

INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS ENGLISH

1

We spend most of our time communicating — talking, listening, reading and writing. People react you and to your ideas in response to the way you talk, listen and write. So reaching your personal and professional goals depends to a large extent on your ability to communicate orally and in writing. In the present-day world — a global village—most business organisations do not limit their activities within local areas, rather they go for international markets. Therefore, as a (future) business person you need to study **BUSINESS ENGLISH** to develop your writing, talking, reading and listening — the communication skills which will help you to communicate locally as well as internationally. In this unit we introduce the basics of business writing.

School of Business

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UNIT-1

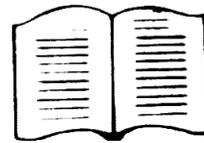
Lesson-1: What is Business writing?

After reading this lesson you will be able to:

- state what communication means
- distinguish between communicating about personal matters and communicating about business matters
- define business writing and
- state main forms for business writing.

Introduction

We are social beings. We often talk or write to our friends, relations or neighbours about various things. We may talk or write to these people about the day-to-day happenings in our life, about our happiness general *well-being* or about anything that concerns our personal life. In other words, we communicate with each other about personal matters.



We communicate with others about personal matters.

Welfare; health and happiness

We also talk or write to many other people who may not be our relations, friends and neighbours. They may be *executives*, managers, salespersons or secretaries. These people do some business. We talk or write to these people for employment, advertising, buying or selling goods or about anything that a business person does for the good of his or her business. In other words, we also communicate with each other about business matters.

Persons holding management position; persons who have authority to carry out decisions, laws, etc. regarding his/her organisation

We communicate with others about business matters.



*Advertisement
Curriculum Vitae
(Vi:tai) - brief
written account of
one's education,
employment, work
experience, etc.*

ACTIVITY

Here are some situations in which you can communicate with people either about personal matters or about business matters. Write PM for a situation about personal matters and BM for a situation about business matters.

1. Arif sends an invitation asking his friend Shafiq to attend his sister's wedding.
2. A TV **ad**: If you are a young, energetic man or woman with a Master's degree in any social science, why don't you send your **CV** with your contact phone number? We have a vacancy for a challenging job. Attractive salary (Address).
3. On the Phone :
 - Afrin : I'm sorry to hear that you hurt your leg in a road accident. How is it now?
 - Kaiser : Oh, not so bad! I'm better now. Thanks for calling.
4. At a shop :
 - Arshad : How much is this watch?
 - Shanta : 400 Taka.
5. In a letter : I am applying for the post of Asstt. Cashier in your bank.
6. In a Party :
 - Salma : Nice shirt!
 - Munir : Thank you.
 - Salma : Where did you buy it from?
 - Munir : There's a sale at Metro Super. It's quite cheap.
7. Mr. Ahmed : I'd like a report on the progress so far of the construction work of the bridge. Could you do it with as much detail as possible, please?
 - Sonia : Sure. when do you need it, sir?
 - Mr. Ahmed : As soon as you can.
8. Jaasuil : Let's go to the International Fair this evening.
 - Masud : Sorry, I've been there once. I'm going to watch **My Fair Lady** on the video.
9. A notice : A meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at the Conference Room on 25 May at 1.30 p.m. Please attend the meeting.
10. Man 1 : You look strong and fit. Why do you beg? Director (Admn.)
 - Man 2 : What shall I do? I look for work almost every day from morning till night, but - no luck!

Business English is a part of Business Communication, so before understanding Business English, the term Business Communication should be clarified. Business Communication uses two words together

*Business English
a part of Business
Communication*

"business" and "communication." Business as defined by the **American Heritage Dictionary** is "(1) The occupation, work, or trade in which a person is engaged; (2) Commercial, industrial or professional dealings: the buying and selling of commodities or services; (3) Any commercial establishment; (4) Volume or amount of commercial trade; commercial policy or practice." By adding these definitions to the word communication, Business communication can be defined as "transmitting of information in connection with an occupation or the conduct of commerce." In other words "flow of information which takes place within a business environment is called business communication.

Broadly communication is of two types:

- Oral or Verbal
- Written or Non-verbal.

Business people work in business organisations like firms, factories, shops, offices, etc. They often write to people within their organisations, and to people outside their organisations. And in return, they get replies in writing from those people. All this writing about business matters is business writing. Business writing is part of written communication.

Business writing is part of written communication.

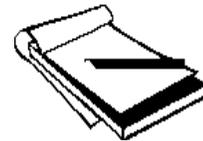
Writing about business matters is business writing.

ACTIVITY

Read the passage silently and answer the questions that follow.

Ms. Daisy Rahman is managing director of a fashion designing firm of international standards. This summer the firm is going to launch a sales campaign for a new frilly white and blue dress. Ms. Rahman asked her secretary to call a meeting of the Heads of Public Relations, Production, Sales, Personnel and Training Divisions. The meeting mainly discussed three things in detail: The production cost, price and the sales promotion, and took the following steps:

- (a) Train the sales persons.
- (b) Advertise in newspapers for 3 models
- (c) Arrange a TV fashion show with the selected models.
- (d) Arrange with the important clothes shops in the country for the display of the dress.



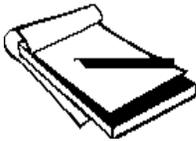
Title used before the name of a woman whether married or unmarried.

In this passage there are a number of situations in which people are needed either to speak or to write to communicate with others. For example, Ms. Daisy Rahman will usually tell or phone her Secretary to call the meeting, but the sales Manager will not usually speak to/phone

the editor of a newspaper, asking him to publish an ad wanting three models. Instead she/he will send the ad in writing for publication.

Now list as many situations as possible in the table below, in which the persons in the passage will usually write to other persons/organisations for communication.

Who will write?	About what?	To whom?
(1) Secretary	Circulating a notice for the meeting	Heads of different divisions
(2)		
(3)		



ACTIVITY

Suppose you are manager of a publishing firm. You are going to hold the publication ceremony of a new book on the future prospects of the Grameen Bank. You think that there will be a great demand for this book in Bangladesh as well as in other developing countries.

Now list five situations in which written communication will usually be used. Mention who will write, what she/he will write about and who she/he will write to.

Functions of Business Writing

Every business message is designed to achieve a specific business objective. Its success depends on what it says and to what extent it induces a favourable response from the reader. Thus, business writing has two functions (1) to inform and (2) to influence.

(1) Informing the Reader

To be effective, a business message must say something important. In order to make certain that it does, you need to gather all the information pertinent to your communication and you must express yourself clearly, accurately and concisely. The message that says little or too much wastes the reader's time and fails to give him/her essential information. So adequate preparation before writing, clear thinking, and exact expression are necessary for effective business communication.

(2) Influencing the Reader

In addition to providing information the business message must also influence the reader's attitudes and action. To secure this, you need to have an adequate knowledge of English language and an understanding of human nature. You must remember no communication is wholly successful unless the reader like it.

No communication is wholly successful unless the reader like it

What form of writing do people in business use?

If you are a business person, you can write **letters** to other business people in or outside your business organisation. You can also write letters to newspapers and journals.

Business people write letters.

You can also write short notes to people within the organisation. These notes are **memos**.

Business people write memos.

You can also write **reports** on various activities of an organisation. Business people write reports for themselves as well as for other business people and organisations.

Business people write reports.

*Memorandums sing:
memorandum short
form : memo.*

*Accounts of or
statements about the
activities of an
organisation or a
person.*

Therefore, common forms of business writing are **letters**, **memos** and **reports**.



ACTIVITY

Read each situation on the left and then write in the box on the right the appropriate name of the form of business writing (i.e., letters, memos or reports).

Situation	form of business writing
1 You want to inform the assistant production manager of the company where you work that the time of the Board meeting has been shifted from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	
2 Some customers have complained in some of the newspapers that, the quality of your products (say, mango chutney) has fallen to a great extent. But in actual fact the chutney they complained about is not the one your company produces - it's a product of a different company. You want to clarify the whole thing.	
3 Your firm has suffered some losses this year you have been asked to write about why it happened and what you can suggest for the remedy.	
4 One Mr. West shows his interest in buying the jute goods your firm is now producing. He wants to know more about the varieties of the goods. You are informing him.	
5 As head of an organisation you want to know about the possibility of a joint venture with a similar organisation.	

Need for Business Writing

The ability to write effectively is a valuable business asset. One reason is that a great deal of business is transacted in writing, so that sooner or later every employee finds it necessary to put ideas on paper. Another reason is that If you are an effective business writer you can use your skill to help increase company's sales and profit by promoting good relations with customers and general public. Another reason is proficiency in writing gives you in business a personal advantage over less capable writers and enhances your self confidence, which is a necessary quality for business success.

Questions for Review

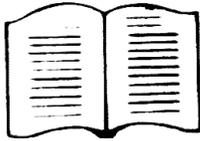
1. What type of Organisation is the firm? (Ans. Business)
2. What does the firm produce?
3. Why does Ms. Rahman ask her Secretary to call a meeting?
4. Who will be asked to attend the meeting?
5. What did the meeting discuss?
6. What steps were taken in the meeting about the newspaper and TV ads?
7. What is business writing? What are its function and why you need it?

Lesson-2: Why should we learn Business English in Bangladesh?

After reading this lesson you will be able to:

- explain the purpose, importance and necessity of learning business English in Bangladesh.

Introduction



If you go to a village market in Bangladesh and ask a vegetable seller: "How much is a kilo of potatoes?" What language will you use? Obviously Bangla. Even if you ask in English, the man might reply '5 Taka' in Bangla. He will do so inferring from context i.e., your pointing to the potatoes, your looking at him and probably a shopping bag in your hand. Even then you should not use English with him in this kind of circumstances, because people here speak Bangla.

If you are talking to a receptionist who is Bangladeshi in an international hotel in Dhaka you can speak to him/her either in English or in Bangla. This is because here guests speak both Bangla and English.

We usually use English for communicating with those who do not understand Bangla.

On the other hand, you are talking or writing to the First Secretary of the British High Commission in Dhaka, for example, about a UK scholarship you have been offered, you have to use English because the secretary is not supposed to understand Bangla. In fact, when you correspond with any foreigners both within and outside the country, you are expected to use English. This is because English is widely known among various nationals. Roughly one in every seven people in the world can speak English.



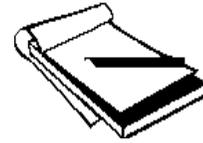
ACTIVITY

1. List 4 persons with their position and organisation, with whom you can speak either in Bangla or in English.
2. List 4 persons with their position and organisation to whom you have to write in English only.

People need to learn Business English to communicate in international business and in employment market.

The present-day world has become a 'global village' mainly because of the overwhelming developments in information and communication technologies. While sitting in your office or home, you can now talk about important business matters over the phone with people across the world. Movement of people and materials between countries has also become easier. All these facilities have made the world a big cosmopolitan village, and hence no country can now afford to be insular. Perhaps, nowhere are these global characteristics felt so strongly as in today's business world. With the telephone, fax, e-mail and transport facilities ready on hand, many organisations are now involved in international business. To facilitate their activities these organisations have to use an international language which is English.

A large illiterate, unemployed population is a big problem for a small country like Bangladesh. But if this huge number of people is turned into skilled manpower many of them will be able to find work in international business and employment markets, thereby increasing their income and hence improving the quality of their life. This could be greatly possible if our people can master communication skills in English. Thus business English can hold out before us great potentials of development, individually as well as nationally.



ACTIVITY

Choose the best answer.

1. The expression 'global village' refers to
 - A. the biggest village
 - B. the whole world
 - C. a developed village
 - D. a small village

2. Because of the modern transportation technologies you can
 - A. talk to people living at a distance over the phone
 - B. watch on TV what is happening thousands of kilometres away
 - C. move fast from one place to another
 - D. travel by train, by plane, and even by cast and boat

3. 'No country now can afford to be insular'
This means:
 - A. Any country can survive without keeping in touch with others
 - B. All countries are now united
 - C. The people of a country live as if in an island
 - D. All countries are interdependent

4. 'Skilled manpower' means
 - A. trained workers
 - B. educated people
 - C. powerful people
 - D. people employed abroad

5. 'Communication skills' help the learners to
 - A. travel aboard
 - B. learn how to speak and write
 - C. find jobs
 - D. become good citizens