memoranda or letters, informal proposals are brief reports. Despite its brevity, an informal proposal could comprise the following elements:
  i.   an introduction or problem description;
  ii.   relevant background information or a statement of need;
  iii. the proposal benefits and schedule for completion;
  iv.   the staffing requirements;
  v.   a budget estimate or a financial analysis, and
  vi.   a conclusion that might often include an authorization or approval request.

Summary

This unit offers an exhaustive overview of a variety of business communication topics, including formal and informal communication, barriers and strategies for overcoming them, business letters, job letters, and business reports. Definitions, characteristics, examples, and diagrams are included in each section to assist bachelor-level learners in comprehending and implementing effective business communication practices.

Bangladesh Case: Case Study: ADB Interactive Dashboards Win Bangladesh Highway Funding

Successfully obtaining funding for significant infrastructure initiatives necessitates persuasive business communication. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) was able to get the government of Bangladesh to pay for a significant highway upgrade by using interactive dashboards instead of regular reports. This case looks at how strategic communication and data visualization led to the project's acceptance.

The difficulty is data-driven argumentation.

Bangladesh's infrastructure could not keep up with its rapid economic growth, which caused traffic congestion and high shipping costs. The government agreed that expanding highways was vital, but it wanted sufficient evidence of the following: economic advantages (trade growth, GDP effect), social benefits (reduced travel time, job creation), and long-term sustainability (maintenance costs, climate resilience). Static reports with data did not function. ADB has to share its ideas more appealingly.

The solution lies in the use of interactive dashboards.

ADB built dynamic dashboards to provide crucial results so that decision-makers could:
a. Use interactive maps and graphs to look at real-time data that shows traffic patterns and economic projections.
b. Officials may modify costs, tolls, and timetables using sliders to see how these changes affect return on investment.
c. Look at the different situations: Side-by-side pictures showed the results with and without the project.
d. Focus on the advantages for society: Heatmaps highlighted how much time and career possibilities commuters may save.

What Made It Work

- Engagement: Officials might make their case stronger by engaging with the data.
- Clarity: Making decisions was easier since complicated data was made easier to see.
- Persuasion: Real-time simulations made the benefits clear.

Outcome: Acceptance of the Project

 After seeing: Economic returns that were better than expected, the government approved the financing. The project will ensure better commercial opportunities, connections across regions, and significant efficiency and job creation improvements.

Decision-makers would rather have clear, interactive information than reports with much text. Interactivity builds trust, and letting stakeholders look at data increases support.

Align with the priorities of stakeholders.

ADB focused more on the social and economic advantages than on the technical details. ADB's usage of interactive dashboards changed how infrastructure communication works in Bangladesh; this shows that data-driven, eye-catching presentations may be phenomenally successful corporate communication tools.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is proper formatting (e.g., the use of headings, fonts, and numbering) important in business reports? How does it enhance readability?
2. Do you think maintaining proper formatting of a report might ensure professional tone? How?
3. Describe the step-by-step process of preparing a business report, from planning to submission. What challenges might arise during the data collection phase?

Electronic Communication in Modern Business

10

Unit Highlights

➢ Electronic communications

➢ Means and methods of electronic communication

Technologies Used for Content Delivery

❖ BOUTUBE
❖ BOU LMS
❖ WebTV
❖ Web Radio
❖ Mobile Technology with MicroSD Card
❖ BTV Program
❖ Bangladesh Betar Program

Lesson 1: Electronic Communication in Modern Business

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Evaluate the impact of digital tools (email, video conferencing, CRM) on business communication.
➢ Propose cyber security measures for electronic communication in Bangladeshi firms.
➢ Compare AI chatbots vs. human agents in customer service.
➢ Design a social media communication policy for a company.

Introduction

Business reports, a critical part of professional communication, are remarkably versatile. They provide decision-makers with organized, factual, and well-analyzed information that supports problem-solving and strategic action. The writing style, format, and structure of a report can be adapted to various situations, organizational requirements, and the purpose it is intended to serve.

For example, a manager writing a short internal progress report will use a different format than a consultant preparing a comprehensive market feasibility report for an external client. Regardless of the type, all effective reports are meticulously prepared following systematic steps, ensuring clarity, accuracy, and credibility. As digital transformation becomes more common, businesses rely more on electronic communication tools like emails, video conferencing, and AI chatbots. This chapter discusses the pros, cons, and best ways to use them.

The Digital Shift in Business Communication

The rapid adoption of digital tools has fundamentally transformed how organizations communicate both internally and externally. Where face-to-face meetings and paper memos once dominated, today's professionals navigate a complex ecosystem of instant messaging platforms, collaborative workspaces, and automated communication systems. This evolution brings both unprecedented opportunities and new challenges that modern business professionals must master.

Key Advantages of Digital Communication Tools

Enhanced Efficiency: Real-time messaging and video conferencing eliminate geographical barriers, enabling instant collaboration across time zones

Improved Documentation: Digital trails of emails and chat histories provide accountability and reference points

Cost Reduction: Virtual meetings significantly cut travel expenses while maintaining personal connection

24/7 Availability: AI chatbots and automated systems provide constant customer service support

Emerging Challenges

Information Overload: The constant stream of messages can lead to decreased productivity
Security Risks: Increased vulnerability to data breaches and phishing attacks
Depersonalization: Over-reliance on digital tools may weaken interpersonal relationships
Technical Barriers: Not all team members may be equally tech-savvy

Best Practices for Effective Digital Communication

Experts are of the opinion that standard code of conduct should be maintained for attaining fruitfulness in any online communication activity. Some of the more important action lists are as follows:

i. Tool Standardization: Implement organization-wide rules for the selection of platforms based on specific contexts.
ii. Digital Etiquette: Establish protocols for response durations, suitable communication methods, and professional demeanor.
iii. Security Protocols: Establish comprehensive cybersecurity protocols and provide staff training.
iv. Equitable Methodology: Integrate digital tools with regular in-person encounters.

We will do a thorough examination of these technologies, analyzing case studies of successful deployments alongside cautionary examples of digital communication failures. Particular emphasis will be placed on formulating hybrid communication strategies that use technology while maintaining human connection, which is essential in the contemporary digital-centric corporate landscape.

Key Electronic Communication Tools

Since the advent telephone and, later, the Internet, there have been regular shifts in the paraphernalia of communication. Although contextual changes are limited, technological advancements have massively affected the way people, firms, states, as well as other entities communicate these days. Let us have a look at the various tools, usages and contextual examples from Bangladesh.

Table 3 Electronic Tools of Communication and their Usage Situation in Bangladesh

Tool	**Use Case**	**Example in Bangladesh**
Email	Formal documentation, marketing	Daraz's promotional newsletters
Video Calls	Remote meetings, interviews	Grameenphone's Zoom-based HR interviews
Chatbots	24/7 customer support	Pathao's AI helpdesk
Social Media	Brand engagement, crisis management	Aarong's Facebook customer service

Advantages of Electronic Communication

Communication has now become more responsive, time-efficient, economical and, most importantly, effective. An email sent from one part of the world reaches its receiver, residing thousands of miles apart in the blink of an eye. The cost of connectivity across the globe is decreasing or at least reasonable. So, we can list the advantages as:

i. Speed – Instant messaging vs. postal mail.
ii. Cost-Effective – Reduces travel expenses.
iii. Global Reach – Connects multinational teams.

Challenges and Risks

With every possible advancement, merits and demerits walk hand in hand. Some risks and challenges often mar the positive scope of electronic communications. Some of these challenges and risks are:

i. Cybersecurity Threats (e.g., phishing frauds in Bangladeshi banks).

    ii. Over-reliance on Emails – it can cause delays if not monitored.
    iii. Digital Divide – Rural areas may lack internet access.

Best Practices

To stay on the safer side, experts advise using encrypted platforms for confidential information. Use proper antivirus and anti-phishing software. Another way is to use licensed versions of software packages and avoid entry into risky sites.

Maintaining decorum with conducting official as well as personal communication over the internet is also applauded. For example, if you want to respond to emails within twenty-four hours, you need to set a time limit for how long it should take to do so.

On the other end, firms need to train their employees on how to act while they are online so that it does not create any misrepresentation of the organization or hamper the individual's reputation.

Future Trends

It is not far when most of the applications software will start on voice-operated interphase acknowledging the authentication and authorization of the owner or licensee. Iris, facial profile and thumb impressions have already been brought into operation. Nagad's voice-based banking system is one example of AI-powered communication. Internet service providers like Carnival Internet also use voice-operated systems for customer support. Pilot projects in Bangladesh's fintech sector are looking at how blockchain technology may be used to make sure that financial transactions are secure.

The unit will conclude with practical exercises that will assist students in the development of their digital communication competencies, thereby preparing them for the technology-driven workplaces they will soon inhabit. These abilities are no longer merely advantageous; they are indispensable for professional advancement in nearly every sector.

Bangladesh Case Study: Nagad's Digital Revolution

Nagad, a mobile financial service, uses USSD codes and AI chatbots to serve unbanked rural populations. Their voice-based Bangla chatbot increased user adoption by 35% in 2023.

Discussion Questions

1. How can SMEs in Bangladesh adopt cost-effective digital tools?
2. What are the risks of relying solely on WhatsApp for business communication?
3. Compare email and instant messaging in terms of professionalism.

Lesson 2: Electronic Communication in Modern Business

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Gain insight into the ways in which artificial intelligence (AI) and automation are revolutionizing business communication.

➢ Determine the extent of the influence of significant emerging technologies (e.g., ChatGPT, virtual collaboration tools).

➢ Assess the advantages and hazards of AI-driven communication within organizations.

➢ Formulate strategies to acclimate and prosper in the changing digital communication environment.

Introduction

This lesson provides readers with the necessary skills to effectively navigate the rapidly changing business communication landscape, combining the latest technological innovations with traditional human abilities. Artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and sophisticated digital platforms are causing a significant transformation in the field of business communication. Technology is revolutionizing the manner in which organizations interact with one another, both internally and externally. This includes the implementation of AI-powered chatbots to provide customer service and virtual reality (VR) meetings. This course delves into the future of business communication, emphasizing the most significant trends, obstacles, and optimal strategies for maintaining a competitive edge.

How AI and Technology Are Reshaping Business Communication

With the advent of varied technologies and artificial intelligence, it is customary that people will make use of AI-powered communication tools in their day-to-day life. Today, AI is not a futuristic concept anymore—it is already embedded in daily business operations and even personal accomplishments.

It can be noted that the development in this regard is gradually emerging, and innovations are made almost every other day! The more apparent developments are:

a. Chatbots and virtual assistants (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Bard)

b. Automate customer support, FAQs, and internal queries.

c. Reduce response times and improve efficiency.

d. Smart email drafting AND predictive text

e. Tools like Grammarly and Microsoft Copilot refine business writing.

f. AI suggests tone adjustments for better clarity.

g. Real-time language translation (Google Translate)

h. Platforms like Zoom AI Translator break language barriers in global teams.

The Rise of Hybrid and Virtual Collaboration

Since the outbreak of pandemic Covid-19, remote work has become increasingly evident, and people have got a hang of it. It is here to stay, and technology is making it seamless. There are some emerging trends that demand attention. These are:

i. Metaverse Workspaces (e.g., Microsoft Mesh, Meta Horizon Workrooms)
ii. Virtual offices where employees interact via avatars.
iii. Holographic Meetings
iv. Companies like Proto enable 3D hologram presentations for remote teams.
v. AI-Enhanced Video Conferencing
vi. Features like automated meeting summaries (Otter.ai) and sentiment analysis (Zoom IQ).

As there are two sides of a coin, so are there both pros and cons of using AI mobilized communication interphases. Let us now have a sneak pick if these:

Advantages

i. Amplified Efficiency – AI handles repetitive tasks, liberating human staffs.
ii. Enhanced Personalization – AI analyzes data to tailor messages (e.g., marketing emails).
iii. 24/7 Availability – Instant responses can be got from Chatbots at any time of the day.
iv. Data-Driven Insights – AI tracks communication patterns to optimize strategies.

Potential Challenges

i. Loss of Human Touch – Over-reliance on AI may weaken interpersonal connections.
ii. Privacy & Security Risks – AI systems can be vulnerable to data breaches.
iii. Miscommunication Errors – AI may misinterpret context or nuance.
iv. Job Displacement Concerns – Will AI replace human communicators?

Real-life incident: Facebook stop its AI Chatbots:

While the recently invented chatbots of Facebook were being designed and trained by software professional and communications experts, it was shockingly discovered that the bots have developed a newer and unique language to communicate amongst themselves! The chatbots were supposed to assist Facebook users with their queries and problems arising at the different level of using the app.The language was somewhat like English but when the subtexts were read, it seemed gibberish. The experts predicted this might be dangerous for humans as there is no scope of deciphering what the bots were discussing about or to what extent this might end up in the future. Consequently, the operation of chatbot operation was closed sine die.

Lesson learnt: Human supervision and control remain crucial.

Prepare for a Workplace with AI Enhancements

It is high time that we gain knowledge about rapid engineering, specifically how to teach AI tools successfully. To compensate for AI's shortcomings, we can cultivate emotional intelligence (EQ). Although many do not accept the boons of having robots, it might be wise to invent a congenial medium for coexistence between humans and robots. Many modern offices have already resorted to using AI for handling mundane jobs like scheduling and data analysis. However, it is essential to let human communicators handle delicate talks and intricate agreements.

Find Out What's New in Technology

It is imperative to pay attention to how blockchain communication, virtual reality, and generative AI are progressing. Both individuals and organizations should adopt digital collaboration tools and AI ethics.

Subsequently, taking steps fordata protection is also a crying need. The use of AI communication tools must adhere to ICT regulations of the country. Institutions should provide their staff with education on secure data handling procedures.

Summary

Chatbots, smart drafting, and virtual collaboration are all ways that AI is changing how we talk to one other. Hybrid work tech, including the metaverse and holograms, is changing how teams work together.

i. Benefits of AI: Quickness, customization, and growth.
ii. Cons: Privacy issues made it harder for people to interact with one other.
iii. Ways to adapt keep learning, find a balance between AI and human jobs, and put security first.

Discussion Questions

1. How can companies keep a "human touch" when they use AI to talk to customers?
2. What moral issues should businesses think about before using AI chatbots?
3. Will meetings in virtual reality take the role of real-life meetings? Why or why not?
4. In a world where AI is becoming more common, how can professionals make sure their communication skills will still be useful in the future?

For Further reading regarding this topic:

📖 Books:

AI Superpowers – by Kai-Fu Lee, written on AI's societal impact.

The Future of Work – by Darren Murph, based on remote and tech-driven workplaces.

🔗 Articles:

McKinsey's "The State of AI in 2024".

Harvard Business Review's "How to Lead in the Age of AI".

🎧 Podcasts:

"The AI in Business Podcast" (by Emery).

"Work Life with Adam Grant" (on evolving workplace dynamics).