

Block

3

WORKPLACE SKILLS

UNIT 8

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BLOCK 3 WORKPLACE SKILLS

Introduction

In the previous Block we helped you with skills to enter the job market. In this Block, we will give you information and practice in skills which will help you at your job. Most jobs require you to use the telephone, make presentations, be part of group discussions. In this Block, we will give you tips and suggestions in these areas so that you may be appropriately equipped to convey your message effectively. The Units in the Block are:

Unit 8 : Presentation Skills

Unit 9 : Telephone Skills

Unit 10 : Group Discussions

Unit 11 : Body Language

We will be presenting these skills through language tasks in reading, writing, speaking and listening. We will give you practice in using relevant vocabulary and contextual grammar.

We hope you find the units enjoyable and useful. Do write to us and give your feedback.

Acknowledgement

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UNIT 8 PRESENTATION SKILLS

Structure

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Warm Up
- 8.2 Reading Comprehension: About Presentations
- 8.3 Preparation for Presentation
- 8.4 The Stages of Presentation
- 8.5 Using Visual Aids
- 8.6 Grammar: Prepositions (Audience Questions)
- 8.7 A Presentation Exercise
- 8.8 Evaluating a Presentation
- 8.9 Summary
- 8.10 Answers to Self Check Exercises
- 8.11 Answers to Activities
- 8.12 References and Further Reading

8.0 OBJECTIVES

To make effective presentations is essential for librarians. You will find that you need to make presentations when you are orienting a new batch of users; when you are introducing a new service – which happens quite often with new and updated e-resources being acquired quite frequently. Of course, you need to present well if you are attending seminars and conferences.

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- explain the important facts of presentations;
- use visual elements to highlight important points; and
- deliver a presentation effectively.

8.1 WARM UP

Can you remember three presentations you have seen or attended in the last one year? Write down the subject of the presentation and the name of the person who made the presentation. It could be a lecture, a speech, a training session and so on.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Try to recollect the three presentations mentioned above, and write down what you liked /enjoyed and also what you did not like/enjoy in each of these.

Presentation 1

Liked

- a
- b
- c

Disliked

- a
- b
- c

Presentation 2

Liked

- a
- b
- c

Disliked

- a
- b
- c

Presentation 3

Liked

- a
- b
- c

Disliked

- a
- b
- c

How would you improve these presentations? You may come back to the list after you have read this Unit.

8.2 READING COMPREHENSION: ABOUT PRESENTATIONS

Pre-reading

Before you read the passage on presentation given below, attempt the following questions. Then read the text and check your answers.

1) Complete the following sentence:

The purpose of most presentations for librarians is either to
or to

2) Name three qualities of a good presentation.

.....
.....
.....

3) Make a list of five different situations in which people are required to make presentations at the workplace.

.....
.....
.....

- 4) Do you think presentations are part of the recruitment process? If so, what purpose would they serve for the selection panel?

.....

Presentations are a way of communicating ideas and information to a group. The objective of communication is to make your message understood and remembered. In order to achieve this, the presenter must be clear, coherent, articulate and convincing. A presentation puts the presenter on display in front of the audience. Therefore, in order to be effective and impressive in your presentation you need to prepare before you actually deliver the presentation.

Most presentations either inform the audience about something or try to persuade the audience about a product, a service, an idea or a concept. Hence, we often hear of sales presentations for existing or prospective customers, as well as presentations on projects, reports, proposals and updates on various business activities for business associates.

Nowadays, presentations have also become an important part of the recruitment process. Perhaps this is because the job market has become so competitive that job interviews alone are not enough to gauge the skills and competencies of the applicants. Therefore, in many organisations the shortlisted applicants are asked to make presentations before the selection panel. Through presentations the interviewers get yet another opportunity to look at the capabilities of the applicants. The applicants too get a chance to demonstrate their public speaking skills, their presentation skills, their ability to communicate to a group of people and display their confidence and leadership qualities.

The first few minutes of the presentation are very precious and crucial. If you fail to draw the attention of your audience at this stage, you may lose it forever. You make your first impression even before you start speaking. It's got to do with the way you look and carry yourself.

Your dress needs to be neat, smart and appropriate for the occasion. It is mostly formal for presentations. The next thing to pay attention to would be your posture. Your body communicates certain impressions to the audience. People not only listen to you, but also watch you. Slouching tells them that you are indifferent or you do not care, even though you might care a great deal! On the other hand, displaying good posture tells your audience that you know what you are doing and you are serious about it. While you need to be upright and look confident, you may need to guard against looking too stiff and uncomfortable. The key is to look relaxed and comfortable and at ease with your surroundings. Reaching the venue well in time could be immensely helpful in making you comfortable with the place.

Eye contact is another crucial factor. It signals interest in others and helps you to connect with your audience. The audience responds to you better

when you look at them straight. Do not keep your eyes away from the audience for too long, even when you are adjusting your equipment or organising your presentation material.

The expressions you wear on your face transmit a great deal. When you smile at somebody, chances are that s/he will smile back at you. A smile spreads happiness around you as it makes others smile in response. It also transmits happiness, friendliness, warmth, and liking.

The voice is probably the most valuable tool you possess. It is the vehicle that carries most of the contents that you wish to pass on to the audience. Hence, the presenter needs to use her/his voice to maximum advantage. You must have control on your speed as well as volume. The pitch and tone are other areas that need your attention. It is a good idea to practice before a colleague or friend and get feedback on whether you are too fast, too loud, too soft, etc. Do not speak in a monotone as it bores the listeners. Modulate your voice to draw the audience in, and raise it to make a point. Warmth of tone and expression of the right body language to accompany your words can help you to connect with the audience instantly.

Presentations are not just about well researched and painstakingly gathered material, well organised and structured, they are a lot about how you combine the human element with the content to reach out and connect.

Self Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers at the space given below the questions.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

1) Pick the sentence from the above text that best describes :

- i) Qualities of a good presentation.
- ii) Qualities of a good presenter.
- iii) The role of the audience.

2)) State whether the following statements are **true** or **false**. Write **doesn't say** for statements that the passage doesn't deal with.

- i) The speaker must reach the venue on time.
- ii) The person making a presentation should be dressed formally.
- iii) The audience spends more time watching a presenter than listening to her/him.
- iv) Use your smile sparingly during a presentation.
- v) The content of the presentation is more important than the human element.

3) Match the meaning of the following words/phrases with words from the text.

- i) Valuable and important
- ii) Capture
- iii) People's opinion about you

- iv) A way of standing with your shoulders bent forwards which makes you look lazy or tired
- v) Location
- vi) Someone who works with you
- vii) Optimum
- viii) With great effort.

8.3 PREPARATION FOR PRESENTATION

Before giving a presentation on a subject, one needs to do some home work to find out:

- Who the audience is?
- Where the presentation is scheduled to be held?
- What kinds of facilities are available at the venue?
- What is the duration?

Based on these factors, decide how you want to make the presentation. It could in the form of a lecture followed by questions and answers, a PowerPoint presentation, a seminar or a discussion.

Activity

- 1) If you have to make a presentation, what kind of information would you find out:
 - i) about the audience
 - ii) about the facilities at the venue

Audience

.....

.....

.....

Venue

.....

.....

.....

8.4 THE STAGES OF PRESENTATION

The three main stages of any presentation are:

- 1) The Beginning
- 2) The Middle
- 3) The Ending

A) The Beginning

- A1 Say “Good morning “or “Good evening” or “Good afternoon”, etc.
- A2 Welcome the audience.
- A3 Introduce yourself.
- A4 State the purpose of the presentation.
- A5 Relate subject to the audience.
- A6 Give a brief outline.

B) The Middle

- B1 Introduce your main theme, point by point.
- B2 Display the main points/ideas on slides if it is a PowerPoint presentation, and then elaborate.
- B3 Introduce the subject point by point elaborating each in detail, in case of a lecture or a speech.
- B4 Support your points/ideas by facts and examples.
- B5 Use signposting.
- B6 Use visuals, to support your explanations.
- B7 Restrict the main points/ideas to a maximum of five.

C) The Ending

- C1 Reiterate /reinforce what you have already said.
- C2 Summarise main points.
- C3 Make a conclusion or recommendation, if necessary.
- C4 Relate conclusion to the activities of the audience.
- C5 Invite questions.
- C6 Thank the audience.

Please note: Don’t introduce any new points/ideas at this stage.

Activity

- 2) Decide which of the following phrases below would you use at the different stages of your presentation? Mark your replies with the numbers shown above, e.g. A2, B1, C4, etc. The first two questions are answered below.

| | | | |
|----|--|--|--------------------------------|
| C3 | In conclusion... | | Secondly... |
| C2 | To sum up... | | And finally... |
| | Let’s turn to ... | | I will begin with |
| | That brings me to... | | After that we will look at ... |
| | Let us leave that and ... | | What was the reason for ...? |
| | Let us start with... | | Did you know that...? |
| | So that covers | | Let’s move on to ... |
| | If you have any questions please feel free to ask... | | Let us recap... |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| I have divided my talk into three... | To summarize the main ... |
| I would like to talk about... | I'd like to conclude... |
| I'm delighted to be here ... | Thanks for the opportunity ... |
| I would like to welcome you... | Thank you all for patiently listening ... |
| The purpose of my talk is ... | Would you mind repeating your? |
| Firstly... | I'm afraid I can't answer this... |

Structuring Presentations

Structure of a presentation will depend upon the topic, the audience and time available. Here are some commonly used structures of presentations:

- 1) Past _____ Present _____ Future
- 2) Concept _____ Benefits _____ Drawbacks
- 3) Problem _____ Causes _____ Effect
- 4) Why? _____ What? _____ How?

To make your presentation enjoyable, try to capture the interest of the audience right from the beginning by,

- Asking rhetorical questions
- Telling interesting stories
- Telling some jokes
- Quoting
- Relating what you are saying to the audience
- Using illustrations
- Using examples
- Eye contact and body language

Wherever possible use PowerPoint slides. That is the best way to make a presentation.

Please note: Never read from your notes!

8.5 USING VISUAL AIDS

Visual aids help us to present figures, to make comparisons and contrasts, to project future trends, etc., thus enabling the presenter to deal with such information and data easily and effectively. This also helps the audience to understand things easily and clearly. A variety of visual aids like flip charts, line graph, pie charts, maps, tables, diagrams, photographs, etc., can be used for this purpose.

Visual aids also make a presentation more interesting. Moreover, they help you to cut down on the amount of talking you have to do. However, you must ensure that your visuals are relevant, appropriate and clear. Never overload them with information. Use visuals to reinforce and clarify and not to overwhelm the audience.



Self Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers at the space given below the questions.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

4) Name five types of visual aids.

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.....
.....

5) Name two do's and two don'ts for use of visual aids.

.....
.....
.....
.....

6) Name two major benefits of using visual aids.

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.....
.....
.....

8.6 GRAMMAR: PREPOSITIONS (AUDIENCE QUESTIONS)

Activity

- 3) The following text deals with a very important aspect of presentations: ‘The Audience Questions’. Fill up the blank spaces in the text with the help of these words given in the box. You will need to use some of these words more than once. Remember to reread the text after you’ve checked your answers with the answers given at the end of the Unit.

of to until in on

Audience questions are important _____ any presentation. You can have two policies _____ this issue. You may either allow the audience _____ ask you questions anytime during the course _____ your presentation or you may request your audience to hold questions _____ the end. Questions are an excellent indicator _____ the extent of involvement of the audience _____ your presentation. If you choose the first option _____ inviting the questions during the presentation, you will have the opportunity _____ clarify doubts as you go along and ensure that your point has been understood. But if you save them _____ the end you will get through the material uninterrupted. It is up to you _____ make the decision. Whatever you do, make sure you stay _____ time! If your allotted time is 10 minutes, do not exceed it. This way you can make sure that the audience remains engaged.

- 4) Given below are some frequently used expressions on presentations. Furnish the prepositions that will follow these words.
- i) Begin.....
 - ii) Emphasize.....
 - iii) I’d like to point
 - iv) I’m sure you would agree
 - v) I’d now like to turn
 - vi) To expand.....
 - vii) I’d like to illustrate this
 - viii) To disagree.....
 - ix) Moving on
 - x) To elaborate.....

8.7 A PRESENTATION EXERCISE

Write a short presentation on any of the topics listed below. Use some facts or statistics to substantiate or illustrate your points. Use PowerPoint for the presentation.

- 1) Getting children to develop a love for books
- 2) The changing face of libraries
- 3) Importance of libraries in education

Once you have completed the write up, make a presentation to your friends, and ask them to give you feedback on your presentation, specifically on the following:

- Contents
- Structure and coherence
- Language and vocabulary
- Body language
- Overall impact

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8.8 EVALUATING A PRESENTATION

It is important to evaluate your presentation, whenever you make one. That is the best way to identify the weaknesses and strengths of your presentation. It is also important to make use of the feedback you receive while making future presentations. You could use a format such as the following for that

Your Name:

Title of Presentation:

Date:

| Presentation | Excellent | Good | Poor |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Captured interest | | | |
| Clarity of delivery | | | |
| Timing | | | |
| Signposting | | | |
| Body language and confidence | | | |
| Visuals | | | |
| Overall rating | | | |

8.9 SUMMARY

The main objective of most presentations is either to inform or to persuade the listeners about something, so it is important to pay due attention to the type of contents you use as well the way you deliver the presentation. Use of PowerPoint can help you feel more comfortable with your presentation and make it more engaging. Use of graphics can help you to present complex data in a simple and comprehensive manner. Practice your presentation to ensure you get familiar with the contents. This will also enhance your confidence.

8.10 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

- 1) **Qualities of a good presentation:** Presentations are not just about well researched and painstakingly gathered material, well organised and structured, they are a lot about how you combine the human element with the content to reach out and connect.

Qualities of a good presenter: The presenter must be clear, coherent, articulate and convincing.

The role of the audience: Most presentations either inform the audience about something or try to persuade the audience about a product, a service, an idea or a concept.

- 2) i) The speaker must reach the venue on time. **True**
 ii) The person making a presentation should be dressed formally. **True**
 iii) The audience spends more time watching a presenter than listening to her/him. **Doesn't say**
 iv) Use your smile sparingly during a presentation. **False**
 v) The content of the presentation is more important than the human element. **False**
- 3) i) Valuable and important – **Precious**
 ii) Capture – **Draw the attention**
 iii) People's opinion of you – **Impression**
 iv) A way of standing with your shoulders bent forwards which makes you look lazy or tired – **Slouching**
 v) Location – **Venue**
 vi) Someone who works with you – **Colleague**
 vii) Optimum – **Maximum**
 viii) With great of effort – **Painstakingly**
- 4) Pie charts, Maps, Tables, Diagrams, Photographs.
- 5) **Do's:** Visual aids must be relevant, appropriate and clear.
Don'ts: Don't overload.
- 6) Makes presentation more interesting. Cuts down on talking time

8.11 ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES

1) *Audience:*

- The educational level of the audience
- Whether insiders or outsiders
- Approximate number

Venue:

- Open area or closed hall
- Size of the venue
- Seating arrangement
- Air conditioned or not
- Availability of plug points to connect laptop
- Availability of LCD projector
- Availability of mike for the speaker
- Availability of mike for the audience to ask questions.

2)

| | | | |
|----|---|----|--|
| C3 | In conclusion... | A4 | Secondly... |
| C2 | To sum up... | A4 | And finally... |
| B5 | Let's turn to ... | A4 | I will begin with |
| B5 | That brings me to... | A4 | After that we will look at ... |
| B5 | Let us leave that and ... | B4 | What was the reason for ...? |
| B5 | Let us start with... | B4 | Did you know that...? |
| B5 | So that covers | B5 | Let's move on to ... |
| C5 | If you have any questions please free to ask... | C1 | Let us recap... |
| A6 | I've divided my talk into three... | C1 | To summarize the main ... |
| A4 | I would like to talk about... | C3 | I'd like to conclude... |
| A3 | I'm delighted to be here ... | C6 | Thanks for the opportunity ... |
| A2 | I would like to welcome you... | C6 | Thank you all for your patient listening ... |
| A4 | The purpose of my talk is ... | C5 | Would you mind repeating your...? |
| A4 | Firstly... | C5 | I'm afraid I can't answer this... |

3) Audience questions are important **in** any presentations. You can have two policies **on** this issue. You may either allow the audience **to** ask questions anytime during the course **of** your presentation or you may request the audience to hold questions **until** the end. Questions are an excellent indicator

of the extent of involvement of the audience **in** your presentation. If you choose the option **of** inviting questions during the presentation, you will have the opportunity **to** clarify doubts as you go along and ensure that your point has been understood. But if you save them **until** the end you will get through the material uninterrupted. It is up to you **to** make the decision. Whatever you do, make sure you stay **on** time! If your allotted time is 10 minutes, do not exceed it. This way you can make sure that audience remains engaged.

- 4) i) Begin **by telling you something/ with a personal...**
- ii) Emphasize **on ...**
- iii) I'd like to point **out ...**
- iv) I'm sure you would agree **with me / to this suggestion...**
- v) I'd now like to turn **to ...**
- vi) To expand **on ...**
- vii) I'd like to illustrate this **with the help of ...**
- viii) To disagree **with this point...**
- ix) Moving on **to ...**
- x) To elaborate **on...**

8.12 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Hughes, J, and A. Mallett. *Successful Presentations DVD and Student's Book Pack*. Oxford University Press, 2012. Print.

Banks, T. *Writing for Impact*. Cambridge University Press, 2012. Print.

UNIT 9 TELEPHONE SKILLS

Structure

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Warm Up
- 9.2 Reading Comprehension: Face-to-Face Conversation versus Telephone Conversation
- 9.3 Vocabulary: Telephone Language
- 9.4 Efficient Telephoning
- 9.5 The Beginning and the Ending
- 9.6 Managing Special Situations
- 9.7 Telephone Etiquette
- 9.8 Language Focus
- 9.9 Grammar: Modals
- 9.10 Listening and Speaking
- 9.11 Writing
- 9.12 Summary
- 9.13 Answers to Self Check Exercises
- 9.14 Answers to Activities
- 9.15 References and Further Reading

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- differentiate between face-to-face and telephone conversation;
- understand the importance of having good telephone skills;
- identify different parts of a telephone conversation;
- manage different kinds of people;
- know the appropriate language required for effective telephone conversation; and
- follow a suitable telephone etiquette.

9.1 WARM UP

Go through the following statements and tick mark “True” or “False” against each:

- 1) I always speak softly on telephone. True () False ()
- 2) I switch off my mobile phone or keep it on silent mode in cinema halls. True () False ()
- 3) I don't eat while speaking on the phone. True () False ()

- 4) Whenever I see a “missed call” on my mobile phone, I immediately return the call. True () False ()
- 5) I never phone a person at odd hours. True () False ()
- 6) I always greet any caller by saying “good morning” etc. True () False ()

We often get irritated when we receive too many telephone calls. It is also a known fact that we waste a great deal of time on the telephone.

Why do telephone calls sometimes irritate us? List five reasons for being irritated by phone calls:

Reasons:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

9.2 READING COMPREHENSION: FACE-TO-FACE CONVERSATION VERSUS TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

How is a telephonic conversation different from a face-to-face one?

You may often have heard people talk about their nervousness while dealing with office situations, especially over the phone. Some people feel that face-to-face communication is usually easier, clearer and more effective than telephone conversation. There are, decidedly, many advantages to having a face-to-face conversation. Facial expressions, gesticulations, visual aids, all come in handy while conveying information when the person you are communicating with is in front of you.

In a telephonic conversation however, you have to convey all you want to say in clearly stated words. Help can come only in the form of voice modulation and stress. Choice of words becomes more critical here, where the listener may need to visualize what s/he is hearing merely from the description being given to her/him. And since you cannot see the listener, you need to confirm if important information has been correctly heard and understood. You can do this by asking the person to repeat what you have said. On the other hand, if you are the one receiving the information, you may need to confirm it by repeating it yourself.

Additionally, business conversations over the telephone are usually to-the-point. You would certainly not want to call back if you forgot to ask for or tell something of significance. Hence, before having a telephonic business talk, you need to make sure that you note down, either mentally or on paper, every point you would like to cover and tick it as you go along. This kind of preparedness will, of course, help even in a face-to-face conversation.

All of these probably make it seem like it is actually a disadvantage to have shop-talk on the telephone. That, as we all know, is definitely not the case, because the advantages of the telephone in business are many.

Telecommunication has made work more efficient in many ways. It saves time and the need to travel long distances. Tele and video conferencing has made it possible to have group discussions and meetings with our business associates in distance places where we can actually see them. Looking at the larger picture, this cutting down on travel means fewer vehicles on the road, less air and noise pollution, and perhaps slowing down the speed of global warming to some extent at least! At the same time we are also saving the hours which we would waste travelling those distances.

Self Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers at the space given below the questions.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

Answer the following questions based on the text given.

1) What are some of the tools that help in understanding a face-to-face conversation?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2) Why is the choice of words more critical in a telephone conversation than when people are facing each other?

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.....
.....
.....
.....

3) How can you use your voice more effectively, especially in a telephone conversation?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4) How can you make sure that the person listening to you has correctly absorbed the important information you are trying to convey, and vice versa?

.....

5) How can you ensure that you do not miss giving or getting all the information you wanted to, before you end the conversation?

.....

9.3 VOCABULARY: TELEPHONE LANGUAGE

Activity

1) These are some sentences commonly used in telephone conversations. Complete these sentences by choosing the missing words from the box.

| | | | | |
|-----------|----------|---------|-------|---------------|
| after | back | calling | in | hold the line |
| moment | reach | ring up | see | checked |
| confirm | dialed | stand | phone | mobile |
| extension | bothered | | | |

- i) Hello, who's this
- ii) Just a, please.
- iii) I'll if she's here.
- iv) I'll get the information you want;, please.
- v) You asked me to when I was in town again.
- vi) Sorry, he's not at the moment.
- vii) You can him any evening six o' clock.
- viii) Well, I can ring later if it's convenient.
- ix) Isn't that 1421? That's what I, I think.
- x) No, this is the wrong; I'll put you on to the switchboard.
- xi) Sorry to have you.
- xii) He's not in the office at the moment. But I can try to find him on the

xiii) This is how things at our end. I'm afraid there's nothing we can do about it.

xiv) I've up on the prices you asked about.

xv) Now I can the arrangements we made.

9.4 EFFICIENT TELEPHONING

It is very essential to ensure that telephone conversations are made professionally and efficiently. It is a known fact that the success of any organisation depends on customer / client satisfaction. It is also a known fact that the first contact is mostly made over the telephone. These new and potential customers / clients will not return unless they are treated professionally and courteously. Often organisations forget this fact and manage this important telephone function unprofessionally. It is not unusual to have more than 80 per cent of customer contact via the telephone in certain type of organisations, especially public service organisations.

Recollect the last time you contacted a service organisation over telephone; bank, telephone department, railway station, electricity office, public library, etc. and try to answer the following questions:

- Did you get connected at the time you dialed the number? Yes () No ()
- Did someone pick up the phone within three rings? Yes () No ()
- Did the person greet you by saying “good morning” “good evening”, etc.? Yes () No ()
- Did the person introduce herself/ himself by name? Yes () No ()
- Did you get the information you wanted? Yes () No ()
- Did the person end the call with a friendly and courteous note? Yes () No ()

Main Telephone Complaints

We frequently talk about the inefficiency of the telephone function in organisations. Though the automatic system for answering queries, like the Call Centre type systems, have reduced the problem to some extent, but still the problem persists.

Bad and outdated equipments, untrained staff, inadequate number of staff, inefficient management, etc. are the reasons for most telephone complaints. The common complaints are:

- Can't get the number, either always busy or not picking up
- Rude behaviour
- Not satisfied with the answer
- Could not hear the person clearly
- Took too much time to get the information
- Lost on hold

- Being switched from person to person
- Not being knowledgeable.

9.5 THE BEGINNING AND THE ENDING

As a librarian, you may often have to attend to calls from customers who may ask you if your library provides a certain service or has a particular book. To prepare you for all sorts of interactions and encounters we will take you through the various components of a telephone conversation and the courtesies involved.

Components of Telephone Conversation

A typical telephone conversation usually has the following components:

- Greeting
- Warm up
- Purpose
- Closing

Most of these, apart from the purpose which is obviously different in each case, are common enough. Very often, a warm up sentence accompanies the greeting.

The Beginning

It is most important to open a telephone call professionally. Make the caller feel welcome, and try to give an impression that s/he is an important caller. This could be done in many ways, as shown below:

- Pick up the phone as soon as it starts ringing (within three or four rings)
- Greet the caller
- State your organisation (department)/section
- Introduce yourself
- Offer help

Example: *“Good afternoon. Central Library Reference Section, Sunita Sharma speaking. How may I help you?”*

The Ending

You should make sure that the customer will come back to you. For this you need to end the conversation properly. You should:

- Thank the customer for calling
- Make sure that the information you have provided is adequate
- Let the customer know you appreciate her/his purpose of calling
- Invite the caller to call again if s/he wants any additional information
- Don't be in a hurry to disconnect the phone, let the customer do that first.

Example: *“Thank you Mr. Sharma. I hope that the information is helpful. Please do get back if you need any further information. It was a pleasure talking to you. Bye now.”*

Activity

- 2) Given below are some such common expressions. Classify each according to the category (a) to (d) as given in section 9.5 of this Unit. The first one is done for you.
- i) Good morning. **(a)**
 - ii) Good morning Neena, how are you today?
 - iii) I'd like to go over the training schedule with you today. Would 4 pm suit you?
 - iv) Thank you for calling Central Library. Have a good day.
 - v) Thanks and bye.
 - vi) That's all for now, thank you.
 - vii) I'd like to discuss the procurement list with you today. What would be a good time to schedule a meeting?
 - viii) Hello Ravi, is this a good time to talk to you?
 - ix) Thank you for calling Central Library, this is Neha. How may I assist you?
 - x) Hi Neha, did you have a good weekend?
 - xi) Thank you for your help. Bye.
 - xii) Good morning, I'm Radha from City Public Library and would like to speak to someone from Accounts, please.
 - xiii) Take care. Bye.
 - xiv) This is Mira. I'd like to speak to Mr. Murthy please.
 - xv) Can you give me Mr. Khanna's mobile number?

9.6 MANAGING SPECIAL SITUATIONS

The Angry Customer

It often happens that the customer starts the conversation with an angry note! This could be because of her/his bad experience on earlier occasions with your organisation. Never retaliate, act cool, and listen patiently for some time. Give enough signals to show that you have taken note of the points. If the person goes on, interrupt and request her/him to come to the point. If the complaints are serious ones, transfer the call to your senior after informing the caller that you are transferring the call. When you transfer a call, say something like:

“I need to transfer the call to Mr. X, because he is the right person to answer your question.”

Often you may not be sure about the answer and you need to check with someone. In that case, say:

“Will you please wait for a moment; I need to check on this with my colleague.”

Managing the angry caller is a difficult job, but an important one. Angry and dissatisfied customers are a threat to the organisation because they are likely to

spread the word that they are unhappy with the way that you do business. This sort of news spreads rapidly. Here are some tips, which one could try, to manage such customers:

- Listen to the customer patiently so that you will understand the problem
- Apologize in a general way, even if you think that situation doesn't warrant it.
- Propose a plan of action if can't provide an immediate solution to the problem.

The Talkative Caller

S/he never stops and you won't get a chance to respond! Some even become too friendly and start talking about anything under the sun! The best way to deal with such a caller is to be "business-like with the caller". Other ways to manage such callers are:

- Ask closed questions, eliciting one word answers. *For example, "Did you? Will you? May I do that?"*
- Give only little space between your statements.
- You talk very little yourself.
- Do not invite unnecessary conversation.
- Give the impression that you are a busy person, and other calls are waiting.

The Waiting Time

The first and important advice is that don't make the caller wait inordinately. If s/he has to, inform her/him and the reasons for it. If you think that the caller will have to wait for long, note down the number and call back. You should indicate when you will call, for example say "in 10 minutes", "by the end of the day", "by tomorrow", etc.

9.7 TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

Telephones have become a necessary and important part of our life. It is difficult to visualize "life without mobiles"! These days most of our social as well as business conversations and interactions happen through these gadgets. Thus, it is becoming all the more important to manage telephone calls effectively.

Following good telephone etiquette is important, while making as well as while receiving calls. You must keep in mind that it is your call; you need to make sure that it is managed professionally.

- 1) Speak softly so that others around you do not get disturbed.
- 2) Do not telephone anyone at odd hours, unless very urgent.
- 3) Personal calls should not be made from office unless absolutely necessary.
- 4) Do not discuss personal matters on telephone from office.
- 5) Be brief on telephone.
- 6) Avoid speaking in your mother tongue from office.
- 7) Greet the caller, even if that person is a stranger.
- 8) Do not terminate a call abruptly.

- 9) If you notice a missed call, phone that person at the earliest.
- 10) Do not make the caller wait inordinately.
- 11) If a person has been made to wait, inform the person the reason.
- 12) If you are transferring a call to another person, explain the reason for doing so.
- 13) Check with the person, if s/he can hear you properly, if you feel there is a problem.
- 14) Do not eat or drink while speaking on the phone.

9.8 LANGUAGE FOCUS

Just as in face-to-face conversation, verbal exchanges on the telephone may be informal, semi-formal or formal. For example, a simple greeting, when you pick up the telephone may be said in any of these ways:

- a) Hi, how's life? (**informal**)
- b) Hello, how's everything? / How're you doing? (**semi-formal**)
- c) Good morning, how are you? (**formal**)

Activity

- 3) Now classify these sentences as informal/semi-formal/formal. Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.
 - i) Would it be possible for you to give me a few days off?
 - ii) Should I send you the CDs right away?
 - iii) Can I leave her a message?
 - iv) Would it be possible for you to meet Ravi Prakash today?
 - v) Would you like me to mail you the catalogue right away?
 - vi) I want to go on holiday next week.
 - vii) Would you like to leave a message?
 - viii) Hiten wants to meet you.
 - ix) Do you think I could get a week off starting Monday?
 - x) Rakesh Jain would like to meet you.
 - xi) Do you want me to send the CDs right now?
 - xii) I'm afraid I can't put you through to him, Sir.
 - xiii) Do you want to leave a message?
 - xiv) You can't meet him today.
 - xv) May I leave a message for her?

You will have noticed that there are certain typical phrases that form the base for formal telephone conversations. The 'do you want' is replaced by 'would you like'; 'could' and 'may' are more formal than 'can' etc.

Activity

4) Rewrite the following sentences to make them sound more formal using phrases from the box given below. You may be able to use more than one option in some cases.

- i) Can you give me Mr. Vasu's number?
- ii) What did you say?
- iii) Where has he gone?
- iv) What's your name?
- v) Yes, I want you to send me the new rate list.
- vi) Send it to me today.
- vii) Mr. Singh is not available today.
- viii) Can I call you tomorrow?
- ix) I want some information about the new car repair course you are starting.
- x) Is 2.30 p.m. on Friday okay?

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Could you tell me..... | Would |
| I would like..... | Could you give..... |
| May I | I beg..... |
| I would like you | Please..... |
| I'm afraid..... | Would it be..... |
| Would..... | Could..... |

9.9 GRAMMAR: MODALS

You would have noticed that many sentences in the Unit begin with words like '*would*', '*could*' and '*may*'. These and others like '*should*', '*shall*', '*can*', '*will*' and '*ought to*' are auxiliary verbs known as modals or modal verbs, the use of which is very important in polite language and telephone conversations. Unlike other auxiliary verbs like 'be', 'do' and 'have', modal verbs are **only** used as auxiliary verbs, and cannot be used as the main verb in a sentence.

The table given below will help you in identifying the functions of modal verbs.

Table 9.1: Functions of Modal Verbs

| Modal | Example | Uses |
|-------|--|---|
| Can | Can I speak to Rita? Can I call you tomorrow? I'm afraid I can't help you with that. You can call him at 10 tomorrow. | Request Asking for permission Expressing inability Stating possibility |
| Could | Could you repeat that? Could I borrow your pen drive? You could speak to your manager about it. | Request Permission Suggestion |

| | | |
|----------|--|--|
| May | May I know who is calling? The meeting may be cancelled. How may I help you? | Enquiring/Requesting Expressing possibility Offering help |
| Might | They might reduce the rates for us. | Future possibility |
| Would | Would you mind mailing me the brochure? I would like to meet Mr. Sharma today. Would you like some tea or coffee? Would you mind if I wrote this down? Would 2.30 on Friday be okay? | Request Stating wish/Request Offering help Asking for permission Making arrangements |
| Should | You should discuss this with Mr. Mehra first. The material should reach you by tomorrow. | Suggesting/Advising/ Recommending Making a prediction |
| Shall | Shall I call the Materials Manager? Shall I call him or will you? | Suggesting/Offering Asking what to do |
| Will | I'll mail the details to you right away. He won't be back before Friday. | Promising /Assuring Certain prediction |
| Ought to | You ought to prepare all papers in advance | Strong advise |

Self Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers at the space given below.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

6) Using modal verbs make appropriate sentences for the following situations.

i) Asking the caller who he wants to talk to.

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ii) Assuring the caller you will pass on his message to your boss.

.....

iii) Suggesting a meeting time to the caller.

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iv) Asking the caller if he prefers to receive certain information by fax or email.

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v) Informing someone about a possible cancellation of a business trip

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vi) Requesting someone to give information in greater detail

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vii) Offering to help with hotel bookings

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viii) Expressing inability to send material before receiving payment

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ix) Advising your colleague to clarify a confusion with his boss

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x) Predicting how the market will move in the coming week

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9.10 LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Activity

5) Listen to two telephone conversations (refer to CD) and complete the following dialogues by filling in the gaps. Then identify the various components in them, as studied in Section 9.5 under heading **Components of Telephone Conversation**, i.e. (a to d). Notice the difference in the formal and semi-formal dialogues.

Note: You may play the CD provided and listen to the audio as many times as you require. Please note that the text of the audio has been provided in the answers section (tape script -1).

Conversation 1

A: Hello.

B: Hi Vrinda, Kavita _____.

A: Oh Hi, Kavita. How's everything?

B: Great! I have _____ this week. I was wondering if you wanted to go for a movie one of these days.

A: That's _____! Shall we go tomorrow?

B: Perfect. Should I _____ at 5 o'clock then and we can watch the 6 pm show?

A: _____. See you then.

B: Bye. See you tomorrow.

A: Bye.

Conversation 2

A: Good morning, Gupta Securities. How may I help you?

B: Hello, Gagan, its Prabhakar this side.

A: Oh, hello, Prabhakar. _____. How's everything?

B: _____. What about you?

A: All good. So tell me, what can I do for you?

B: I wanted _____ from you, so I was wondering if we could _____ some time this week.

A: Sure. Why don't you come to my office on _____, say _____?

B: _____. I'll see you then.

A: _____ to it. Oh, and don't forget to pick up those delicious samosas from the shop below your office!

B: _____. Bye.

A: Bye.

6) Now listen to this conversation between an executive and the Managing Director of a company and tell the difference between this conversation and the two you previously heard. The conversation is given in the answer of question 6 as conversation 3.

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9.11 WRITING

Activity

7) Make appropriate sentences for the situations given below. One is given as an example.

i) Answering the telephone.

Answer: Good morning, Kavita Nagpal speaking. How may I help you?

ii) Offering to take a message.

iii) Saying who you are.

iv) Asking to speak to Aman.

v) Asking the caller for more information about the call.

- vi) Saying someone is unavailable.
- vii) Asking for the caller's name.
- viii) Asking the caller to repeat something.

Self Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers at the space given below.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

Make telephone conversations for three situations given below. The model conversation is given at the end of the Unit.

7) You are calling your colleague Milind to ask after his health. He has been down with a fever for a week.

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8) You are working with Central Reference Library of a university. Receive a call from a customer for the availability of a reference source.

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9) Your boss has asked you to make a call to Mr. Sahu's office to find out whether they have received delivery of books/periodicals/etc.

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9.12 SUMMARY

Nowadays a great deal business is done over telephone. The large scale and unprecedented penetration of mobile phones has added a new dimension to this. So it is all the more important to ensure that every organisation manages this important activity professionally. Installing the right type of telephone system, placing the employee with the right type of attitude and skills to answer telephones and giving all staff training in telephone use skills etc. go a long way in getting this important function streamlined.

9.13 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

- 1) Facial expressions, gesticulations and visual aids are some of the tools that help understanding in a face-to-face conversation.
- 2) Choice of words is more critical in a telephone conversation as the speakers can't see each other or use any visual aids and gestures. The listener often has to visualize something from hearing a description of it.
- 3) Enunciating clearly, stressing on important words, raising and lowering pitch in the right place are some of the ways to use your voice more effectively.
- 4) To ensure that important information is correctly given and received, it is best for the listener to repeat it for confirmation.
- 5) You can ensure that nothing of importance is left out of a business telephone conversation by preparing for it in advance by noting down all the points that need to be addressed / asked.
- 6) These are only sample answers; yours could be different.
 - i) Who **would** you like to speak to?
 - ii) **I'll** inform Mr. Varshney as soon as he comes in, Sir.
 - iii) **Would** 4.30 on Monday suit you?
 - iv) **Would** you prefer this to be sent by fax or email, Sir?
 - v) I'm afraid I **may not** be able to come to Mumbai just yet.
 - vi) **Could** you elaborate on that, please?
 - vii) **Shall/Should** I book the hotel for you?
 - viii) I'm afraid I **can't** send you the material until we receive the payment.
 - ix) You **should** clarify this with your boss first.
 - x) I think the market **will** make a good recovery in the coming week.
- 7) Milind: Hello?

You : Hi Milind, Rakesh this side. How are you doing?

Milind : I'm okay. What's up with you?

You : Oh! Nothing much. Everything is as usual. So how are you feeling now? Do you still have a fever?

Milind : No, the fever's down, but I'm feeling really weak! And bored!

- You : Yeah, I can imagine! Waiting to see you back in the library.
Get well soon.
- Milind : Yeah, thanks.
- You : Bye then.
- Milind : Bye.
- 8) You : Good afternoon, Central Reference Library of IGNOU. How may I help you?
- Customer : I'd like to renew two books and two periodicals that are due today.
- You : May I have your membership number, Sir?
- Customer : It's IGL1860.
- You : Thank you, Sir. The two books and two periodicals against your membership have been renewed. They are next due on 12 July.
- Customer : Ok. Thank you.
- You : Is there anything else I can assist you with, Sir?
- Customer : Yes. Is the January, 2013 issue of the ELT journal available?
- You : Let me just check that for you, Sir.
- Customer : Ok.
- You : I am sorry, Sir. The journal has been issued to another member. You can reserve the journal if you wish. You will be notified by email as soon as it has been returned.
- Customer : Ok. It would great if that could be done!
- You : Sure, Sir. (Pause) The ELT journal has been reserved. The reference number is J34. The details have been sent to your e-mail.
- Customer : Thank you so much.
- You : You're welcome, Sir. Have a good day.
- 9) Ms. Rupa : Hello.
- You : Good morning, Ms. Rupa. This is Manu Khanna calling from Ruby Publication.
- Ms.Rupa : Hello, Manu.
- You : I've called to find out if you have received the copies of the Product Design books you had ordered. We dispatched it last week.
- Ms. Rupa : No, Manu. I'm afraid we haven't received it yet.
- You : I'm very sorry about that, Ma'am. I'll call the delivery department and get back to you immediately.
- Ms. Rupa : Please do that. We need the material urgently. The students are all asking for the books.
- You : I will look into the matter. Once again, I'm sorry for the inconvenience. I'll call you back soon.
- Ms. Rupa : Okay. Thank you.

9.14 ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES

- 1) i) calling, ii) moment, iii) see, iv) hold the line, v) ring up, vi) in, vii) phone, after, viii) back, ix) dialed, x) extension, xi) bothered, xii) mobile, xiii) stand, xiv) checked, xv) confirm.
- 2) i) Good morning. (a)
 - ii) Good morning Neena, how are you today? (a, b)
 - iii) I'd like to go over the training schedule with you today. Would 4 pm suit you? (c)
 - iv) Thank you for calling Central Library. Have a good day. (d)
 - v) Thanks and bye. (d)
 - vi) That's all for now, thank you. (d)
 - vii) I'd like to discuss the procurement list with you today. What would be a good time to schedule a meeting? (c)
 - viii) Hello Ravi, is this a good time to talk to you? (a, b)
 - ix) Thank you for calling Central Library, this is Neha. How may I assist you? (b)
 - x) Hi Neha, did you have a good weekend? (a, b)
 - xi) Thank you for your help. Bye. (d)
 - xii) Good morning, I'm Radha from City Public Library and would like to speak to someone from Accounts, please. (a, c)
 - xiii) Take care. Bye. (d)
 - xiv) This is Mira. I'd like to speak to Mr. Murthy please.(c)
 - xv) Can you give me Mr. Khanna's mobile number? (c)
- 3) i) Would it be possible for you to give me a few days off? **Formal**
 - ii) Should I send you the CDs right away? **Semi-formal**
 - iii) Can I leave her a message? **Formal**
 - iv) Would it be possible for you to meet Ravi Prakash today? **Formal**
 - v) Would you like me to mail you the catalogue right away? **Formal**
 - vi) I want to go on holiday next week. **Informal**
 - vii) Would you like to leave a message? **Formal**
 - viii) Hiten wants to meet you. **Informal**
 - ix) Do you think I could get a week off starting Monday? **Semi-formal**
 - x) Rakesh Jain would like to meet you. **Formal**
 - xi) Do you want me to send the CDs right now? **Informal**
 - xii) I'm afraid I can't put you through to him, Sir. **Formal**
 - xiii) Do you want to leave a message? **Semi-formal**
 - xiv) You can't meet him today. **Informal**
 - xv) May I leave a message for her? **Formal**

4) i) Can you give me Mr. Vasu's number?

Could you give me/May I have Mr. Vasu's number?

ii) What did you say?

I beg your pardon? /Could you repeat that?

iii) Where has he gone?

May I know/Could you tell me where he has gone?

iv) What's your name?

May I have your name, please?

v) Yes, I want you to send me the new rate list.

Yes, I would like you to send me the new rate list.

vi) Send it to me today.

Please send it to me today. / Could you send it to me today?

vii) Mr. Singh is not available today.

I'm afraid Mr. Singh is not available today.

viii) Can I call you tomorrow?

May I call you tomorrow? /Would it be alright if I called you tomorrow?

ix) I want some information about the new car repair course you are starting.

I would like some information about the new car repair course you are starting.

x) Is 2.30 p.m. on Friday okay?

Would 2.30 p.m. on Friday be convenient for you?

5) Conversation 1

A : Hello. (a)

B : Hi Vrinda, Kavita **this side/here**. (a)

A : Oh Hi, Kavita. How's everything? (b)

B : Great! I have **four days off** this week. I was wondering if you wanted to go for a movie one of these days. (c)

A : That's **not a bad idea!** Shall we go tomorrow? (c)

B : Perfect. Should I **_pick you up** at 5 o'clock then and we can watch the 6 pm show? (c)

A : **Sounds fine**. See you then. (d)

B : Bye. See you tomorrow. (d)

A : Bye. (d)

Conversation 2

A : Good morning, Gupta Securities. How may I help you? (a)

B : Hello, Gagan, its Prabhakar this side. (a)

A : Oh, hello, Prabhakar. **Long time no news.** How's everything? (b)

B : **All well here.** What about you? (b)

A : All good. So tell me, what can I do for you? (c)

B : I wanted **some investment advice** from you, so I was wondering if we could **sit together** some time this week. (c)

A : Sure. Why don't you come to my office on **Wednesday**, say **4 pm**? (c)

B : **Perfect.** I'll see you then. (d)

A : **Look forward** to it. Oh, and don't forget to pick up those delicious samosas from the shop below your office! (d)

B : **Sure.** Bye. (d)

A : Bye. (d)

6) Conversation 3

Ajay Sinha : Hello.

Hari Modi : Good morning, Sir. This is Hari Modi from the Personnel Department. Mr. Dewan asked me to speak with you.

Ajay Sinha : Yes, yes, Hari. Good Morning. I need you to do something for me.

Hari Modi : Certainly, Sir. How may I help you?

Ajay Sinha : Let me just brief you about it first. You see, my secretary, Ms. Nene, is on leave, and I need somebody to accompany me to the Singapore conference for three days. Mr. Dewan recommends you highly, so I'd like you to assist me on this trip.

Hari Modi : Certainly, Sir. I'd be pleased to be of assistance. When would we be leaving and what would you like me to do in preparation?

Ajay Sinha : Could you come to my office at, say, 10:30 and we can discuss the details?

Hari Modi : I'm afraid we have a departmental meeting from 10:30 to 11:30. Would it be alright if I come in at 11:30?

Ajay Sinha : Oh, that's perfectly fine.

Hari Modi : Right, Sir. I'll be there at 11:30.

Answer

i) The language in conversation 3 is very formal. For example the executive says "How may I be of help to you" instead of "What can I do for you" as in Conversation 2, which is semi-formal. Conversation 1 is totally informal.

ii) Note that there is greater use of modals like 'would' 'could' and 'may' in formal language.

iii) The executive does not address his senior officer by his first name.

iv) There is no small talk or warming up as is the case in many formal conversations.

- 7) i) Good morning Kavita Nagpal speaking. How may I help you?
ii) Would you like to leave a message?
iii) This is Neha Gupta.
iv) I'd like to speak to Aman Wahi, please.
v) Could you tell me why you'd like to speak to the Principal, please?
vi) Ms. Sonia Singh is in a meeting.
vii) Could you tell me your name, please?
viii) Could you say that again, please?

9.15 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Smith, David G. *Express Series English for Telephoning*. Oxford University Press, 2007. Print.

Schnurr, S. *Exploring Professional Communication*. Routledge, 2012. Print.

UNIT 10 GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Structure

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Warm up
- 10.2 Why Group Discussions (GD)?
- 10.3 Conduct of Group Discussions
- 10.4 What do Selectors Look for?
- 10.5 Group Discussion: The Do's
- 10.6 Group Discussion: The Don'ts
- 10.7 Language Focus
- 10.8 Vocabulary
- 10.9 Listening: How to be Successful in a Group Discussion
- 10.10 Grammar: Linking Words
- 10.11 Assessment Criteria
- 10.12 Speaking
- 10.13 Summary
- 10.14 Answers to Self Check Exercises
- 10.15 Answers to Activities
- 10.16 References and Further Reading

10.0 OBJECTIVES

This Unit introduces you to one of the often used selection process: Group Discussion. Employers resort to this, because they can find out many crucial attributes of a candidate through this process, which other selection processes do not permit. It is important for you to prepare well before the group discussion and perform in such a way that you draw the selectors' attention towards you. You are given many tips on how to conduct yourself in a group discussion.

10.1 WARM UP

Group Discussions (GD) when held as selection process always involves two parties: the selectors and the GD participants. The former plays only a passive role; they only watch the GD process and observe each participant. They seldom intervene or interfere. Their sole objective is to identify certain attributes in the participants which they could not easily identify by other means.

Activity

- 1) What attributes of the participants do you think the selectors try to find out from a GD? Select five attributes out of the ones listed in section 10.2 and 10.4, which you think are most important.
 - i)
 - ii)

iii)

iv)

v)

10.2 WHY GROUP DISCUSSIONS (GD)?

Group Discussion (GD), as selection tool, is gaining more and more importance for a variety of reasons. Usually GDs are conducted after the written test to shortlist candidates for the next stage of the selection process. GD also helps the selection panel to reject outright candidates because of their poor performance in the GD. This technique is being increasingly used by professional educational institutions, especially business schools, as well as by business houses to select professionals. GD allows the selection panel to observe, compare and form opinions about a large number of candidates in a relatively short span of time. GD gives the opportunity to assess certain traits and skills, (such as the following) of the candidates that are not possible to observe in a resume, written examination or an interview:

- leadership qualities
- quality of participation
- analytical skills
- problem solving skills
- oral communication skills
- ability to handle people
- team spirit
- non-verbal behaviour
- conformation to norms
- decision-making ability
- inter-personal behaviour
- behaviour in a group
- body language
- how much importance do you give to the group objective as well as your own
- how well do you listen to viewpoints of others and how open-minded are you in accepting views.

10.3 CONDUCT OF GROUP DISCUSSIONS

A Group Discussion is normally a formal discussion involving an invited group of participants. The number of participants usually will be around eight, but there is no guarantee it will not be fifteen! They will be given a topic, often a contemporary and debatable topic. The participants will be allowed a few minutes, about 10 minutes, to understand the topic and organise their thoughts. Then they will be asked to discuss the topic for about 20 to 25 minutes. The time available for the discussion will be communicated to the participants in advance. In such

GDs no one is appointed as the leader or coordinator. Everyone is treated at par by the selection panel, but it is not uncommon for someone to take the initiative and take on a leadership role.

A GD is normally not conditioned by such procedural rules as in the case of a formal debate. Here the candidates can say whatever they like and whenever they like on the subject under discussion. A candidate can speak in favour of the subject, against the subject or even follow a neutral path. Everything depends on the interest and ability of each member of the group. So the candidates are quite free to discuss the topic without any interference from the selection panel.

The entire discussion process will take place in front of the selection panel. They will be observing every action of each participant closely.

10.4 WHAT DO SELECTORS LOOK FOR?

In a GD what do the panel of selectors look for? They will be looking for a variety of attributes in you, which they were unable to assess from the resume. These will include the following:

- Did you make any useful contribution at all?
- What was your level of knowledge about the subject?
- Did you communicate effectively?
- Were you a good listener?
- Did you unnecessarily interrupt others?
- How positive or negative was your body language?
- Did you exhibit any analytical skills?
- Did you provide leadership to the group?
- How good a team player were you?
- Did you look or sound “selfish”?
- Did you do anything to bring the group to focus on the topic rather than going outside it?

10.5 GROUP DISCUSSION: THE DO’S

If you have a reasonably good level of general knowledge, that will come in handy in a GD. So also your proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, accent and so on. These help to draw the attention of the selectors towards you.

To bring out the best in you and to create the desired impact on the selectors, you need to adhere to some Do’s and Don’ts. These are:

- Listen to others attentively; you may even take brief notes.
- Enter the discussion at an early stage.
- Communicate with confidence.
- Make sure that your contributions are focused on the given topic.
- Try to speak something new which has not been said by the earlier speakers.

- If you find that any participant is not making her/his viewpoint clear, ask pertinent questions.
- Even when you oppose a view point, use dignified language.
- Try to make your contributions take the centre point for the discussion.
- If the discussion is going out of focus, try to point this out and bring it back on track.
- Use positive body language. Example, looking into the other person’s eyes when listening or speaking.
- Remain confident and interested throughout, whether you are speaking or not speaking.
- Conclude each argument at the right time and in the right manner.
- Collaborate instead of compete.

Activity

- 2) Out of the Do’s listed above; identify three, which are very important. Say why.

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10.6 GROUP DISCUSSION: THE DON'TS

The selectors will be critically observing your every action while the GD is on, and will be making notes of the positive points as well as the negative points. While it is important to demonstrate strengths, it is equally important to work on your weaknesses. So please take note of the don'ts listed below:

- Don't appear or feel restless when someone is speaking.
- Don't keep silent for a long time; the selectors are there to hear you speak.
- Don't exhibit negative body language. Example, shaking your leg when speaking.
- Don't use abusive or objectionable language or gestures.
- Don't interrupt others when they are speaking.
- Don't impose your views upon others.
- Don't get irritated or lose temper if someone disagrees with you.
- Don't deviate from the subject given for discussion.
- Don't take anything personally.
- Don't give instructions to others in the group.
- Don't speak for the sake of speaking.

Activity

3) Out of the Don'ts listed above, identify three, which are very important. Say why.

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10.7 LANGUAGE FOCUS

Here is some helpful language for group discussions:

- **Stating an opinion**
 - It seems to me...
 - In my view...
 - I tend to think...
 - It's obvious that...
 - I believe...
 - Clearly...
- **Interrupting**
 - Excuse me, may I ask for a clarification on this...
 - If I may interrupt...
 - Sorry to interrupt but...
- **Handling Interruptions**
 - Sorry, please let me finish...
 - If I may finish what I am saying...
 - Could you please allow me to complete what I'm saying...?
- **Moving the discussion on**
 - Can we go on to think about...?
 - I think we should now move on to consider...
- **Expressing Agreement**
 - I quite agree
 - I couldn't agree more
 - Absolutely / precisely / exactly
 - I think you're right

- **Expressing disagreement**
 - I think quite differently on this
 - I don't really think so
 - I'm afraid I can't agree with you there
- **Checking comprehension / reformulating**
 - To put that another way...
 - If I follow you correctly...
 - So what you're saying is...
 - Does that mean...?
 - Are you saying...?
- **Making a suggestion**
 - I suggest that...
 - We could...
 - Perhaps we should...
 - It might be worth...
 - What about...?
 - Why don't we...?

10.8 VOCABULARY

Self Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers at the space given below.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

- 1) Read the text and use the right form of the word in the bracket to form a word that fits in the numbered space. The first one is done for you as an example.

The **surest** (sure) way of antagonizing others in the GD as well as the examiner is to appoint yourself as a de facto _____ (**chair**) of the group. Do not try to impose a system whereby everyone gets a chance to speak in turn. A GD is meant to be a free _____ (**flow**) discussion. Let it proceed naturally. Do not ever try to take a vote on the topic. A vote is no substitute for discussion.

Do not address only one or two persons when _____ (**speak**). Maintain eye contact with as many members of the group as possible. This will involve others in what you are saying and increase your _____ (**chance**) of carrying them with you. Do this even if you are _____ (**answer**) a specific point raised by one person.

10.9 LISTENING: HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN A GROUP DISCUSSION

Listen to a speaker telling you about how to be successful in a group discussion. Please note that the text of the audio has been provided in the answers section.

Self Check Exercise

- Note:** i) Write your answers at the space given below.
 ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.
- 2) On the basis of what the speaker says, state whether the following statements are True or False:
- i) You must contribute towards reaching a consensus.
 - ii) In order to be heard you must speak for at least 15 minutes.
 - iii) You can make a meaningful contribution even if you do not know much about the topic being discussed.
 - iv) A fish market scenario is one where each one tries to talk at the same time and emphasize her/his point of view.
 - v) If you fail to contribute towards reaching a consensus it means you are not very good at team work.
 - vi) A good listener agrees with what others say.
 - vii) In the end you must summarize only your own point of view.

10.10 GRAMMAR: LINKING WORDS

In any piece of writing the sentences and the ideas in them are logically related by certain words or phrases that are known as linkers. These linkers have different functions and belong to different parts of speech. These may be pronouns, conjunctions, conditionals, determiners, etc.

Let us look at some of the linkers and their functions in the following table:

Table 10.1: Linkers and their functions

| Linkers | Functions | Examples |
|---|---|--|
| And, as well as, moreover | Used to add new elements | This technique is being increasingly used by professional educational institutions, especially business schools, as well as by business houses to select professionals. |
| Or, in other words, alternatively | Used to express opposite ideas or an alternative choice | A candidate can speak in favour of the subject, against the subject or even follow a neutral path. |
| But, however, yet, still, on the other hand, on the contrary, even though | Used to express contrast | Slouching tells them that you are indifferent or you do not care, even though you might care a great deal! |
| Because, since, for, as | Giving a cause for a particular statement | And since you cannot see the listener in a telephone conversation, you need to confirm if important information has been correctly heard and understood. |
| Therefore, consequently, so, so that, hence | Used to express a result | Speak softly so that others around you do not get disturbed. |
| If, provided that, otherwise, unless, in case | Used to express condition | Do not telephone anyone at odd hours, unless it is very urgent. |

Self Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers at the space given below.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

3) Complete the paragraph with the words from the box.

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------|----|-----|
| therefore | otherwise | or | who |
| and | if | | |

In most GD's the opening speaker is the person _____ is likely to get the maximum uninterrupted airtime. The reason is simple. At the start most other participants in the GD are still trying to understand the basic issues in the topic, _____ are too nervous to speak _____ are waiting for someone else to start. _____ the evaluators get the best chance to observe the opening speaker. Now this is a double-edged sword. _____ the opening speaker talks sense, naturally s/he will get credit because s/he opened the discussion and took the group in the right direction. _____ on the other hand, the first speaker doesn't make too much sense, s/he will attract the undivided attention of the evaluators to his shortcomings. She/he will be marked as a person _____ speaks without thinking merely for the sake of speaking. S/he will be seen as someone who leads the group in the wrong direction _____ does not make a positive contribution to the group. So remember, speaking first is a high-risk high-return strategy. It can make _____ mar your GD performance depending how you handle it. Speak first only _____ you have something sensible to say. _____ keep quiet and let someone else start.

10.11 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The participants of Group Discussions are evaluated by a panel of experts. Here are most of the areas on which they would mark you on their evaluation sheets. It would be extremely helpful to keep these in mind when you participate in Group Discussions.

- Command over spoken English – it should be logical, coherent, correct, appropriate.
- Knowledge base – authentic information – genuine facts and figures.
- Convincing power – cogent, decent and constructively forceful attitude.
- Discourse management – coping with twists and turns of arguments.
- Body Language – eye contact, body posture, attentiveness.
- Maturity – candidate must not 'bully' others or take undue advantage to prove herself/ himself a 'leader'.
- Listening – intelligent and analytical.
- Supplementing – responding and adding to what another has said before initiating a fresh turn.
- Initiative and Assertiveness.

Beneficial Team Behaviour

- Initiate discussions.
- Seek information and opinions.
- Suggest procedures for reaching a goal / consensus.
- Clarify or elaborate ideas.
- Summarize.
- Act as a gate-keeper, direct conversational traffic, avoid simultaneous conversations.
- Subdue dominant talkers, make room for reserved and shy people.
- Keep the discussion from digressing.
- Be flexible and creative in resolving differences.

A consolidated task based on the inputs given in this section is given in the speaking section.

10.12 SPEAKING

Practice your group discussion skills by arranging to meet with your study partners. Remember to apply the tips we have given you, the do's and don'ts as well as the formulaic language given in the Unit. Ask someone to assess you on the basis of the assessment criteria given in the Unit.

The topics could be:

- i) Do we really need libraries, especially in the age of Internet?
- ii) Changing role of the librarian.

Suggested points for discussion:

- Libraries are an integral part of any society.
- In a knowledge driven society, libraries can play a crucial role.
- Think of a situation when there will not be any libraries!
- Role of libraries have changed a great deal in the recent past.
- Besides providing books and periodicals, they also provide users information.
- E-documents, virtual libraries, online access to full-text etc., are new developments.
- Internet may appear to be making libraries somewhat redundant, but it will never replace books and libraries.

10.13 SUMMARY

GD is being used by employers increasingly, because that gives the employer a chance to observe you in a group environment and evaluate your many crucial attributes, and compare with other candidates. You may be good academically and professionally, but if the selectors notice that your spoken communication or body language is not good enough, there is all possibility that you will be

rejected at the Group Discussion stage. You need to brush up your social skills before participating in a GD. Participate in GD in such way that the selectors take note of you!

10.14 ANSWERS OF SELF CHECK EXERCISES

- 1) The **surest** way of antagonizing others in the GD as well as the examiner is to appoint yourself as a de facto **chairperson** of the group. Do not try to impose a system whereby everyone gets a chance to speak in turn. A GD is meant to be a free **flowing** discussion. Let it proceed naturally. Do not ever try to take a vote on the topic. A vote is no substitute for discussion.

10.15 ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES

- 1) Five attributes
- i) Oral communication skills
 - ii) Behaviour in a group
 - iii) Leadership qualities
 - iv) Body language
 - v) Ability to handle people.
- 2) i) Listen attentively
- ii) Communicate with confidence
 - iii) Positive body language.
- 3) i) Don't keep silent for a long time.
- ii) Don't deviate from the subject given for discussion.
 - iii) Don't exhibit negative body language.

Do not address only one or two persons when **speaking**. Maintain eye contact with as many members of the group as possible. This will involve others in what you are saying and increase your **chances** of carrying them with you. Do this even if you are **answering** a specific point raised by one person.

Text for the Audio: How to be Successful in a Group Discussion

In order to succeed in any unstructured group discussion, you must define what your objective in the group is. A good definition of your objective is – to be seen to have contributed meaningfully in an attempt to achieve the right consensus. The key words in this definition are 'seen', 'meaningfully', and 'attempt'.

Let us understand what each of these imply in terms of action points:

The first implication is that merely making a meaningful contribution in an attempt to achieve consensus is not enough. You have to be seen by the evaluator to have made a meaningful contribution to build the right consensus. In other words, you must ensure that you are heard by the group. If the group hears you, so will the evaluator. You must get at least some airtime. If you are not a very assertive person, you will have to simply learn to be assertive for those 15 minutes.

The second important implication is that making just any sort of contribution is not enough. Your contribution has to be meaningful. A meaningful contribution suggests that you have a good knowledge base, are able to structure arguments logically and are a good communicator. These are qualities that are desired by all evaluators.

One way of deciding what sort of contribution is meaningful, at what point of time, is to follow two simple rules.

First, in times of chaos, a person who restores order to the group is appreciated. Your level of participation in a fish market kind of scenario can be low, but your degree of influence must never be low. In other words, you must make positive contributions every time you speak, and not merely speak for the sake of speaking. The second rule is applicable when the group is floundering. In this situation a person who provides a fresh direction to the group is given credit.

The third implication is that you must be clearly seen to be attempting to build a consensus. Nobody expects a group of ten people, all with different points of view on a controversial subject to actually achieve a consensus. But did you make the attempt to build a consensus? The reason why an attempt to build a consensus is important is because in most work situations you will have to work with people in a team, accept joint responsibilities and take decisions as a group. You must demonstrate the fact that you are capable and inclined to work as part of a team. What are the ways that you can try to build consensus?

Firstly, you don't just talk. You also listen. You must realize that other people also may have valid points to make. You should not only try to persuade other people to your point of view, but also come across as a person who has an open mind and appreciates the valid points of others.

You must try and resolve contradictions and arguments of others in the group. You must synthesize arguments and try and achieve a unified position in the group. Try and summarize the discussion at the end. In the summary do not merely restate your point of view; also accommodate dissenting viewpoints. If the group did not reach a consensus, say so in your summary. You must carry people with you.

One last point, you must not agree with another participant in the group merely for the sake of achieving consensus. If you disagree, say so. You are not there to attempt to build just any consensus. You have to attempt to build the right consensus.

- 2) i) You must contribute towards reaching a consensus. True
- ii) In order to be heard you must speak for at least 15 minutes. False
- iii) You can make a meaningful contribution even if you do not know much about the topic being discussed. False
- iv) A fish market scenario is one where each one tries to talk at the same time and emphasize her/his point of view. True
- v) If you fail to contribute towards reaching a consensus it means you are not very good at team work. True

- vi) A good listener agrees with what others say. False
- vii) In the end you must summarize only your own point of view. False
- 3) In most GD's the opening speaker is the person **who** is likely to get the maximum uninterrupted airtime. The reason is simple. At the start most other participants in the GD are still trying to understand the basic issues in the topic, **or** are too nervous to speak **and** are waiting for someone else to start. **Therefore**, the evaluators get the best chance to observe the opening speaker. Now this is a double-edged sword. **If** the opening speaker talks sense, naturally s/he will get credit because s/he opened the discussion and took the group in the right direction. **If** on the other hand the first speaker doesn't make too much sense, s/he will attract the undivided attention of the evaluators to her/his shortcomings. S/he will be marked as a person **who** speaks without thinking merely for the sake of speaking, as someone who leads the group in the wrong direction **and** does not make a positive contribution to the group.

So remember, speaking first is a high-risk high-return strategy. It can make **or** mar your GD performance depending how you handle it. Speak first only **if** you have something sensible to say. **Otherwise** keep quiet and let someone else start.

10.16 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

P. Patnaik. *Group Discussion and Interview Skills with CD*. Cambridge University Press: India (CUPIPL), 2011. Print.

Furman. *Effective Group Discussion: Theory and Practice*. McGraw-Hill, 2003. Print.

UNIT 11 BODY LANGUAGE

Structure

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Warm up
- 11.2 Observing others
- 11.3 Reading Comprehension: Body Language during Interviews
- 11.4 Vocabulary: Making Sentences
- 11.5 Writing and Speaking: Speech on Body Language
- 11.6 Listening: Presentation on Body Language
- 11.7 Grammar: Phrases and Clauses
- 11.8 Summary
- 11.9 Answers to Self Check Exercises
- 11.10 Answers to Activities
- 11.11 References and Further Reading

11.0 OBJECTIVES

This Unit will help you to understand the importance of body language i.e. non-verbal communication. We use body language as much as we use verbal communication, to communicate or while communicating verbally. Our body language sends strong signals, positive as well as negative to the person(s) who listen. A lot of guidance is given in this Unit to get your body language right while communicating with others.

11.1 WARM UP

Go back to Section 8.1 in Unit 8, where you identified three presentations which you had attended in the near past. These are:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

You also wrote down what you liked /enjoyed and also what you did not like/enjoy in each of these. Now recollect those three presentations and the body language of the presenter and write below what you appreciated or what you did not like about the body language of the presenter.

Presentation 1

| Liked | Disliked |
|--------------|-----------------|
| a | a |
| b | b |
| c | c |

Presentation 2

Liked

- a
- b
- c

Disliked

- a
- b
- c

Presentation 3

Liked

- a
- b
- c

Disliked

- a
- b
- c

Activity

1) While making a presentation, what type of body language you think the presenter should exhibit to ensure that the audience actively listens to the presentation?

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11.2 OBSERVING OTHERS

Knowingly or unconsciously we are always observing each other. You should always be aware of the fact that you are being observed continuously! You too must be doing that where others are concerned. It is also a fact that we usually don't tell others anything about their good as well as bad body language.

When you are with a group of five or more people the next time, observe them closely and identify the body movements or actions of at least one person that indicates

- enthusiasm and interest
- confidence
- power and control
- boredom and disinterest

Discuss your findings with members of the group.

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11.3 READING COMPREHENSION: BODY LANGUAGE DURING INTERVIEWS

Communication between people takes place in various ways. It is estimated that only about 10% of a message is communicated through verbal communication! We often cannot determine the truthfulness or sincerity of people by what they say. Very often words transmitted verbally do not reflect what people really feel. The only way you can determine their true inner feelings is by reading their body language. It is often difficult to question a person directly because even her/his replies may not indicate what s/he really feels or thinks. From her/his body language you may not get convinced that what s/he is saying is true.

Here are some examples of body language and their interpretations:

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Brisk, erect walk | Confidence |
| Standing with hands on hips | Readiness, aggression |
| Sitting with legs crossed | Boredom |
| Sitting legs apart | Open, relaxed |
| Arms crossed on chest | Defensiveness |
| Walking with hands in pockets, shoulders hunched | Dejection |
| Hands on cheek | Evaluation, thinking |
| Touching, rubbing nose | Rejection, doubt, lying |
| Rubbing eyes | Doubt, disbelief |

When you appear for an interview, it is important to remember that besides your resume, you are going to be watched for the clothes that you wear and how you present yourself during the interview. Even before a word has been spoken, your body language would have already given the people on the panel their first impression of you. Based on your body language, they would be able to assess if you come across as insecure or self-assured. It can also tell others if you are an assertive or a quiet type of person. It also reveals whether you are speaking the truth or not. Body language can also show if you are prone to stress or not. It can show how enthusiastic you are and whether you are a nice person, someone who will take work seriously and yet have a sense of humour. The members of the panel will ask you questions, but they will pay attention not only to what you say but also to how you say it.

Everybody uses body language, but it takes place mostly at the subconscious level. By becoming more aware of your own body language and by watching the body language of others, especially leaders and successful people, you can definitely improve your own body language.

During job interviews, try to adopt a posture that shows interest but despite the obvious stress do try to come across as being relaxed. You should change your body posture during the interview. For example, when someone says something, it is good to turn a little with your shoulders towards that person and also to lean forward a little. This shows that you are taking an interest in what the other

person is asking or saying. It is also important to pay attention to the body language of the persons who is interviewing you.

Sometimes, your hands are an obstacle during job interviews rather than a useful means of communication. In a difficult situation we fold our arms across our body. During a job interview it is better not to do this, because it can be interpreted as a defensive gesture. It is better to let your hands be on your lap or place them on the armrest of your chair. From these positions it is also easy to support your words with hand gestures. Hand movements also help to liven up the interview. It indicates that you feel at ease and are relaxed. However, do not make too many hand movements as it may be a distraction. Do pay attention to inadvertent movements that you may make sometimes due to nervousness. For example, shuffling your feet or kicking against the leg of the table can be very irritating to others. So also drumming with your fingers can be a distraction.

It is also important to show through your body language that you are listening to the people interviewing you. Looking directly into somebody's eyes or looking away actually serves as the dots and commas in your spoken sentences. When one of the panel members explains something or poses a question, keep looking at that person for as long as s/he is speaking. This shows that you are listening. When you answer a question, you should look first at the person who asked the question, but while you answer you should take turns looking at the other people on the interview panel.

Success at the interview also comes from paying attention to the body language of the people interviewing you. Acceptance and irritation of the panel will be visible from their body language. So do be conscious of the body language of the members of the panel.

(adapted from an article "Body language during a job interview" by Frank van Mar Wijk)

Activity

Now that you have read the article, answer the following questions:

- 2) What do the following body gestures indicate?
 - i) Sitting with hands clasped behind the head and crossing the legs

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 - ii) Open palms

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 - iii) Tilted head

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 - iv) Stroking chin

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3) What are some of the inherent qualities that your body language may reveal at an interview? List at least one below.

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4) What advice does the article give you regarding sitting on the chair at an interview?

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5) Some movements of your body could be distracting and irritating. What are these?

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11.4 VOCABULARY: MAKING SENTENCES

Activity

6) Make sentences using the following words, ensuring that the sentences bring out their meaning fully.

i) Convey

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.....

ii) Transmit

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iii) Assess

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.....

iv) Self-assured

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v) Prone

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vi) Indicate

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vii) Inadvertently

.....

viii) Mutual

.....

ix) Updated

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x) Issues

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11.5 WRITING AND SPEAKING: SPEECH ON BODY LANGUAGE

You have been asked to give a speech to a group of young trainees in your community library on “Body language”. Using the points given below, write a speech which you would deliver to the trainees. Then deliver it to the students at your study centre.

- Importance of body language in communication.
- Examples of a positive body language.
- Examples of a negative body language.
- What type of body language you should exhibit while talking to the public who come to the library.
- Some general advice to the group on body language.

You may use some of the tips given below:

- Look straight into the eyes of the other person, but don’t stare.
- Nod when others are speaking to show that you are listening, but don’t overdo it.

- Do not slouch but sit up straight, keeping your body erect but in a relaxed manner. This shows that you are professional in your attitude.
- Don't sit or stand too close to anyone, keep enough space around you.
- Take care of your arms and legs, don't cross them.
- Present a smiling face, laughing gently if the situation warrants.
- Keep control of your fingers, don't fiddle with them.
- Dress appropriately, but don't over dress.

11.6 LISTENING: PRESENTATION ON BODY LANGUAGE

Self Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers at the space given below the questions.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

- 1) Listen to the audio recording 'Presentation on Body Language' carefully and fill in the blank spaces in the exercise with appropriate words/phrases.

You may play the CD provided and listen to the audio as many times as you require. Please note that the text of the audio has been provided in the answers section.

- i) People who are emotionally upset will at once jump to the conclusion that they are a _____, thus increasing their tension.
- ii) One way of learning body language is to _____ the sound of your television. You will notice that what people _____ is not always what their body language _____.
- iii) The ability to read others' _____ makes it easier to know whether the person you are talking to is happy or sad or _____.
- iv) Understanding your own body language will _____ for you to _____ others body language.
- v) Hidden _____ and intentions can be known by observing people.
- vi) Pushing your hair behind your ear or rolling your _____ could mean that you are _____.
- vii) A person who sits with his legs stretched out before him expresses _____.
- viii) A person waiting for a job interview would be observed to be sitting on the _____ of the chair because he is _____.
- ix) A smile can be considered genuine only if it extends to the _____ as well.

11.7 GRAMMAR: PHRASES AND CLAUSES

Study the following sentences from the text:

- 1) a) *In a difficult situation*, we fold our arms across our body.
- b) *When we face a difficult situation*, we fold our arms across our body.

- 2) a) Success at the interview also comes from paying attention to the body language *of the people interviewing you.*
- b) Success at the interview also comes from paying attention to the body language *of the people who are interviewing you.*

These are phrases

In a difficult situation ...

... of the people interviewing you.

These are clauses

When we face a difficult situation...

...of the people who are interviewing you.

The following table will show you the difference between clauses and phrases.

| Phrases | Clauses |
|--|--|
| A meaningful group of words | A meaningful group of words |
| Has no predicate | Has a subject and a predicate |
| Has no finite verb | Has a finite verb |
| Dependent on another part of the sentence for completing meaning | Dependent on another part of the sentence for complete meaning |
| Forms part of a sentence | Forms part of a sentence |

A sentence has all the features of a clause but can stand alone as an independent sentence e.g. Rohan hit a number of boundaries

Self Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers at the space given below the questions.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

- 2) Say whether the underlined parts of the following sentence are phrases or clauses.
- The librarian ordered the books from the e-book sites.
 - The books in the store room were covered with dust.
 - He has a bookshelf which is made of rosewood.
 - The librarian was sure that the child had lost the book.
 - He finished his work and went home to sleep.
 - We all ran into the reference section when we heard a bang.
 - I will meet you very soon in the canteen.
 - She came back early from work because she was not feeling well.

3) Separate the phrases and the sentences in this poster.

Children’s Day Book Carnival
 At the Central Municipal Park
 On Friday, 14th November
 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
 Attractions
 Lots of Books and CDs
 Lots of Food and lots to Drink
 On the spot competitions – story telling, quiz, recitation
 On the spot prizes to be won.
 The Chief guest, Mr. Sanat Kumar, well-known children’s writer will
 distribute the prizes at 4 p.m.
 Entry by tickets only
 Children below 12 years must be accompanied by adults.

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4) Complete the following sentences with phrases or clauses as indicated in the brackets.

- i) Mithu has a talking book _____. (clause)
- ii) _____ Rajni, stopped at Mr. Kumar’s shop to give him the good news. (phrase)
- iii) I showed her the library _____. (clause)
- iv) They returned _____. (phrase)
- v) We cannot go to college _____. (clause)
- vi) _____ we are playing against the Chennai team. (phrase)
- vii) _____ his mother gave him some fruit to eat. (clause)
- viii) I will meet you _____. (phrase)
- ix) The sun rises _____. (phrase)
- x) I don’t know _____. (clause)

11.8 SUMMARY

Remember that oral communication needs to be complemented with body language to make communication complete. People watch you more than they listen to you. So give as much importance as you can to your body language while attending interviews, at group discussions, while making presentations,

etc. It is not difficult to change your body language style, though it takes time since it is more a habit. Observe others, learn from others, accept weaknesses of your body language, and practice the new styles regularly: you will be able to overcome your weaknesses.

11.9 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

Text: Presentation on Body Language

Body language is noticed by everybody but is not always given enough attention. We sometimes ignore it and try to hide behind words, but we should never forget that we cannot fool everyone.

Children react to body language because they experience the world through intuition. The same can be true for adults when feelings are involved. People who are in bad shape emotionally place great importance to it. In fact, they often pick up the smallest hint of a pause in attention in the person they are speaking to. And they frequently jump to the conclusion that they are boring or a nuisance—thus compounding their sense of depression or poor self esteem.

A way to learn body language is to watch television with the sound turned off and try to interpret what is being said simply from reading the stance and body gestures. You will experience that humans say a lot with their mouth which is contradicted by their body, gestures and other channels of communication.

If we develop increased sensitivity to our own body language, our ability to read others' body language is increased.

This makes it easier to tell whether a person you are talking to is happy, sad sullen or irritated. Or whether he or she is lying to you, or is impatient, or bored. You should also be able to register whether the person appears to like you, agrees or disagrees with you, is aggressive to you, or is suspicious, angry or worried.

Increased attention to body language will allow you to observe hidden feelings, prejudices and sexual intentions.

Body language also includes the movement of arms and legs, body posture, the manner in which you sit, facial expression, gait, eye movements and regular gestures such as stroking your hair, touching your nose etc.

Perhaps you hold your hands close to your face when you talk generally. This is a sign of insecurity. The same is true if you pull a beard or roll a moustache with your hands or fix your hair, perhaps pushing or curling it behind an ear.

When you try to interpret body language, you must try to interpret it in relation to what is being said with words; otherwise misunderstandings can easily arise. It must be judged as a whole. Several elements must be in accordance if you are to draw any firm conclusions about a person.

In order to reach your conclusion you must also pay attention to facial expression, the mouth's position, eye movements and pupil dilation and retraction.

Research has shown that the speaker’s face is the most reliable source of information about the mood of a person. It is through visual experiences that happiness, surprise, anger or contempt is communicated while auditory experiences communicate fear. In order to ascertain the mood of the speaker you must observe facial muscles. How they are tightened and loosened, how the lines around the mouth are softened, how the wrinkles around the eyes can made them shine with happiness when that is the feeling the face has to express.

The same features express anger and contempt, while softer features are taken to express kindness and friendliness-but note, only if the feelings also extend to the eyes. A mouth that smiles without the eyes smiling as well, sends signals of falseness and unreliability.

- 1)
 - i) nuisance
 - ii) turn off, say, suggests
 - iii) practice
 - vi) make it easier, understand
 - v) feelings
 - vi) moustache, insecure
 - vii) indifference
 - viii) edge, nervous
 - ix) eyes

- 2)
 - i) The librarian ordered *the books from the e-book sites*. Phrase
 - ii) *The books in the store room were covered with dust*. Clause
 - iii) He has a bookshelf *which is made of rosewood*. Clause
 - iv) The librarian was sure *that the child had lost the book*. Clause
 - v) He finished his work and went home *to sleep*. Phrase
 - vi) We all ran into the reference section *when we heard a bang*. Clause
 - vii) I will meet you *very soon in the canteen*. Phrase
 - viii) She came back early from work because she was not feeling well. Clause

- 3)

| | |
|---|----------|
| Children’s Day Book Carnival | Phrase |
| At the Central Municipal Park | Phrase |
| Lots of Books and CDs | Phrase |
| Lots of Food and lots to Drink | Phrase |
| On the spot competitions – story telling, quiz, recitation | Phrase |
| On the spot prizes to be won. | Phrase |
| The Chief guest, Mr. Sanat Kumar, well-known children’s writer will distribute the prizes at 4 p.m. | Sentence |
| Entry by tickets only. | Sentence |
| Children below 12 years must be accompanied by adults. | Sentence |

- 4) i) Mithu has a talking book which is very informative. (clause)
- ii) The excited girl Rajni, stopped at Mr. Kumar's shop to give him the good news. (phrase)
- iii) I showed her the library which was at the end of the corridor. (clause)
- iv) They returned at 9'o clock. (phrase)
- v) We cannot go to college as there is a strike by Students' Union. (clause)
- vi) Luckily we are playing against the Chennai team. (phrase)
- vii) Because he was hungry his mother gave him some fruit to eat. (clause)
- viii) I will meet you in the evening. (phrase)
- ix) The sun rises in the East. (phrase)
- x) I don't know where do he lives. (clause)

11.10 ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES

- 1) Look straight into the eyes of the other person, but don't stare, keep your body straight but in /a relaxed manner, present a smiling face, laughing gently if the situation warrants
- 2) i) Confidence, Superiority.
ii) Trust, Sincerity, Innocence.
iii) Interest.
iv) In the process of taking a decision.
- 3) i) Whether you are insecure.
ii) Whether you are speaking the truth.
iii) Whether you are prone to stress.
iv) Whether you are enthusiastic.
v) Whether you have a sense of humour.
- 4) i) Have your back against the chair.
ii) Don't slouch on the chair.
iii) Don't sit on the edge of the chair.
iv) Change sitting postures to ensure you face all interviewers.
- 5) i) Too many movements of the hands.
ii) Shuffling of the feet.
iii) Kicking the table.
iv) Drumming your fingers.
- 6) i) His letter does not **convey** his true feeling about the incident.
ii) We can use a radio to **transmit** messages.
iii) His style of living makes it difficult to **assess** his status.
iv) His way of walking indicates that he is a **self-assured** person.
v) She is always **prone** to accidents, so I am not surprised.

vi) All the symptoms **indicate** that Ravi has dengue fever.

vii) The secret just slipped out **inadvertently**.

viii) The love between the two families is **mutual**.

ix) This letter will keep you **updated** about the events.

x) I have no **issues** to settle with you, so please be relaxed.

11.11 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, and Barbara Pease. *The Definitive Book of Body Language*. Australia: McPherson's Printing Group, 2004. Print.

Beattie, G. *Visible Thought the New Psychology of Body Language*. Routledge, 2003. Print.