

*Democratic and popular Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Mouloud Mammeri University - Tizi Ouzou -*

Faculty: Economics, Commercial and Management Sciences

Department: Financial Sciences and Accounting



PEDAGOGICAL MATERIALS

ON

Communication and Administrative writing

Addressed to 1st Master students
Enterprise Finance/Accounting and Auditing

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Communication and Administrative writing

INTRODUCTION

An organization cannot function without communication to efficiently connect all of its components and coordinate their actions. It can have management, large amounts of land, cutting edge machinery, materials, highly skilled workers, etc. Employees must be informed of the decisions made by management, and procedures must be followed to guarantee that these decisions are carried out. The management was provided with information from all areas of the organization, which served as the basis for the decisions made.

There are several organizational sizes. There are four types of organizations: small, medium, huge, and complicated. These organizations' sizes differ in how they communicate. Compared to small, single organizations, large, complex organizations with several divisions and locations have more communication challenges. Employee attitudes inside an organization can be positively or negatively impacted by the type of communication that occurs there. A communication breakdown is another common cause of workplace conflicts. In an organization, communication is crucial. It is true that a manager's ability to interact with other people of the organization successfully has a major role in determining how successful they are.

From a leadership perspective, persuading people and organizations to act a specific way requires effective communication. Organizations come in a variety of sizes. Small, medium, big, and complex organizations exist. These sizes of organizations have different communication styles. Communication is more challenging in large, complicated organizations with several departments and locations than it is in small, single organizations. The manner in which communication occurs inside an organization may have a beneficial or bad impact on employees' attitudes. A breakdown in communication is another common cause of industrial conflicts. Effective communication is crucial inside an organization. Undoubtedly, a manager's capacity to successfully interact with other people of the organization has a major role in determining their performance.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS COURSE

The overall aim of this course on the Introduction to Administrative Practices and Processes is to expose the students to the nitty gritty perspective on Administrative procedures and stimulate your interest in government operations. It is also to make you appreciate all that culminate in administrative practices and inputs towards the delivery of goods and services to the citizens. You will therefore learn the ideas behind the act or minuting, drafting of speeches, writing reports and speeches, recording minutes of council meetings, developing minutes. You will also be exposed to the communication skills, how to prepare for organizational conferences and seminars. In addition to these, you will also learn how to conduct government businesses as well as professional ways of record management.

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COURSE AIMS

The aim of this course as pointed out earlier is to expose the students of Public Administration to the administrative practices and processes of government operations. It is to make you appreciate the way government operates its business and what they are capable of doing.

This will be achieved by aiming to: - Introduce you to the basic principles of minutes taking in government business - Introduce you to the act of drafting speeches, writing reports, recoding minutes of council meetings and developing same, - Give an insight into the nitty gritty of communication skills. - Assess the patterns of behavior of operators of government - Introduce you to the conduct of government businesses and record management, - Appraise the changes that had taken place over time in the operative mechanism of government.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To achieve the aims set out above, the course sets overall objectives. In addition, each units also has specific objectives. The course objectives are always included at the beginning of a unit. You are advised to refer to them as you study each unit both at the beginning and at the end to ensure that you check your progress and that you have done what is required of you by the unit. Below are wider objectives of the course as a whole. By meeting these objectives, you should achieve the aims of the course as a whole. On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

1. Identify and explain the basic principles of minutes taking, speech drafting, report writing, recoding and developing minutes of council meetings associated with the conduct of government business ;
2. Situate the administration of government business within its contextual limits ;
3. Appreciate the philosophy of day to day administration in government businesses and how it is conducted.
4. Identify and discuss written communication in various forms, as a veritable tool with which policies are formulated, decisions are made and approvals are given by government operators.

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CHAPTER 01: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Main Content
 - 3.1 The concept of information
 - 3.2 Definition and meaning of Communication
 - 3.3 Functions of Communication
 - 3.4 Process of communication
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1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we will learn about communication and its functions within organizations. We will also examine the methods and substance of communication inside an organization, as well as the instruments used to spread knowledge and information.

2. Objectives

At the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

- Recognize the value of communication;
- Understand and discuss communication and its processes.
- Understand the ways to communicate
- Understand the functions of communication.

3. Main content

3.1 The concept of information

3.1.1 What is information?

Almost certainly since before the term ‘information science’ was coined in 1955 (Madden, A.D, 2000), The word information has Latin roots (informatio). Before we explore this thread we should examine its entry in The Oxford English. We shall consider two basic contexts in which information is used; namely, the act of molding the mind and the act of communicating knowledge. These two activities are, obviously, intimately related (Capurro, R., Hjarland, B, 2005, p. 351).

‘We live in the age of information’: this sentence has become a commonplace of our times. Our everyday language includes the word ‘information’ in a variety of different contexts. It seems that we all precisely know what information is (Lombardi, O, 2004).

The concept "information" is somewhat tricky to define, as it is usually not a tangible object. It is rather an abstract phenomenon which arises between tangible objects (Ahmad, H, 2020). A concept usually connected with the notion of information is the concept of knowledge: it is assumed that information provides knowledge, that it modifies the state of knowledge of those who receive it. Some authors even define the measure of information in terms of knowledge (Ahmad, H, 2020) According to Bell (1957) the information is “measured as a difference between the state of knowledge of the recipient before and after the communication of information”.

Dretske (1981) refer that the “information is a commodity that given the right recipient, is capable of yielding knowledge”.

Here are a summary of the concepts below : (Madden, A.D, 2000, p. 344)

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- Information as a representation of knowledge: Information is stored knowledge. Traditionally the storage medium has been books, but increasingly electronic media are becoming important ;
- Information as data in the environment : Information can be obtained from a range of environmental stimuli and phenomena; not all of which are intended to 'convey' a message, but which can be informative when appropriately interpreted ;
- Information as part of the communication process Meanings are in people rather than in words or data. Timing and social factors play a significant role in the processing and interpretation of information ;
- Information as a resource or commodity Information is transmitted in a message from sender to receiver. The receiver interprets the message as intended by the sender. There may be added value as the information is disseminated or exchanged.

3.1.2 The attributes (characteristics) of information :

We can make a comparison to the terms 'data' or 'knowledge' for recognize the attributes of information. For example, compare the following sentences:

- This is not information I already know it.
- This is not knowledge I already know it.
- This is not data I already know it.

While the first sentence makes sense the other two are senseless, This example reveals that information in contrast to data and knowledge is associated with novelty. In this context the characteristics of information can be defined as follows :

- **Reliable** : the source is known or is clearly identifiable ;
- **Relevant**: it is a response to a need (requirement) ;
- **Topical**: the information is recent and updated regularly ;
- **New**: it must not already existing in the organization ;
- **Accessible**: can be obtained easily.

3.1.3 Forms of information:

The most common forms that information can take it are:

- **Oral information**

Example: the information provided in interview between the employee and his employer.

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- **Written information**

Example: the elements present on the payroll.

- **Visual information**

Example: the graph summarizing the performance of the sales team during the weekly meeting.

- **Audiovisual information**

Example: a demonstration recorded on a camcorder, then broadcast on a TV.

- **Qualitative information**

Example: new products sold by the competition institutions.

- **Quantitative information**

Example: the number of competitors in a sector.

3.2 Definition and meaning of Communication

What communication is ?

In the discussion about information, there are a number of other concepts which can be considered close or related, but which themselves are not the same thing as information (Palmius, P, 2005). The first concept which related to the term « information » is the term « communication ».

The word communication is derived from the Latin word “communicare” which means to share or to participate. Here are some definition : (Ahmad, H, 2020)

Communication has been variously defined by various authors and management practitioners.

- (Blidaru. O.P. et al, 2019) Sees communication as " as a process that takes place between people, groups, which has as a means of interaction the word, gesture, sign, symbol, mimic, image. The purpose of the communication is to convey what is desired, the reason why something is desired and the means by which it can reach the proposed goal. "
- (Abimbade, A, 2006) Reffer that the communication is " a process of exchanging information between two or more individuals in an attempt by an individual to persuade or change the behaviour of the other individual".

Some believe that communication is the transfer of information from the sender to the receiver with the information being understood by the receiver.

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- (Randcil, D, 1984, p. 156) " sees communication as the meaningful transfer of information from one person (or group) to another".
- In this context ; (Reilly, W, 1979), posit that it is “the exchange of information between a sender and a receiver and the inference of meaning between organisational participants”.
- (Obisi, C, 2003, pp. 218-219) argued that Communication is generally understood as spoken or written words. But in reality, it is more than that. It is the sum total directly or indirectly, unconsciously or consciously transmitted words, attitudes, feelings, actions, gestures and tones. Even silence is an effective way of communication.

Communication consists of all the processes by which information is transmitted and received. Communication is not only spoken or written words. It may come as facts, attitudes, gestures, intentions, feelings etc. Silence is also perceived as an effective way of communication. The overriding concept in communication is to make the receiver of a communication decode what is in the mind of the sender. In other words, communication does not occur unless one person transmits a piece of information to another person, who receives the piece of information and the received information has meaning to the receiver.

Communication is an inevitable process, so that each individual communicates, regardless of which means; any behavior, gesture, sign represents communicative value, even if speech is not involved.

- Cushway and Lodge (1999:189), opines that communication is effective only when the ideas and intentions of one person are successfully conveyed to another.

Communication involves emotional, psychological and mental characteristics of the sender and the receiver of the information as well as the technical characteristics of the medium used to communicate. An person or group of individuals can be motivated or demotivated through communication. It can be used for effective co-ordination of group activities. It is essentially vital in the performance of all management functions.

For communication to be effective, three requirements must be met. These requirements are as follows:

- There must be at least two people involved ;
- There must be information to be communicated ; and
- There must be intent or attempt to transmit the information.

For this to be accomplished, three vital components must be present. These are; the source, the channel and the receiver.

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3.3 Functions of Communication

Communication is indispensable for an effective running of an organisation. To this end, we posit that its roles or functions are enormous. Communication in its broadest sense, not only acts as the exchange of news and messages, but also as an individual and collective activity embracing all transmissions in sharing of ideas, facts and data. Communication in any organisation, be it private or public, plays many roles. These include:

- **Information:** The collection, storage, processing and dissemination of news, data, facts, opinions, etc which is essential in order to understand and execute organisational practices and processes are all embedded in communication. It will be difficult to make or execute decisions or policies in organisations without communication.

- **Socialization:** Communication provides a common forum for people to interact and operate as effective members of the society in which they live. Such interaction will enable them learn and acquire the societal norms and values which is imperative in communal life. It will also help them find enjoyment and recreation which will subsequently aid healthy society. The social cohesion and awareness so acquired will enable them to participate actively in public life.

- **Motivation:** Communication gives directions to the employees in that it will make them know what is expected of them at any point in time. It also clarifies the mode of execution of tasks. Praises for job well done are also channelled through communication. All these and more will motivate and encourage the employees to put in their best for the organisation.

- **Education:** Communication ensures dissemination of information within the community. It enhances the transmission of knowledge develops intellectual capability of individuals within the society. In so doing, it aids the formation of character and acquisition of skills and capacities of individuals at all stages of life. - **Debate and discussion:** Communication provides the needed facts required to facilitate the exchange of agreements or to clarify differing viewpoints on public issues. It also supplies relevant evidence needed to foster public interest and involvement in all local, national and international issues.

- **Control:** Communication serves as a veritable tool for control measures in an organisation. Every organisation has chain of command as well as rules and regulations that guide it. This will be disseminated to all through communication. Grievances reporting as well as making various official requests are done through communication.

- **Cultural Promotion:** Dissemination of cultural and artistic products in a bid to preserve the heritage of the past is facilitated through communication.

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- **Integration:** Communication is the key to dealing with people as it facilitates the exchange of ideas and information. It provides all persons, groups and nations access to the variety of messages needed in order to know and understand themselves and to appreciate each other's viewpoints and aspirations. For this reason, it is classified as the foundation of purposive management.
- **Planning:** The pivot of planning, which is one of the functions of management, is information. Communication, therefore, aids planning, since no planning is possible without information.
- **Decision Making:** Communication aids in decision making. It provides information that individuals and groups need to make decisions through the provision of data to identify and evaluate alternative choices.
- **Managerial roles:** Communication helps managers take action. The plans must be explained, policies must be interpreted, procedures must be outlined and budget limits should be stated. All these require adequate communication since decisions not communicated cannot be implemented.
- **Organising:** The organizing function of management is not complete until there is interconnection of the vertical and horizontal structures. Communication acts to control the behaviors of the formal and informal groups within the organisation in various ways.
- **Recruitment:** Communication is very essential in the recruitment, orientation, placement or deployment of employees. New employees get acquainted with the dos and don'ts in the organisation through communication. The existing employees are also supervised and disciplined according to the rules and regulations of the organisation. These are made possible through communication.
- **Staff Appraisal:** Appraisal of performance as well as promotion or demotion is made possible through communication. Training of employees is made possible through communication. Remuneration is also organized through communication.

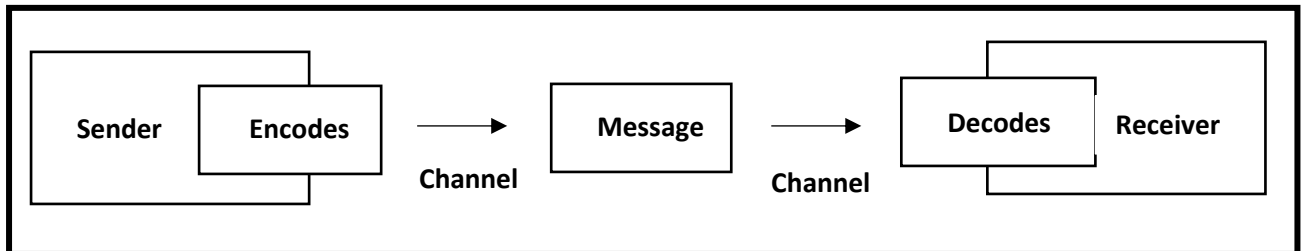
3.4 Process of communication

Adler and Towne describe communication as a process between at least two people that begins when one person wants to communicate with another. Communication originates as mental images within a person who desires to convey those images to another. Mental images can include ideas, thoughts, pictures, and emotions. The person who wants to communicate is called the sender (see figure). To transfer an image to another person, the sender first must transpose or translate the images into symbols that receivers can understand. Symbols often are words but can be pictures, sounds, or sense information (e.g., touch or smell). Only through symbols can the mental images of a

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sender have meaning for others. The process of translating images into symbols is called encoding.

Figure 01 : The process of communication



Source : basic communication model, <https://home.snu.edu/~jsmith/library/body/v25.pdf>, Accessed on 03/03/2023, p.01.

Once a message has been encoded, the next level in the communication process is to transmit or communicate the message to a receiver. This can be done in many ways: during face-to-face verbal interaction, over the telephone, through printed materials (letters, newspapers, etc.), or through visual media (television, photographs). Verbal, written, and visual media are three examples of possible communication channels used to transmit messages between senders and receivers. Other transmission channels include touch, gestures, clothing, and physical distances between sender and receiver (proxemics).

When a message is received by another person, a decoding process occurs. Just as a sender must encode messages in preparation for transmission through communication channels, receivers must sense and interpret the symbols and then decode the information back into images, emotions, and thoughts that make sense to them. When messages are decoded exactly as the sender has intended, the images of the sender and the images of the receiver match, and effective communication occurs.

3.4.1 Models of communication

- **Definition :** A model can be defined as the visual representation that identifies, classifies and describes various parts of the process. In the communication process, the main features include, sender, message, media and receiver. There is a strong association between these features. It is considered as an important concept that helps the individuals in acquiring an efficient understanding of the processes of communication. Like the nature and concept of communication.

- **Lasswell Model (1948):** is regarded as one of the early models of communication. Lasswell who looked at communication in the form of various types of questions. These include, who, what, in which channel, to whom and with what effect. This model focussed attention on the essential elements of communication. This model was

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considered as the oversimplified model, which implied the presence of the communicator and the message.

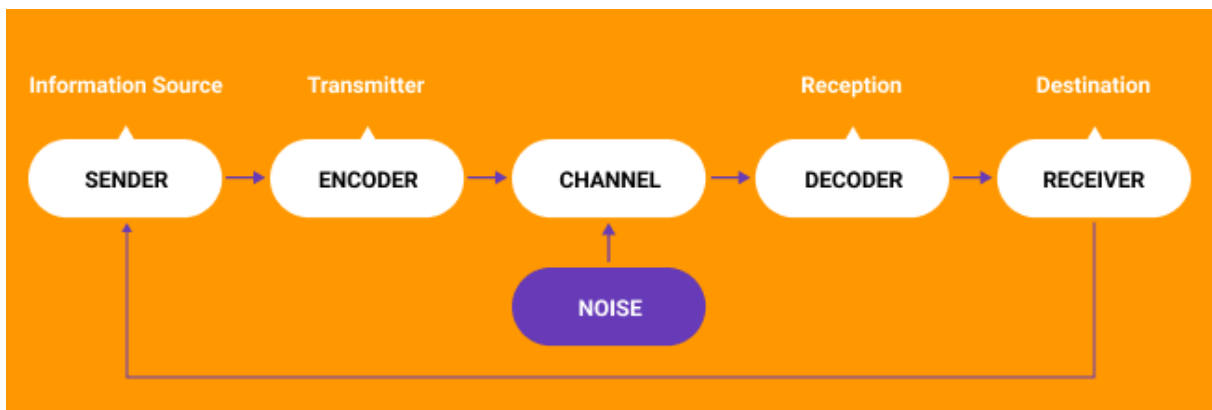
Figure1 : Laswell's communication Model



Source : <https://pumble.com/learn/communication/communication-models/>, Accessed on 03/03/2023.

- **Shannon and Weaver Model (1949)** : Shannon's Model has become a basic element of the communication engineers training. It has been regarded as one of the important models of communication. The reason being, the individuals are able to make use of this model in a manageable way to transfer information. In this model, the message through the transmitter is transmitted through the channel to the receiver. Through the receiver, the messages reaches its destination. The messages may consist of spoken as well as written words. This mean we can use an oral and written forms of communication. There have been introduction of concepts, such as, noise, disturbances or errors in transmission. There is a need to maintain the necessary balance between entropy, which means the degree of uncertainty and redundancy, which refers to the uniqueness of information. This implied that for effective communication, the greater the noise in communication, the greater is the need for building redundancy. The repetition of the message causes the reduction in the relative entropy or in other words, the uncertainty in terms of the message. This model was criticised for being based on the hardware aspect, which is developed for engineering problems and not for facilitating communication between human beings. Another criticism is, it did not take into account the element of feedback. The element of feedback is regarded as vital in making the communication processes complete.

Figure2 : The Shannon-Weaver Communication Model

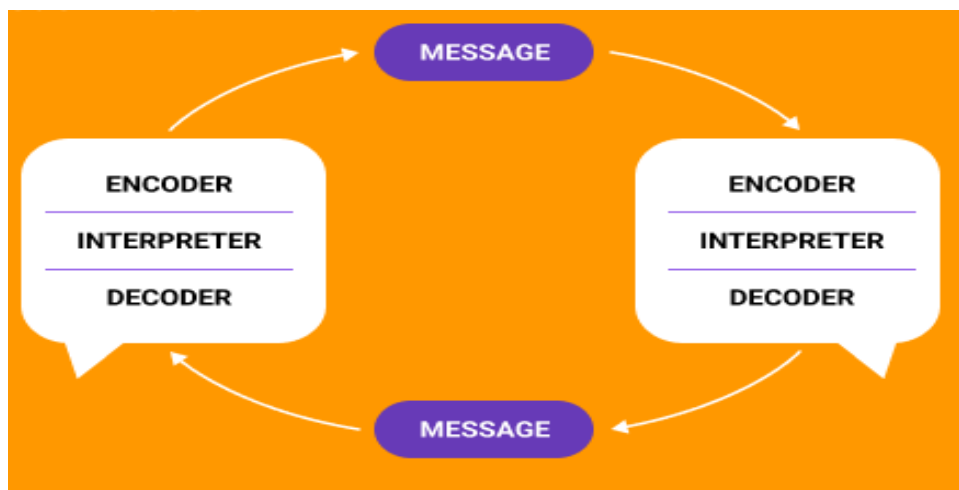


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Source : <https://pumble.com/learn/communication/communication-models/>, Accessed on 03/03/2023.

- **Charles Osgood's Model (1954)** : in his model shows that communication is the dynamic process, in which there is an interactive relationship between the sender and the receiver. When the individuals are engaged in the communication processes, they send as well as receive messages. It is regarded as the two way process. This model imparts information that when the individuals are communicating with each other, they need to implement the methods of encoding, decoding and interpreting the messages. For example, when the teacher imparts information in terms of lesson plans to the students, then interaction is facilitated, by asking questions, exchanging ideas and viewpoints and so forth. Therefore, the role of interpretation of the message has also been highlighted in this model for decoding a message.
- **Schramm Model (1954)**: Wilbur Schramm proceeded from the simple communication model to a more complicated one. He visualized the processes of communication as a process of sharing of experience and commonality of experience in terms of the individuals, who are communicating. This model introduced the concept of shared orientation between sender and receiver. The main concept that is emphasised upon is, the sender and the receiver share information with each other, in terms of various kinds of experiences. When they have similar experiences, the processes of communication becomes more effective and worthwhile. The source can encode and the destination can decode in terms of the experiences that the individuals have.

Figure3 : The Osgood-Schramm communication Model



Source : <https://pumble.com/learn/communication/communication-models/>, Accessed on 03/03/2023.

- **Dance's Helical Model** : According to Dance's Helical Model, communication is seen as a circular process that gets more and more complex as communication progresses. That is why it is represented by a helical spiral. With every cycle of

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communication, we expand our circle, and each communication encounter is different from the previous one because communication never repeats itself.

Additionally, in the process of communication, the feedback we get from the other party involved influences our next statement and we become more knowledgeable with every new cycle.

Figure4 : Dance's Helical Model



Source : <https://pumble.com/learn/communication/communication-models/>, Accessed on 03/03/2023.

3.4.2 The categories of communication

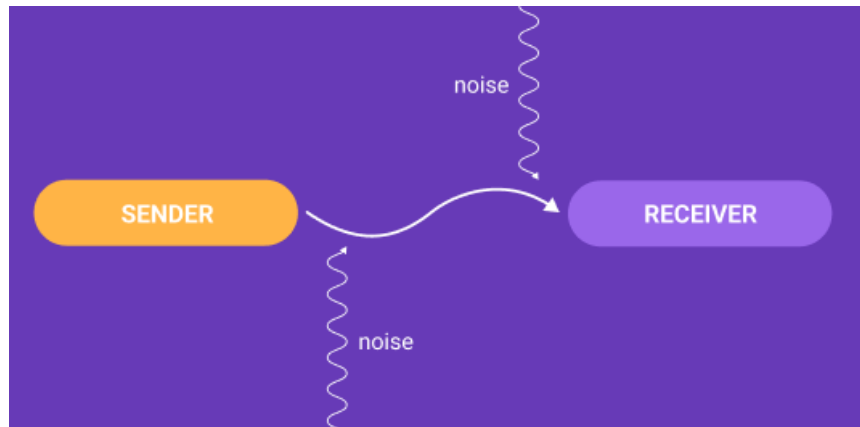
This major models of communication; we can be divided into 3 categories:

- **Linear models:** Linear models of communication suggest that communication takes place only in one direction. The main elements in these models are:
 - The channel,
 - The sender, and
 - The receiver.

Simply put, the sender transmits the message via a channel, and the channel is the medium and changes the message into speech, writing, or animation. The message then reaches the receiver, who decodes it. This model is straightforward and is used mainly in marketing, sales in communication with customers.

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Figure5 : Linear communication model

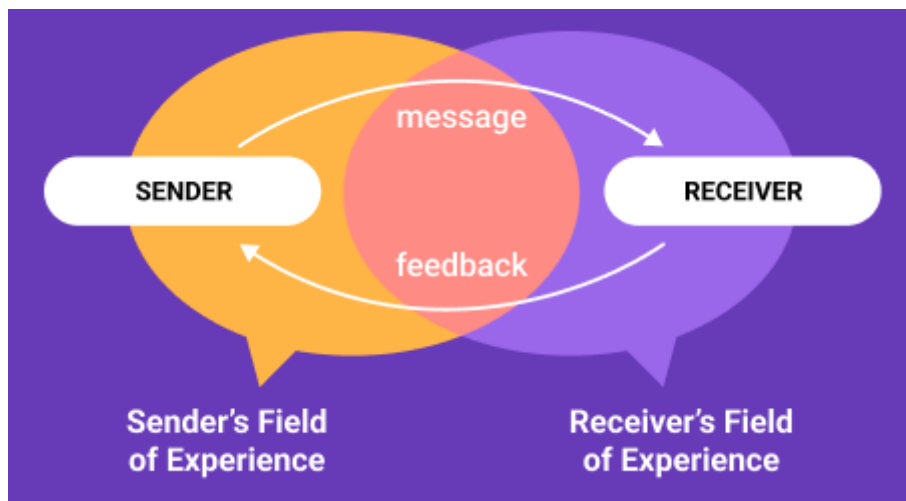


Source : <https://pumble.com/learn/communication/communication-models/>, Accessed on 03/03/2023

- **Ex :** Shannon and Weaver Model

- **Interactive models:** As more dynamic models, interactive models of communication refer to two-way communication with feedback. However, feedback is not simultaneous, but rather slow and indirect. Interactive models are used in internet-based and mediated communication (telephone conversations, letters, etc.).

Figure6: Interactive communication model



Source : <https://pumble.com/learn/communication/communication-models/>, Accessed on 03/03/2023

The main elements of these models:

- Sender
- Message
- Receiver
- Feedback

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- Field of experience

You probably noticed the new, previously not seen, element field of experience. The field of experience represents a person's culture, past experiences, and personal history. All of these factors influence how a sender constructs a message, as well as how the receiver takes it. Every one of us brings a unique field of experience into communication situations.

Ex: Laswell, Osgood-Schramm communication Model

- **Transactional models:** are the most dynamic communication models.

Their key components are:

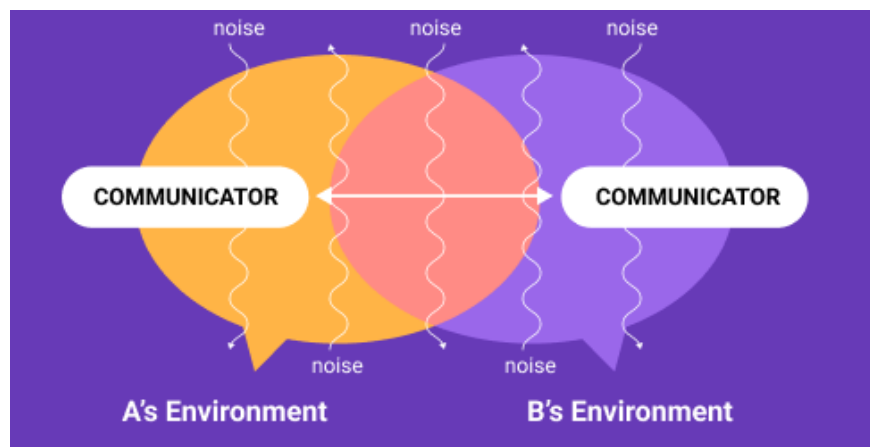
- Encoding
- Decoding
- Communicators
- The message
- The channel
- Noise

In these models, communication is viewed as a transaction, meaning that it is a cooperative process in which communicators (a new term for senders and receivers, which first appears in these models) co-create the process of communication, thereby influencing its outcome and effectiveness.

In other words, communicators create shared meaning in a dynamic process.

Aside from that, transactional models show that we do not just exchange information during our interactions, but create relationships, form cross-cultural bonds, and shape our opinions.

Figure7: Transactional communication model



Source : <https://pumble.com/learn/communication/communication-models/>, Accessed on 03/03/2023

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Ex: Dance's Helical Model

3.5 The characteristic of Communications :

The analysis of the models above implies that communication has the following characteristics, which define the nature of Communication :

- It is a process:

The term process has been defined as an identifiable flow of interrelated events moving over time towards some goal or an end. Accordingly, communication is a process in which there are some identifiable inter-related events which start with the sender. Then it moves by encoding messages, through some channel till the receiver receives the message and ends with the feedback.

- It is inevitable:

Communication is essential physically, socially and psychologically. If an individual is provided all physical comforts but is not allowed to read, write, speak and listen, he will become mentally retarded.

- Communication is intentional as well as unintentional:

While some communication is intended, that is, it is purposely done, much of the communication may be unintentional, that is, we might convey, in many ways, even what we don't wish to communicate.

- Communication is systematic:

Every component of Communication is affected by the other. The one who sends the message, the message itself as well as the receiver of the message; all are interrelated and affected by each other.

- Communication is a social process:

Human being cannot live in isolation. Communication is a process which helps the human being to interact and socialize. Hence, it is a social process.

- Dynamic Process:

Dynamic means —ever changing. Communication is not a constant, one-time event. It is a dynamic process, which is changing all the time.

- Continuous Process:

Communication is a continuous process. More often than not, it is repeated to achieve the desired results. It is an on going process, in which one interaction is followed by the other.

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- **Communication is both interaction and transaction:**

The participants of communication exchange ideas and information and also influence each other in the process. They share and exchange both thoughts and meanings.

- **Leads achievement of the organizational objective:**

Effective communication does this by creating the sense of object orientation in the organization.

- **Dispels misunderstanding:**

In this sense, it provides clear understanding between persons and thus builds a bridge of camaraderie among people.

- **It has four specific skills:**

Communication has four specific skills. They are reading, writing, speaking and listening.

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4. CONCLUSION

As earlier stated, communication is very crucial in all aspects of human endeavour. Its importance goes beyond the transmission and reception of information. Communication or lack of it can affect the attitudes of the employees and the degree to which they understand or support management policies. Many industrial disputes, misinterpretation of company's policy etc, originates in lack of communication or inadequate communication. Communication is also required if result of a given goal or objective is to be evaluated. It is also very essential in motivating individuals or groups to follow a certain behavioural patterns. The importance of communication in organisation cannot be quantified.

5. SUMMARY

In this chapter, we explored the concept of communication and provided several definitions. We highlighted the functions and roles of communication, examined the communication processes, and discussed the content and tools involved. It is believed that you have learnt the contents of the unit very well and that you are quite prepared to answer the questions below. In the next chapter we will be discussing Administrative communication.

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6. TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

6- 1 Write brief notes on the following:

- Communication process
- Content of communication
- The characteristic of Communications

6-2 Discuss seven (7) roles of communication in an organisation.

6-3 What are the most important characteristics of each model of communication.

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CHAPTER 02: ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATION

1. Introduction
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 - 3.3 Communication patterns in organisations
 - 3.4 Types of Communication in organisations
4. Conclusion
5. References/Further Readings

Communication and Administrative writing

1. INTRODUCTION

The design of an organisation should provide for meaningful communication in four distinct directions: downward, upward, horizontal, and diagonal.

These four directions establish the framework within which communication flows in an established organisation, be it public or private. In this chapter, we are going to define the Administration and recognize the importance of communication at the administration, and examine the various patterns and types of communications in an organisation.

2. OBJECTIVES

At the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

- Recognize the importance of Administrative communication;
- Understand and discuss the communication patterns in administration ;
- Understand the Types of Communication in administration.

3. MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition of Administration

Administration is a process of systematically arranging and co-ordinating the human and material resources available to any organization for the main purpose of achieving stipulated goals of that organization.

Administration is a term used to refer more to Government business. Administration occurs in every organization. The basic aim of administration is the need to get things done for defined objectives to be accomplished.

As for other elements of administrative activity, especially communication procedures, this has become a worry as anticipated. In the management of correspondence, there are numerous requirements that must be completed in order to complete the documents required to carry out an action or duty. According to Nuraida (2014), a letter is a type of communication consisting of multiple written assertions carrying some data or information that will be transmitted to the recipient.

3.2 The importance of Administrative communication

Communication is an indispensable part of the process of management. The success of an enterprise depends upon the effectiveness of communication. Every manager must communicate in order to get things done through others. A good communication system offers the following benefits:

❖ Information Sharing:

The main purpose of communication is to transmit information from a source to target individuals or groups. Various type of information is transmitted in the organization: policies and rules, and changes and development in the organization etc. There may be a need for fast diffusion of some information in the organization, e.g., special rewards and awards were given, settlements with the union, and major changes

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in the organization.

❖ Feedback:

There is a need to give feedback to the employees on their achievements, to the department on their performance, and to the higher management on the fulfilment of goals; and, difficulties encountered in the communication of feedback helps in taking corrective measures and making necessary adjustments, and it motivates people in developing challenging and realistic plans.

❖ Influence:

Information is power. One purpose of communication is to influence people. The manager communicates to create a good environment, right attitudes, and congenial working relationship. All these are examples of influencing.

❖ Problem-solving:

In many cases, communications aim to solve problems. Communication between the management and the unions on some issues (negotiation) is aimed at finding solutions for a problem and to evolve a consensus.

❖ Assists in decision-making:

The most important function of every manager is decision-making. In order to make an accurate and appropriate decision, a manager needs to obtain information available through various channels of communication. Here the way decision is communicated will have an impact on the outcomes of the organization in terms of cooperation and support of the people to achieve organizational goals. For arriving at a decision several kinds of communication is needed, e. g., exchange of information, views, and available alternative etc., communication helps a great deal in decision –making.

❖ Facilitating change:

The effectiveness of a change introduced in an organization depends to a large extent on the clarity and spontaneity of the communication. Communication between the managers and employees helps in recognizing the difficulties in the planned change, and in taking corrective action.

❖ Group building:

Communication helps in building relationships. If communication breaks down the group may disintegrate. Communication provides the necessary lubrication for the proper functioning of a group.

❖ Conveying the right message:

The main object of communication is to convey the right message to the right person, i.e., to the person for whom it is meant. The message conveyed should be well understood and accepted by the receiver in the right perspective. In other words, it should carry the same meaning which has been conveyed so that it may be translated into act effectively.

❖ Helps in Co-ordination of Effort:

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Communication is an effective tool for co-coordinating the activities of different persons engaged in running a business. In organizations, there exist a lot of differences, which are many times formally created by an organization through departments, divisions, delegation, decentralization, authority, and power.

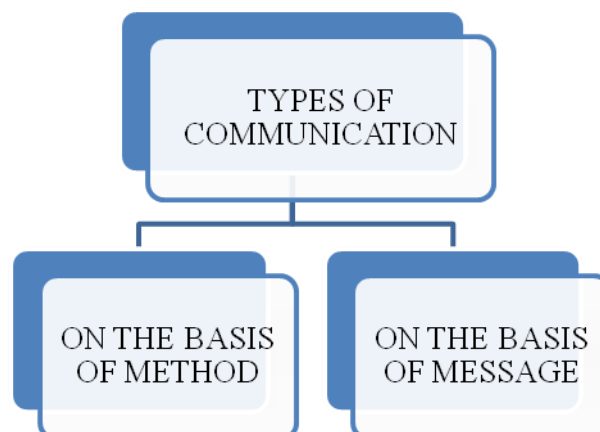
Through various effective communication mechanisms like letters, circulars, meetings conferences, telephone, cellular phones etc., these differences are minimized and activities are properly coordinated to achieve organizational goals. The individuals or groups come to know what others are doing and what is expected from only through communication.

❖ Development of managerial skills:

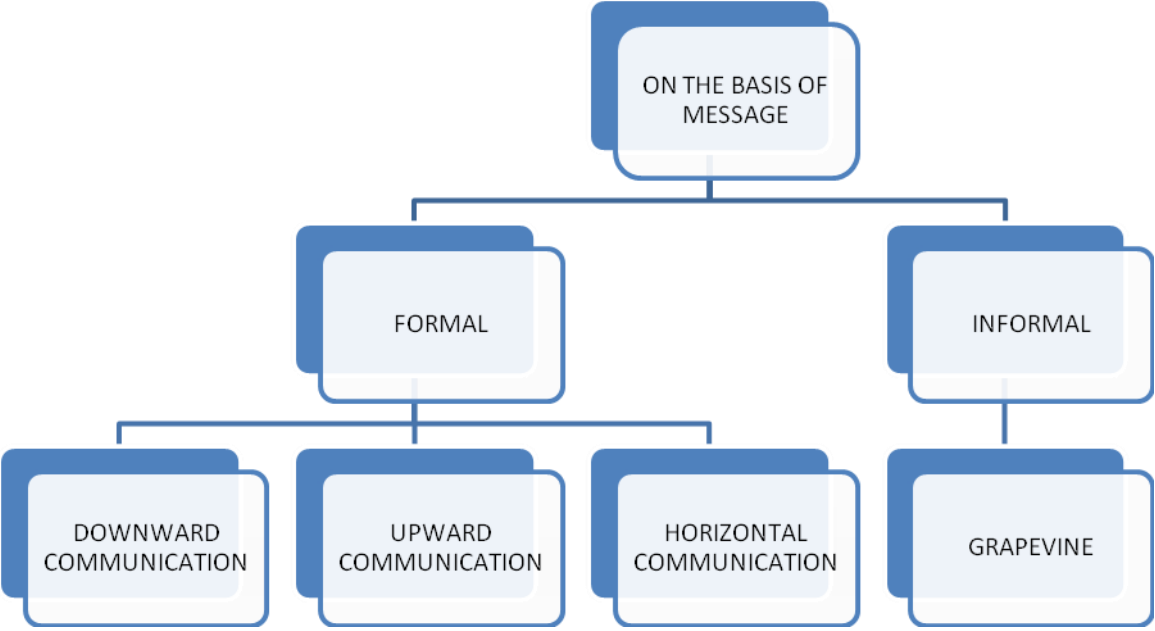
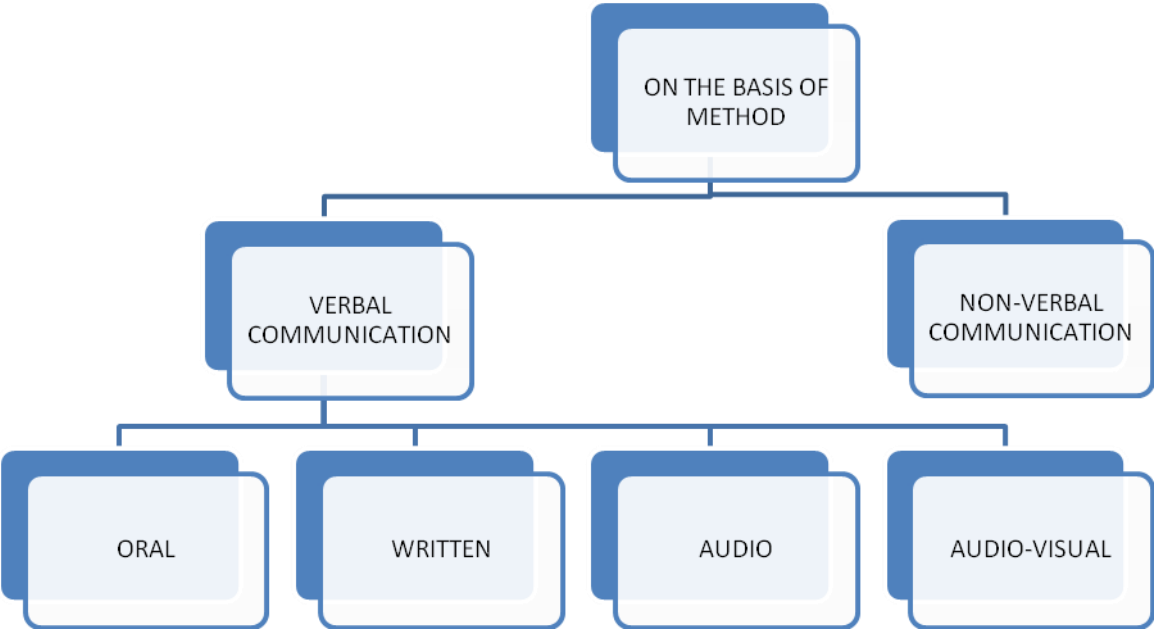
Communication helps managers to understand human behaviour at work. Communication of facts, ideas, opinions, information, feelings etc., add value to the knowledge of managers about various happenings, in the organization and behaviour of people. Thus, communication is a process of learning.

3.3 Communication patterns in administration

Figure 01 : Types of communication



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3.3.1 On the basis of method

3.3.1.1 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 communication

– Written communication:

The written form requires the drafting of letters and circulars, proposals, memos and business reports of varying kinds and includes: Minutes of Meetings, Report, E-mail...etc.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Written Communication

– Advantages:

- It allows us sufficient time to plan the document we propose to create taking into account the purpose for which it is being written.
- 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.
- 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.

– Disadvantages

- It takes much more time to compose a message in writing. Therefore it is expensive.
- It also tends to suffer from the limitations of the sender, like his assumptions or prejudices, and the delayed feedback makes it worse.
- The inadequacies of the first message may only be revealed when the reply arrives.

– Oral Communication

Research studies have shown that 80% of communication by executives of a company is done in the oral form. The modes of Oral Communication include Telephone/Mobile phone, Messages, Face-to-face discussion, Meetings/Conferences Presentations, ...etc

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Advantages and disadvantages of oral communication

As stated earlier, oral communication is the most frequently used means of transmitting messages in Administration. The reasons for the popularity of oral communication are its advantages They are as follows:

– Advantages

- Oral Communication Saves Time.
- Oral Communication Provides the Opportunity for Feedback and Clarification.
- Oral Communication helps to transfer the Message more appropriately with Suitable Tone, Voice, and Use of Words.
- Oral Communication is an Effective Tool of conviction in Management.
- Oral Communication is very effective in Communicating with Groups.
- Oral Communication is Economical also.
- Withdrawal of Oral Communication is comparatively an Easy Task.

– Disadvantages:

- Oral communication depends on the mental structure of sender/receiver.
- Communication is not a one-sided activity: It has to be kept in mind that communication is a two-way process.
- Bad/partial Listening Affects Message: Oral communication is totally dependent on listening. Therefore, some meetings go on endlessly without producing proportionate results.
- There is No Record or Legal Liability: Oral communication generally has no record or legal liability. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to confirm important oral messages in writing.

– Visual Communication

Visual communication could be with words, pictures, or a combination of both. It includes the following: Graphs, Tables/charts, Maps, etc.

The main advantage of using visual communication is that the message conveyed to the receiver is easily remembered using these modes and it remains in his memory for a longer period too. However, using this mode is also expensive which is its major disadvantage.

– Audio-Visual Communication

The rapid advancements taking place in the field of information technology have brought about unprecedented changes in the communication systems the world over. In this scenario, the modes of audio-visual communication assume more importance. The means of audio-visual communication include Television/video/cable, Video conferencing...etc.

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The greatest advantage of this model is that it aims at stimulating the senses of both sights and hearing simultaneously and thus enhances the effectiveness of the message. The other advantages are its wider reach and the fact that the message is remembered for a much longer time. Here again, the high- cost factor involved is becoming the greatest disadvantage.

3.3.2 On the basis of message

3.3.2.1 Formal communication

Formal communication refers to official communication, which takes place through a chain of commands. It flows in formally established channels & is concerned with work related matters. Members of the enterprise are expected to communicate with one another strictly as per channels laid down in the structure.

The various means of carrying out formal communications in an organisation are as follows:

- a. Telephone
- b. Computers
- c. Postal system
- d. Written instructions in : memos, letters, minutes, notice boards, company's magazines, journals, newsletters, pay slips etc.
- e. Broadcast messages over public address systems.
- f. Briefs in meetings addressed by senior officers to subordinates.
- g. Inter-departmental committees.
- h. Interviews to give instruction or information or to review a subordinate's performance.
- i. Joint committees of management and employees.
- j. Suggestion boxes.
- k. Questionnaires.

Many organisations experience communication issues not due to a lack of awareness of the significance of communication within the organisation, but rather due to the failure to establish the necessary formal arrangements to facilitate the flow of communication at the desired levels and directions, whether laterally or upward. This prevents management from accessing the ideas and opinions of employees, as well as complicating departmental coordination. Many organisations have communication problems not because they do not know the importance of communication in an organisation but because they fail to make necessary and formal arrangements for communication to flow at the desired directions and levels, either laterally or upward thus preventing management from having access to the employees' ideas and opinions and also making departmental co-ordination very difficult.

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The formal communication may be divided into three categories, which are given as follows:

❖ Downward Communication:

Under this system, communication flow from the top management downward to be operating level. It may also be called a communication from a superior to a subordinate. It follows the line of authority from the top to the bottom of the organization hierarchy. Downward communication consists of plans & policies, orders, and instructions, procedures etc.

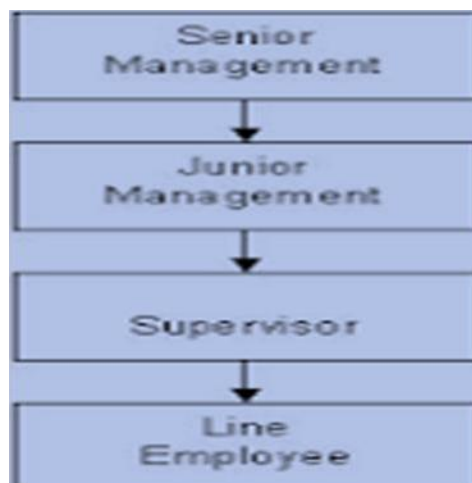


Figure 02: Downward Communication

Table 01: Advantage and disadvantage of downward communication

Advantage	Disadvantage
Discipline	Lack of vision & arbitrary decision making can prove detrimental and harmful to the organization
Implementation of orders happen efficiently	Balance in sharing information is important so is judicious use of discretion
Tasks & positions can be well defined	Delay implementation of decisions
Clarity in the minds of employees about their responsibility, avoids confusion	Oral communication leads to information loss, distraction & lack of accountability
It helps in uniting different level of authority & brings in team spirit	Absence of feedback mechanism can lead to frustration, lack of trust in authority & feel exploited

Source: Business Communication,

<https://www.rapodar.ac.in/pdf/elearn/Business%20Communication%20Semester%20I%20notes.pdf>

❖ Upward Communication:

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It means the flow of information from the lower levels of the organization to the higher level of authority. It passes from subordinate to superior as that from worker to supervisor, supervisor to the manager, manager to the general manager & so on. This communication includes opinions, ideas, suggestions, complaints, grievances, appeals, reports etc.

It is very important as it serves as the feedback on the effectiveness of downward communication. Management is able to know how well its policies, plans & objectives are followed by those working at lower levels of the organization. It keeps the management informed about the progress of the work & difficulties faced in performance. Based on upward communication, the management revises its plans & policies & makes further planning.

Figure 03: Upward Communication



Table 02: Advantage and disadvantage of upward communication

Advantage	Disadvantage
Employees participation	Failure on the part of subordinates to take initiative & participate in the decision making
Trust , emotional bonding, understanding & cooperation between management & employees	Long line of authority, inability of the seniors to listen or to act, create barriers
Employees enthusiastic	Delays due to slow transmission, distortion of communication further hamper the process
Authority earns subordinates cooperation response to management's call	Employees failure to handle upwards communication

Source: Business Communication,

<https://www.rapodar.ac.in/pdf/elearn/Business%20Communication%20Semester%20I%20notes.pdf>

❖ **Horizontal/ lateral Communication:**

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The transmission of information and understanding between people on the same level of organization hierarchy is called the horizontal communication. This type of communication is also known as lateral, sideward, or crosswise communication. Usually, it pertains to inter departmental managers working at the same level of organization or among subordinates working under one boss. Horizontal communication speeds up information and promotes mutual understanding.

It enables the managers working at the same level to exchange information and co-ordinate their activities without referring all matters to the higher level of management. The horizontal communication is generally of an informal nature. Whenever a departmental head requires some information from another departmental head, he tends to contact him directly. However, this type of communication can be oral or written.

Need for:

- To exchange official information
- To create understanding and team spirit among members
- To solve difficulties
- To seek and extend co-operation
- To save time when quick decisions have to be made

Figure: 04: Horizontal/ lateral communication

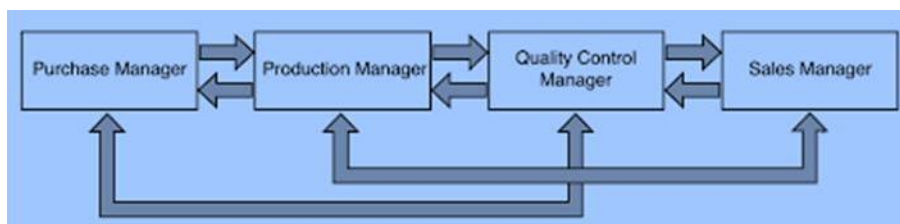


Table 03: Advantage and disadvantage of horizontal/ lateral communication

Advantage	Disadvantage
Helps in clarifying doubts, taking quick decisions & eliminating mistrust	Ungoverned horizontal communication to leads to discipline
It brings about better coordination, builds team spirit and ensure faster implementation of decisions	Employees tend to waste precious time arguing and debating over issues and decisions
It also check the grapevine	

Source: Business Communication,

<https://www.rapodar.ac.in/pdf/elearn/Business%20Communication%20Semester%20I%20notes.pdf>

❖ **Vertical Communication :**

This type of communication may involve two or more people, or it may flow among

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several different levels in an organisation. It may also flow both up and down the organisation.

3.3.2.1 Informal communication

There is also a great deal of informal communication in an organization, this is described as any interaction or relationship which exists in any organization which is unofficial or unplanned. This communication flows through informal channels and may or may not be work related. Informal communication cuts through the formal organizational structure. Most of us are familiar with the term 'grapevine' used to describe a network of informal communication.

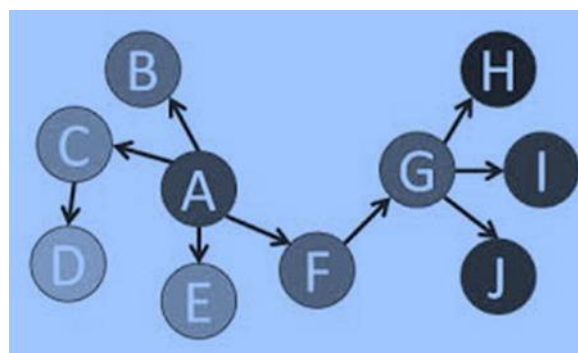
Means of informal communication are as follows:

- a. Conversations between employees at all levels.
- b. A private telephone conversation to facilitate the speedy accomplishment of a task in an organisation. This is usually based on personal or friendly relationship between the officers in the organisation.
- c. Cartoons in the notice boards.
- d. Secret signs and gestures warning other officers of the approach of an officer that is not supposed to be privy to the information or of the approach of a senior manager.
- e. Grapevines or rumours.

This is a great channel of informal communication. It is important to note that when the formal system of communication in an organisation are comparatively inefficient, the informal communication become very active.

So effort should be made to ensure that the formal system of communication in an organisation is functional and effective.

Figure 05: Informal communication



There are channels through which information flow, which is very important for analysing the communication as the element of organizational behaviour, and those are informal group network.

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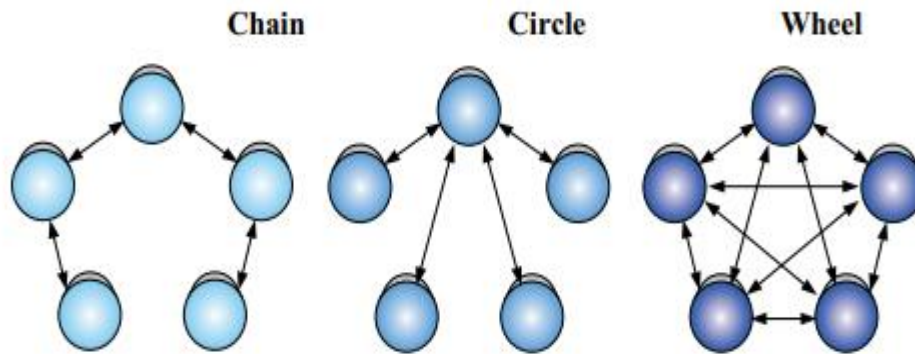
“Informal communication in the organization, in Anglo-American business culture known as “grapevine” is secondary and very complicated communication network that is based on personal contact, and opposed to the system of formal communication it does not follow a particular line settled in advance.”

Since grapevine is not a less important source of information, the managers should acknowledge also the informal communication systems in the organization, and use them for the welfare of their organization.

“Informal communication reflects the employees’ perception concerning the organization. It often carries or asks for information that the management, accidentally or deliberately, has not formally disclosed.”

Grapevine is the plant or creeper on which grapes grow. The grapevine may grow or move in any direction with the support of its tendrils. In the same way, informal communication can move in any direction with the support of informal group.

Figure 6: Three forms of network in small informal groups



Source: Robbins, S. P.: Organizational Behavior, 10-th ed., Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 2003. p. 290.

- ❖ **Chain network:** mainly follows the formal chain of command.
- ❖ **The circle network:** has the leader as the central person for conducting all communications within the group.
- ❖ **The wheel network:** characterized by openness that enables the joint communication of all members of the group.

If we compare the networks in small groups having in mind certain criteria as speed, accuracy, leader emergence and member satisfaction, we would conclude that in order to come to a conclusion, we have to wisely choose a particular form of the communication network depending on the aim we want to achieve. If we appreciate accuracy, then the chain network should be used. The small formal groups circle network is to be used if our aim involves some of its features: great speed, accuracy and high emergence of the leader. Wheel network is fast and enables high member satisfaction.

Table 01: Advantage and disadvantage of informal communication

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Advantage	Diadvantage
Grapevine communication travels fast, It has vast reach	Negative information half truths, personalized accounts of events, gross distortions are passed on by the render
The content because of its immense personal appeal are readily believable	It often leads to lack of motivation & moral of employees

Source : Business Communication,

<https://www.rapodar.ac.in/pdf/elearn/Business%20Communication%20Semester%20I%20notes.pdf>

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4. CONCLUSION

Communication in an administration is indispensable to the survival and efficient management of the organisation. It is the livewire of any organisation. It can be likened to the blood that flows in the veins of the human beings without which the individual dies. Communication is required if results are to be evaluated in terms of what was sought through a given plan. To communicate something to someone involves the emotional, psychological and mental characteristics of both the communicator and the recipient of the information as well as the medium used in such communication.

5. SUMMARY

We have discussed extensively on communications in organisation especially in the administration. We examined the patterns of communication as well as the types of communications in an organisation. We observed the features of formal and informal communication in an organisation. It is hoped that you have gained meaningful information and knowledge in this unit that will help you perform at your optimal in any organisation you may find yourself.

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6. TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

6- 1 Write short notes on the following:

- a. Formal communication
- b. Informal communication
- c. Lateral or horizontal communication
- d. Vertical communication
- e. Downward communication
- f. Upward communication

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CHAPTER 03: ADMINISTRATIVE CORRESPONDENCE

1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Main Content
 - 3.1 Definition of Administrative correspondance and its importance
 - 3.2 The main principles of Administrative correspondance
 - 3.3 Principls of effective communications in Administration
 - 3.4 Barriers to Communication and the ways for overcome this barriers.
4. Conclusion
5. Summary
6. Tutor Marked Assignement
5. References/Further Readings

Communication and Administrative writing

1. INTRODUCTION

The administrative correspondence need an effective Communication. One may ask why the ability to communicate effectively so important to managers. Effective communication, no doubt, is very important in organisation but equally important is what gets communicated and the quality of interaction. Even the most capable and innovative manager is unlikely to perform well without being able to communicate ideas effectively. It is not sufficient for managers to have the knowledge of how tasks are to be performed or what changes are needed to improve effectiveness or efficiency in organisations; managers also must be able to communicate such knowledge and ideas to those people who take part in the routine daily activities of the organisation. Some barriers to effective communication have been identified and discussed. In view of the barriers to communication identified and examined, what can individuals do to minimize the problems and attempt to overcome these barriers? The discussions and suggestions made in this unit may be helpful in answering this question and in making communication more effective in organisations.

2. OBJECTIVES

At the end of this chapter, you should be able to recognize the Administrative correspondence, and To give the students the knowledge and necessary skills required for effective communication in the organisation whether public or private organisation.

3. MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition of Administrative correspondence and its importance

3.1.1 Definition of Administrative correspondence

Correspondence is simply written communication from one person to another for various reasons: to report information, convey feelings, or ask questions. It can be verbal or written. The communication may include memos and emails. It can range from formal to informal. In all cases, it is a two-way exchange of information.

Correspondence is the most important channel through which Business Communication and Official Communication takes place in any written or digital form between two or more parties. It may be in the form of letters, memos, e-mail messages, text messages, fax messages, voicemails, notes etc.

The administrative correspondence is one of the most important tools for achieving organizational goals. The official language of each organization that is evident in its administrative correspondence reflects the level of knowledge, expertise of the staff and managers of the organization. In the administrative organization, types of correspondence such as letters, circulars, the report, the form and the minutes are used for the sake of accuracy and durability as the most formal, legal and most relevant form of communication, and letters and reports are considered to be the best communication tools. Accuracy and speed in writing along with the observance of its administrative

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principles in this field can be considered as one of the main fields of communication and organizational success.

- In Administration, written communication is an important medium for passing information. This form of written communication used for administration purposes is termed Administrative correspondence. The correspondence in Administration communication must happen within the organization.
- The importance of business correspondence lies in the fact that it is the formal way of exchanging information by which professional relationships are maintained between organizations, employees, and clients. Since it is in a written form, it can serve as a future reference for the information being communicated.
- Administrative correspondence is an umbrella term used for any form of written communication that happens in Administration relationships. when we use this term in Business we call it Business correspondence.

3.1.2 Essentials of effective correspondence

Administrative correspondence is essential in realizing organizational goals : Meeting people personally can be quite a time-consuming job hence Administrative correspondence helps organizations with:

- Help in maintaining proper relationship

Now-a-days business activities are not confined to any one area or locality. The businessmen as well as customers are scattered throughout the country. Thus, there is a need to maintain proper relationship among them by using appropriate means of communication. Here business letters play an important role. The customers can write letters to the businessman seeking information about products and businessmen also supply various information to customers. This helps them to carry on business on national and international basis.

- Create and maintain goodwill

Sometimes business letters are written to create and enhance goodwill. Businessmen at times send letters to enquire about complaints and suggestions of their customers. They also send letters to inform the customers about the availability of a new product, clearance sale etc. All this results in cordial relations with the customers, which enhances the goodwill of the business.

- Help in expansion of business

Business requires information regarding competing products, prevailing prices, promotion, market activities, etc. If the trader has to run from place to place to get information, he will end up doing nothing. It will simply result in loss of time. But through business letters, he can make all enquiries about the products and the markets. He can also receive orders from different countries and, thus enhance sales.

3.2 The main principles of Administrative correspondence :

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❖ **Dignity** : This dignity will be reflected in administrative correspondence by:

- Kindness and politeness in the choice of terms: do not use insulting, trivial, slang, vulgar or overly familiar expressions;
- Respect the grammatical rules;
- Style correction: avoid vocabulary errors and syntax errors.

❖ **Respect for the hierarchy**

The administration is a structure organized hierarchically. It means there is a set of relationships of subordination and authority whose respect creates a discipline. Thus, there are terms used by the superior addressing his subordinate and vice versa, terms used by equals.

Ex:

The superior (informs, engages, invites, makes known to, asks to, orders to, prescribes to,) his subordinate.

The subordinate (reports to, exposes to, solicits from, offers to, suggests to, is grateful to,) his superior.

Between equals: I have the honor to inform you that you would like to ...

• **The sense of responsibility**

The sense of responsibility will translate concretely into:

- The refusal of anonymity: any administrative document must be signed and the signature must be accompanied by the name of the signatory, his quality.
- The use of the first person singular, "I", which marks the responsibility of the person who expresses himself. The indefinite and personal pronouns "We" are not used in administrative writing.

However, we sometimes find the personal pronoun "we" in certain regulatory texts or in minutes. In this case, it is a plural of majesty (for the sovereign) or of modesty (for the representative

of State...).

• **Prudence**

It will result in the use of the conditional whenever it comes to the decision of an authority other than his own. Prudence is necessary because any fault, any error noted, in writing, will be imputed by the public to the whole administration.

• **Objectivity**

The administration represents the general interest and not individual interests. It must be impartial and not express personal feelings.

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- **Courtesy**

This is the direct consequence of objectivity.

- **Precision and accuracy**

An administrative document is a working document. He must :

- Be understood in the same way by potential readers;
- Express with Prudence anything that involves hazards;
- Expose with accuracy and precision all that is certain and verified in the official language of the country.

The information allowing the document to be identified and its antecedents to be traced (date, registration number, subject, references, identity of signatory and addressee) are obligatory.

- **Clarity, conciseness, efficiency**

These qualities are necessary because the administrative document is a working document. It is only necessary to say what is necessary, using the form expressing exactly the facts or the thought and discarding the unnecessary

- **A specific formal presentation**

The main elements are as follows: the identity of the data entry operator, the stamp or attachment, the place of origin and the date, the address, the subject, the reference, the attachments, the amplification and signature.

3.3 principals of effective communications in Administration

In any business environment, adherence to the seven Cs and the four Ss helps the sender in

transmitting messages with ease and accuracy.

3.2.1 The Seven Cs

Table 01: The Seven Cs

Cs	Relevance
Credibility	Builds trust
Courtesy	Improves relationships
Clarity	Makes comprehension easier
Correctness	Builds confidence
Consistency	Introduces stability
Concreteness	Reinforces confidence
Conciseness	Saves time

Source : REW, Vardhaman Mahaveer Open University, Kota, technical report writing in english, <http://assets.vmou.ac.in/REW.pdf>.

- **Credibility**

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If the sender can establish his credibility, the receiver has no problem in accepting his statement. Establishing credibility is not the outcome of a one-shot statement. It is a long-drawn process in which the sender builds his credibility through constant interaction with the receiver so that the latter places trust in the former.

- Courtesy

Courteousness in expression is an essential part of communication. In the business world, almost everything starts with and ends with courtesy. Much can be accomplished if tact, diplomacy and humility are woven in the message.

- Clarity

Clarity of ideas adds much to the meaning of the message. The first stage is clarity in the mind of the sender. The next stage is the transmission of the message in a manner which makes it easy for the receiver to comprehend it. As far as possible, simple language should be used.

- Correctness

At the time of encoding, the sender should ensure that his knowledge of the subject is comprehensive. The encoder should formulate his message according to the level of knowledge, and the educational background of the decoder. In case there is any gap between the formulation and the comprehension of the message, miscommunication can arise. If the sender decides to back up his communication with facts and figures, there should be accuracy in stating the same.

- Consistency

The approach to the subject of communication should, as far as possible, be consistent. If the sender shifts his stand, it might lead to confusion in the mind of the receiver. If a certain stand has been taken, it should be maintained without creating a situation in which the sender is left groping for the actual content or meaning.

- Concreteness

Concrete and specific expressions should be preferred instead of vague and abstract expressions. In continuation of the point on correctness, the facts and figures presented should be specific. Abstractions or abstract statements can cloud the mind of the sender.

- Conciseness

The message to be communicated should be brief and to the point. Weighty language definitely sounds impressive but people would be suitably impressed into doing precisely nothing. As far as possible, only simple and brief statements should be made. Excessive information can only sway the receiver into either a wrong direction or into inaction. However, brevity should not be aimed at the cost of clarity of the message. Be brief only to the extent of conveying the message clearly.

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3.2.2 The Four Ss

Table 01: The Four Ss

Ss	Relevance
Shortness	Economizes
Simplicity	Impresses
Strength	Convinces
Sincerity	Appeals

Source : REW, Vardhaman Mahaveer Open University, Kota, technical report writing in english, <http://assets.vmou.ac.in/REW.pdf>.

An understanding of the four Ss is equally important.

- Shortness

“Brevity is the soul of wit,” is a popular maxim. The same can be said about communication. If the message can be made brief, and verbosity done away with, then transmission and comprehension of messages is going to be faster and more effective. Flooding messages with high-sounding words does not create an impact.

- Simplicity

Simplicity, both in ideas and in the choice of words, reveals clarity in the thinking process. It is commonly understood that when an individual is himself confused then he tries to use equally confusing strategies to lead the receiver into a maze. Clarity in the thinking process can be revealed by using simple terms to express ideas clearly.

- Strength

The strength of the message emanates from the credibility of the sender. If the sender himself believes in a messages that he is about to transmit, there is bound to be strength and conviction in whatever he tries to state. Half-hearted statements or utterances that the sender himself does not believe in add a touch of falsehood or tentativeness to the entire communication process.

- Sincerity

A sincere approach to an issue usually becomes evident to the receiver. If the sender is true and honest, it will be reflected in the manner in which he communicates. If the receiver is keen and observant, he would be able to sense if there is an element of deceit on the part of the sender. It becomes difficult to establish one’s credibility once the receiver loses faith in the sender

3.3 Barriers to Communication and Ways to Overcome this Barriers

3.3.1 Barriers to Communication

Communication plays a major role in developing a relationship. It can also affect the relationship among family members or management in any institute. More specifically, communication influences the effectiveness of instruction, performance

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evaluation, and the handling of discipline problems. Communication should be straightforward. What can make it complex, difficult, and frustrating are the barriers. Miscommunication can originate at three levels: at the level of the transmitter, of the medium, or of the receiver. In technical parlance, anything that obstructs free flow of communication is called noise. Or we may refer to it simply as a 'barriers to communication.

The barriers are physical, sociological and psychological obstacles that interfere with the planning, organisation, transmission and understanding of the message. There are a number of such obstacles that can occur in the process of communication. The natural result of such obstacles or interfering factors is the misunderstanding of the message.

Cushway and Lodge (1999:189) posit that barriers to Communication can come from a number of sources such as the sender, the receiver, the mode of transmission or the feedback mode. The barrier may be with the sender of the message who may be unable or unwilling to communicate the necessary message very clearly, or with the receiver who may not understand the message sent, or there may be environmental factors affecting the condition under which the message is conveyed, such as noise.

Barriers to communication often disturb the communication cycle. Many social psychologists opine that there is 50% to 70% loss of meaning while the message is being conveyed by the sender to the receiver. A few barriers to effective communication in an organization are given below:

- Muddled messages

Effective communication starts with a clear message. Contrast these two messages: "Please be here at about 7:00 tomorrow morning," and, "Please be here at 7:00 tomorrow morning." The difference of one word makes the first message muddled and the second message clear. Muddled messages are a barrier to communication because the sender leaves the receiver unclear about the intent of the sender. Muddled messages have many causes. The sender may be confused in his or her thinking, or may not make efforts to clarify his meaning. Clarifying muddled messages is the responsibility of the sender. The sender hoping the receiver will figure out the right meaning of the message does little to remove this barrier to communication.

- Stereotyping

Stereotyping causes us to typify a person, a group, an event or a thing according to our preconceptions, beliefs, or opinions. For example, basketball players can be stereotyped as tall, green equipment as better than red equipment, football linemen as dumb, Ford as better than Chevrolet, Vikings as handsome, and people raised on dairy farms as interested in animals. Stereotyping replaces thinking, analysis and open-mindedness to a new situation. Stereotyping is a barrier to communication when it

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causes people to act as if they already know the message that is coming from the sender, or worse, as if no message is necessary because “everybody already knows.” Both senders and listeners should continuously look for and question their thinking, conclusions and actions based on stereotyping.

- Wrong Channel

“Good morning,” - an oral channel for this message is highly appropriate. Writing “GOOD MORNING!” on a chalkboard is less effective than a warm oral greeting. In certain cases meeting someone in person is more effective than writing a letter. Physical Barriers One of the major barriers to communication in a workplace are physical barriers. Physical barriers in an organization include large working areas that are physically separated from others. Other distractions that could cause a physical barrier in an organization are the environment, background noise.

- Language

Lack of a common language that is understood by both the sender and the receiver may cause the communication process to fail. Ignorance of the commonly used language is the greatest barrier to effective communication. When a person uses inappropriate words while conversing or writing, it could also lead to misunderstanding between the sender and the receiver.

- Emotions

Your emotions could be a barrier to communication if you are engrossed in your emotions for some reason. In such cases, you tend to have trouble listening to others or understanding the message conveyed to you. A few of the emotional interferences include hostility, anger, resentment and fear.

- Lack of Knowledge of the Subject

If a person who sends a message lacks knowledge of the subject then he may not be able to convey his message clearly. His message could be misunderstood, and this could become a barrier to effective communication.

- Stress

One of the major communication barriers faced by employees in most of the organization is stress. When a person is under immense stress, he may find it difficult to understand the message, leading to communication distortion. At the time of stress, our psychological frame of mind is influenced by our beliefs, experiences, goals and values. In stressful situations we fail to comprehend the message being communicated.

- Poor expression

The power of the expression of the communicator determines the quality of communication. To be effective, the message has to be developed properly into an idea. Lack of conceptual skills results in poor or incomplete communication of the thoughts.

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- Faulty transmission

In an organization the person transmitting the message may be different from the person who conceived the idea. The intent and purpose of the message may not remain intact as it moves from the originator to the transmitter, and might take on an entirely different shape.

- Distance and time

If the distance between the sender and the receiver of the message is more, the communication is not clear and fails. Today, emails fax, and telephones are commonly used to communicate with people living at remote places in the world. If these modern equipments fail, communication is difficult.

3.3.2 Ways to Overcome Barriers to Communication

Effective communication is a two-way process that requires effort and skill by both the sender and the receiver. Here are some ways to overcome them communication barriers:

- Conflicting Versions :

Conflicting interpretations of the same event. If you're in doubt about what someone tells you, get more information from other sources before taking action.

- Poor Timing : Timing is everything in successful communication

- Wait until you've gathered and organized all the information you need to get your point across.
- Choose a time when both you and the other person or group are open, receptive, and ready to communicate.
- Avoid times when anyone involved is under pressure or having a bad day for reasons unrelated to what you need to talk about.

- Poor Listening : Poor listening can sabotage any attempt at communication. We all do it: we hear a little and then "fill in" what we think the rest will be, without really listening to what's actually being said.

- Devote your full attention to the message.
- When discussing serious issues, make sure that you communicated clearly and the receiver understood what you meant.
- Test the listener's understanding of what you said: Ask questions or get listeners to repeat the message back to you in their own words.

- Conflicting Expectations : When everyone shows up with a different idea of what the communication is all about, disaster lies ahead.

- At the beginning of every communication, describe as clearly as possible the reason for the talk or meeting.
- If someone else has begun the communication, make sure you understand the other person's expectations.

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- **Hostility** : When people are angry, it's unlikely that any meaningful communication would take place. Give anger % whether it's yours or the other person's % a chance to cool down, and take whatever steps are necessary to reduce tension.
 - Apologize when you think it is appropriate.
 - When you meet, always discuss first what you both agree on, and then talk about the disagreeemen

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4. CONCLUSION

Communication is the glue that holds an organisation together. It cuts across every activity of human endeavour. Effective communication is very desirable and essential for co-ordination of organisational and or group activities. The interconnection that we seek with others is successfully accomplished through effective communication on many different levels. Misunderstanding that occurs due to ineffective communication could lead to great losses to the organization. Good mastery of effective communication processes and the avoidance of the barriers to effective communication can lead to improved managerial performance in organisations be it private or public organisation.

5. SUMMARY

In this unit we observed that communication is inevitable for the smooth operations of organizations, be it private or public organisation. In this unit we explained effective communication, the various barriers to effective communication, and concluded by giving guidelines to effective communication. We hope you have learnt a lot about communication and how to communicate effectively. This is very essential and is the principal means of achieving various organisational activities.

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6. TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- 6.1 List and explain 15 barriers to effective communication.
- 6.2 Suggest a guidelines to effective communication?
- 6.3 Mention 4 principles of effective communication and briefly explain each of them.
- 6.3 what is the barriers to communication and how we can overcome this barriers.

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CHAPTER 04: THE ADMINISTRATIVE WRITING

1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Main Content
 - 3.1 The basics of a formal letter
 - 3.2 Official letter writing
 - 3.3 The letter in personal form (Demi Official Letter)
 - 3.4 Structure of Effective Letters
 - 3.5 Features of a good Letter
4. Conclusion
5. Summary
6. Tutor Marked Assignement
5. References/Further Readings

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1. INTRODUCTION

Say all you have to say in the fewest possible words and in the plainest possible words or your reader will be sure to skip them or he will certainly misunderstand them.

-GEORGE ORWELL

Formal letter writing is undoubtedly one of the most challenging types of letter format. When putting it together, often you are addressing a person or organization with whom you are not familiar and the quality of your content, including spelling and grammar will be strongly scrutinized.

2. OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, the students will be able to:

- Understand what business letters are ;
- Understand the difference between business and personal letters ;
- Know the layout of business letters ;
- Understand the form of Layout of Letter.

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3. MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Basics of a formal letter

Formal letter writing is undoubtedly one of the most challenging types of letter format. When putting it together, often you are addressing a person or organization with whom you are not familiar and the quality of your content, including spelling and grammar will be strongly scrutinized.

There are two types of letters : the first is the official letter (Administrative letter), the second is demi official letter (Personal letter).

3.2 Official letter writing

Letters, like minutes, memo etc are forms of communication from one individual or group to another. Letters are used to convey decisions, give directives on the required course of action or to let people know of certain new developments. Letters differ from minutes or memo in that they, unlike minutes or memo invariably insist on certain formalities such as the inclusion of the addresses of both the author and the addressee, indication of the date of the letter at the right hand side, insertion of headings and so on. The use of abbreviations is not encouraged in official letters. It is advisable to write words in full. Most letters are written on prepared letter-headed papers which have already printed address of the sender, columns for Reference Number, and Date. The format of any letter will, to a large extent, depend on the addressee. If the letter is from one ministry to another the format is similar. But if it is from a Ministry or Parastatal to an individual or organization outside government, the format is different. If a letter is going from one ministry to another the person who signs it will equally depend on the seriousness of the subject matter and who is supposed to treat it at the receiving end. It is advisable for a senior or a high-ranking officer to sign any letter that is considered very important or has serious under tone. An officer may be directed in a minute to issue a letter but his signature should not be appended in the said letter without prior clarification from the officer that issued such directives. The signatory to a letter is considered very serious in certain public offices such as the Armed Forces. A lower ranking officer should never sign a letter that is meant for the attention of a very senior officer. When in doubt as to whose signatory the letter should bear, seek clarifications from your superiors. Paragraphs should be numbered in letters except the first paragraph. The concluding paragraph bears "Thank you", which, in this instance, appears to be shortest paragraph.

3.2.1 File copy

A copy of any letter sent out by an officer should be made and put in the file and appropriately paged as a file copy. The importance of file copy is enormous. For instance, it provides an easy reference point for the subject matter dealt in it. It is also an invaluable guide for officers who may be posted newly to any ministry or establishment of government long after the originator of the letter had left the organization. In the file copy, it is also indicated the date when the file should be brought up (b.u) for a reappraisal

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of the content of the letter.

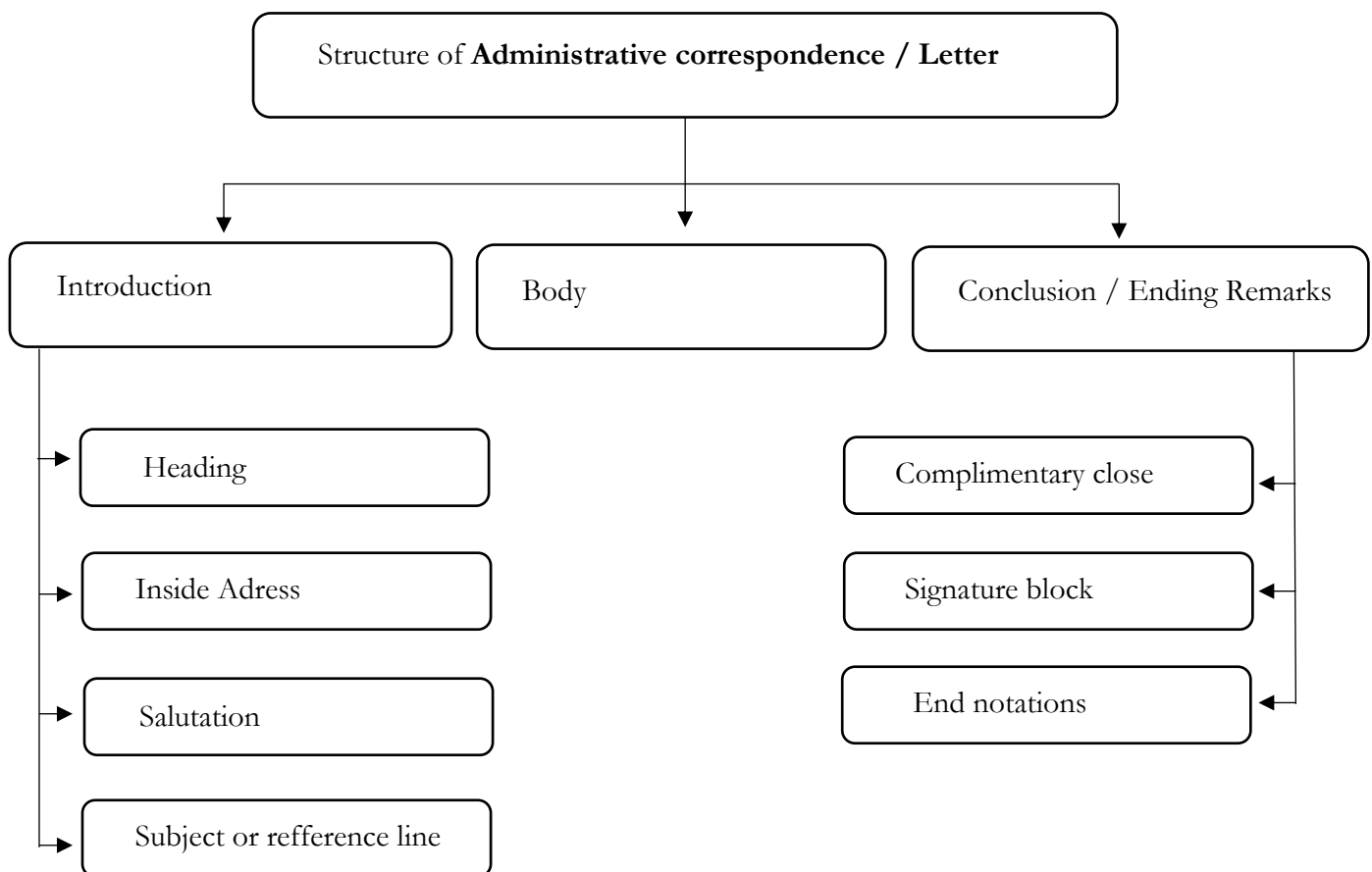
Officers should also keep their own ‘flimsy copies’ for future reference.

3.2.2 Structure of Administrative letter

Any standard Administrative letter has certain common components and formulas which are recognised and handled accordingly. A basic Administrative letter is composed in three steps:

Introduction, body of the letter and conclusion (ending remarks).

Figure 01 : Structure of Official letter (Administrative letter)



Source : Ghafil, N. Translation of Business and Administrative Correspondence, https://uomustansiriyah.edu.iq/media/lectures/8/8_2020_02_24!09_24_24_PM.pdf.

3.2.2.1 The Introduction :

The introduction block states the reason for writing the letter. The introduction helps the reader to understand in which context the letter should be considered.

The introduction includes :

- Heading ;
- Inside address ;
- Salutation ;
- Subject or reference line.

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An administrative letter has a different format from the other types of letters. There are some essential parts of an administrative letter, that would not look like a business letter. The essential parts of a business letter are

- **Heading:** The heading of an administrative letter includes the name and postal address of the administration, E-mail address, website address, telephone number, fax number and trade mark or logo of the administration (if any). Firms prefer to use printed letter heads these days. Many firms prefer to put much of the above information at the bottom of the letter head. This basically saves the top of the page from looking cluttered. But the firm's name should always be at the top. The name and address of the firm are usually at the centre of the page, although the address may be optionally given at the right side of the page. While writing the address, if the building number or the lane number is being mentioned, no comma is required. The main purpose is to make the letter head as neat and impressive as possible.
- **Date:** The date is normally written on the right-hand side corner below the heading, although it is sometimes typed or written close to the left margin as well. There is a proper format for writing the date as well. Any of the following may be used: 15th May, 20– or 15 May, 20– or May 15, 20–. It is necessary, while writing the date, to avoid using abbreviations and cutting short the year as '09 or '10. 3.
- **Reference:** The reference number indicates a particular number allotted to the letter. It helps in future reference and correspondence. This is a very important number, especially where a large volume of correspondence is being handled. Reference number is given on the left-hand corner after the heading, usually opposite to the 'date' and in the same line.
- **Inside address:** The inside address includes the name and full address of the person or the firm to whom the letter is addressed. This is written on the left-hand side below the reference number. The name of the receiver should be prefixed with courtesy titles. If the letter is to an individual, then add Ms., Mrs. or Mr. and if the letter is to a firm, then it should be addressed to the responsible head, e.g., the secretary, the chairman, etc. In case, the letter is addressed to a firm and no particular head is known, then add 'Messrs or M/s'. For example:

M/S Nisha Enterprises
Nisha Complex 51, Nehru Place
New Delhi– 110019
OR Ms. Nisha Chopra
Nisha Enterprises
Nisha Complex 51, Nehru Place
New Delhi– 110019

The inside address is exactly similar to the one written on the envelope.

- **Subject:** It is customary to state in brief the subject of the letter. It is given to attract the receiver's attention immediately and enable him to understand what the letter is

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about. If any reference has to be made to a previous letter, then it is also mentioned.

For example:

Subject: Your order No. D124 dated March 10, 2009.

The subject is written or typed either on the left side below the inside address or five spaces away from the left margin so that it stands out prominently from the other parts.

- **Salutation:** Salutation is a way of greeting the receiver. It is written below the inside address next to the left margin. The words to be used for salutation depend on whom the letter is addressed to. For example:

Sir or Madam	For official correspondence with government
Dear sir or Dear Madam	This is the most commonly used salutation for Business letter
Dear Mr. Kat or Dear Mrs. Kant	This type of salutation is used if you are familiar with the receiver.

The salutation may or may not end with a comma.

3.2.2.2 Body of letter

This comes after the salutation. The body of the letter is the most important part and the most difficult to write as well, it is to be divided into three paragraphs.

- **Opening paragraphs or the introductory paragraph :**

The introductory part deals with the message of the letter and reference to any previous correspondence. This paragraph should attract the attention of the receiver such that he feels inclined to read the entire letter with full concentration and interest. If you fail here, the purpose is lost. Never begin your letter with stereotyped openings. The purpose of this part is to create interest in the receiver.

- **Main part or the main body :** It is the longest part of the letter and therefore should be very carefully written to avoid language errors and monotony. Care should be taken to avoid ambiguous words and to ensure that no relevant details are left out. Moreover, the main paragraph must be edited carefully before a final copy is made.
- **Concluding or the closing part :** it is an important part as opening one. It should flow naturally from the main part towards a conclusion. The purpose is to motivate the receiver for the action that the sender wants. The language must be friendly yet forceful, gentle yet firm. Conclusion should be made on a positive note. At the end, terms like thank you, with warm regards, etc. Should be used.

3.2.2.3 Conclusion of letter

The conclusion contains information about intended next steps and actions, what you would like to happen in the future. The writer should provide a call for future action. This can be a chance to talk in person, a follow-up letter or more. It's important to make it clear that you would expect the next step from the person reading your business letter.

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- **Complimentary close:** This is a formal yet polite way of closing the body of the letter using respectful phrases. As we generally call it, a complimentary close or subscription must be in accordance with the salutation that has been used.

Table 1 explains how it may be written:

Table 01 : Complimentary close for an administrative letter

Salutation	Subscription	Remarks
Dear sir Dear sirs Dear Madam Dear Mesdames	Yours faithfully	The most common formal subscriptions for administrative letter
Dear sir Dear sirs Dear Madam Dear Mesdames	Yours truly	Less formal, used for persons who are acquainted with each other
Sir Gentlemen Mesdames	Yours respectfully	To be used while addressing superiors.
Dear Mr.Suraj Dear Ms Nisha	Yours Sincerely	To be used for persons known to each other. This is used very commonly in business letters to show informal relations.

Source : JAIN, Unit 04, Written communication,

<https://fr.scribd.com/document/766949090/Unit-4>.

- **Signature:** Even if the entire letter is typed, the signature is usually hand written and should be legible. Below the signature, the name and designation of the sender are typed.

For example:

Yours faithfully

(Signature)

Yash Chopra

Head– Marketing

OR

Yours faithfully For M/s Chopra & Sons

(Signature)

Yash Chopra

Head– Marketing

- **Enclosures:** Quite often there may be documents to be sent along with a letter. The documents may be a cheque, a draft, bills, receipts, invoices, order forms, CV etc. In such a case, the mention of the documents should be made in the letter as well, after the signature near the left-hand margin.

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For example:

Encls: Two

OR

Encl:

1. A cheque for` 10,000 (Ten Thousand Only) drawn on PNB.
2. A copy of the order from.

Even in the case of no enclosures, it is customary to mention as follows:

Encl: NIL.

- **Copy circulation:** This is required when copies of a letter are to be sent to some other people as well apart from the actual receiver. They may be marked as follows:

CC: Mr. Kant

OR

CC: The Manager, XYZ Company.

- **Postscript (PS):** PS (Latin: Postscriptum) is required when the writer wishes to add something in the body of the letter. This is also used to convey some important information but in a line. The person who has signed the letter must sign again, otherwise PS is meaningless. For example: PS Myheartiest felicitations on your assuming the charge of the department (Signature)

OR

PS We provide 2–year on-site warranty. (Signature)

- **Reference initials:** These days, it is customary to type the initials of two people, the first who has dictated the letter and the second who has typed the letter. This is done towards the end of the letter and close to the left-hand margin.

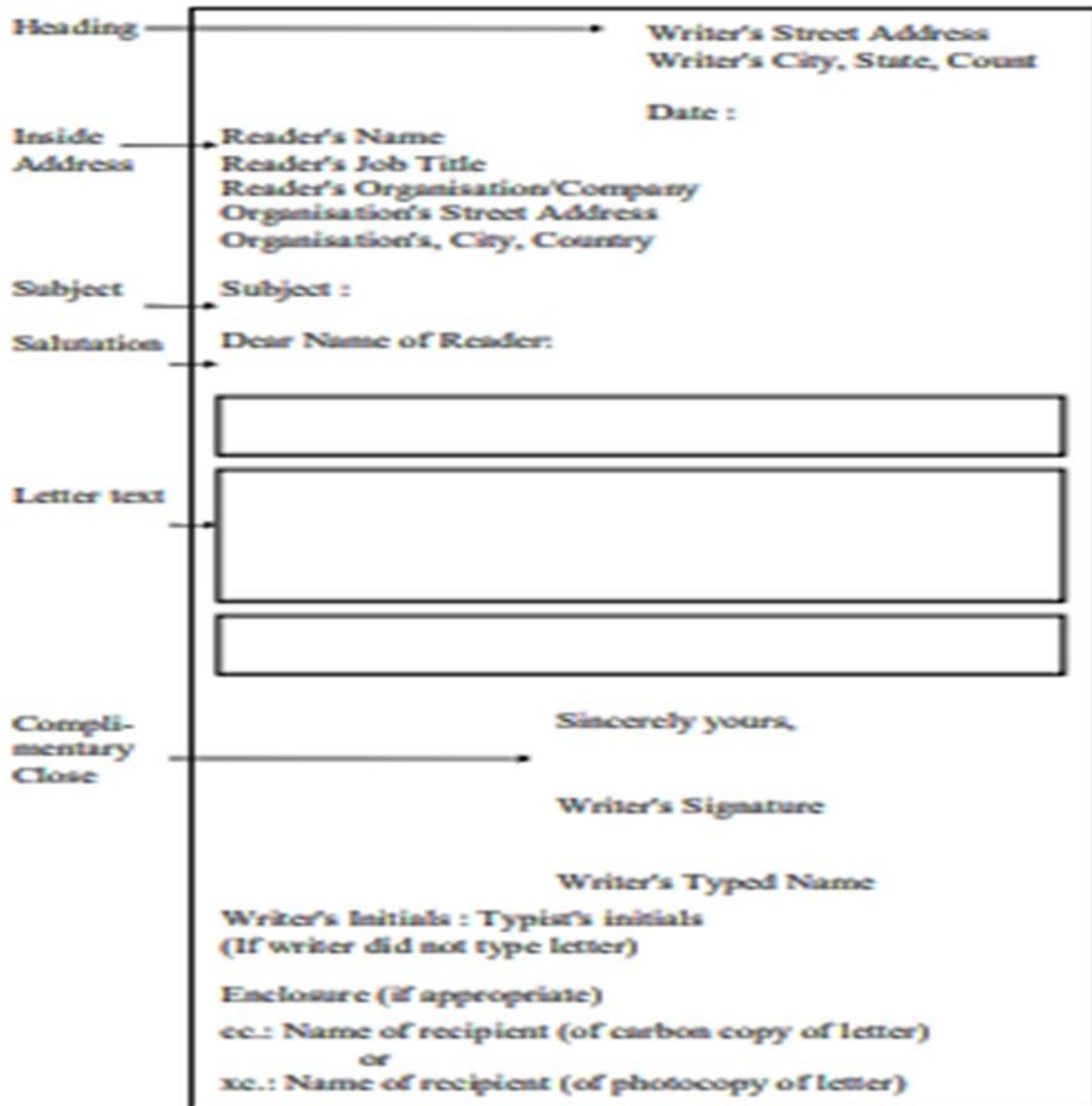
For example:

R.K./S.K.

This explains that R.K. has dictated the letter and S.K. has typed it.

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Figure 02 : Letter form



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Figure 03 : Letter form

Your Contact Information

Your Name

Your Address

Your City, State Zip Code

Your Phone Number

Your Email Address

Date

Recipient's Contact Information

Name

Title

Company

Address

City, State Zip Code

Salutation

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Body of Letter

The first paragraph of your business letter should provide an introduction to why you are writing. Then, in the following paragraphs provide more information and details about your request. The final paragraph should reiterate the reason you are writing and thank the reader for reviewing your request.

Closing:

Respectfully yours,

Signature:

Handwritten Signature (for a hard copy letter)

Source : Pandey, R. Unit -3 : Written Communication, microtek college of management and technology study notes of bca semester 1, business communication,

https://microtek.ac.in/Adminpanel/MicroData/facultynotes/MCMT_BCA-_COMMUNICATION_1.pdf.

3.2.3 Layout

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The parts of letters described above are arranged and aligned in different ways. There are several formats for writing professional letters properly. We focus on two most common ways to format a traditional business letter: indented form (used mainly in the UK) and block form (used mainly in the US). Knowing what form to use you can show your manners and choose the right format depending on the country you are sending your letter to.

Figure 04 : Different forms of Administrative letter

Indented form (specific for the UK)

The diagram shows a rectangular box representing a letter. At the top right, the text 'Sender's address' is right-aligned. Below it, 'Date' is centered. On the left side, 'Receiver's name', 'Address', and 'Dear _____' are left-aligned. Below these are several horizontal lines representing the body of the letter. At the bottom right, 'Closing word(s)' is right-aligned, followed by a blue signature and the text 'Typed signature'.

Block form (specific for the US)

The diagram shows a rectangular box representing a letter. At the top left, the text 'Sender's address' is left-aligned. Below it, 'Date' is left-aligned. On the left side, 'Receiver's name', 'Address', and 'Dear _____' are left-aligned. Below these are several horizontal lines representing the body of the letter. At the bottom right, 'Closing word(s)' is right-aligned, followed by a blue signature and the text 'Typed signature'.

Source : Dorogikh, R.V, Teplova, L.I. (2017). How to write formal letters, Study guide for students of english, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Sevastopol, p.11.

3.2.3.1 Indented form

- It is the oldest style of writing formal letters. In this form, the first line of each paragraph is indented (written leaving some spaces from the left margin) one-half inch.
- The Sender's address is right-justified (i.e. the left edge of the address is aligned with the center of the page).
- The Date is typed so that it lines up underneath the Sender's address.
- The Receiver's name and address and salutation are left-justified.
- The Receiver's name is followed by a comma (e.g. Dear Mr Jones,).
- The Subject line (if included) is centred.
- Paragraphs in the body of the letter are indented with no space line between paragraphs.
- Valediction and Signature are right-justified and even with the address and date above, as illustrated here.
- Notations (if included) are flush left.
- Date indication and punctuation used in the indented form are specific for the UK.

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- Lines between paragraphs are skipped

3.2.3.2 Block form

- All the elements are left-justified. The text is single spaced, with no indent at the tops of the paragraphs.
- Date indication and punctuation used in the block form are specific for the US.
- The Receiver's name is followed by a colon (e.g. 'Dear Mr Jones:').
- Lines between paragraphs are skipped.

3.3 The letter in personal form (Demi Official Letter)

It is also called as Demi-Official Letter (DO Letter), because addressed to a public authority or an individual. The object of this correspondence is primarily intended to serve a particular interest. The presentation of a letter in personal form differs from that of the letter in administrative form.

3.4 Structure of Effective Letters

There is an acceptable structure for writing professional letters as noted in the guidelines below:

- Your return address and the current date needs to be placed at the beginning of the letter - either top left corner, tabbed or flushed right in the upper right-hand corner of the letter. Do not include your name or telephone number in this section.
- The employer's address should be placed at the left margin before the salutation. The inside address includes the name, title, department, and complete address of the organization to whom you are writing.
- The salutation is the formal greeting of the letter. "Dear Mr." or "Dear Ms." preceding the individual's last name is appropriate. The punctuation following the salutation can be a colon (:) or comma (,). Do not use "Mrs." unless you have seen this title used by the individual in question. Do not use "To whom it may concern" or "Dear Sir/Madam" as it will appear you have written a form letter. If you do not have the name of an individual, you may use "Dear Human Resources".
- The body of the letter comes after the salutation. The body can be three to five paragraphs in length depending upon the content and intent of the letter.
- Paragraphs can be indented five spaces or block style can be used. The text within each paragraph is single-spaced with double-spacing between each paragraph.
- The closing follows the body of the letter. It is aligned with your return address and current date that opened the letter. A formal closing, such as "Sincerely," is appropriate. Three to four blank lines are inserted and type your formal name as it appears on your resume.
- Above your typed name, sign your name in blue or black ink. Other colors of ink and pencils will not photocopy well.

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- If information is to be enclosed, (i.e. a resume or transcript) then it is appropriate to place the word "Enclosure:" at the left margin followed by the name(s) of the document(s) enclosed.

Figure 04 : Exemple of Demi official Letter

Enter Name of Person, Enter Designation Tele. No.: Enter Telephone Number	D.O. No. Enter Demi-Official Number GOVERNMENT OK INDIA (Bharat Sarkar) Department of Enter Name of the Department (Enter Name of the Vibhag) Enter Place the Enter Date
My dear/ Dear Shri....	
We propose to draw up a model scheme for.....A copy of the online prepared in this connection is enclosed.	
I should be grateful if you would let me have your comments as soon as possible. I may add that we intend circulating the drafts scheme to all departments under due course for their comments.	
Yours sincerely	
Enter Name of person . Enter Designation Department of Enter Name of the Department (Enter the Name of the Vibhag) Enter Address.	Enter Name of Person signing

Source : Demi Official Letter, <https://fr.scribd.com/doc/308816991/Demi-Official-Letter>

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3.5 Features of a good Letter

Letter Writing An administrative letter is quite different from other letters that we read or write in terms of content, format and other features. Care should be taken in writing an administrative letter to avoid any miscommunication or incomplete communication. There are some important or essential features of an administrative letter as:

- **Clarity of expression:** Use simple and direct language. Avoid repetition. An administrative letter should be written in lucid and clear language so that the receiver is able to understand what the sender wishes to convey. Ambiguous language should be avoided at all cost so that the meaning is clear. A good correspondent should organise the information in a clear, correct, logical and impressive manner. Confusing the customer hampers business relationships.
- **Accuracy:** Verify your facts and figures in advance before writing. All facts and figures mentioned in a business letter should be accurate. Remember that any false statements may lead to loss of business and even legal action in extreme cases. Accuracy also implies that the language written is grammatically correct. Errors in written correspondence are never appreciated.
- **Simplicity:** Using words for which the receiver needs to turn pages of a dictionary would not help the business but put off the customer. Hence business letters should be written in correct but simple and lucid language.
- **Grammar:** Weak grammar mars the quality of a letter. Use correct punctuation marks, Avoid slangs. Use your Dictionary when in doubt.
- **Courtesy:** All communications must be worded politely. Even the reply to a discourteous writer should be couched in courteous terms, Though formal, a business letter should also be courteous, respectful and sensitive. Courtesy wins the heart of the reader. Being courteous and respectful can help even if there is a dispute to be settled.
- **Headings:** Drafts of minutes, briefs, letters, etc should as a rule, have headings which give an idea of the matter in the letters.
- **Line Spacing:** Reasonable spacing is used in typed letters so that there is ample space for amendments. Letters should be typed only on one side of the typing sheet or already used or discarded sheets.
- **Discretion:** Discarded papers containing classified information should never be used for letter.
- **Designation:** After drafting a minute or letter for the superior officer, the drafting officer should remember to write the superior officer's name and not his/her own name as the author. It is an offence in the civil service to claim credit for a draft you made for your superior officer.

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- **Filing:** The subordinate should put the draft in a file before sending the reply back to the superior officer. In the absence of the main file use a Temporary File marked ("T File).
- **Completeness:** Business letters should be able to provide all information that is necessary for the receiver to know or which the sender wants the receiver to be aware of. Incomplete information is never appreciated and the customer may feel that the company is hiding facts on purpose. And if the letter is from the customer to the company and the information regarding an order is incomplete, it will delay the delivery.
- **Conciseness:** Time is very precious for the receiver as well as the sender. Hence a business letter should be concise but not at the cost of completeness and clarity. Unnecessary repetition should be avoided as lengthy letters are not appreciated; in fact, they irritate the receiver.
- **Relevance:** Only relevant information should be written in an administrative letter. There is no room for irrelevant details hence should be avoided.
- **Convincing power:** The purpose of an administrative letter is to expand business, which means to win customers. Hence a business letter should be highly convincing. A correspondent should have a very good power of expression so that he/she creates a letter that is impressive, effective and of course convincing. The power of persuasion of the correspondent is clear from a letter.
- **Neatness:** An untidy letter irritates the receiver. A good business letter, whether handwritten or typed, should be neat and attractive. Untidy paper, overwriting and cutting should be avoided

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4. CONCLUSION

Official letter is a relevant tool and a vehicle to official communication in an organisation. This unit has provided us some fundamental facts which before now have been complex in official letter writing. However, the unit has also analyzed the import of official letters and its usefulness. An in-depth knowledge and understanding of this unit enable anyone reading Administrative Practices and Processes either as a student, practitioner or scholar, to become very proficient and confident in the art of official letter writing and or any form of written communication.

5. SUMMARY

In this chapter, a detailed explanation of all that is involved in official letter writing was undertaken. The various stages involved, in addition to the structure / format of official letter and demi official letter writing were equally clarified. We hope you have learnt enough as to enable you produce a very powerful official letters henceforth.

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6. TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

6. 1 Outline the format of an official letter.

6.2 Identify the differences between an official letter and demi official letter.

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CHAPTER 05: INTERNAL COMMUNICATION DOCUMENTS

1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Main Content
 - 3.1 Memo Writing
 - 3.2 Essence of Memorandum
 - 3.3 Format of a Memo
4. Conclusion
5. Summary
6. Tutor Marked Assignement
5. References/Further Readings

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1. INTRODUCTION

Memorandum is another form of written communication used in both public and private organizations. Memorandum is a highly classified document. It connotes notes, minutes, as well as forms of letters. It is a written documents used informally to convey information, facts or ideas from one person or group to another in an organisation. But for the purpose of the administrative practices and purposes we view memorandum as a specialized and classified government or public agency document used for the presentation of analysed data, facts and ideas to aid government or a particular public organization's decisions either for a more vigorous approach to execute established policies, or exploit revision of existing policies. In this unit, we are going to examine forms of memo, its importance in an organisation as well as the various formats and strategies for writing a memo.

2. OBJECTIVES

It is believed that after studying this unit, students should have acquired added knowledge and skill on the art of memo writing, its importance as a medium of communication in an organisation as well as the various formats and strategies for writing a good memo.

3. MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Memo writing

The word "Memorandum" or Memo is derived from the Latin word "Memorare" which means 'to remember' or 'to' bring to mind'. According to the Chambers Twentieth Century "Memorandum" means "something to be remembered; a note to assist the memory; a summary of the state of a question". Memorandum is used in both public and private organizations to mean notes, minutes, as well as forms of letters and written documents used informally to convey information, facts or ideas from one person or group to another. For the purpose of Administrative practices and processes, a memorandum is viewed as a specialized and classified government or public agency document used for the presentation of analysed data, facts and ideas to aid government or a particular public organization's decisions either for a more vigorous approach to execute established policies, or exploit revision of existing policies.

3.2 Essence of memorandum

Writing a memorandum involves some activities such as: research into a subject problem or situation; data collection and analysis; and policy initiation and analysis, relevant inputs for decision-making at government level. In the public service, government policies and programmes and other crucial issues are examined and analysed in its entirety and thereafter presented in a concise, analytical form as a memorandum. This is done to facilitate decision-making. Memorandum is a highly classified document.

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Normally, it is ‘SECRET’ and regarded as the property of the council or cabinet. The memorandum may be submitted to the appropriate authority in the form of concrete proposals or recommendations for the purpose of obtaining approval or consent, decision or directive on fresh policy or amendment or modification of an existing policy. Similarly, an internal memo serves the same purpose but is restricted to a particular organization.

3.3 Format of a memo

As is the case in a minute, a memo starts by addressing the designation of whom the memo is meant. This is followed by the subject matter of discussion written and underscored so that it will attract attention immediately. In public organisation, the subject matter in a memo is referred to as “Matter at issue”. The first paragraph of the memo deals with the introductory aspect of the matter at issue. Then major components or interrelated areas in the subject matter are, each, discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

The last paragraph is called the PRAYER paragraph. This is a request paragraph in which the approval is sought. In this paragraph, each of the issues discussed in the previous paragraphs should be itemized.

For example: “In view of the foregoing, the Vice Chancellor is requested to kindly consider and approve that:

- A course on Forensic Analysis be organized for the staff of the Audit Unit;
- The ICAN be chosen to run the course
- The course should take place at Intercontinental Hotels, Ikeja, Lagos State;
- Six (6) Audit officers between CONTISS 10 and 13 be released to attend the programme;
- A total sum of Two MILLION Naira (2, 000, 000.00) as analysed in paragraph -
- be released for the course.

Then the final sentence could then be: Submitted please OR submitted for the V.Cs kind consideration and approval please. This is immediately followed by the forwarding officer’s signature, designation and date. It is important to note the following:

- Designations are used in place of names because, in the Service, Officers are known by their designations e.g Dean, SMS meaning Dean, School of Management Sciences OR D.V.C. (Acad.) meaning Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academics), etc.
- Aside from paragraph one, other paragraphs are numbered for cross referencing purposes.
- The word PRAYER could be written in the last paragraph but the important thing is to understand that it means request. For instance, an officer who feels unfairly treated in a disciplinary action or loss or promotion opportunity could appeal for a re-consideration of his case. In this instance, he could use the word Prayer in that

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paragraph. However, people should not be seen to be praying in this paragraph for the “Almighty God or Allah” to make the approving Authority to grant their request.

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4 CONCLUSION

Memo is one of the many forms of written communication in an organisation. A good knowledge of the art of writing memo will enhance the communication skill of the concerned officer. As is the case with other forms of communication discussed above, this is not an easy task to accomplish but constant practice will, however, help subordinates accomplish it.

5. SUMMARY

In this chapter, all the relevant issues concerning memo and memo writing were discussed. We also discussed its importance as well as powerful guidelines on how to write memo in an organisation. We hope that you have acquired the necessary knowledge and skill on this very important medium of communication.

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6. TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Your organisation has just procured sophisticated equipment that will help dictate fraudulent practises in your establishment as well as make it difficult for staff to engage in same. However, there are no competent officers to handle this very costly equipment. Employing new staff to perform this assignment will be very costly for the organisation. You are therefore required, as the head of your unit, to present a memo to the Managing Director of your organisation requesting that five (5) employees of the Audit unit within the salary scale of COUNTIS 12 to 15 be allowed to attend an IT course on Forensic detection and prevention. The content of this course revealed that the attendants will be trained in the use of the sophisticated equipment which your organisation has procured. Present your memoranda on this request.

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Communication and Administrative writing

1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Main Content
 - 3.1 Handling of files
 - 3.2 Handling of correspondence
 - 3.3 Precautionary Measures on Movement of Files and Correspondences
 - 3.4 Priority Classification of Correspondence
 - 3.5 Good Records Keeping
 - 3.6 The Registry
4. Conclusion
5. Summary
6. Tutor Marked Assignment
5. References/Further Readings

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we are going to discuss about documents which are kept as records for the organisational transactions. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, document is an official paper or book that gives information about something or that can be used as evidence or proof of something. In organisations, every official document are recorded and kept in files. Some of these documents are classified as 'official' while some are referred to as 'personal'. A document could be referred to as 'official' if it contains information on the operations of a corporate organization, whether public or private. Since such documents contain information which is the live-blood of any organization, it becomes quite imperative that the formation, circulation, storage and use of such vital components must be done in a standardized and systematic manner, to avoid disastrous consequences.

Considering the importance of information in any organization, care must be taken about the way information in the document is generated, collated, stored, retrieved and disseminated. This is the crux of record management which we discussed in unit one above. Such standardized way of handling records would give the organization the required level of attention and exposure to official documents. In this unit, we will discuss the ideal ways of handling official documents for secure and effective operational performance of the organization.

2. OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, students are expected to have proper knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Official documents;
- Procedure for handling files and correspondences in the office;
- Classified Documents;
- Good record keeping.

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3. MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Handling of Files

File is the medium through which various forms of written communication are channelled from one officer to the other. It is a collection of documents on same subject, enclosed in a jacket for easy identification, circulation, storage and reference. In handling of official documents, all matters on related subject are originated and concluded in the same file. At the end of each transaction, files related to that transaction are stored or kept in the Registry as records of the operations of the organization. In organisations with corporate image, files are classified as “open”, “secret” and “confidential”. These classifications determine the way such files must be handled. There must be kept in place the IN-COMING and OUT-GOING trays for files. All in-coming and out-going files must be subjected to due registration in a ‘File Movement Register’ kept for the purpose. In situations where only one register is used as movement register, the front side is used for outgoing while the back side is used as in-coming. This is usually not advisable because the recorder may mistakenly record one under the other. But when separate registers are kept, the title on the cover of the register guides the recorder. Both the in-coming and out-going registers are drawn up in columns and for the out-going, the following are written: Date; File Reference Number; File subject; and destination. For the in-coming, we require; Date; File Reference Number; File subject matter and where it came from. The file movement register shows the location of any file whenever such a file is needed. Files taken in or out of an office without recording in the file movement register cannot be located with ease. Each file has an action sheet in which the designation of the officer required to treat the file and the page of the file requiring action will be indicated. The Registry officers must ensure that the file is sent to the exact officer indicated in the action sheet and that this is recorded accordingly in the File Movement Register.

3.2 Handling of correspondence

By correspondence, we mean letters that come into or go out of the organization. Individual organizations receive and send their correspondence in different ways. But from whichever way correspondence is received, there is a standard way of handling them. All letters received are recorded in the Correspondence Register. After the Schedule Officer or Chief Executive must have seen the letter, it is treated according to his directive. This may require sending such a letter to a schedule officer/a head of Department/Division etc, for further necessary action. Such out-going correspondence must be recorded in the out-going Correspondence Register, indicating the Reference Number, Subject, Source, date and the Destination. The Correspondence Register is a critical factor in the handling of correspondence in an office because; it shows the movement of all letters at each point in time.

3.3 Precautionary Measures on Movement of Files and Correspondences

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Cases abound where officers request for a file and deny having ever taken such a file. Such a file may be potential exhibit for either police investigation or decision on staff matters, bordering on discipline or crucial personnel issues. To prevent such denials, files are sent to officers with their signature confirming the receipt. This may be recorded in a dispatch book with a column for signature of receiver, or an additional column drawn on the Movement Register, where receiver of files signs. Receivers of correspondence in loose form must sign for their receipt, as a way of compelling the individual to handle the letter with care.

3.4 Priority Classification of Correspondence: In organisations, different ways are used to indicate the speed with which a document should be treated. There are different systems of denoting priority classifications of correspondence in a government office. (Civil Service Handbook (1997)). These can be grouped into three (3) namely:

- Printed Slips (Classification in Words);
- Coloured Slips (Classification by sign);
- Red Xs (Classification by Symbols)

3.4.1 Printed Slips: Printed slips are words printed on paper slips that could be easily attached to any document. The slips have the following words boldly printed on them:

- Immediate or At Once;
- Today
- Urgent

3.4.2 Coloured Slips: Another form of priority classification is by attaching red and green/blue slips to documents requiring speedy attention. Coloured slips are made from coloured papers, cut into small slips that could be attached to documents. A red slip denotes priority immediate attention; while green/blue slip suggests urgent action.

3.4.3 Red X Markings: Priority classifications could be denoted by the marking of Xs with a red pen or pencil on the papers or document requiring urgent action.

- Three (3) Xs i.e. XXX mean Immediate, Priority, At Once
- Two (2) Xs i.e. XX mean Today
- One (1) X i.e. X means Urgent

Whether the officer prefers to use the printed slips, colored slips or Red X markings, the message is for the recipients to treat the accompanying document with a prescribed rate of speed. When a document bears indications of any of the above three status, certain actions and steps are required of the recipient and they are as follows:

- **Immediate / At Once / Priority:** If this action is indicated on any document sent to an officer, it means that the receiver should put aside any other job in hand and treat the one with this priority classification. 'Immediate' classification is an order, to leave every other job and do the one just received. This classification takes precedence over all others. If such a classification is attached to a job, it should be handed personally

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to the officer required to take necessary action. He should, after completing his action, return it by hand to the officer who had ordered the work.

- **Today:** The next in importance is “Today”. This takes precedence over a job marked “urgent” and all unclassified work. The emphasis on this is that the job should be completed and submitted to the officer ordering the work, before the office closes for the day.
- **Urgent:** Urgent classification is superior to all unclassified correspondence. It also denotes that action should be completed on the file or correspondence within 24 hours of its receipt

In order to ensure that priority action is taken on files as requested, files with such classifications should NEVER be placed in an officer’s in-Tray with other files, but rather, on the officer’s desk in front of him, to attract his immediate attention.

3.5 Good Records Keeping

Official documents constitute the records of the organization. The public service operates through extensive use of precedence, decisions and rules. These are kept in files usually made available on demand. In order to engender easy access to such authority documents, documents and correspondence are kept in files separated under subject headings. Hence, all matters of the same subject are put in one file under one subject. Every subject file is usually given a reference number to facilitate easy identification, storage and retrieval. There is usually a File Index, containing the reference number of all files opened and their subject. The file Index serves the purpose of providing information on the existence of a subject file and the last number used for opening files.

Files are stored in metal filing cabinets that are fire-resistant, to prevent total destruction of documents in case of fire outbreak. The filing cabinets should be fitted with key to prevent access of documents by unauthorized persons. Files are usually arranged in numerical order in the filing cabinet for easy retrieval. The hallmark of a good filing system is that which allows good tracking and quick retrieval of documents.

3.5 The Registry

Files are opened, closed and stored in the Registry. We have the Open and Secret / Confidential Registries. Documents kept in the Secret Registry are highly classified and officers working in such places are required to swear an oath in accordance with the Official Secret Act of 1962. Entry into the Secret Registry is often tightly restricted. Documents are stored away in metal cabinets with iron bar fitted across the drawers and provided with padlock. Confidential Registry keeps mostly personal files of staff of the organization. This gives it enhanced security. Whether an open or secret Registry, visitors should not be allowed into them. Staff of the organization may be allowed into the Registry strictly on official business

The purposes of keeping good records in an organization include:

- Calculation of staff benefits;
- Showing details of progress in the service e.g. promotions;

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- Determination of Seniority;
- Determination of incremental dates;
- Training and qualifications obtained ;
- Tax deductions, salary, leave matters etc ;
- Discovery of Ghost Workers.

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4. CONCLUSION

Information is very crucial in Organisations. Organisations operate by use of information gathered in documents. The quality of documents available to the organization determines its performance and ability to withstand the turbulence of business. It is pertinent that organizations must know how the information in their documents are generated, categorized, stored, retrieved and disseminated. Also organization should have at the back of its mind, its competitors and the general public and ensure that they are not given undue advantage, through improper handling of official documents.

5. SUMMARY

Successful conduct of government business will required properly and well documented Official documents. This is because, most of such documents aid decision making by the government. Some official documents are secret whereas others are marked confidential. These are some of the measures to protect government affairs. We explained the procedures for classifying the documents in files and treating correspondences in this unit. We also outlined the advantages of records keeping and the features of good records keeping. We hope you have acquired the necessary knowledge about handling files and official documents in the organisations.

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6. TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- 6.1 Explain the importance and features of good records keeping
- 6.2 Name the different systems of denoting priority classification of correspondence in a government office.

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CHAPTER 06: NARRATIVE, DESCRIPTIVE AND ANALYTICAL DOCUMENTS

1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Main Content
 - 3.1 Definition of Minute
 - 3.2 When not to Minute
 - 3.3 Form and content of a Minute
 - 3.4 What to avoid in Minute
 - 3.5 Tips on Minuting
 - 3.6 Abbreviations in Minuting
 - 3.7 Characteristics and types of Meetings
 - 3.8 Pre-Meeting Activities
 - 3.9 Meeting Activities
 - 3.10 Post Meeting Activities
 - 3.11 Recording and Developing Minutes of a Meeting
4. Conclusion
5. Summary
6. Tutor Marked Assignment
5. References/Further Readings

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1. INTRODUCTION

Minuting, like drafting, is a very important form of written communication in an organisation. It is one of the most widely used and its use cuts across all levels of the organisational hierarchy. In view of the importance attached to this form of formal communication, we deem it pertinent to give the students the required knowledge and skill on how to write minutes while performing their professional duties. This is because many employees especially the newly employed do not know what minuting is all about. Majority of them do not know when to minute or when not to. Equally surprising is the fact that those of them who know when to minute still struggle as to the content or form such minutes will take. There are still older employees who do not know the forms and content of a Minute. Neither do they know what to avoid in Minuting. We intend to discuss all these and also give essential hints on Minuting as well as the format and strategies for minuting.

2. OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, the student should be able to acquire knowledge and proficient skill on the art of minuting while performing their professional duties.

3. MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition

Minute could be defined as a communication in writing between two or more officials in an organisation. Minutes are normally used to consider and settle matters or to direct what action may be taken in a circumstance. Minuting is the act of writing a minute.

The term Meeting Minutes could be confusing as many people get overwhelmed that they have to take notes “minute by minute”! Minutes are a factual record of the meeting for its members while also acting as a source of information for people who were unable to attend.

Meeting minutes are only aimed at capturing the essence of the meeting so that all important aspects of it get documented for future reference.

3.2 When Not to Minute

It may not be necessary to minute on a matter when:

- The matter can be solved by oral communication either at a meeting (usually informal) or by telephone.
- The action necessary is a routine one.
- The matter is straight forwarded and no further information or guidance is required.

3.3 Form and Content of a Minute

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At the top left-hand side of a minute is the designation of the person to whom the minute is addressed to. This is followed by the text of the minute. This is then concluded by the signature or initials of the writer. Immediately under his signature or initials is the typewritten or stamped name of the officer that wrote the minute. Under his name, the post held is shown and the date of his minute, indicated.

Guidelines for a good minute:

- State briefly the 'matter at issue'.
- State the present position and the facts affecting it. This should be supported by making reference to previous papers.
- It is important to verify whether or not the report, proposal or request accords with any laws, Public Service Rules, Financial Regulations, Circulars, or Memoranda which have been circulated. Quote the necessary section of the Public Service Rules, etc, or attach a copy of the relevant document concerning the point at issue.
- It is quite necessary to indicate any previous decisions which may be relevant to the point at issue.
- Indicate any facts or argument which may influence the action to be taken. You will do well to cite relevant authorities.
- Finally, suggest what action you think should be taken. The substance of a memoranda or letter in reply may be suggested in your minute which should be so drafted that the wording may be incorporated direct into the reply to issue.

3.3 What To Avoid In Minuting.

- Avoid mediocrity: Do not minute in an amateur or obscure manner. Try to be as clear and as logical as possible.
- Legibility Writing: Let your writing be legibly enough. Do not type short minutes. However, minutes covering more than half of foolscap sheet should be type written.
- Avoid procrastination: Do not defer action on problems requiring considerable effort in minuting. Delay to act on files promptly tends to encourage the production of hasty minutes based on haphazard research.
- Be original and relevant: Try to have a grasp of the subject at issue and do not drift away from the matter being considered.
- Avoid Inaccurate Information: It is profitable to know intimately the provisions of Government circulars and regulations. Take note of alternations in the laws, Public Service Rules and other approved authorities. It is pertinent to be as current as possible. This is because a conclusion based on an obsolete rules and regulations is likely to be misleading.
- Indecision: For a minute to solve or advance the solution to a problem, it should not show indecision. In view of this, the summary or conclusion of the minute should indicate its stand.

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- Stylistic Defects: Avoid repetitions as well as unnecessary airs and graces.

3.5 Tips on Minuting

To write a good minute, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Go through the subject matter files and other relevant documents to ensure you have facts to enable you produce a good minute.
- make sure you clearly understand the subject matter which should be briefly stated.
- State the previous positions or decisions, if any, which may lead to the Present.
- Write in good English with correct spellings and avoid journalistic writing or slang.
- Arranged all facts in both logical and chronological order.
- Indicate whether there are laws or past decisions that may affect the present case.
- Identify relevant facts and argue persuasively either for or against the matter at issue, quoting appropriate authorities or laws or precedence wherever necessary.
- Identify the options and make sure your argument is balanced by stressing points for and against the options.
- Highlight reasons for your preference.
- Avoid disjointed presentation by ensuring that your presentation flows logically.
- Avoid bad grammar. Use correct punctuation marks.
- Be precise in your expressions. Avoid flowery language or journalistic writing.
- Make sure that the information you give is correct.
- It is good to put headings when minuting as this serve as a quick reference point
- Long minute should be type-written. However, if a minute is to be submitted in long hand, it should be done neatly, legibly and should not exceed half of one foolscap sheet page.
- Minutes are supposed to be short and not lengthy, therefore, use abbreviations where necessary.

3.6 Abbreviations in Minuting:

The under listed abbreviations are examples of some of the abbreviations to use while minuting:

- a b c means: at back cover of file;
- fyi – means for your information;
- fna – for necessary action;
- b.u – Bring up.

3.7 Characteristics and types of Meetings

3.7.1 Characteristics of Meetings

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The following are the characteristics of effective meetings:

- An agenda is prepared prior to the meeting.
- Meeting participants have an opportunity to contribute to the agenda.
- Advance notice of meeting, time and place is provided to those invited.
- Meeting facilities are comfortable and adequate for the number of participants.
- The meeting begins on time.
- The meeting has a scheduled ending time
- The use of time is monitored throughout the meeting
- Everyone has an opportunity to present his/her point of view.
- Participants listen attentively to one another.
- There are periodic summaries as the meeting progresses.
- No one tends to dominate the discussion.
- Everyone has a voice in decisions made at the meeting.
- Ends with a summary of accomplishments.
- The meeting is periodically evaluated by participants.
- People can be depended on to carry out any action agreed upon during the meeting.
- Minutes of the meeting are provided to each participant following the meeting.
- The meeting leader follows up with participants on actions agreed during the meeting.
- It is worthy of note that no meeting can have all the qualities or characteristics enumerated above; but any meeting to which 60% of the qualities can be attributed can rightly be described as an effective meeting.

3.7.2 Types of Meeting

For the purpose of this chapter, we shall group meetings into two broad types namely; Information meeting and, Decision-making meeting. The elements listed in the table overleaf will assist us in appreciating the differences between the two types, and therefore enable us to appropriately locate the meetings we attend.

Table 01 : Types Meeting

Elements	Information Meeting	Decision-Making Meeting
Number of attenders	Any number	Preferably not more than 12
Who should attend	Those who need to know	Those responsible and those who can contribute
Communication process	One way from leader to participats with opportunities for questions	Interactive discussion among all attending

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Meeting room set-up	Participants facing front of room-classroom style	Participants facing each other – Conference style.
Most effective style of leadership.	Authoritative	Participative
Emphasis should be on	content	Interaction and Problem – solving
Key to success	Planning and preparation of information to be presented	Meeting climate that Supports open, free expression.

Source : Ibeme, N.P. (2014). Introduction to administrative practices and procedures, national open university of nigeria

3.8 Pre-Meeting Activities

By these we mean the activities which the convener, the leader, or the Secretary is expected to carry out prior to the day or commencement time of a meeting. They include:-

- **Establishing the need for the meeting** even for regular meetings, there is a need for the officer in-charge to ensure that there are cogent issues to discuss in a meeting before a meeting is convened. A meeting that is called for the mere reason that it is the date or period that such meeting is supposed to be held, will end up being purposeless, and nothing is expected to be achieved in such meeting. For instance a meeting that holds in a University in April after the first semester examination cannot be justifiably convened in April unless the first semester examinations are completed.
- **Deciding on who to participate:** depending on the agenda or purposes of a meeting, the secretary or convener decides those that are to participate in meetings. The implication of this is that in situations where the extant regulations guiding the operation of a group, provides, the purposes or agenda for the meeting will determine the participants.
- **Choice of Venue, Date and Time:** The convener of a meeting and/or the Secretary chooses the venue of a meeting. Again, these are sometimes determined by statutory provisions, and sometimes by the purpose of the meeting

When and where the meeting is held can affect its success. Many meetings arrange their own times and venues. It must be today and not next week; the conference room is only available at 2.00 p.m; and so on. Within the inevitable constraints of a busy organization, do what you can to influence these matters for the better.

- **Constructing the Agenda:** every meeting has an agenda. It may not have been written, discussed or even thought about. But the agenda is there, all the same. Whoever controls the agenda controls the meeting. If the agenda is not made public, the meeting may be hijacked by private agendas; the result will be confusion,

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frustration and failure. A written agenda allows everyone to focus on what they are to do; before, during and after the meeting. It acts as:

- A plan of the meeting to aid preparation;
- An objective control of the meeting's progress;
- A measure of the meeting's success (Barker, 1997:29)

The contents of an agenda include:

- Title of Meeting
- Date, time and venue
- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Reports from sub-committees (where applicable)
- Any other business.

Agenda items are often supported by briefing papers. These may outline the issues to be discussed in some details, give background information and indicate the preferred direction the 'task owner' would like the meeting to take. They may also form the basis of a formal presentation at the meeting (Barker, 1997:33)

- **Issuance of notice of meeting:** having taken care of the four pre-meeting activities outlined above, the secretary or convener now goes ahead to issue notice of meeting to the qualified participants. It is important for the notice of meeting to be sent well ahead of the meeting date. This will enable those who cannot attend the meeting for genuine reasons, to send their apologies to the signatory.
- **Provision of a comfortable meeting venue:** as the date of the meeting draws closer, it is the duty of the secretary to provide a very conducive environment for the meeting. Every thing must be done to ensure the comfortability of the participants as anything that reduces their comfort will make them irritable and ultimately affect their contributions to the meeting. This also makes some participants leave the meeting before the end. To avoid these, participants must be made to relax throughout the duration of the meeting. This can be done through;
 - **Provision of a clean environment:** If a meeting is held in a filthy irritating venue, the participants will not feel comfortable or at ease. This will make them look frequently at the clock while the meeting lasts.
 - **Provision of adequate public address system/audio visual aids:** For meetings held in large halls, public address systems and audio visual aids must be used. A situation where participants can hardly hear themselves or follow the proceedings will defeat the very essence of the meeting.
 - **Provision of conveniences:** This is very crucial and must be kept clean. People who are 'pressed' will only be longing for the closing prayer. This must be guarded against.
 - **Provision of refreshment:** a hungry man is known to be an angry man. This accounts for the aggressive disposition of some people during meetings.

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Depending on the duration of the meeting, therefore, full meal or light refreshment must be provided.

3.9 Meeting Activities

Two main activities pre-occupy any person servicing a meeting during the meeting. These are:

- **Compilation of attendance:** An attendance register must be made available for people to sign as they come to the meeting. This helps to check late coming as no one would like to be recorded as habitual late comer.
- **Recording of proceedings:** This is chiefly the duty of the secretary or his assignee. Whoever is doing this must ensure that trivial issues are not recorded to the detriment of more salient ones. To avoid this, it is advisable to concentrate on resolutions rather than individual contributions. Verbatim recording must also be avoided. Movers of motions and their seconders must be captured.

3.10 Post Meeting Activities

The word 'post' means 'after'. The expression 'post meeting activities' therefore, refer to those activities that are carried out at the end of a meeting, in relation to the meeting.

After your meeting has taken place, perhaps the first question you should ask yourself is whether it was successful. Bad points as well as good ones can be analysed and used to help plan meetings in the future. To determine whether the meeting was successful or not, the following questions need to be answered

Was the meeting held on the best day and at the best time to achieve a satisfactory outcome?

- Did it start and finish on time?
- Were the correct people in attendance?
- Was the agenda followed in the correct order?
- Were accurate notes taken?
- Were the right decisions taken?
- Did the meeting achieve what it set out to achieve?

The more answers of 'yes' you can give, the better. Any 'nos' need to be investigated, so that future meetings stand a chance of being as near to perfect as anything involving the human element can ever be (Bobson, 1999:100).

In addition to what transpired while the meeting lasted, there are, however, certain after-meeting activities which go a long way in determining the success or failure of the meeting. These are what we refer to in this unit as, the post meeting activities. They are:

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- Writing of Minutes of Meeting Servicing a meeting is not an activity that begins and ends in the meeting venue.
- The proceedings of a meeting is jotted down by the secretary during the meeting but developed into a minute later.
- A good secretary does not record discussions verbatim rather, he records resolutions.
- The reason is that, if the contribution of every participants in the meeting is recorded, the minutes of the meeting will be unnecessarily voluminous

3.11 Recording and Developing Minutes of a Meeting

Although the format of minutes varies with the nature of the meeting, most minutes have the following subheads in their formats.

- **The Title of the Meeting:** this comprises the description of meeting i.e the name of the group holding the meeting, the venue and the date. For instance, Minutes of the meeting of the Association of Licenced Customs Agents of Nigeria, Ikorodu Branch, held on February 12th, 2006 at C.K.C. Grammar School, Igbogbo’.
- **Attendance:** in most minutes, the attendance section has three parts:
 - Present: this lists all that are present, including those attending in representative capacity.
 - Apologies or Excused: this contains the names of all those that notified the Secretariat in advance, of their inability to attend the meeting owing to a stated reason.
 - Absent: here the names of all those that are supposed to be present but are absent without apologies are listed.
- **Commencement:** this captures the take-off time of the meeting, as was as the welcome remarks of the presiding personnel.
- **Reading and Adoption of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** Under this, inaccuracies in the read minutes and the amendments thereto, are pointed out. This is followed by the mover and seconder of motion for adoption of the minutes.
- **Matters Arising from the Minutes:** this captures the issues that were raised in the minutes but never concluded. These are discussed before the substantive issues.
- **Agenda:** (this is) an itemized list of the business to be transacted at a meeting. The order of the business should normally be as shown in the agenda, as some members might be inconvenienced if they had made arrangements to attend for only that part of a meeting where the business concerning them was due to be transacted (Austin, 1978:99).
- **Any Other Business:** under this heading comes business discussed or validly transacted which has not figured in the agenda. It will be appreciated that matters of importance may not be validly transacted unless due notice was given in the agenda.

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“Any other business” is therefore restricted to minor matters or to the agreement that certain important matters be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

- **Adjournment:** this depicts where the day’s business terminates, and states, where practicable, the date, time and venue of the next meeting.
- **Follow-Up** Post meeting activities in servicing meetings do not begin or end with writing of minutes of meetings. It is rare that meetings end without some need for follow-up activities, including thank you notes, implementing action times, paying bills, catching people up who were not there, phone calls, minutes, etc. Part of planning any meeting ought to be thought given to the follow-up after the meeting, so that the meeting was worth having.

4. CONCLUSION

Minuting is one of the many forms of written communication in an organisation. A powerful communication skill can be learnt by acquiring a good command of the art of minuting. This is not easy to accomplish but constant practice will, however, help subordinates accomplish it.

Servicing meetings is a very interesting but demanding and challenging activity. The demanding and challenging aspect of the concept emanates from the fact that it is one phenomenon that can make or mar the meeting of very serious minded participants. This goes to say that the success or otherwise of a meeting and by extension the activities of an organization or group, depends largely on how the meetings, where the decisions that decide the fate of that organization or group are taken, are serviced. Officers that service meetings should therefore, recognize the importance attached to their roles, and do everything possible to ensure that meetings are serviced to the best standard.

5. SUMMARY

Attempt has been made to cover almost everything concerning minuting in this chapter. We discussed all the relevant issues concerning minuting. We also proffered guidelines on how to write a good minute. We hope that you have acquired the necessary knowledge and skill on how to write a good minute.

The importance of meetings cannot by now be overemphasized so is adequate procedure for undertaking it. The unit therefore identified those activities that must be carried out in order to ensure successful meetings. These include: pre-meeting activities; meeting activities and post meeting activities. More importantly, records of proceedings at meetings are kept as instruments of implementation of decisions of such meetings. Such records are referred to as Minutes. This unit also explained the format of good minutes of meetings.

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6. TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

6.1 What are the things to avoid when minuting.

6.2 Give guidelines on minuting to the newly employed staff in your department

6.3 Outline the format of Minutes of a Meeting.

6.4 Enumerate the various stages in a meeting.

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1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Main Content
 - 3.1 Definition of Report
 - 3.2 Types of Report
 - 3.3 Strategies for Report writing
 - 3.4 Purpose of Report
4. Conclusion
5. Summary
6. Tutor Marked Assignment
5. References/Further Readings

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1. INTRODUCTION

Report is a medium or a vehicle of communication. It is a means of generating and presenting information to meet organizational needs. The ability to produce a good report is a mark of serious minded and erudite staff. Modern and Corporate organizations invest heavily in the capacity building of their employees partly because of the high dividend of such investment. The knowledge and skills to write qualitative reports is recommended for all the staff in the organisation especially at the middle and management levels.

2. OBJECTIVES

- At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
- Know what report writing is all about ;
- Identify the different types of Report ;
- Explain the stages involved in Report writing ;
- Write and present good reports.

3. MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition

The definition of report writing is creating an account or statement that describes in detail an event, situation or occurrence, usually as the result of observation or inquiry.

A report is written for a clear purpose and to a particular audience. Specific information and evidence are presented, analysed and applied to a particular problem or issue. The information is presented in a clearly structured format making use of sections and headings so that the information is easy to locate and follow.

Reports are means of generating facts and presenting information to meet organizational needs. According to Bentley (1978) “reports are means of setting down the facts, opinion and conclusion which the author or (individual/group) wishes to communicate”. Oxford Dictionary describes report “as a written document in a given subject to convey information and ideas and at times to make recommendation”. According to Oxford advanced Learners Dictionary, Report is “A spoken or written account of something heard, seen, studied, etc. All the above definitions are pointers to what report is all about. It is indeed a means of conveying information or an account of an issue to the parties concerned and, sometimes, to non concerned parties as well. Report may be written or orally given but written report has a more permanent nature.

3.2 Types of Reports

The types of report are largely based on the Ministries/Departments/Agencies (MDAs) in the Public and Private sectors and their need. In the context of both public and private sectors, the following format is common:

- Performance ;
- Functional related job ;
- Scientific and Technical ;

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- Professional Advisers ;
- Government Green and white paper; and
- Committee of inquiries.

3.2.1 Performance

Report on performance is of four types. These include:

- Quarterly report
 - Half yearly report
 - Annual report
 - Report on conferences / seminars
- **Quarterly Report** : is clear and that in every quarter reports on the activities of an organization or its units are written and are forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- **Half yearly** : can be useful in different Organizations, Departments, Divisions to enable the organizational objectives to be properly put in place for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- **Annual Report** : is a report that organizations render to their corporate body or stakeholders annually. Progress of the organization can be obtained from this report.
- **Report on Conference/Seminar** : this is a report obtained from personnel who attended seminar/conference and submitted to his organization at the end of the conference/seminar. Recommendations contained in it, become useful for the organizations; and other vital organ for implementation.

Other forms of report are

- Internal Audit
 - Accident
 - Sales
 - Production
 - Appraisals
- **Internal Audit** : This provides a kind of checks and balances on both administration and financial activities. It deals with individuals and papers respectively.
- **Accident** : This is an unexpected event which comes and goes but the organization takes report of such event. The reports are made available after investigation e.g fire, burglary, road accident etc.
- **Sale** : This relates to cash transaction outfits, e.g the NOUN Canteen where sales report is made formerly to the Head of ventures on daily basis.
- **Appraisal** : This involves assessment of an individuals against his productivity. Report on his performance gives the organization the opportunity to know how productive the individual/group is.

3.2.2 Scientific and Technical Report: Report on technical contents, emanate from Ministries of Health, Science, Education etc. Diagnosis is incomplete without formal

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technical report.

3.2.3 Professional/Advisers: This is a report that takes the style of scientific/Technical. It emanates from professionals such as accountants, medical and management consultants to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for decision making.

3.2.4 Committee of Inquiry: This is usual with public sector organizations. It is set up to conduct studies on different issues/problems, according to Mort (1920), to provide recommendations

3.2.5 Government's Green and White Papers: it is a gorgeous type of report. It is green when the contents are still being proposed (policy), while the white paper indicates that a definite decision has been made. It is then called white paper.

3.3 Planning of Report Writing

Planning is an essential ingredient in report writing. Before putting your pen to paper, the planning stage must be well articulated, i.e. through collection and arrangement of data. In report writing, which presupposes that thorough collections and analysis have been and must as well be managed as a matter of fact. It should be noted that information or data analysed must meet the facts required. Indeed, the terms of focus or/and essential for a rational conclusion. Planning in report, takes cognizance of structure and layout features such as: the title, table of contents and digital system i.e. the main heading, sub headings e.g.

1. Main headings

1.1 Sub headings; and

1.1.1 Sub, sub headings

Furthermore, the sources of data collection are worthy of mentioning in planning. It is important to consider interview or talking to people who are involved, apart from the data collected. These facts must be devoid of (hear say) when planning. It is also necessary to appreciate the state of Art in communication today, hence the need for information technology. Technologies have played roles that are dominant; computer print out brochures, pamphlets can be relied upon when planning to write reports.

The sources of information which include primary and secondary are very germane in writing a good report. The sources are as follows:

- **Primary:** This includes field interview, observation, experimentations etc.
- **Secondary:** This involves collection of information from books, Encyclopaedia, computer etc.

A good planning / preparation provides, in the final analysis, a good report. At this stage, the write up is said to have fulfilled the reader's needs.

3.4 Purpose of Report

The purpose of a Report provides the focus and determines the structure and content

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of a report. The overall purpose of the report is to communicate or to inform. Under the purpose, the element of structure is a feature which provides the arrangement of the contents for the readers to comprehend the proper intent of the report.

The essence of written report is to communicate therefore, organizations must have written report basically to inform its audience and for actualization of the organisation's goals and objectives. Every written report is to provide explanation on specific events as well e.g. "report on last semester exam". Report enhances discussions or consensus reached by individuals or groups.

The importance attached to Report is quite high so much so that an agreement cannot be reached without a written document.

3.4 Stategies/structure of Report Writing

Two main stages are to be considered. These are: Investigation and note taking:

- **Investigation:** This is carried out to obtain facts, uncover problems and gainful understanding of the subject. Information can be obtained from published materials, files or individuals, which must be critically examined to avoid bias.
- **Note taking:** This is an essential aspect of report writing. Notes which can be used in writing the report must be taken as the investigation progresses. It should be stated that under planning there is a need for proper sort out of data during this period of note taking as well.

Structure: All organizations should prepare and issue guidelines about the way reports should be structured and ensure strict adherence to them. The structure will vary with the type of report. The following are the three basic elements in structuring a report:

Structure

Language and;

Presentation

Sections, Paragraphs, Sub paragraphs etc, should be given headings to aid the flow of the report and clearer understanding.

- Preliminaries aspect of report writing includes the following:
 - (i) Title page,
 - (ii) Dedication,
 - (iii) Acknowledgement,
 - (iv) Preface,
 - (v) Foreword,
 - (vi) Content page etc. and are numbered in Roman figure.
- Main body of the report includes:
 - (i) introduction,

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- (ii) findings,
- (iii) Analysis,
- (iv) recommendations etc.
- End Matter will include the following:
 - (i) Appendix,
 - (ii) Bibliography,
 - (iii) References etc.
- **Language:** The rules are as follows
 - (i) The writer should write it in lucid prose
 - (ii) The writer should express and not impress.
 - (iii) He should employ clearly legible and short sentences
 - (iv) He must observe the rule of the 4C's i.e. clear, concise, correct and complete.

- **Presentation:**

The report must be presented in such a way that will arouse the reader at a glance. The writer must be very generous with the use of space, and the layout of report must be well set with appropriate margin. Format, according to Derbyshire (1970) depends upon the types and purpose of the report, its reader, and the prescribed convention, and also laid out by the organization. In general terms, there are two broad types of format which are differentiated by whether the summary and / or recommendation is placed after the main body of the report, or is placed before the main body. The eventual choice might be a combination or a condensed version of these two formats.

A typical format of a written report is as follows:-

- Title page
 - Abstract
 - Table of Contents
 - Body of the report
 - Conclusion (and recommendations where applicable)
 - References / Bibliography
 - Glossary (if needed)
 - Appendices
- **Title page :** State the title, the author e.g. "Report on end of workshop is prepared by, State the names of the Chairman, members and Secretary.
 - **Executive Summary :** It is a report in miniature covering all the sections of the main report with a proportional length. (Must not be in all reports) but where it is used, it comes immediately after the title page.
 - **Letter of Transmittal :** This is a covering letter forwarding the report which

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highlights the genesis of the report, the objectives, items of reference and the issues/recommendations.

- **Acknowledgement** : This acknowledges the help obtained and expresses the gratitude to those who assisted in preparing the report. This usually comes after the title page.
- **Table of Contents** : This contains the list of headings and pages which will enable the reader to easily grasp and understand the content of the various sections.
- **Introduction** : The author in this section tries to put the reader fully in the picture. It highlights the events that led to the writing of the report, how and why he addressed the problem; the way he sees and how successful he was in reaching solutions. Materials from the main body may not be part of this section
- **Methodology** : This section, which usually features in big reports, explain how the problems/issues were tackled and why particular methods and techniques were used.
- **Body of the Report** : This is regarded as the heart of the report where all materials gathered during the investigation stage are clearly and logically presented. The facts / information presented in this section should be objectively stated and the temptation to develop parts, because the writer finds them interesting, must be down- played.
- **Conclusion** : The placing of conclusion in a report is a matter of convenience. In some instances, both conclusion and recommendations can be included in the main body. This section also gives the writer the first opportunity to express opinion as against facts. The aim should be to present opinions in such a way that the reader is able to follow the reasoning, even though his interpretation may differ.
- **Recommendations** : This section is the ultimate goal of the report. It proffers solutions to the problems/issues that gave rise to the report.
- **Appendices** : Appendix is mostly recommended and is desirable in a complex report. This, however, is not the case with a brief report. Appendix makes the body of the report more readable. Cross references in the text should be made to the relevant parts of the appendices.

4. CONCLUSION

Report is a very strategic means of conveying information or an account of an something to people. It may be written or given orally. However, written report is more desirable since it has a more permanent nature.

Organisations are more concerned with written reports. In view of this, it is highly recommended that employees should be adequately trained and equipped with the right skills and knowledge in the art of report writing.

Report writing is a very important form of communication in organisations. Unfortunately, not everybody knows how to present a good report. There is no uniformity in writing reports. However, all organizations should prepare and issue guidelines about the way reports should be structured and ensure strict adherence to them. The structure will also vary with the type of report. A good report must be presented in such a way that will arouse the reader at a glance. It should also contain necessary information that will aid the reader to grasp the full meaning of the report.

5. SUMMARY

In this part, we have discussed report writing, types of reports, the strategies of report writing and the purpose of report writing in an organisation. We also examined the format of report writing which is very crucial for good report writing. It is believed that good knowledge and skill in report writing will help eliminate or reduce to the barest minimum, the errors in report writing in an organisation.

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6. TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

6.1 Outline and discuss in detail the format of report writing.

6.2 What is the importance of report writing?

6.3 What is performance report?

6.4 Which part of the report gives the picture of the report and why?

6.5 Critically analyse why the body of a report is called the heart of the report.

6.6 Outline and discuss the language of a Report.

6.7 Identify the strengths and weaknesses inherent in report writing

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CONCLUSION

Communication in an organisation is indispensable to the survival and efficient management of the organisation. It is the livewire of any organisation. It can be likened to the blood that flows in the veins of the human beings without which the individual dies. Communication is required if results are to be evaluated in terms of what was sought through a given plan. To communicate something to someone involves the emotional, psychological and mental characteristics of both the communicator and the recipient of the information as well as the medium used in such communication.

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