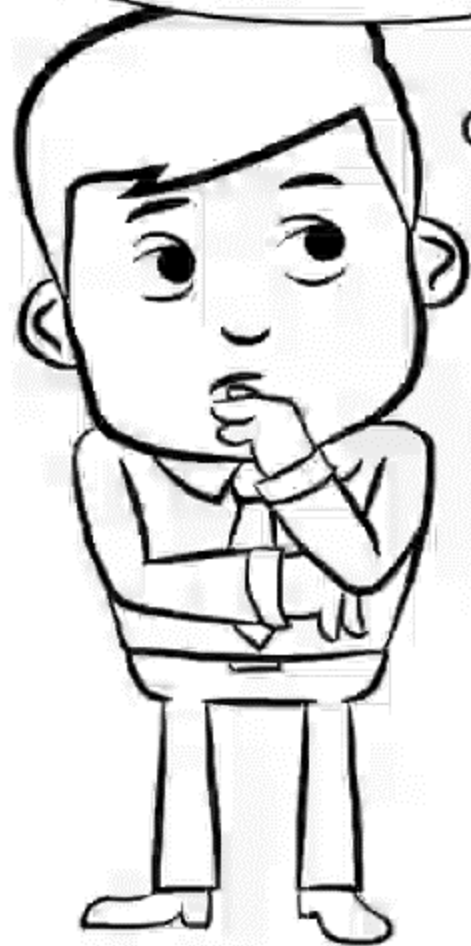


# Soft skills for effective interpersonal communication

**Soft Skills**



# Concept of Soft Skills

- Soft skills are character traits and **interpersonal skills** that characterize a person's relationships with other people.
- In the workplace, soft skills are considered to be a complement to hard skills, which refer to a person's knowledge and occupational skills.
- Sociologists may use the term soft skills to describe a person's emotional intelligence quotient (EQ) as opposed to intelligence quotient (IQ).
- Soft skills have more to do with who people are, rather than what they know. As such, they encompass the character traits that decide how well one interacts with others and usually are a definite part of an individual's personality.
- In a competitive labor market, employees who demonstrate they have a good combination of hard and soft skills often see a greater demand for their services.



HARD  
SKILLS



**For Example** the soft skills required for a teacher would be empathy , understanding the students, good interaction, active listening and so on.

The hard skills necessary for teacher would include good knowledge of the subject.

**For Example,** The soft skills required for a doctor would be empathy, understanding, active listening, and a good bedside manner.

Alternatively, the hard skills necessary for a doctor would include a vast comprehension of illnesses, the ability to interpret test results and symptoms, and a thorough understanding of anatomy and physiology.

**Similarly,** leaders are expected to have good speaking as well as negotiating abilities, but good leaders also are good at listening to workers and to other leaders in their fields.

When negotiating with employees, clients, or associates, leaders need to be skilled in staying considerate of what others want while remaining focused on pushing for what they want.

Good leaders also need to know how to make their own work most efficient by strategically delegating tasks to workers.

## Lesson 1 :

Tips on how to start a business



## Some of the soft skills are: -

- Communication skills – whether the individual has a clarity in speech and in writing, has good listening skills and Public Speaking skills.
- Courtesy- whether the individual has manners, etiquette Ex- He/she is gracious, says please and thank you, and remains respectful to others.
- Flexibility – whether he possesses adaptability i.e. willingness to change, being a lifelong learner, accepting new ideas and things.
- Integrity – whether the individual is honest, ethical and has high morals, whether he has personal values.
- Interpersonal skills – whether he/ she has social skills i.e. warm and friendly nature, sense of humour
- Positive attitude – whether he/she is optimistic, enthusiastic, encouraging , confident
- Responsibility – whether the individual is accountable, reliable, finishes the tasks assigned, is resourceful, self – disciplined.

- Teamwork – whether the individual is cooperative, has team spirit, supportive to others
- Whether the individual has work ethics
- Whether the individual possesses negotiation and conflict resolution skills
- Whether the Individual has leadership skills to influence others
- Whether he/she can manage time effectively in completion of tasks assigned.
- Whether he/she has an appropriate body language
- Professionalism – whether he/she is business-like, is well dressed and keeps a good appearance, remains poised.



**Listening** is the most vital part of communication. If there is no listener there is hardly any point in speaking.

Listening is receiver's ability to listen to the sender properly and decode the message to have clear understanding of ideas, thoughts or information, which sender wants to share.

If the receivers fail to understand the message which has been expressed by the sender, they will also fail in providing a substantial and meaningful response.

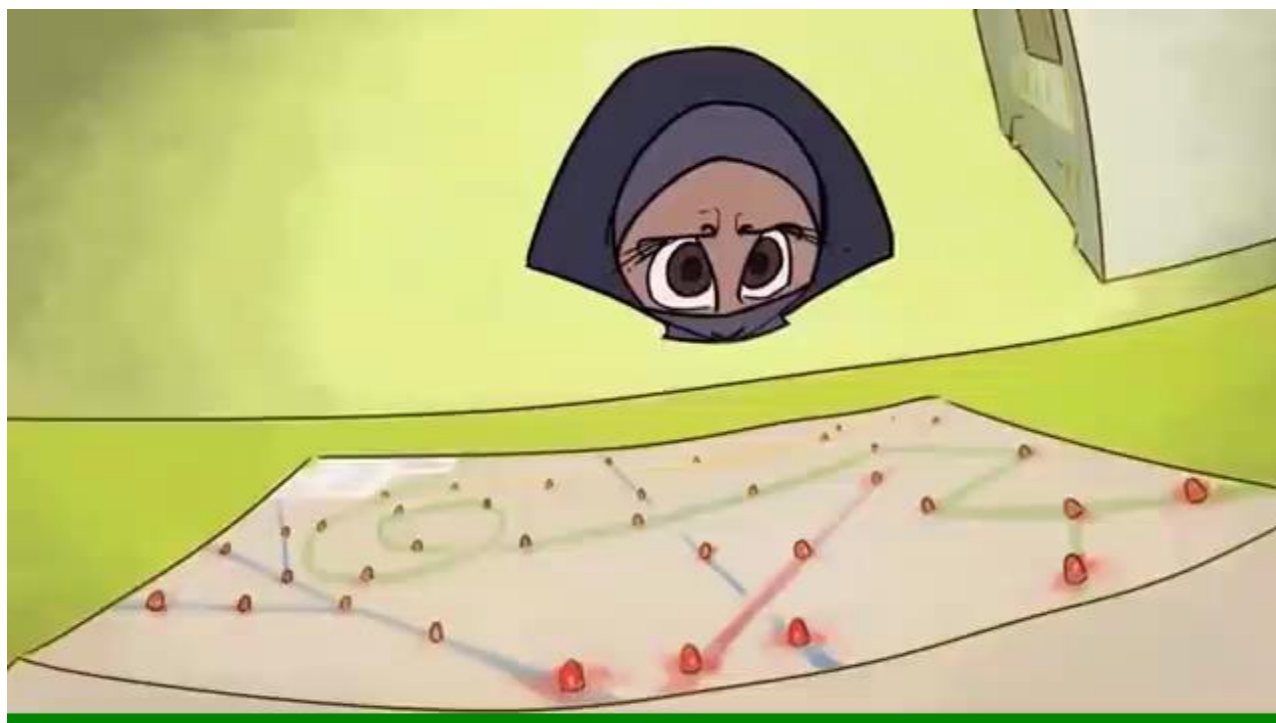
This wrong feedback is the root cause of many arguments, misunderstandings, and worries, at personal or professional life.

Listening is a skill that needs to be practiced. Ability to listen is the most critical skill required in managers and leaders. It provides them with all the information they need.

Listening enables us to participate effectively in discussions and other interactions.

Unless we listen to the points made or views expressed by the other participants in a speech, we would not be able to react rightly and to put forward our views.

In nutshell, Listening means art of understanding others; it helps in climbing the ladder of success and is a great source of wisdom in life.



## **Importance of Listening:**

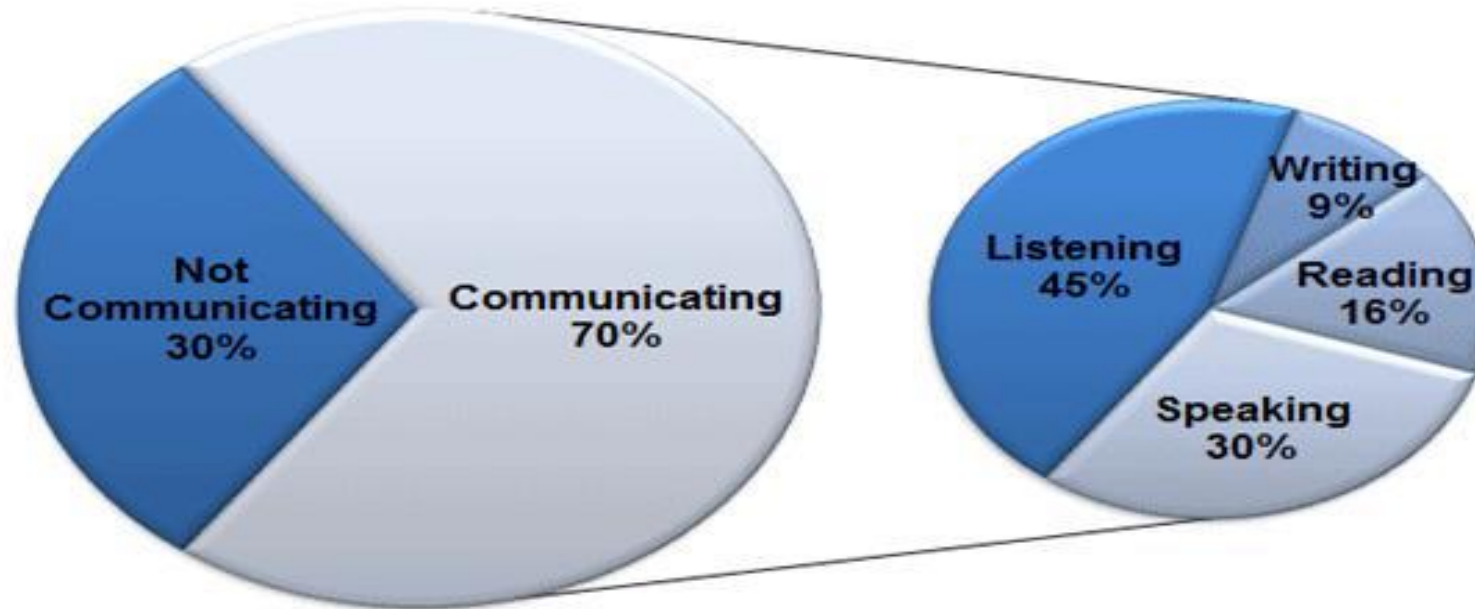
*“Give thy ear to all but your tongue to a few”*

- The Tragic History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark (1.3.71)

- Listening is very important part of everyone’s life, as through listening we can comprehend the language and understand the people around us.
- It may be interacting to customers or with subordinates or even to the whole world at large. Whether in business or personal life, listening is extremely important.
- The time spent on listening is always substantial. In fact listening is an important everyday means of gathering information and acquiring knowledge, it is even vital for socializing, for relaxation, for inspiration, and even for gaining new ideas officially or by listening to friends and peers.
- As a student one has to listen to lectures, seminars, presentations, discussions & instructions. Similarly as a professional listening takes place with boss, colleagues, subordinates within the organization. Likewise a judge, a psychiatrist, and a physician must possess special competence in listening.

**According to Adler, R. et al. (2001)** Adults spend an average of 70% of their time engaged in some sort of communication, of this an average of 45% is spent listening compared to 30% speaking, 16% and 9% writing.

### **Time Spent Communicating**

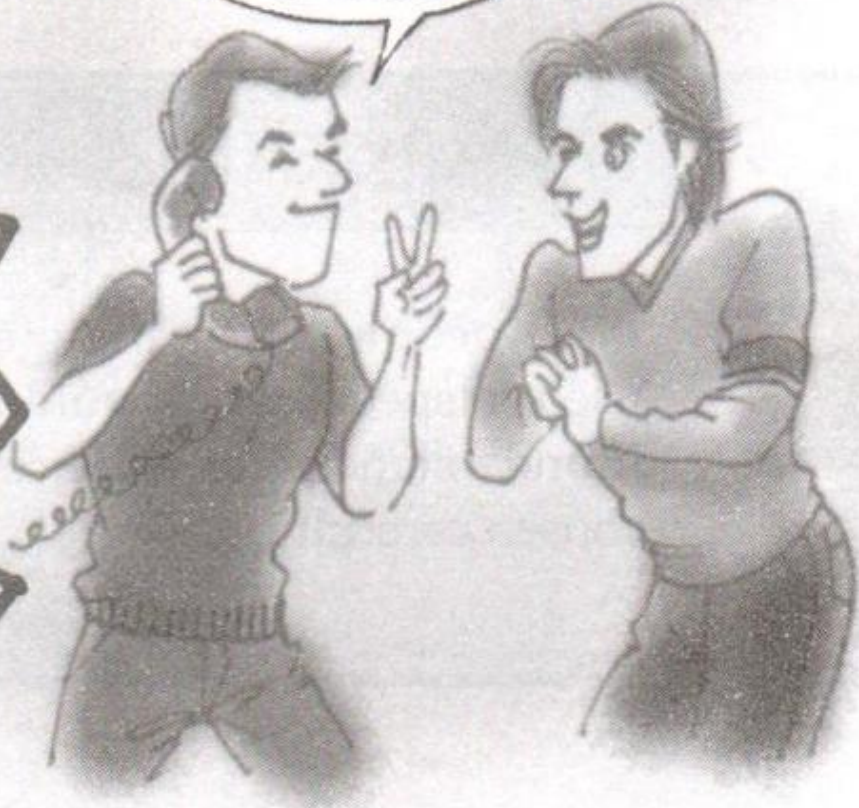


**Source:** Adler, R., Rosenfeld, L. and Proctor, R. (2001) *Interplay: the process of interpersonal communicating* (8th ed.), Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt.

Send reinforcements. we're going to advance.



Send three or four men. we're going to a dance.





So, first there was PlayStation— aka PS1—

## **Importance of Listening at Workplace**

- Listening has vast importance not only at a personal level in life but also at workplace.
- Those Business owners of any segment, entrepreneurs, and the employees, who develop attentive listening skills and encourage this ability for others too, will be the most likely to keep their organizations progressing.
- Listening is a lively process that involves focusing on what is said without allowing erstwhile beliefs to obstruct the process.
- It is true that if people would concentrate on listening at work, they will gain profitable results such as increased productivity, more rapid progress towards target and more pleasant relationships between co-workers.
- The following are some points which further elaborate importance of listening at a workplace:

### ***Calming complaining employees :***

Harvey Mackay, a businessman said, “You can win more friends with your ears than with your mouth”. Very often employees have certain grievances, all that they need is a listener. If a manager or a leader listens to them patiently their anger will be drained out and it will lead to calmness & peace of mind.

### ***Formulating better policies:***

If a manager listens to his/her subordinates carefully, he/she will know that which policies are acceptable to all other members and are better suitable for the organizational success. This step may also accomplish the willing support of employees.

### ***Open door strategy:***

Some managers use open door strategy and keep the doors open for employees to walk in and talk. It leads to better understanding and better upward communication.

Sometimes it also happens that their doors are open but their ears are closed. This bad listening of managers leaves the employees in distress. Despite of this, if a manager listens patiently, employees will be encouraged to talk, and there will be free upward communication.

### ***Spotting sensitive areas:***

Problems if not resolved could lead to serious disputes. It is important for managers and leaders to spot the sensitive areas and resolve complaints by finding better solutions to avoid serious disputes. Mahatma Gandhi as a leader was like an expert therapist, by analyzing the problems he listened patiently to the grievances of the people, and helped them to live a better life.

### ***Increasing confidence:***

People, who listen well and carefully, tend to have better knowledge and clear understanding. Therefore, they are more confident in day to day activities and even while taking major decisions.

### ***Forming a bond:***

True listening generates respect and trust between speaker and listener. Employees like to respond to those bosses who they think are listening to them.

### ***Boosting productivity:***

Instead of only giving an advice, if a manager listens carefully to the explanation of problems and start working towards solution, employees will be more dedicated towards work and the productivity will rise.

### ***Advancing innovations:***

If a leader or a manager listens properly to the ideas of people, and motivates them to implement it instead of controlling or curbing. This technique will show the way of new and innovative tactics of work. Listening makes employees feel better as it recognizes not only the value of the employee viewpoint but also the value to the employee of being listened to.

### ***Enhancing accuracy:***

Listening in a better way leads to a huge recollection of important facts and issues, resulting in more accuracy while solving complex issues, with lesser miscommunication and faults.

### ***Knowing your organization :***

Careful listening to the grapevine helps to know the members of the staff, about the company's activities and policies. Therefore, it leads to better understanding of organization, it also facilitates in predicting what changes are required for growth.

***Developing better relations:***

Listening develops better relations between individuals or groups within an organisation. For Example – Employees may have certain grievances against the management. If the management listens to these grievances then hostilities can be removed or diminished from the minds of the employees. This can lead to better bonds or relationship between the two parties that in turn can lead to improvement in efficiency of the organisation.

***Helping in sharing experience:***

Listening helps to share experiences. For example, in conferences, experts can share their experiences with the participants. In committees, the senior members can share their experiences with the junior members. Such sharing of experiences can be a good learning experience to the listeners.

***Helping in decision making :***

listening helps in proper decision making . After careful listening to the subordinates as well as the superiors, managers can make proper decision relating to incentive schemes, marketing activities and so on.



A wise man once said, “We never learn anything with our mouth open. We can only learn by reading, by listening, by observing and by doing” (Rega, M.).

Thus, the importance of listening is at the core of communication, it may be anywhere with anyone. In business it is important for a manager to encourage employees to listen one another in order to build an environment that promotes cooperative team work and innovative problem solving.

Brown, M. (2004) wrote, that “Listening is a learned behavior. Just as decoding the written word is not the same as comprehending its meaning, hearing a sound is not the same as understanding what is being said”.

Proper listening is again very important in making a comfortable environment, to attract and retain good people in an organization, to develop healthy relationships and for the growth of the organization.

## Features of Listening

- **Process:** Listening is a process of hearing and understanding the message of the speaker

The process of listening includes:-

- Paying attention to the message
- Interpretation and evaluation of the message
- Responding
- Retaining the message

- **Types of listening:** listening is of various types varying from situation to situation. It depends upon the content, purpose, the speaker as well as the listener. The types are:-

- **Active listening:-**
- where the listener listens with interest and encourages the speaker with continue speaking
- **Appreciative listening:-**
- the listener appreciates the views , opinions and ideas expressed by the speaker through body language, cues or otherwise.



- **Informational listening:-**
- where the listener listens in order to learn from the speaker
- **Content listening:**
- selectively listening to only those contents relevant to the listener
- **Empathetic listening :**
- active listening and empathising with the speaker
- **Evaluative listening:**
- critical review of what is being said by the speaker.
- **Reflective listening:**
- where the listener tries to understand the speaker's idea , and then reverting the idea back to the speaker so as to confirm that the idea has been understood correctly.
  
- **Obstacles in listening :** there are several barriers to listening , which are:-
- **Marginal listening:**
- According to studies listening is 3 times faster than speaking, the listener can become distracted and this could lead to a loss of communication.
- **Language barrier:**
- the listener cannot understand the language being spoken by the speaker. This could be that the speaker does not know have a good command over the language too.

- **Emotional problems:**
- the listener could be unhappy or angry at the earmarks of the speaker. Also the listener could be happy an excited and thus failed to listen effectively.
- **Noise:**
- there is a possibility that there could be some noise in the background that could distract the listener. This could be loud music or traffic noise.
- **Problems of forced listening:**
- many a times a listener may be forced to listen to the speaker. For example students forced to sit through the lecture.

**Benefits of listening:** Listening benefits both the speaker as well as the listener:

- The listener may retain important aspects of the message
- Listening may help to take decisions and solve problems
- Listening may help to develop good relations between the speaker and the listener

- It helps to share experiences between the speaker and the listener.
- It provides encouragement to the speaker

**Listening is different from hearing:** Listening is the art of hearing and understanding the message of the speaker. Listening requires hearing but the receiver must understand and evaluate the message as well. Hearing involves only the use of ears but listening involve the use of Ears and Mind

**Degree of Listening:** Different listeners have different degree of listening :

- Some have poor listening skills and thus pay little or no attention to what is being said.
- Some may hear but not understand what is being said.
- Some listeners listen selectively to certain aspects
- A few listen attentively to all aspects , evaluate and retain some of them for sometime.

**Fake listening :** many a times the listeners nod approvingly to show that they are understanding what the speaker is saying but they are not paying any attention at all.

**Listening and retention:** Listeners may retain certain percentage of what they have heard. Certain studies indicate that listeners can retain 10-25% of a presentation and it is therefore necessary to make use of AV Aids to help retain concepts better.

**Listening skills can be improved:** Although many people receive formal training in Communication skills such as reading, writing, speaking yet few receive training in listening skills. This results in a lot of poor listeners. Proper training and self discipline is needed to become effective listeners.



# Methods of Communication

## Verbal

## Non - verbal

### Oral

### Written

#### Face to face

telephone

- Talk
- One- to –One
- Group Discussion
- Meetings
- Conferences

- Letters
- Memos
- Reports
- Notices
- Circulars

- Body Language
- Posture, Gesture
- Expressions
- Dress and Grooming
- Space and Proxemics
- Silence
- Auditory Signals
- Visuals

The medium of communication can be broadly divided into two groups:

- Verbal Communication
- Non-verbal Communication

➤ **Verbal Communication** The word ‘verbal’ means ‘connected with words or use of words’.

Words are the most accurate and powerful set of symbols involved in communication. Hence, verbal communication involves a written or spoken message in which words are used to exchange ideas/information. Words are selected in phrases, sentences and paragraphs depending upon the results the verbal communication is trying to achieve.

▪ The means of verbal communication are:

- Written communication
- Oral communication
- Visual communication
- Audio-visual

# **Characteristics of Verbal Communication:**

## **Mediums**

Verbal communication is either face-to-face or public.

Communicating face-to-face allows communicators to exchange ideas back and forth freely, while public speaking allows the back and forth exchange of ideas only in certain circumstances, like a classroom setting or during a question and answer session.

However, in order to keep information flowing smoothly and clearly between the speaker and the audience, rules have to be negotiated as to when each individual can speak.

Verbal communication does not just involve speech, since written communication conveys a specific idea and is a part of verbal communication.

## **Sound**

At birth, everyone has the ability to make sounds. Some sounds have nothing to do with language or words, such as laughing, crying and yelling.

Despite that, people with different languages can understand the emotion that the individual is communicating.

Emotions and attitudes can also be communicated through the tone of the words.

People have a tendency to show how they feel about the subject or the audience through the tone they present.

Tone can completely shift the meaning of an uttered statement.

For instance, if a statement is said sarcastically, others will likely believe the opposite of what is said.

## **Words**

At some point, children learn how to put sounds into words.

Words are sounds that are produced in such a way that people can distinguish them from other sounds.

Not everyone will necessarily know the meaning of each individual word, so those wishing to communicate verbally need to make sure that those they're speaking to understand the intended meaning of the word.

## **Language**

Languages are created when meaning is assigned to words. The language that a child is exposed to is the language that the child picks up. Individuals who want to verbally communicate to others speaking another language must not only learn the language but also understand how these words are used in common speech. For instance, a person learning English might know that accelerated is a synonym for fast but needs to understand that accelerated means a specific type of fast in which an individual is performing an action faster than before.

## **Etiquette**

In addition to understanding, different cultures have systems of etiquette that determine what is said in order to avoid offending others. For instance, speakers often address their audience as ladies and gentlemen. In face-to-face communication, individuals often refer to each other as sir and madam.

# Written Communication

A famous English writer Francis Bacon has said, “*Reading maketh a full man, writing an exact man, conference a ready man*”.

In order to make himself exact, i.e., to say effectively what he wants to say, the writer has to make a considerable effort.

The written form requires drafting of letters and circulars, proposals, memos and business reports of varying kinds and includes:

- ✓ **Office order, Graphs/Charts, Staff Newsletter, E-mail, Fax, Form/Questionnaire, Notice Agenda, Notes on Agenda, Minutes of Meetings, Advertisement, Customer Newsletter, Press Release, Invitation, Leaflet/Brochure/Handbills, Manuals, Telegram etc.**

## **Advantages of Written Communication**

Written communication has several advantages, although the disadvantages of written communication are equally serious.

- i. It allows us sufficient time to plan the document we propose to create taking into account the purpose for which it is being written.
- ii. It also enables us to revise and modify the contents if we find them unsuitable for the recipient from the point of view of clarity or interest.
- iii. To display what we have written, we have a variety of recent and traditional trends to choose from. There is also a scope to use tastefully designed stationery for the purpose.
- iv. The use of headings and bullets enable us to highlights the material for better understanding.

- v. Information in the written form can be filed or retrieved at our convenience. Its permanence facilitates prolonged correspondence.
- vi. It provides us records, references, etc., on which important decisions rest.

### **Disadvantages of Written Communication**

- i. It takes much more time to compose a message in writing. Therefore it is expensive.
- ii. It also tends to suffer from the limitations of the sender, like his assumptions or prejudices, and the delayed feedback makes it worse.
- iii. The inadequacies of the first message may only be revealed when the reply arrives.
- iv. Communication in writing suffers from lack of congruence with non-verbal communication.

However, written communication is indispensable.

*Sounds and Letters: A Poem for English Students*

When in English class we speak,  
Why is break not rhymed with freak?  
Will you tell me why it's true  
That we say sew, but also few?  
When a poet writes a verse  
Why is horse not rhymed with worse?  
Beard sounds not the same as heard  
Lord sounds not the same as word  
Cow is cow, but low is low  
Shoe is never rhymed with toe.  
Think of nose and dose and lose  
Think of goose, but then of choose.  
Confuse not comb with tomb or bomb,  
Doll with roll, or home with some.  
We have blood and food and good.  
Mould is not pronounced like could.  
There's pay and say, but paid and said.  
"I will read", but "I have read".  
Why say done, but gone and lone –  
Is there any reason known?  
To summarise, it seems to me  
Sounds and letters disagree.

# ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral communication is communication by means of the spoken word.

It can take place as a face-to face meeting or over the telephone.

It could be a personal and informal communication, or a formal interview, business meeting, a conference or a speech before an audience.

## **Principles of effective oral communication:**

Oral communication is a very effective and powerful medium.

Effective oral communication depends on the speaker following certain principles.

These principles are as follows :

### **Know your objective:**

You must know what you want your message to do – you may need to inform, to entertain, to convince, to express an opinion, or to explain.

### **Know your audience:**

Consider carefully the nature of your audience – their age, level of understanding, their occupations and their level of interest in your message.

□ **Know your subject:**

Prepare your message thoroughly. See that you know your main ideas and key points. You must also know your facts and figures.

□ **Know (how to use) your voice:**

A good speaker uses his voice to maximum advantage. Attention must be paid to volume, pitch, speed of speaking and correct pronunciation of words. Your voice must be clear, pleasing; and varied in volume, pitch and speed, to be interesting. Good delivery depends on using your voice well.

□ **Know when to stop:**

The length of the oral message has a lot to do with its success. The message must aim for just the right length, neither too short nor too long. All points must be covered and yet there should be no repetitions or unnecessary elaboration

## **Advantages of oral communication:**

Oral communication is generally more preferred, as compared to written communication.

Its popularity is due to its several advantages.

- **It is direct and time-saving.**
  - The listener understands the words as soon as they are spoken. Oral communication is the best way to transmit messages quickly and to save time.
- **It saves money.**
  - It is economical as it does not require costly equipment or stationery.
- **It conveys the exact meaning of words.**
  - A great advantage of oral communication is its use of non-verbal elements like body language and paralanguage.
  - Body language includes facial expressions and posture.
  - Paralanguage includes features like voice volume, pitch and speed of speaking; it also includes the sounds we make while speaking, like sighing or clearing the throat.
  - These non-verbal elements allow the speaker to express his/her meaning more accurately.

- **It provides immediate feedback from the receiver.**
  - The sender gets the receiver's response immediately, even on the telephone.
  - This also explains why oral communication is so effective in teaching and coaching.
  
- **It is more persuasive in nature.**
  - Oral communication is more useful when arguments and reasons have to be given to convince someone, as in sales and marketing, or in a court of law.
  
- **On-the-spot additions and corrections are possible.**
  - The speaker has the scope to change, improve and add to her/his message as s/he is speaking.
  
- **Confidential messages can be communicated.**
  - When subjects of a delicate and confidential nature cannot be written, one can take recourse to oral communication.
  
- **It is informal and friendlier.**
  - It can build friendly relations with people and develop social contacts.

## **Disadvantages of oral communication:**

Oral communication, however, has several drawbacks.

- It lacks legal validity. Oral messages have no legal proof.
- It lacks accountability. In oral messages, we cannot fix responsibility. The speaker can deny that he said something.
- Possibility of misunderstanding. This happens when the listener is not attentive to the message.
- Problem of retention. People do not remember oral messages for a long time. Or they may retain only a part of the message.
- Not always effective. Oral communication is not effective when the distances are great or when the message is very lengthy.
- The need for good speaking skills. Oral communication cannot be effective, if the speaker does not have the necessary skills.

# Face-to-face communication

□ takes place when two or more people meet personally.

## Advantages of face-to-face communication

1. It is a combination of verbal and non-verbal factors. This makes the message more effective, due to the use of paralanguage and body language.
2. Immediate feedback is possible.
3. The speaker can modify his message immediately if the receiver's response tells him it is necessary. The receiver can also ask questions and clear his doubts immediately.

## Disadvantages of face-to-face communication:

1. Face-to-face communication is difficult to practice in large organizations where there are many people in different departments, and in different places.
2. It is not effective when the receiver does not pay attention to the message.
3. It is not effective when the gathering consists of too many people.

# **NON – VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Non-Verbal communication is communication without words. It has been defined as —any message you give other than the literal interpretation of your words – the way you move, speak, appear. Non-verbal elements form an important part of oral communication. The major forms of non-verbal communication are as follows:

1. Dress and Grooming
2. Kinesics or Body Language
3. Proxemics
4. Paralanguage
5. Silence
6. Visual and Auditory Signs and signals
7. Posters
8. Colors
9. Maps, Graphs and Charts

## **Dress and Grooming:**

The clothes we wear and the level of our grooming play an important role in giving people an impression about us.

Our choice of clothes on different occasions and in different places, our attention to neatness and to details like well – combed hair and clean nails, all provide important clues to others about our personality.

Thus, dress and grooming play a vital role in providing a clue to the man behind the appearance.

## **Body Language or Kinesics:**

Body language or kinesics is a vital part of communication.

It includes several factors like facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, posture and even dress and grooming.

## **Gestures:**

A gesture is an action of the hand, head or body, which conveys a message.

Gestures can convey a greeting, such as folding one's hands in a **Namaste**; it can pass information, such as holding up your hand to indicate —wait, or nodding your head to say —yes and shaking it to say —no; gestures can also show emotion with a clenched, raised fist which indicates anger.

A photograph of Sylvester Stallone with a very intense, almost angry facial expression. He has his mouth open as if shouting or speaking emphatically. His hands are raised in front of him, with fingers spread, in a gesture of emphasis or communication. He is wearing a dark jacket over a dark shirt and a beaded necklace. The background is dark with a red vertical stripe on the right side.

Gestures: Hand motions to communicate messages

## **Facial Expressions:**

The face of the person mirrors the emotions and conveys a host of different messages. Facial expressions also include eye contact. Smiling, frowning, widening the eyes, raising the eyebrows, pursing the lips are all examples of facial expressions.

Such expressions communicate in one of two ways.

Sometimes, they act as a complement to the words used and add to their meaning.

They can also act as a substitute for the words.

Facial expressions often reveal the true feelings of a person, even when his words are saying something else.

## **Posture:**

Posture is an important part of body language.

It means the manner in which we carry ourselves, i.e. the way we walk, sit and stand.

Posture says a lot about a person's personality, her/his mood and general nature.

Hunched shoulders, slouching in a chair can mean lack of self - confidence and low energy levels, or shyness; an erect stance shows positivity and confidence; standing with hands on the hips and head thrust forward shows aggression and anger.



**PERSONAL SPACE**

**AN IMPORTANT  
COMMUNICATION SYSTEM  
IN ALL CULTURES**

You know everything's global.



## **Proxemics:**

Proxemics can be called the language of space.

It is the study of space and how we use it in communication.

The term was first given by Edward Hall in the 1960s.

The manner in which we use space, in personal as well as in group communication, creates different kinds of meaning and sends different messages to others.

Experts have identified different kinds of areas or zones of space:

Intimate space, for immediate family members and close friends.

Personal space, for friends and colleagues.

Social space, for one's senior or junior colleagues.

Formal or Public space, for meetings and gatherings.

The 'closer' the relationship, the closer the space we allow the individual.

## **Paralanguage:**

Paralanguage includes pitch, volume, intonation, and such non-verbal elements of communication which modify meaning and convey emotion. e.g. the vocal sounds 'hmmm' or 'ah'.

The study of paralanguage focuses on how you say what you say.

The tone of voice, rate of speech, pause, accent can not only communicate but alter the meaning significantly.

PITCH-INTONATION RISE & FALL

## **Silence:**

Silence is a powerful form of communication.

We convey our ideas and emotions very clearly and eloquently when we remain silent in certain situations.

Silence can be used to convey agreement or disagreement, approval or disapproval, anger, shyness, sympathy or respect.

**Visual and Auditory Signs and Signals:** The word —Sign is derived from the Latin word **signum** which means a mark. Both signs and signals are symbols, which are given some meaning .Signs are fixed and static symbols, while signals are dynamic and have an element of change or movement. Signs are used in Chemistry, Mathematics, Music and in Road signs to guide motorists. Signals use color, light or sound for communication, as in traffic signals, or the school bell or the ambulance siren.

**Posters:** Posters are a combination of verbal and non-verbal factors, because they consist of pictures as well as words. However, they are considered a form of non-verbal communication because it is the visual or non-verbal part which plays a key role in posters. Posters are used in advertising or for educational purposes, to spread awareness on subjects of public interest like literacy programs, importance of protecting the environment, and other such issues e.g. Save the Environment or Say No to Drugs etc. Posters use visual appeal to make their message effective.

A well-designed poster consists of 3 parts:

- a) **Headline:** This is the short but catchy slogan which conveys the main message.
- b) **Illustration:** This is the visual part consisting of pictures or photographs. It must be striking enough to catch the attention of the viewer.
- c) **Copy:** This is the written matter, which gives necessary details. Copy can sometimes be avoided.

**Colors:** It is impossible to imagine life without colors. They are an unavoidable part of our lives. Colors can convey direct messages, such as the traffic signal, or the red flag that workers carry to indicate that they are on strike.

Colors also have an important symbolic role. The symbolism of colors finds a place in every aspect of our lives; the colors of flags of various nations stand for different qualities; in most countries, the color red symbolizes something good and auspicious, white symbolizes peace, and green stands for prosperity, and so on.

Being symbolic, the same color may mean different things in different cultures.

For example, an Indian bride wears red, but a bride in a western country wears white, which represents purity. Colors also have an important psychological role in our lives. There is scientific evidence to show that bright colors excite and soft, light colors soothe and calm the mind, and dark, dull colors can be depressing.

## **Maps, Graphs and Charts:**

**Maps :** A map is a drawing on paper that shows the location, size and other features of countries, towns, as well as natural features like rivers and mountains. Maps use a scale and a key to give us information about places, and even stars and planets.

**Line-Graphs:** A graph is a diagram consisting of lines which display the variation of two quantities. Graphs are used to show variations of temperature, production and sales, prices and profits etc.

**Charts:** A chart is used for displaying maps and graphs, for better visual effect. A chart can be pasted on cardboard or drawn directly on chart – paper. Charts are widely used in schools.

## References

Source: Taylor, S. (2006) *Communication for Business*, Pearson Education Ltd

<http://www.ukstudentlife.com/Ideas/Fun/Wordplay.htm>