**Bonga University**

**College of Social Sciences and Humanities**

**Department of English language and Literature**

**Course syllabus/Guide book**

Course Title: **Business Communication**  Credit hours **3**

Course code: **EnLa3103** ECTS: **5**

Academic year: **2012 E.C or 2020 G.C**  Semester:  **2**

Mode of delivery: **Block** Target students: **3rd** English major students

1. **Personal Information**

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1. **Course objectives**

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

* Identify business writing and the different types of business letters.
* Develop their business communication skills.
* Set purposes for their business communication and write different types of business communication texts.
* Design and deliver effective business speech.

1. **Course Description**

This course introduces basic concepts of business communication in general and its practical applications of business writing in particular, in business arena. It is designed to assist students in achieving academic and career goals through the development of effective business writing skills. It includes writing letters, memos, reports, and knowing career communication. It introduces definition and nature of business communication (Organizing Presentation, and conducting job interview), elements and processes of communication, basic requirements of

business communication, barriers to communication, written communication. In this course students learn the concept of business writing; various types of business letters; inquiry / request letters, order letters credit and collection letters, sales letters, claim or complain letters, social-business letters such as letters of congratulations, thank you letters, letters of condolence, invitation letters, employment related communications; drafting job vacancies, job descriptions, CV/ resume, job offer letter, resignation letter, conducting job interviews, writing memos, e-mails, and fax messages. Drafting notices, minutes; conducting meetings, chairing and participating in meetings; business report writing conventions; drafting business project proposals; designing and delivering

business speech.

1. **Course Contents**

**Unit 1: Basics of Business Communication**

1. Definition ,nature and principles of business communication

1.2. Basic requirements of business communication.

1.3. Oral business communication

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1.4. Conducting Job Interview

1.5. Written business communication

1.6. Barriers of business communication

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2.5 Building the body of business letters

2.5.1 types of business letters

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2.5.1.3 Complaint letters

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2.5.1.5 Circular letters

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**Unit 4. Business Report**

4.1. Formal Business Report

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**5. Assessment**

1. Continuous Assessment (50%)

• Quiz …………………10 %

• Term-Paper Group …10 %

• Term Paper Individual..10%

• Test 1 ………..10 %

• Test 2 ………10%

2. Final Exam (50%)

**6. References**

Hybels,S and Weaver, R(2001). Communicating effectively. McGraw-Hill.

Glavin. M. K. (2001). Communication Works. National Textbook Company.

Malcog. A.M. (2001). Letter Writing in English. USA.

Clark, L. et al, (1994). Business English and Communication. Mcgraw-Hill.

**UNIT ONE: Basics of Business Communication**

**1.1 Definitions of Communication**

The word communication is derived from the Latin word ‘communes’ meaning ‘common’. It stands for natural activities of all human being to convey opinions, feelings, information and ideas to other people through oral or by written, body language and sign.

Communication is the act of transmitting and receiving information**.**

Communication has been defined by many theorists; some of these definitions are quoted here.

* Communication is a process of passing information and understanding from one person to another. - **Keith Davis**
* Communication is any behaviour that results in an exchange of meaning-**The American**   
  **Management Association**
* Communication may be broadly defined as the process of meaningful interaction among human beings. More specifically, it is the process by which meanings are perceived and understandings are reached among human beings. - **D. E. McFarland**
* Communication is the process by which information is passed between individuals and/or organizations using previously agreed symbols. - **Peter Little**
* Communication is the sum of all things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of others; it involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding-(Allen Louis)

Communication is the transmission of information and meaning from one individual or group to another. The crucial element is **meaning.** The process of communication is successful only when the receiver understands an idea as the sender intended it. Both parties must agree not only on the information transmitted but also the meaning of that information.

These definitions show that communication involves the exchange of thoughts between two parties. To transfer an idea, we must use symbols (words, signs, pictures, sounds) which stand for the idea. The symbols must be understood by the person or persons with whom we intend to communicate. Both must assign the same meaning to the symbols used; otherwise, there is miscommunication. Unless there is a common understanding of the symbols, it is not possible to communicate.

**1.2 Classification of Communication**

Communication can be classified based on the number of the persons (receivers) to whom the message is addressed. **Intrapersonal communication**-is talking to oneself in one’s own mind; **interpersonal communication**-the exchange of the message between two persons. **Group** communication is communication among a group of people like organization, clubs or classroom in which all individuals retain their identity. **Mass communication** occurs when a message sent to large groups of people, for example, by newspaper, radio or television.

We can also classify communication depending on the medium employed as verbal and non-verbal communication.

**Verbal communication:** communication with words, written or spoken. It consists of speaking, listening, writing, reading and thinking.

**Non-verbal communication:** it includes using pictures, signs language and facial expressions for exchanging of information between persons.

Written communication is one of the widely used forms of communication in business and it is realized through the instrumentality of various written communication skills that embody business letter writing, business report writing, memorandum writing, minutes writing skills and others. On the other hand, oral or written communication is the most important activity to which priority is given in most business organization.

**Environment Communication:** is takes place in an environment. The environment includes several things. The most obvious is the place in which the communication takes place; if it is pleasant and comfortable, the communication is better. If it is hot, noisy and uncomfortable, it is less effective. Noise or disturbance in the environment usually hinders the flow of communication.

Another aspect of the environment is the **circumstances**. The circumstances of each communicant, each one's position in the organization, the usual work that each one does, and the present state of mind of each one, can all influence the communication process. The present relationship between the two is another factor in the environment; it is difficult for persons to communicate with each other if their relationship is not good. The political, cultural, legal, technological environment influences communication as these factors may affect each one's situation and opinion about the content of a message.

**Time** as an element of the environment has three aspects:

(a) The time of the communication (first thing in the morning, just before or just after lunch,   
 when it is almost closing time) affects communication.

(b) The length of time taken by a communication event (how long the presentation or the   
 meeting or the conversation goes on) influences the quality of the communication. Too long   
 can be tiring and boring; too short may be inadequate and one of them may feel that   
 insufficient attention was given by the other.

(c) There is a right time for giving some information. If it is given too late, it may be useless; if it   
 is too early, receivers may not be ready for it and may not understand it.

**Context** is another aspect of the environment. Context is the set of circumstances that surround an event and influence its significance. A message may acquire a different meaning in a changed context. It is the background of the content of the message; if both have the same amount of background information about the situation and the issue; it is easier to communicate on the topic. The context influences the sender's encoding and the receiver's decoding, and also each one's interpretation.

**1.3. Process of Communication**

In order to analyze the activity of communication, we must know the process and the elements involved in the process of communication.

There are seven elements or factors which make up the process of communication:

1. **Source /Sender** is the one who initiates the action of communicating

2. **Audience /Receiver** is the person(s) for whom the communication is intended

3. **Goal/Purpose** is the sender's reason for communicating, the desired result of the   
 communication

4. **Message/ Content** is the information conveyed

5. **Medium /Channel** is the means or method used for conveying the message

6. **Feedback** is the receiver's response to the communication as observed by the sender

7. **Environment /Context** is the background in which the communication takes place.

Each of these is complex; any analysis of communication has to take into account the various possibilities of each of these. The process of communication involves decisions and activities by the two persons involved, the sender and the receiver. The sender initiates the process of communication. The sender has to be clear about the purpose (or goal or objective) of the communication and about the target audience (or receiver) of the communication; that is, the sender decides why and to whom to send a message. Conscious or intended communication has a purpose. We communicate because we want to make someone do something or take some action, or think or feel in a certain way, that is, to influence the person. The source has to decide what information to convey and create the message (or content) to be conveyed by using words or other symbols which can be understood by the intended receiver. The process of putting the idea into symbols is called **encoding**; in order to encode, the sender has to select suitable symbols which can represent the idea and can be understood by the receiver. The sender also chooses' a suitable channel or medium (like mail, e-mail, telephone, face-to-face talk,) by which to send the message. The choice of the medium depends on several factors like the urgency of the message, availability and effectiveness of a medium, and the relationship between the two communicants.

Finally, the sender tries to note the effect of the message on the receiver; that is, he checks whether the receiver has got the message, how the receiver has responded to the message and whether he has taken the required action; this information about the receiver's response is called **feedback.**

Sender's functions make up half the process of communication. The functions of the sender are:

1. Being clear about the goal/purpose of the communication

2. Finding out about the understanding and needs of the target audience

3. Encoding the required information and ideas with symbols to create the message to suit the   
 receiver/ audience

4. Selecting the medium to send the message

5. Making efforts to get feedback that is, finding out the response of the target audience

The **receiver** becomes aware that a message has arrived when he perceives it with his senses (he may see, hear, feel, etc). The receiver attends to the message and interprets it. The process of translating the symbols into ideas and interpreting the message is called **decoding.** Interpreting is a complex activity; it involves using knowledge of the symbols, drawing upon previous knowledge of the subject matter, ability to understand, attitudes and values, in order to create meaning. The receiver understands and interprets the message based on earlier knowledge. The meaning that a receiver gives to the words and other symbols is influenced by his/her knowledge, intelligence, past experience and relation with the sender. If the two have a common field of experience, the receiver's understanding of the message will be closer to what the sender intended. The receiver also feels a reaction to the message; this reaction may be conscious or unconscious; it may cause some change in the receiver's facial expression. It definitely leads the receiver to think. The receiver may take some action if required. He may also reply to the message. This response and/or reply is **feedback.** Receiver's functions complete one cycle of the process of communication. The functions of the receiver are:

1 Attending to the received message, that is, listening, reading or observing

2 Decoding the received message

3 Interpreting and understanding the meaning of the message

4 Responding to the message

5 Giving feedback to the sender of the message

This is a simplified description of a single cycle in the process of communication. Communication really takes place in several cycles and the two persons take turns and alternately carry out functions of sender and receiver. Both, the sender and the receiver have important functions in the communication process; it can be successful only if both are efficient and attentive. Each person's perception of things and the interpretation of messages is influenced by his/her past experience and attitudes formed by previous communication events. Each one has a field of experience which is critically important to the process of communication. Unless there is an area of experience that is shared by both, the message is not likely to be communicated.

**1.4.Role of Communication in Business**

Entry into a good organization requires excellent communication skills. The primary element in the skills of management is competence in communication. It is the tool with which we exercise influence on others, bring about changes in the attitudes and views of our associates, motivate them and establish and maintain relations with· them. Communication is central to everything that we do. We do things in organizations; our family, school/college, office, hobby group, community group, our city/town are the organizations in which we live and act. Our activities succeed or fail, and our goals are achieved or not achieved, according to our ability to communicate effectively with other members. Communication plays a foundational role in the development of any healthy relationship. It can strengthen a mutual sense of commitment; it also helps to bridge the gap between people who have misunderstandings. Indeed, communication plays a critical role in all phases of interpersonal relations, from creating a relationship to the maintenance of relationships. Communication is the mortar that holds an organization together, whatever its business or its size. Without communication, an organization cannot function at all.

Without effective communication, information cannot be collected, processed, or exchanged; words and data would remain isolated facts. With effective communication, multinational organizations which are spread all over the world can function as a single unit.

Some benefits of effective communication are:

* Leads to personal effectiveness
* Helps to network with people
* Helps to collaborate with everyone at the workplace
* Influences motivation for enhanced performances
* Build a better understanding between bosses and subordinates
* Creates better interpersonal relations
* Increases listening ability, etc.

The most important foundation skill for anyone in the new world of work is the ability to communicate. This means being able to express your ideas effectively in writing and in speech Employers have always emphasized the importance of communication skills, and the current trends in the business environment make these skills even more critical. Owing to advances in information technology, companies downsize and decentralize, and work is increasingly carried out by teams. Team members must be able to work together to identify problems, analyze alternatives, and recommend solutions. They must be able to communicate their ideas persuasively to others. Ability to work well in teams, to manage your subordinates and your relationships with seniors, customers and colleagues, depends on your communication skill. Production of goods is of no use if potential buyers have no information about the product. Communicating to the public about the product is the essence of business. A large amount of communication in the form of advertisement and public relations is needed in order to inform the public and to persuade potential customers to buy the products.

**1.4.1Basic Requirements of Business Communication**

The term business communication is used for all messages that we send and receive for official purposes like running a business, managing an organization, conducting the formal affairs of a voluntary organisation and- so on. Business communication is marked by formality as against personal and social communication. It includes both written and oral communication. Letters, reports, memos, notices are all formal and part of commercial and business activity; so are interviews, meetings, conferences, presentations, negotiations. Some of these are more formal than others; a group discussion would be less formal than a company meeting; a letter is less formal than a report. Friendly chatting, letters between friends and family, reciting poetry for one'sown pleasure or telling stories to entertain friends, are not included in business communication.

The study of communication and efforts to develop skills of communication are needed because communication is absolutely necessary for business. And there is no one who does not have to engage in some kind of business activity. Persons in all professions need to cultivate skills as needed for their work. Doctors, engineers, chartered accountants, actors and others in the entertainment industry, managers of all kinds of organizations, educators, besides persons engaged in business enterprises have to engage daily in some kind of business communication.

**1.5. Barriers of Business communication**

Communication is not always successful several things can prevent the message from reaching ' the intended recipient or from having the desired effect on the recipient. There are problem areas at every stage in the process of communication. Process of communication shows the possible gaps in the process which can lead to a failure of communication between two persons. Besides these pitfalls, there are other things that can hinder or distort communication. There may be some faults in the communication system, which prevent the message from reaching. Some of these defects are in the mechanical devices used for transmitting, that is, the medium. Some are in the symbols we use for communicating, that is, language or other symbols used for encoding. Some are in the nature of the persons who are engaged in communication, that is, the sender and the receiver. In an organisation, these barriers can become quite complicated and can cause physical barriers, Semantic and language barriers, Socio-psychological barriers and Organizational barriers. Besides, there are Cross-cultural barriers which distort communication between person or groups belonging to a different cultural background.

1. **Physical Barriers-** Obstacles that prevent a message from reaching the intended recipient may be outside and beyond the control of the persons concerned. Some can be controlled by the management; some cannot be controlled because they are in the environment.

* **Defects in the Medium** - Defects in the devices used or transmitting messages are external, and usually not within the control of the parties engaged in communication. The telephone, the postal system, the courier service, or electronic media may fail. Messages can get delayed, distorted and even lost while being transmitted. A partial failure of the mechanical equipment is more harmful than a total failure because a partial failure may carry an incomplete or distorted message. A fax message can be wrongly delivered as a wrong number can get dialled on the telephone. The printout may not be clear at all. It is advisable to call up and check that the fax has been received. If a medium like a telephone is out of order, the communication may have to be postponed or sent by an alternative medium.
* **Noise in the Environment -** Noise is any disturbance which occurs in the transmission process. In face to face communication which is carried by air vibration, the air may be disturbed by noise such as traffic, factory work, or people talking. In a factory, oral communication is very difficult because of the noise of the machines.

1. **Information Overload Barriers -** When there is too much information, some of it is blocked in transit and may not reach the intended audience. Advertising and sales information is an example of overload; so much communication about products floats through so many media that good deal of it does not reach the potential buyer.
2. **Semantic and Language Barriers -** Semantic means pertaining to or arising from the different meanings of words or other symbols. Language is our most important and powerful tool of communication; and yet itis a tricky tool that needs skill in handling. First of all, many words have multiple meanings. Just look into a good dictionary and see how many meanings you can find for some commonly used words like "charge", "spring", "check", "suit", "and ring".

Meaning that comes to your mind first depends on your occupation ("charge" may mean an electrical charge to an engineering student, but fee/rent to a commerce student). Words like "minute" and "wind" are pronounced in two different ways to mean two entirely different things. Some words like "present", "transfer", "record" are used as a verb and as a noun with a difference in stress in speaking, but no difference in spelling. A person may be present at a function and receive a present (stress on pre-), and present (stress on -sent) some thoughts on the budget. Similar sounding words like "access" and "excess", "flour" and "flower", "cite","site" and "sight" can cause misunderstanding in speech. Many people confuse"week" and "weak," "steer' and "steel" in writing. Adjectives and adverbs like "fast", "far", "few", "early", "easy", convey different meanings to different persons depending on their daily activities and way of life. The meaning of descriptive adjectives like "beautiful" and "ugly" depends entirely on personal taste. Even a concrete noun like "table" may suggest a writing table or a dining table or a statistical table to different persons; similarly, "chair" could be something to sit on or a position to occupy. How many ideas does the word "home" convey? Emotional and cultural attitudes towards something can evoke different responses in people; for example, "dog" will evoke responses according to a person's past experience with the animal as well as cultural attitudes towards the animal.

More importantly, semantic barriers arise because words mean different things to different persons. It is' said, "Meaning is in people, not in words." Age, education, cultural background and many other factors influence the meaning we give to words.

1. **Socio-Psychological Barriers -** All persons are not skilled communicators. Skill in communicating has to be cultivated. Most people have problems which come in the way of good communication.In order to be a skilful communicator, you have to watch yourself constantly and make an effort to overcome your deficiencies or problems in communicating. It is useful to understand how barriers develop in persons, and what problems prevent communication from being successful. People have personal feelings, desires, fears and hopes, likes and dislikes, attitudes, views and opinions. Some of these are formed by family background and social environment; some are formed by the individual's own intelligence, inherited qualities, education, and personal experiences. They form a sort of emotional filter around the mind and influence the way we respond to messages that we receive and to new experiences. Factors like the time, the place and the circumstances of a particular communication also influence our understanding and response. Problems of understanding, interpretation and response to communication arise partly from our socially-learnt attributes and partly from our personal attributes. These are called socio-psychological barriers.

Most of the **socio-psychological barriers** are discussed below operate at the emotional level

* **Self-centred Attitudes -** We tend to see and hear everything in the light of our own interests and needs and desires. We pay attention to messages which are useful to us, and often do not pay enough attention to those messages which do not interest us. Self-interest may prevent us from seeing the point of view of others. If we look at everything from the point of view of our own interests and desires, we miss some useful information and develop narrow ideas. A highly self-centred person also fails to build up good relationships with other people. In order to win the goodwill of others with whom we work, we must be able to understand how other people feel and think.
* **Group Identification -** Our values and opinions are influenced, in some matters, by the group to which we belong. All persons have a sense of belonging to a group, like family, the larger family of relatives, people of our locality or city, our religion or language group, age group, nationality, economic group and so on. Many of our ideas, attitudes and values are picked up from the group. We tend to reject an idea which goes against the interests of the group. Sometimes it is difficult for parents and children to agree because of the different age group ideas; there are disagreements between women and men because of different gender values and attitudes; employees and the management cannot agree because the interests are different. It is difficult for persons of one group to understand how persons of another groupthink and feel. This becomes a barrier to communication.
* **Self-Image -** We have a certain idea of our self; some persons even take care to project an image of themselves. Self-image is our idea about what we are, what we look like and what impression we make. It is usually based on some truth and some exaggeration of our good points. A self-image is built up over the years, and it is quite difficult to accept any idea which goes against it. This makes it particularly difficult for us to give and take feedback. If you make a good self-assessment, it will be easier for you to endure the stress of an assessment by others. A systematic self-assessment gives you a balanced self-image.
* **Selective Perception -** Sometimes, we fail to get the complete message which is sent to us. We see, read or hear selectively according to our own needs, interests and experience. We project our expectations into communication as we interpret the message. We may not perceive some of the aspects and information content of the message.
* **Defensiveness** *-* If we feel threatened by a message, we become defensive and respond in such a way that reduces understanding. We may question the motives of others or become sarcastic or judgmental. Such defensive behaviour prevents understanding. This is a particularly harmful barrier in handling complaints and grievances and resolving conflicts.
* **Filtering -** is the process of reducing the details or aspects of a message. Each person who passes on a message reduces or colours a message according to his/her understanding of the situation. In the role of the sender, we tend to edit information so that it will appear favourable to our self; some information is changed and lost in this way. The information which has to be sent up the levels of hierarchy has to be condensed and integrated so that the senior managers at the top are not overloaded with information. At each level, the information gets edited according to what the person thinks is important for the boss. The more the levels of hierarchy in an organization, the greater is the filtering and loss of information. A common barrier to horizontal communication is organizational politics; one manager may withhold information from another since possession of information usually has benefits and advantages.
* **Status Block -** A "boss" who is conscious of status finds it difficult to receive any suggestions from subordinates. People in senior positions often develop the feeling that they know everything about how to run the business. They do not agree that a junior may have some good ideas. Many good ideas are wasted only because they come from junior employees who are considered to be too young and inexperienced. The ideas of workers are most likely to go unheard because of the social distance between them and the managers. A subordinate may be too nervous to speak to a senior manager. Social distance sometimes makes workers too shy or frightened to speak to their senior bosses. The social and official status distance can raise a difficult barrier which both may be unable to overcome.
* **Resistance to Change -** This is a serious psychological barrier. Some people strongly resist new ideas which are against their established opinions or traditions or social customs. They may avoid new ideas because they feel insecure or afraid of changes in methods or situations. People bound by traditions have their own emotions, attitudes, standards and convictions and do not accept anything that goes against the cherished ideas.
* **Closed Mind -** Limited intellectual background, limited reading and narrow interests can cause a person's mind to be narrow. This limits the ability to take in new ideas. Persons with a closed mind do not take any suggestions for change. Young employees with bright ideas and a fresh approach feel frustrated by the closed mind of the senior people in an organisation. Persons with a closed mind have a limited understanding of human nature; this makes it difficult for them to receive communications with sympathy. This becomes a serious barrier to receiving grievances and appeals. Organizational procedures like grievance committees, counselling and suggestion schemes are meant to overcome this barrier.
* **Poor Communication Skills -** Lack of skill in writing and in speaking prevents a person from framing the message properly. Oral communication can be handicapped by a number of problems; nervousness in facing an audience may affect a person's clarity in speaking. Even excitement about an achievement or a new idea may make a person's speech incoherent. Written communication can be handicapped by poor skills in using language. Lack of skill in reading and in listening is even more common though these are really the more important communication skills. Poor reading habits and faulty listening are both psychological short-comings and need careful training to overcome. Since listening is an important skill in communication, it is discussed in detail in the next chapter.
* **State of Health -** Physical condition can affect communication efficiency. Pain or fever certainly makes a person disinclined to engage in communication; but even if the general state of health is poor, communicating ability is reduced. The mind is not sufficiently alert; there will be gaps in attention while reading or listening; there is a lack of energy to think clearly and to find the right words. Perception is low when the state of health is poor. Emotions, which play an important part in successful communication, are easily disturbed.

1. **Organizational Barriers** - In an organisation, the gaps and barriers become more complex. Editing and filtering the movement of papers and of information gets held up by the system itself. A great deal of loss of information occurs as a message moves from senior management to lower levels. If it has to pass through much levels of authority, there is a delay as well as the distortion of the message. Each person through whom it passes edits it, filters it, and simplifies it for the understanding and needs of the next person who is to receive it. If a message passes down through many levels of authority, there may be much distortion in the message. The chances of such distortion are fewer in a flat organisation with few levels of hierarchy. Loss or distortion of information as it moves downward may be caused by misinterpretation, lack of understanding, and neglect of messages by some of the members of the organisation.

Even if there is a very active downward flow of communication, it does not mean that the information is accurate, or that it is received and understood and accepted by subordinates. Studies have shown that employees at the lowest level receive only 20% of the information that they should get. Loss of information also occurs as messages move from subordinates to higher levels of authority Messages are filtered at every level. Improving communication is the responsibility of all educated persons. The advantages of effective communication among members of a working team or any organisation, including the family, are such as to improve the efficiency as well as the quality of life. Ways and means to improve communication are discussed in another chapter.

1. **Inter-Cultural Barriers -**Even in the best of conditions, communication can be difficult. Cross-cultural factors naturally increase the possible problems of communication. If for historical or political reasons, the relationships between the two countries are not friendly, there can be even greater problems of communication. Culture is a shared set of values and attributes of a group; it is the total of the ways of living built up by a group and transmitted from one generation to another. Culture is so much a part of an individual's manner of talking, behaving and thinking, that communication style and competence are influenced by it. Besides, there are differences in political, legal and economic systems separating potential business partners. In a world that is becoming global in its business, skill in communicating with people of other cultures is vital to success. Many international business training firms give courses in cross-cultural communication to company executives. Knowledge of some of the features in which cultures differ provides a good foundation for any training you might like to take later. Some of the most significant differences between cultures are:

**The Language: -**of any group directly reflects their culture. You only have to think of some of the sayings or proverbs or idiomatic expressions in an Indian language and in English to see that translation from one to the other is nearly impossible. Many words cannot be translated exactly. Even among countries that speak the same language as the British and the Australians, a word may not have the same significance. It has been pointed out that Russians cannot understand the concepts of the free market, regulation, efficiency as the British or the Canadians. Connotations of words differ in different cultures.

**Non-verbal behaviour: -**is another area of trouble in cross-cultural communication. Body language is a major factor that varies between cultures. Not only are gestures understood differently, but the amount of use of gesture varies. Indians use much more natural gesture than the British; the Japanese have many formal gestures for social interaction but less free body movements. **Appearance** tends to be an unconscious basis for evaluation. We react unconsciously to the biological appearance (colour and texture of skin and hair, shape and colour of eyes, stature and body structure) as well as to the acquired appearance (style of dress and grooming) of persons we communicate with. Ways of dressing and what is considered formal clothes is another problem area.

**Paralanguage: -** Cross-cultural confusion arises from the way we use our voice. People in many countries express their idea by using a different tone that gives different meaning based on culture. Some Western cultures speak in such low voices that we can hardly hear them and may wonder if they intend to be secretive. Difference between cultures in the speed of talking makes the faster-talking people consider the slow-talking cultures as slow and lax. Some cultures expect formality and formal tone at work and are embarrassed or put off by the informal tone of another culture. The amount of silence that is considered as right during a conversation can cause confusion. The Japanese believe, "Those who know do not speak-those who speak do not know"; this is quite contrary to Americans who are embarrassed by silence and hasten to fill it by speaking. Closely related are the rules of turn-taking in conversation; most Western cultures consider interrupting as very impolite; each speaker is allowed to complete speaking; in India interrupting others in a conversation is acceptable. Also,"breaking into" a conversation between others is acceptable here, but not in Western cultures.

**Perception** is influenced by culture. We perceive some things and ignore others; we particularly perceive what is contrary to our own culture and what makes us uncomfortable. What smells "good" or "bad" is perceived differently. Rain means something different for Indians from what it means for the British. Differences in perception of the world can be amazing. Our world view and attitudes to life affect our meanings.

**UNIT TWO: Written Business Communication**

Writing is one means of communication in the business world. People use a written form of communication to transfer information from place to place by using different types of communication media.

**2.1 Differences between Business Writing and Other Writing**

* business writing is brief and concise than other kinds of writing
* business writing starts with broad details and narrows down at the end whereas other types are not
* business writing has some accepted format i.e. it is too formal
* Business writing has its tone and style, etc.

**2.2 Issue/Consideration in Business Writing**

**Knowing the audience:** the main task for effective writing in business is to recognize the needs, expectations, fears and attitudes of the audience or receiver and the reader of the written message.

**Punctuation and grammatical errors**: punctuation determines the meaning of the sentence and paragraph, sometimes even the meaning of the word gets changed by the punctuation mark.

**Effective use of active voice**: to help the reader read fast and know the main subject of the message at every beginning of a sentence choose active voice if possible.

E.g. We are going to finish the construction next week (active voice)

The construction will be finished next week (passive)

**2.3 Business Letter Writing**

**Task one:**

What the difference between a personal letter and a business letter?

Business letters are purposeful internal or external communication designed to communicate business messages or information between the letter producer and the reader or supplier and the potential customer.

**2.3.1 Principles of Business Letter**

To compose effective messages you need to apply certain specific communication principles. These principles tie closely with the basic concepts of the communication process and are important for both written and oral communications. They provide guidelines for choice of content and style of presentation – adapted to the purpose and receiver of your message. To compose effective messages you need to apply certain specific communication principles, the “Seven C’s”, are *consideration*, *clarity, completeness conciseness*, *concreteness*, *correctness*, and *courtesy*.

**Candidness (consideration) –** in all business transactions, our view of matter should be honest, sincere and guiltless. We should speak and listen without prejudice or bias. Candidness in other way implies consideration of the other person’s (writers or reader’s) interest and his/her need to know things objectively and fairly. It should be characterized by your attitude.

**Clarity –** the principle of clarity is the most important in all communication, especially when we are involved in face to face communication. To express ourselves clearly, we should use accurate and familiar with proper intonation, stresses and pauses. Our language should be consisting of simple words and short sentence.

**Completeness –** clarity is ensured also by the completeness of the massage. The principle of completeness requires that we communicate whatever is necessary, provide answers to all possible questions which could be raised and add something additional, if necessary as footnotes, to whatever has been said.

**Conciseness –** in business and professional communication, we should be brief, and be able to say whatever we have to say in minimum words. We should avoid repetition. We, sometimes, believe erroneously to our message.

In business letter writing we should have to:

* Avoid unnecessary details and round about expressions, and avoid the long introduction

Examples:

**Verbose concise and direct**

As advised in our communication - As stated in our letter

As per your instructions - As instructed

By the reason of the fact that - Because

In the majority of instances - Usually

**Negative and round about Positive and direct**

- You failed to tell us … Please let us know….

- We can’t help you unless … We should be pleased to help you…

- We haven’t heard from you … We’d appreciate hearing from you…

**Concreteness:** it means being specific, definite in describing events and things. It also means the vivid description of events or state. As a rule, avoid using vague expression or words, and use precise and formal words or expressions instead.

**For example,** passive voice is avoided; active voice reflects force and action.

e.g. No one says ‘you are requested by me to…(passive)

I request you to… (Active)

**Correctness:** it contains

* Using appropriate grammar
* Keeping the sequence of tenses
* Correct use of the pronoun, etc.

e.g. He said to me that I will surely go there. (wrong)

He told me that I would surely go there. (correct)

Being an experienced manager, we are sure you can solve the conflict (wrong)

As you are an experienced manager, we are sure you can resolve the conflict (correct)

**Courtesy** - courtesy demands that we do not use words that are insulting or hurtful to the listener or reader. In business discussions, we must respect the other person by listening to him or her patiently. Our tone should reflect our respect for our reader or audience. The tone we use should not be aggressive. It should be level and measured as it can make or break our discussion.

**2.3.2 Requirements of a Good Business Letter**

A good business letter should meet the following requirements:

* It should be communicative – understandable, clear, direct, simple, concise and correct interims of structure and should be well logical.
* A business letter has standard and supplementary parts that should be appropriately used. These comprise the letter head, sender’s name and address, message date and the like.

**2.3.3 Elements/Components of the Business Letter**

**Heading –** This standard letter part identifies the name of the business establishment together with the postal, telephone, fax, and addresses of the sender of the letter.

**Message dateline** – this is a message part that indicates the date, the month and the year in which the letter is written.

**Inside address** – this part carries the postal, telephone, fax and addresses of the receiver of a business letter, and is printed close to the left-hand margin immediately following the dateline in all business letter styles.

**Salutation –**this part of a business letter is simple expressions of greeting that appear beneath inside address. The salutation often described based on the first line of the inside address. Thus if the first line of the inside address is a person’s name that is in charge of a certain business establishment, the salutation will be **Dear + person’s name,** for instance, Dear Jeylan, but if the first line of the inside address is a job title, the corresponding salutation should be Dear + job title, i.e. Dear Manager, Dear Dean, etc. On the other hand, if what is printed in the first line of the inside address is the name of a business establishment, the salutation would be, Dear Sirs, Madams or Gentlemen.

**Message Headings** (Subject line) – as far as business letter writing goes a subject heading is used following the salutation and is meant to convey the reader the central idea or the theme of the letter in a few logically arranged communicative words.

**Body of the Letter** –the body of the letter begins one space blow the message heading. The first lines of all paragraphs of a business letter to be indented five spaces in the case of indented and semi-blocked letter style. On the other hand, the first lines of paragraphs that are likely to appear on a page should be kept flush with margins of business letters produced on the basis of the full-blocked letter styles. The body of business letters should necessarily be divided into paragraphs taking the issues to be discussed

**Complimentary closures** – is known as **subscriptions** or are simple expressions of complements positioned immediately following concluding paragraph of a business letter. A complimentary closure should necessarily be designed in such a way that it is harmonized with the salutation of a business letter. Some of the widely used complementary closures are, ‘your faithfully’, ‘yours truly’, sincerely yours, obediently yours, respectfully yours, with regards, and the like.

**Signer’s identification**: this part of a business letter carries the signer’s or writer’s signature followed by his/her job title in succession this letter part is often printed five spaces below the complimentary closure.

**Identification initials** – in contemporary business letter writing, these initials supposed to correspond to the first letter of the full name of the person. This letter part appears beneath the signer’s identification.

**Attention Line** – attention line is the first supplementary letter part that appears above the salutation. The purpose of this part is to enable an executive to readdress the letter to the concerned authority in the same organization.

**Post script** – refers to any forgotten essential that must be included in the body of a business letter. It is printed following the signature area of the letter.

**Enclosure notations** - these are standard notations which refer to important materials that need to be attached with the original letter. These notations include:

Enclosure: single page/material to be enclosed

Enclosures: More than one page/ materials/ that deserve to be enclosed.

**Copy Notations** \_ copy notations are standard abbreviations which refer to copies of a letter that need to be sent to heads of offices or individuals to make them aware of the issues that the letter communicate. These notations which are applied worldwide are:

CC – carbon circular

PC – photographic copy

BCC – a blind carbon copy

It is important to note the three notations; the first two are being widely used in business letter writing in most business enterprises in Ethiopia whereas the third one is quite used in a rare case.

**2.4 Styles /Layout of a Business Letters**

Layout means the design in which the different parts of the letter are placed on the letterhead. The parts are placed in the same order from top to bottom in all forms or styles; the variation is in the indention and the paragraph styles. Because there are a lot of letter styles that can be employed in business letter writing, we use four contemporary styles which are in practical use in most business establishment and government agencies involved in the business. These are blocked, Semi-blocked, full blocked and indented styles. Of these letter styles, the blocked and semi-blocked ones are widely applied in business letters. It is also important to note that the blocked and semi-blocked styles preferably used in the production of personal letters. On the other hand, the full blocked style is predominantly used in financial institutions, education sectors, business and service rendering organizations in Ethiopia and in western countries such as England and Scotland.

1. **Indented Form** - This old style is now outdated. In this form, the inside address was in indented style as shown earlier, and every paragraph began three to five spaces away from the left margin. The indentation caused the letter to look uneven at the left margin. Besides, it took more time to type because of the indenting. This style is not used today.

**Example of Indented Style**

|  |
| --- |
| November 8, 2007  Excello Typing Institute,  14, Green Avenue,  Mumbai 400 053.  Dear Sirs,  This is the Indented form which is considered old fashioned now. The inside address is indented, i.e., each subsequent line is indented 2 spaces from the previous line; each line is followed by a comma and the last line by a full stop. Each paragraph begins five spaces away from the margin.  This form was used in the days before the typewriter when all letters were hand-written. Today even hand-written letters are not written in this style.  The appearance of this style is not very neat; besides, it wastes typing time because of the indentions.  Yours faithfully,  Office Superintendent |

1. **Full Block Form**

This is the most modern style. There is no indentation from the left margin at all; every line, including the date and the complimentary close, begins at the left margin. The address has no punctuation at the end of the line. The salutation and the complimentary close do not have a comma at the end. There is a double line space between the parts and between the paragraphs. This form takes less time to type because it requires no indention and has no punctuation in the layout parts. Some companies do not like this form because it looks heavy on the left, and rather blank on the right. A clear disadvantage of this form is that, after the letter has been filed, the date and the signature cannot be seen unless the file is fully opened. The date of a letter is an important item and is often referred to for many purposes. Quick reference data and to signature in the field letter is not possible in this form.

**Example of full-Block Style**

|  |
| --- |
| May 2, 2007  Windsor Stationery Mart  86, Main Avenue, Santa Cruz  Mumbai 400 054  Gentlemen  This letter is in Full-Block form. Every part of the letter, including the date and complimentary close, begins at the left-hand margin. The inside address is in block form with no end-of-line punctuation. There is no punctuation mark after the salutation or after the complimentary close.  As there is absolutely no indention, this form takes the shortest time to type and is very useful in a firm which sends out a large number of letters. It is the latest in styles of layout, but it has already become quite popular and is used in a number of firms.  The drawback of this form is that it looks rather blank on the right side and heavy on the left. Besides, when the letter is filed, it is difficult to refer to the date and the signature without taking out the file and opening it fully.  Yours faithfully  Correspondence Supervisor |

1. **Modified Block Form**

This style is a modification of the full block form. It eliminates the shortcoming of the full block style by keeping the **date** and the **complimentary close** on the right in their usual position. The inside address is in block form. The salutation and the complimentary close are followed by a comma; however, many firms now do not use the comma after the salutation and the complimentary close. All the paragraphs begin at the left margin, and there is double space between the paragraphs. This is the most popular form as it has most of the advantages of the full block form without its disadvantages. Its appearance is balanced and neat.

**Example of modified Block Form**

|  |
| --- |
| 10 September 2007  Pinto Commercial Institute  23, Rampart Row  Mumbai 400 001  Dear Sirs,  This is the Modified Block Form and is in most common use today. Most companies adopt this form as the most convenient and also the most attractive.  The date and the complimentary close are at the right. The address is in block form, that is, all lines begin at the margin and there are no punctuation marks at the end of any line. The paragraphs begin at the left margin and are separated only by double spacing. As most of the lines begin at the left margin, this form saves the time of the typist. This form is neat and balanced in appearance. It is a modification of the ultra-modern Full Block Form.  Yours truly,  Supervisor |

1. **Semi-intended/blocked Form**

This form is also called Semi-block form. It has the inside address in block form but the beginning of every paragraph is indented. The date and the complimentary close are on the right side. The salutation and the complimentary close are followed by a comma as in the traditional style. This style is getting outdated rapidly.

|  |
| --- |
| **Example of Semi-indented/blocked Form** |

|  |
| --- |
| 15 July, 2007  Modern Typists  29, Mount Road  Mumbai 400 002  Sirs,  The Semi-Block forms combine the indented and block forms. Some of its features are taken from the old style and some from the new style.  The date and the complimentary close are on the right. The address is in block form and the paragraphs are indented five spaces away from the margin. Many firms use this form although it does not look as streamlined as the modified block form.  This form will probably fall out of use for typewritten letters and will be used only for handwritten letters.  Yours faithfully,  Sales Manager |

1. **Hanging Indention Form**

In this style, the inside address is in block form. The date and complimentary close are on the right. The beginning of every paragraph is at the left margin, but the subsequent lines of every paragraph are indented three to five spaces. This style is adopted for sales letters, brochures and other documents in which striking appearance is useful. The opening line of every paragraph "hangs out", and can be used for highlighting important points. If this style is used, the opening words of every paragraph should be important and worth highlighting.

**Example of Hanging IndentationForm**

|  |
| --- |
| 20 August 2007  Expert Advisory Service  Beach View  Warden Road  Mumbai 400 026  Gentlemen:  This is the Hanging Indention form. It has the address in block form, every paragraph starting  at the margin, and subsequent lines of every paragraph indented a few spaces from the  margin.  As the first line of every paragraph 'hangs' out, it attracts attention. Sales and stunt collection  letters are written in this style in order to catch the eye. The opening words of every  paragraph must be striking and the drafting must be done carefully.  Typing time is wasted in this form because of the large number of indentions. It is not used for  routine letters.  Yours faithfully,  Sales Manager |

1. **NOMA Form**

This is the most recent experiment in layout style. It is recommended by National Office Management Association of America (the name NOMA is an acronym). It has been accepted in the UK by the Institute of Office Management. It has most of the features of Full Block form, all lines begin at the left margin and the inside address is in block form.The special features of this style are:

1. it has no salutation and no complimentary close
2. the subject line is in capitals, three lines below the inside address
3. numbered items of a list begin at the left margin, but if there is no number, the items are indented five spaces; there are no full-stops at the end of items
4. the writer's name and title are typed in capitals in one line below the space for signature
5. the typist's initials are in the left bottom corner. This style is not popular as it is too far removed from the familiar, conventional styles. Some people feel that this style saves time and sensibly omits meaningless salutation and close; but most people feel that this omission makes it impersonal and distant, and lacking in feeling.

**NOMA letter layout style**

|  |
| --- |
| 11 May 2007  Expert Advisory Services  Beach View  Mumbai 400 026  NOMA LETTER LAYOUT STYLE  This style has the following special features:  a. Salutation and complimentary close are omitted  b. The subject is in capitals three lines below the inside address  c. Enumerated item lists, like this one, begin at the left margin. Lists of items without number letter are indented five spaces  d. There is no full stop at the end of the items in the list  e. The writer's name and title are typed in capital letter in one line at the left margin at the end of  the letter, leaving space for the signature  f. The typist's initials are at the bottom left corner  Some people like this form as it eliminates the needless salutation and complimentary close, but it is impersonal, distant and too far removed from the familiar conventional styles.  KAMAL BHUTA - REGISTRAR |

**2.5. Types of a Business Letter**

**2.5.1 Sales Letter**

All sales letters that have to do with general publicity are purposefully designed to persuade potential customers to purchase the products from the producer or enable clients to be provided with various services that they are observed in. when the letters are produced, they need to be characterized by a sense of friendless, goodwill and business integrity. When you design such letters, you should maintain a polite and courteous tone. It is also necessary to avoid words or expressions which exaggerate the quality or value of your products.

**Sales letter has three parts:** introduction, body and conclusion

**Introduction**-to capture attention, claim-to indicate the genuinely of the product (best)

**Body**-substantiate the claim (supporting or backing up) the claim, conclusion- to conclude the letter.

**Sample of Sales letter**

Mega Publishers

P.O.Box 5022

Tell. +251115674856

Nov 30, 2015

Ref. no. MG/00/45/06

Haramaya University

P.O.Box 138

Tel. +251 5552214335

Subject: Introducing newly published books

Dear Sirs,

We are pleased to announce that we have published a new book entitled “Business writing.” If you by this book, you will be beneficial. Students are too beneficial from it. We will send you a free sample before you buy it.

Send your order play and you will be the first from every University to get our newly published book.

Your faithfully

Sign

BadasaChalchisa

Sales Manage

**2.5.1.1 Compliant Letter**

A complaint letter is written when a customer has a cause for a complaint. Compliant may arise when a customer feels that he or she has received a wrong order or inferior quality or merchandise of different quality. The customer can also voice his/her compliant when it is likely to be a delay in delivery or damage occurring on ordered goods while transit. When a customer has a cause for complaint he/she has to inform the supplier politely and frankly in writing.

**Sample Letter of Compliant**

Ref. no.AS/118/00/06

Admas College

P.O.Box 4110

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

December 21, 2014

Nakene computer centre

P.O. Box 19264

Addis Ababa

Dear Sir,

Subject: Our order ref, no. H/P.L 146

You have been already offering us good service that we request to call your attention to by order number H/P-L 146 placed with your under the data November 16; it should have reached us 60 computer to our college, but only 40 of it reached us. We shall appreciate if you send us the entire amount we asked. Because many of our students still couldn’t begin their studies as a result of your delaying. Please take immediate steps to send us the result of it within two days.

We shall expect your telephone call upon receipt of this letter

Sincerely Yours

Sign

Dean of College

**2.5.1.2 Letters of Adjustment**

Letters of adjustment are positive replies to complaints made by potential suppliers. These letters are purposefully designed by suppliers with the aim of fully or potentially adjusting the complaints made by potential customers. Letters of adjustment should be prompt and apologetic in content. In these letters, the reasons for the delay, damage, wrong consignment, etc. deserve mentioning. In a letter of adjustment, suppliers should inform customers about a possible replacement, price discount, etc. that need to be made. In these letters, suppliers should convey promise that such mistakes will not happen again.

There are two options in adjusting letters:

* Accepting
* Rejecting ( refusing, decline)

Both are a kind of response

**2.5.1.3 Letter of Order**

An order letter is considered one of the simplest types of direct request. When placing an order, you need not excite your reader’s interests; just state your needs clearly and directly. To see what to include in a good order letter, examine any mail-order form supplied by a large firm. It offers complete and concise directions for providing all the information that the company will need to fill an order.

After the date, the order form probably starts with “please send the following” or “please ship,” order blanks are arranged to document the precise goods you want, describing them by catalogue numbers, quantity, name or trade name, colour, size, unit price and total due. This complete identification helps prevent errors in filling the order. As in any letter sent with money, mention the amount of payment, explain how the amount was calculated, and if necessary, explain to what account the amount should be changed.

**2.5.1.3.1 Guidelines of a Letter of Order**

* Open with a general description of your order that encompasses all the details
* For complex orders, provide a general explanation of what the requested materials will be used for
* Provide all description: quality, price, size, catalogue numbers, product description, shipping instructions (date and place), arrangements for payment (method, time, deposits) and total costs
* Describe your needs clearly
* Request the price and time of payment
* Ask for a guarantee concerning your goods
* Double check the completeness of your order and the cost totals
* Ask accessories etc.

**Example of the Letter of Order**

CPU College

P.O. Box 1122

Adddis Ababa

Ethiopia

Re no.cpu/026/116/07

20rd Nov, 2014

Oxford Computer Training Center

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Dear Sir,

Subject: placing order, order no. G/PC/ 140

Thank you for your quotation dated13thNov, 2015. We are placing an order ten personal computers, one laser printer and two dot matrix printers. The order requires a proforma invoice that includes freights, endurance and discount. The order is subject to delivery before the end of Nov 30, 2014

The method of payment will be by irrevocable letter of credit. We suggest that the goods should be dispatched by air, freight home paid

We looked forward to receiving your shipment

With best regard

Sign

General Manager

**2.5.1.4 Circular Letters**

Circulars are used for sending instructions and information about new procedures to all branches of the organisation. They are addressed impersonally like a memorandum "To all Branch Managers", or “To all Accounts Section staff for information and immediate action" Circulars used for internal communication follow the same style of layout as those sent out of the organisation. However, they are not personalized and are written in the same precise, informative style as memoranda and office orders.

**Samples of Circular Letters**

Date: 25 February 2015

To: All Teaching Staff for information and immediate action

From: Principal's office

**Subject:** Self-assessment form

University circular no. xxx requires all teaching staff members to complete a selfassessment form at the end of every academic year. The forms are to be sent to theUniversity on 15 April.All members of the teaching staff are requested to collect a copy of the form from the office Registrar and submit the completed form to the college office by 31 March.

Vice-Principals will guide teachers who need clarification and help in completing the form.

**C/C**

* Faculty of social science and humanities
* Business and Economics
* Natural science

Circular No-

14 August 2007

**Subject: Leave Travel Allowance**

The Company's Management is happy to announce that the Board of Directors has decided to grant leave travel allowance to all employees of the Company from the current year.

The State Government LTC scheme will be adopted. The facility will be available once in two years for the family to visit the home-town, and once in four years to visit any place in India, in place of one of the home-town concessions.

The Government LYC rules are displayed on the notice board along with this circular.

V.V. Ramamurthy

HRD Manager

**C/C**

* To all concerned bodies

**2.5.1.5. Letter of enquiry**

The most common letters in business are buyers' enquiries about goods and services and sellers' replies giving information and quotations. Today, a good deal of information about goods and prices is conveyed by telephone or e-mail or fax; but all parts of the country and all people do not have these facilities and prefer to use letters so that they have a document and a record for reference.

In these letters, the direct approach is used to save time. The letters are short; formalities are not required, and you can get straight to the business.

**Enquiries**

To ask for information, you can begin directly with a question or request like:

*• Could you give us the following information?*

*• Please send us the following information.*

*• I would appreciate receiving the · following information from you.*

The letter may also begin with an indication of the need. Indicating the purpose for which the information is needed helps the supplier to give relevant information, especially in the case of products with a vast variety of models. A dealer in computers will be able to give useful information and a quotation only when he knows the buyer's specific need.

A series of direct questions may follow this opening paragraph. End the letter with a friendly comment which will leave a sense of personal relationship. Endings like "an early reply would be appreciated" or "Thanking you in advance" are weak and outdated. It is more effective to send a letter with a more business-like sentence such as:

• We *could discuss this personally if you could meet me in my office next week.*

*• If you could get this data to me by Tuesday, I shall be most grateful.*

*• When replying, please include details of delivery.*

The following letters illustrate these points:

Dear Sirs,

During a recent Trade Fair held here, I saw some samples of your new granite tiles for flooring. I would like to make use of them for the interiors I am designing for a new housing complex. Please give me the following information:

(1) In what sizes, colours and designs can you supply the tiles?

(2) Are the tiles likely to be affected by rising moisture?

(3) Is any special processing of the under-flooring required?

I shall be most grateful if you could send me answers to these questions by Friday, the 17th•

Yours faithfully,

Sign

Name/position title

Dear Sir,

We are opening a new school in New Panvel, with 36 classrooms and will be buying a large number of desks and chairs. We would be pleased to receive your catalogue of moulded plastic school furniture together with your price-list.

The school has to be fully equipped by the end of May, and we will expect supplies to reach us by 15 May. If you can supply suitable goods, we may place further orders as we will be expanding some of our schools and also setting up new ones in other parts of the State.

Yours truly,

Sign

Name

Points included in these letters are:

1. Courteous request for information, giving its purpose

2. Statement of what is wanted (or a list of questions)

3. Request that the information may be given by a certain date

**2.5.1.6 Job Search Letters and Résumés (curriculum vitae – CV)**

Application letters as one type of personal letter can either be **solicited** or **unsolicited**. The former corresponds to the application for jobs that are not advertised whereas the latter is a kind of invited application. In the case of an unsolicited letter, the source of invitation will be provided by a prospective employer.

Even though the standard and supplemental letter parts are common to both letters of application and business letters; the following items which are peculiar to the former deserve highlighting:

* A subject line that mentions the type of vacancy in which application is made and the media in which the vacancy is advertised is used.
* A brief mention is made about the age of the applicant followed by nationality if the application is written to international agencies.
* Educational background of the writer/applicant/ is given
* Job experience /if any/ and suggestion to bit for an interview are given appropriate room
* Copies of testimonials and curriculum vitae are appended

There are **two** types of application letter:

* Cover letter with CV
* Cover letter and separate CV

The application letter is very similar to a sales letter. It has to be attention capturing and it should contain the following points:

**Plan of application letter**

* Confirm that you wish to apply and say where you learned about the job
* Say why you are interested in the position
* Show that you can contribute to job highlighting your most relevant skills and experience
* Indicate your interest/willingness to attend an interview

**Opening Sentences/ways of starting**

* I wish to apply for the post of communication officer advertised by you in the Ethiopian Herald of Nov. 25, 2014
* I should be grateful if you kindly consider me for the post of public relation officer advertised by you in the reporter newspaper dated Nov. 12, 2014

**Ways of finishing (closing application letters)**

* I look forward to hearing from you
* I hope that my qualification and experience will merit your consideration
* I would very appreciate if the opportunity is given to me for providing further details

There must be application address in an application letter, inside address, salutation, body and complimentary closure.

The application letter should not simply repeat the information given in the datasheet; rather, it should interpret and expand upon that data. It is the place to present the intangible qualities which are difficult to show on a data sheet. These qualities might include:

* **Adaptability** – ability to get along with others
* **Poise** – ability to handle the responsibility
* **Tact** – ability to please customers
* **Honesty** – ability to respect others

Prospective employers look for relationships between prior work experiences and the qualifications needed for jobs. An applicant should point out how his/her past activities will help in the performance of the job.

**Example of job application letter**

**20 April 2014**

**Abba Geda News Agency**

**P.O. Box 6214**

**Tel. 011 34 81 912 113**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Dear Sirs,**

I am writing to apply for the position of reporting officer advertised in the reporter newspaper of 15 April 2014. Please find in closed copy of my CV.

I received my BA in English as major from Addis Ababa University last year. Since my graduation, I couldn’t get employed at any company or organization. But I am very interested in the job you advertised and working at your organization.

If I get the chance to be employed I could make a significant contribution in your office depending on my grade I scored at University and while developing my skills. I am hardworking person who enjoys challenges of the reporting officer.

I do hope that I shall have an opportunity of an interview for the position of the reporting officer.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours

Sign

Chala Magarsa

* **The Curriculum Vitae** (**Résumés**)

The typical application consists of two important parts. The first is curriculum vitae or **résumés** whereas the other one is a letter of application which has been thoroughly discussed. The curriculum vitae is a list of applicant’s most important personal information, accomplishments, talents, educational background including qualifications and abilities. You should write the datasheet or CV as the first step in preparing a job application. Then, in the application letter, interpret your abilities and training in terms of requirements for the prospective job.

The first step in writing a CV is to assess your personal information – education, experiences, and other related information such as extracurricular activities and hobbies to determine which are important enough to include on the CV.

A most CV includes the following information in some order:

Personal Data – the following are a type of personal data that an applicant might wish to include in a datasheet or CV.

* Name of applicant (don’t use nickname)
* Address and telephone number
* Date of birth and sex
* Marital status
* Social security number if any

**Include the following information in the education section:**

Name, location, date of attendance, and degree awarded for all schools attended (begin with the high school from which you graduated and work forward in time)

* Special honours received
* A major area of study
* Courses pertinent to the job, if they strengthen your presentation

**Work Experience –** is the most important part of the CVfor applicants who have had many related jobs. List your work experience even if it does not seem related to the job for which you are applying. List all paid jobs, beginning with the last job and moving backwards in time.

Employment information should include:-

* Name and the location of the company
* Job title and type of work performed
* Dates of employment and/or length of time employed (indicate part-timeme work where appropriate to avoid confusion

**References –** List at least two people (such as former employers or teachers) who can recommend your professionals, abilities. For a character reference, include the name of a friend of established reputation who can attest to your stability and general responsibility. In addition to indicating what type of reference the person can supply (professional or character), include the following details:

* Full name and the address of the reference
* Telephone number (include area code)
* Title (if the person has one)

As a matter of courtesy, ask the permission of your references to use their names on your CV

* The CV should be well organized and neatly typed so that it’s easy to read and pleasing to look at
* Use parallel constructions in presenting each part of the CV
* Use short phrases rather than long, complete sentences to describe the information

The CV should be no longer than one typewriting page unless the applicant has had years of work and educational experiences.

**Example of CV/ Résumés**

1. **Personal information**

Name: TolosaWayesaGutema

Address: +251 09 11 20 33 53

Date of birth: Dec. 12, 1987

Nationality: Ethiopian

Marital Status: Single

1. **Qualification**

2006 – 8 Addis Ababa University BA in English

2004 – 5 Qarsa Preparatory School

2002 – 2003 AbdiBoru Senior Secondary Schools

1994 – 2001 Batu Elementary School

1. **Skills**

Basic computer skills, translation experience, the experience of researching, compiling, and   
 writing narrative reports. Skill in conducting training and knowledge sharing

1. **Interests (Hobbies)**

Playing music, watching movies and reading fictions

1. **Reference**

TamiratYigezu (09 11 12 03 54)

Dr. AbomsaWakuma (09 11 23 04 32)

**2.6 E-mails and Memos**

E-mails and memos can be similar in style. Memos and e-mails between colleagues can be informal, but business faxes and e-mails, etc. may be either semi-formal or informal depending on the individual relationship and what the message contains. It is also common for normal business letters to be sent as faxes.

There are some basic rules for writing memos and e-mails:

* You do not have to write Dear Sir/Madam/,Mrs Smith or use a particular formula at the end
* Be consistent in style. Don’t vary between formal and informal
* Remember to use paragraphs and proper sentences.
* Keep it short and to the point
* Use the subject line to summarize the point of the message so the reader is clear about the content.

**Memos**

A memo (short for memorandum) is used only for communication within the organisation. It may be from one person to another or to several persons. The purpose of a memo may be:

• To ask for information

• To give information

• To request decision or action

• To convey information about action or decision

Memos have just two sections: the heading and the body. Many organizations use memo pads with pre-designed formats. A Memo format may be either vertical or horizontal. In the vertical format, all the lines of formal information begin at the left margin as shown below.

Date: October 6, 2007

To: David Philip

From: Shawn Paulson

Subject: Language Requirement

In the horizontal format, the "To" and "From" lines begin at the left margin, while the "Date" and "Subject" are aligned with the right margin.

To: David PhilipDate: October 6, 2007

From: Shawn PaulsonSubject: Language Requirement

Each of these four fields must be filled in carefully.

**To:** This space is for the name of the person(s) to whom the memo is sent. Courtesy Title (Mrs., Ms, Mr.) or professional title (Dr., Dean, etc.) may be omitted if the organization's policy and the relationship between the writer and the addresses allow it. When writing to persons of higher .rank the title must always be included. For a formal memo, the addressee's full name must be used; for an informal one, the first name may suffice. If the addressee's name alone is not enough to identify the person, add the job title and/or department name after the name (for example, *To: JatinNaidu, Accounts Office).* If the memo is addressed to several persons, list their names alphabetically or in the order of their seniority in the organisation. If many names are required, you can write *"To: See Below"* and list the names at the end of the message. If the group is too large to list all the members individually, an identifying classification, such as *"Faculty and Staff'* or *"Process Engineers"* is written after"To."

**From:** The writer's own name is written on this line. One's own name is always written without any courtesy title or professional title; it is not appropriate to use a courtesy/professional title with one's own name. If you think the addressee may not know you, add your job title and/or department name.A memo need not be signed but if you choose to sign it to personalize it or to indicate authorization put your initials below or above or to the right of your typewritten name. Since different organizations have different practices, follow your

Organizations practice. A memo is always official even if it is not signed.

**Date:** Write the full name of the month or its standard abbreviation but do not write a number for the month; since practices vary with regard to writing the day or the month first, a date written in numerals can cause confusion; 2/4/2007 will beread as 2 April in British practice and as February 4 in American practice.

**Subject:** The subject should be stated concisely and accurately. The subject line often determines where the memo is to be filed.

**Drafting a Memo**

A well-written memo is informative and concise. It can be made informative by following the principles of any good writing: preparation and organisation. **Preparation-** decides the exact objective. What is to be achieved by sending this memo? It should be possible to state the objective in a single sentence. Consider the reader(s), and decide whether you should include fundamental issues or define technical terms.**Organization-**organizes the material to suit the purpose of the memo. The content can be organized by decreasing order of importance or by increasing order of importance. Organizing by decreasing order of importance is used when the reader is well acquainted with the topic. The most important point is given first (this does not mean repeating the "Subject" statement). This method spares readers needless waste of time in reading information that they already know. Supporting facts are given in subsequent sentences for readers who may be unfamiliar with the subject. The background information is given last. Readers who need this information to understand the message will take the time to read it; others may scan it or pass it by most business memos use this pattern of organisation.

Organizing by increasing order of importance is suitable for certain types of occasions and messages. For example, announcing bad news or when the reader(s)need a significant amount of prior knowledge to understand the main idea. For writing this kind of memo, organize your thoughts by leading up to the most important idea which is presented at the end of the memo. This type of memo usually takes longer to write.Outlining with focus on the main ideas helps to organize thoughts. The outline can provide structure and proportion. It should not have gaps in logic or important details. The outline can be in the form of short phrases listed in logical order; it helps to give order to the body and establish relationships between their ideas. Develop the outline into a rough draft by expanding the points into paragraphs

**Memo Style**

A memo is always brief. Make every effort to be plain, direct and concise while using a comfortable, natural style. Although memos are usually formal, the recent trend is towards a personal style. Careful writers can achieve this style without sacrificing clarity, grace, or precision.It helps to write quickly; if you pretend that you are speaking to someone sitting across the table you can achieve a more personal style. Showy style, too much technical jargon, or complicated sentences will make you sound pompous. Try to have a style that is cordial, straightforward, lucid and conversational while, yet beingformal. Generally, the tone is neutral or positive, though occasionally, complaints or reprimands may be issued in memo form. Use caution in negative situations, and be aware of the effect of your memo. Spiteful, blunt, condescending, or too coldly formal memos alienate people.

**Sample of memorandum**

**Fulcon publishing**

**Children’s book**

To: All editors

From: Frank Digby

Subject: Sales figures

Date: 8 October 2015

Please see the attached sales figures for September. A meeting to discuss these will be held on Tuesday 12 0ctomber at 10:30 a.min the conference room.

Frank

**Sample of e-mail**

To: ChalaMegarsa

From: ChaltuMerga

Date: 6 September 2014

Subject: Rehearsal Tonight

Hi ChalaSorry to say I’ll be bit late for tonight’s rehearsal as something’s come up at work and I won’t be able to get a way on time. I hope to make it by 7:15.Chaltu

**UNIT -3: Meeting and Documenting**

**3.1 Writing Notices**

A notice is used when many people in the organisation have to be given the same information. It is the most common method of mass communication within an organisation. Notice is short; the language is simple, and the type is large and well-spaced for easy reading. A notice is put up on the notice board. A copy may also be circulated among staff for signature. Notice is often called an office circular. Notice board is a medium for public communication within the organisation. A notice board is placed at a location where it can be seen by the persons for whom it is meant. Notice boards need care and attention. They must be attractively laid out; overlapping notices and crowding of too many notices gives the notice board a poor appearance and makes it difficult to read. An up-to-date notice board is neatly laid out and does not carry stale notices; it must look attractive to get attention.

Notices typed in double spaced lines, in large font, with wide margins are easy to read.A notice must be drafted in clear language. It must also be short so as to fit on a single sheet. A notice is an announcement and does not have to give details of the topic. If it is about a complex topic, it may refer to detailed information available in the office for reference.

A notice may be just a one line announcement like the following:

**Notice**

15 October 2007

The office will remain closed from 28 October to 2 November on account of Diwali.

Sd/

Office Superintendent

**Example of Notice**

**1 February 2008**

The Final Examination for all courses will begin on 21 March 2008 the time-table is displayed separately for each course on the notice board. The portion for the examination will be the entire year's course. Each paper will be of three hours and will carry 80 marks.

All assignments must be submitted by 28 February. Students who do not complete and submit their assignments by this date will not be allowed to write the final examination, according to the University rule.

Sd/

Principal

**Public notices** are published in newspapers. They are related to any matter which has to be announced to the public. The subject may be anything from the closure of a road for repairs, cut in water or electricity supply to specific areas during specific days/hours, to the announcement of property or goods for sale.

Daily newspapers newspapers carry a large number of public notices on a variety of matters. The Cs of communication is very important. One very important point is that space in newspapers is costly; it is paid for by centimetres used, across columns. Therefore, it is necessary to be able to draft notice with the minimum number of words without losing clarity. Loss of clarity might give rise to legal problems if the notice suggests more than one meaning.

**3.2. Designing Agenda**

The agenda is a list of topic to be discussed in the meetings.The chair man’s agenda is for the chair man’s use only. It contains extra notes in addition to the agenda headings. These notes help him to conduct the meeting efficiently. The notes and agenda are normally combined in one document. The portion at the topis known as the notice, giving information about the type of meeting to be held, the place in which it will be held, the day, date and time of the meeting.

**3.3 Involving in the Meeting as:**

* A chairperson
* A secretary
* A member

A **chairperson** plays the role of guiding meeting. In order to guide the meeting properly, a chairman must have ability and experience on how to guide the meeting. A **secretary** is a person who takes minutes or writes the main points/objectives that rise in the meeting. As a rule, a secretary needs to focuses only on the very crucial idea of a meeting. All details and extra information that may rise as a point of discussion must not be included in the agenda. A secretary will usually responsible for conveying the meeting, issuing the necessary documentation at the appropriate time, and for a variety of preparations which are necessary to ensure the success of the meeting.

The third important body is a **member – (people who participate in meeting).** Every member at the meeting has an equal chance and right to express their idea based on the given agenda, by the guidance of chairperson. A member of the meeting plays a great role by providing essential information about the agenda.

**3.4 Writing Minutes**

Minutes are a record of what take place during a meeting – discussions made and perhaps the main discussions which took place during the meeting. They should be written in the past tense, the third person reported speech.

There are three main ways of producing minutes of the meeting:

1. **Verbatim Minutes:** these are primarily used in court reporting, where everything is reported word by word.
2. **Minutes of Resolution:** the discussions which took place in the meeting are not recorded except the main points and conclusion. The exact wording of any resolutions passed should be recorded.
3. **Minutes of Narration:** these minutes will be a concise summary of all the discussion which took place and the conclusion reached.

**3.4.1 Principles of Writing Minutes/ Layout of Minutes**

The name of the organization should be included in the main heading, followed by wording which involves from the notice, but beginning with the minutes of the meeting:

* A list of these present should be recorded
* Layout of minutes may take a variety of different formats, depending on the preference and requirements of individual’s organizations.

At the end of the minutes, space must be left for the chairman’s signature, at the next meeting space for him to insert the date of signing. The date of typing and a reference should be included

**UNIT 4: Business Report**

**Business Report**

A report is a logical presentation of facts and information. It provides feedback to the managers on various aspects of the organization. A report presents information needed for reviewing and evaluating progress, for planning the future course of action and for taking decisions. Every organization has a system of routine periodical reporting on the progress and the status of different activities. Besides, management assigns some special studies for taking decisions.

Special Reports may be written by an individual or by a group of persons to whom the task has been assigned. The report is submitted to the authority that assigned it.

Reports are written for various purposes. They may be required to review performance, keep a check on a continuing activity, plan for the future needs of the organization, survey the market, submit standardized information, etc.

**Types of Reports**

Reports may be routine or special. Routine reports are periodical and are usually prepared by filling in printed cyclostyled forms, to convey information about the progress or status of work/tasks. They are submitted at regular intervals or soon after the completion of the task

Special reports are required when a special situation or problem arises. An individual or a committee of persons who have knowledge and understanding in the Writing Scientific and field /subject is appointed to investigate and study a specific problem, collect information related to it, and make suggestions to help the management to make a decision.

**The following diagram gives an idea of the types of reports:**

**Routine Special**

Progress F.L.R

Inspection Investigation

Performance/ Feasibility

Appraisal Survey

Periodical Project

Analysis

Laboratory experiment

**Routine Reports:** Routine reports are usually forms in which blanks have to be filled in or multiple-choice statements are to be ticked. Report forms must be prepared carefully to ensure that the management gets complete information.

The following are routine reports:

**(a) Progress report:** gives information about the progress of a project or a task which is in the process of being completed, such as the construction of a building or manufacture of products or implementation of a scheme. This report is also prepared by filling in a standard form periodically.

**(b) Inspection report:** is submitted as soon as an inspection is carried out. It is necessary for detecting any irregularities or deviations from standard practice, in day-to-day work, for example, internal audit reports. Inspection of machinery, buildings, and property may be done at regular intervals. Audits and inspection of work and systems may be done by surprise check in order to ensure that they work properly at all times. Printed forms and guidelines for checking may be provided by the authorities; otherwise, experts in the field, like engineers, auditors, etc. use their own guidelines and formats for inspection reports.

**(c) Performance Appraisal report:** is periodical and is usually prepared by filling in a form. It is meant for assessing and recording the performance of an employee. Every supervisor has to fill in an assessment report for each of the subordinates, annually. Performance appraisal helps the superiors to assess the performance of individual employees. It also helps employees to get feedback on their performance. Based on these reports, decisions about promotions and other benefits are taken.

**(d) Periodical report**: is prepared at regular intervals on the working of a section or a department. The information required is of a routine nature and can be easily tabulated; hence, it is prepared by filling in a form.

**Special Reports**

Special reports are written in a schematic format, which varies slightly according to the requirements of the organization and the subject of the report.

**(a) First Information Report** (F.I.R.): is required when there is a disaster like fire, building collapse, robbery or accident in an organization. It is prepared by a responsible person on-the-spot or the person in charge, for submission to a higher authority; for example, the branch manager prepares it for submission to the Regional Office or Head Office. The report has to give all the information which is available immediately after the incident occurs. It must state what happened, about what time, who first noticed it, and what steps were taken immediately. It also states the extent of destruction or loss of life, property, important papers, etc. As can be estimated immediately.A First Information Report is always written by an individual.

**(b) Investigation Report:** is written after making a thorough study and inquiry. An investigation is made when there is a problem and the management needs to find out the causes of the problem and needs suggestions for solving it. For example, falling sales, declining deposits in a bank, many customer complaints, losses in a branch, etc. A committee may be appointed to find out the causes of the problem, and suggest measures to solve it and prevent it from occurring again. It requires the collection of facts, which are not always easy to get. The collected information has to be analyzed; conclusions have to be drawn and recommendations may have to be made. Since such reports require a great deal of work, thinking, discussion and consideration, they are usually assigned only to a committee of competent and experienced persons. A simple investigation of a small problem may be assigned to an individual who has knowledge and experience in the field.

**(c) Feasibility or Survey Report:** is required when an organization intends to launch a new product in the market, introduce a new service, or make any major changes that may affect the company's customers. The proposed field or area has to be surveyed, and its conditions observed and recorded. The factors to be examined and recorded depend on the purpose of the survey. The purpose may be to consider the suitability of a site for a factory, to evaluate the feasibility and financial viability of a proposal, to survey the market, to estimate the damage. For some purposes only a physical survey and inspection of the area may suffice; for others, availability of essential requirements in the area, an attitude of the local people, State Government's policies, possible expenses, etc, will be needed. A survey may be made by an individual or by a committee, depending on the size of the survey to be made. For example, if a factory is to be established, the survey involves a great deal of work, and a committee would be appointed; if damage to a piece of machinery is to be surveyed for estimating the loss, an engineer can do it alone.

**(d) Project Report:**is written after a proposal takes shape, and after the preliminary survey has been completed. It describes the proposal as projected into the future, showing the cash flow and expected results. It is used for planning and for convincing others, especially sanctioning and funding authorities like government departments and banks. A project report may be prepared on assignment by the management of a company or by a person on his own initiative, with a proposal for which he wants to get approval or sanction or funding. For example, an entrepreneur prepares a project report in order to get it approved by various authorities.

(e) **Laboratory Report:**is written to record observations made in a laboratory test and to draw conclusions from the observations. It requires exact details of the equipment and material used, and procedures followed so that the experiment can be repeated in the same conditions. Its purpose is to observe record and verify existing conditions and scientific processes.

(**f) Analytical Report**, in addition to giving the information, discusses and analyzes the information based on theories and other related knowledge; it needs an experiment or a test whose results are analyzed. Analysis requires breaking up into components, examining each component and studying the organization of the components into the whole.

**Parts of a Report**

A report has several sections, which enable the writer(s) to layout all the complex information in an easy-to-read form. Not all reports require all the sections but long reports need to be including all the parts. A report generally includes the following sections. The essential sections marked with an asterisk (\*); the other sections may be included depending on the type, length and purpose of the report.

* Letter of transmittal
* Title page\*
* Table of contents
* Lists of abbreviations and/or glossary
* Executive summary/abstract
* Introduction \*
* Body\*
* Conclusion\*
* Recommendations
* Bibliography
* Appendices

**Letter of Transmittal**: is typed on the organization’s letterhead. This is a letter addressed to the person who commissioned the report, in the letter, you effectively hand over your report to that person.

**Title page:** this must include:

* report title which clearly states the purpose of the report
* full details of the person(s) for whom the report was prepared
* full details of the person(s) who prepared the report
* the date of the presentation of the report

A short report of two to three pages does not need a title page, but it must have a title. It must indicate the subject of the study and the purpose of the study. The title appears at the top of the first page, before the text of the report, as follows:

In an individual letterform report, the title is in the form of the subject line, indicating the topic, for example:

Subject: Decline in Sale of Cycles in Tamil Nadu between January and June 2004

**Table of Contents:**is given after the title page. It is used only if the report is long, say ten pages. It is a list of the headings and appendices of the report with the page number on which each begins.

If the report is long and complex, you can give a list of the tables, and a list of illustrations (or figures), separately. The correct page numbers must be shown opposite the contents. Word processing packages can generate a table of contents.

**Abbreviations and Glossary**

If the report includes abbreviations, which may not be known to all readers of the report, an alphabetical list of them is provided. If there are many technical terms, a glossary is also provided. A glossary is an alphabetical list of the terms, with brief explanations of their meanings.

**Acknowledgements**

This is a list of names of persons, who helped the writer of the report with information, collection of -data, references, discussion, and so on. It can be written in one paragraph or a few short paragraphs.

**Abstract or Summary or Executive Summary**

An abstract is a summary used for a scholarly, academic work and an executive summary is used for a business report. An Executive summary is written for an executive who most likely does not have the time to read the original. It is notlonger than 10% of the full report. The abstract is the report in miniature. It summarizes the entire report in a single paragraph of about 100 to 200 words. It summarizes the entire report, not the actual experiment. The abstract can be written only after the report has been completed.

**An executive summary**:

• Gives readers the essential contents of the report document in 1-10 pages depending on the length of the report.

• Previews the main points of the report enabling readers to build a mental framework for organizing and understanding the detailed information in the report.

• Helps readers determine the key results and recommendations reported in your document.

The summary is written after the report is completed. It should be the last thing you write even though it is usually the first thing read by others. Its concise length and summary format enable the reader to understand the main points of the issue.

**Use of Illustrations**

A report becomes much more readable, clear and effective if the findings are explained with relevant illustrative data like diagrams, graphs, charts, plans or maps. There are several advantages in using illustrations.

• They clarify and support the verbal analysis.

• They can present a large amount of complex data in a compact form and with precision.

• Comparisons of data can be seen at a glance in a graph or chart.

• Pictorial representation is more attractive and interesting to most people.

Every illustration should have a number and a title and should be mentioned in the text of the report. A table has a Roman number (I, IV, IX are Roman numbers) and title placed above it. A figure has an Arabic number (1, 4, 9 are Arabic numbers) and title placed below it. All illustration should be placed as near as possible to the point where it is mentioned for the first time in the text. Complicated illustrations are given as Appendices. All diagrams, graphs, charts, maps etc. used as illustrations must have:

• Proper labels to show what information is being represented

• The scale used

• The key to colour/shading/symbols used

• The date of the information it contains

**Recommendations**

This is the last section of the body of the report. Recommendations are proposals for action suggested by the report writer(s) to the appointing authority. This section is included only if the assignment has asked for it. Sometimes, an assignment may be only to present findings without recommendations. Usually, very senior persons in responsible positions are asked to include recommendations. A person or committee of persons in the junior position may make suggestions; since they have studied the problem in-depth, they are in a position to suggest ways to solve the problem. Recommendations should be written in the same order as the problems are stated in the findings, as far as possible. They may be numbered and must be in the same grammatical form. Recommendations may be introduced with a sentence like,

• The committee makes the following recommendations

• The sub-committee recommends the following steps

• The following steps are recommended

The recommendations may also be written without any introductory sentence, for example,

(i) A scheme of loans to educated boys and girls should be introduced to encourage self-employment.

(ii) Loans should be given for minor irrigation projects to combat the drought conditions.

(iii) The possibility of establishing a hire-purchase scheme through the bank for consumer durables should be explored.

**Conclusion**

Draw conclusions from the result and discussion. The conclusions should answer the question "So what?" Then explain your conclusions. It is a test of your ability to reason from the work you have done and to summarize the knowledge you have gained. This section may include your critique of the experiment and any suggestions for improvement. This should focus on the lab as a learning experience and not just criticize equipment or the time spent on the experiment. The results, discussion and conclusions sections can be combined.

**References**

Some reports need references. It is a list of books or articles, which have been referred to for the purpose of the experiment and mentioned in the report. This section is not always needed for a lab report. Consult your guide/faculty/ advisor if it is needed.

**Bibliography**

The bibliography is the list of books and articles used by the report writer. It is arranged in alphabetical order of the surnames of the authors. Publication details are usually included.

**Appendix**: Appendix (plural: appendices or appendixes) is supplementary material given at the end of the report. This may be a copy of a questionnaire used, or plans of buildings, maps or other material which is referred to in the body of the report, but need not appear in the body. Any interested reader can refer to it since it is mentioned in the report. If there is more than one appendix, they are numbered. Intended to present data and analysis, that though important, may not be directly relevant to the main body. It is intended for interested readers only. Appendices are not dumped places and they must be classified and organized.

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