Lecture Notes
Business Communication B

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Lecture 1: LONG REPORT WRITING

1. **Effective Planning**
2. **Controlling Your Sources**
3. **Writing the Front Matter**
4. **The Main Body, or Text**
5. **Conclusions and Recommendations**
6. **Signature Block**
7. **Addendum, or End Matter**
8. **The Report Writing Sequence – A quick Review**

Last term we considered the various kinds of long reports and the characteristic features of long report format. In order to refresh your memory, you should refer to your lecture notes on

1. <u>Research Methods: Obtaining Information</u>: this section deals with the nature and characteristics of business information, effective ways of searching for, and using business information.
2. <u>Writing with Force and Clarity</u>: this section focuses on the planning process in communication, drawing up of the tentative outline, orders of development of thought and ideas, qualities of writing style, editing suggestions, etc.
3. <u>Business Letters</u>: particularly the section dealing with letter format, letter form and the principles of business communications.
4. <u>Report Writing and Form Design:</u> pay special attention to section five, which deals with the various kinds of long reports and their formatting.

Today we shall briefly revise material from these sources, relevant to the subject matter of today's lecture – Long Report Writing, and then focus on a few details of using and documenting sources – details that have not been adequately covered in our previous lectures.

1. **Effective Planning** is the longest and in a sense the most important stage:

- Define the problem
- Identify the purpose of the report
- Consider the receivers (the three familiar steps),

and

- Determine the ideas to include
- Collect the information
- Select and evaluate the information
- Organize the information

2. Controlling your Sources

Once you've conducted some research and are ready to begin drafting, you need to decide which sources to use and how to use them. You can't make that decision based on how much time you spent finding and analyzing each source. That decision must be

based on how useful the source is in answering your main research question. In other words, you need to control your sources rather than letting them control you.
Papers written in an effort ‘to get everything in’ are *source-driven* and all too often are read like a patchwork of quotations loosely strung together. You should aim, however, to stay in control of your sources: focus on presenting your ideas, using sources as supporting evidence.
The best way to ensure that you remain in control is to make an *outline* first and then to organize your notes according to it. By outlining first you let the logical flow of your ideas create the framework of your paper.
Once you have outlined or begun drafting and have a good sense of the shape of your paper, organize your sources to fit your ideas.

3. Writing the Front Matter

In the long report format, items placed before the main text are the title page,, letter of transmittal, letter of authorization, table of contents, list of tables and executive summary. These are classified as front matter.

<u>Title Page</u>
The title page should include the report’s title, the name of the person who authorized the report, the name(s) and designation of the author(s). Create a title that indicates the nature and purpose of the report. Include the name of the organization and person to whom the report is submitted and the date of submission. If the report is to be distributed to other sections or people in the organization, place these on the title page as well.

<u>Letter of Transmittal</u>
The letter of transmittal is the covering letter for the report. This should be written in block business letter layout and addressed to the person who authorized or requested the report.
State clearly and concisely who wrote the report and thank others who worked on the project. Include the terms of reference, the scope of the report and problems addressed.

<u>Table of Contents</u>
Include the main sections and subsections in the report. The page numbers of the major sections should be clearly indicated.

<u>List of Tables</u>
The list of tables is placed under the table of contents, if only a few tables have been used. If a large number of tables has been included, use a new page for the list of tables.

<u>Abstract, Preface, Synopsis, or Executive Summary</u>
State the purpose of the report. Give a brief outline, half to one page in length, on the report’s scope, purpose, methods, findings and conclusions.
This part of the front matter section sets the framework and helps the receiver understand the subject matter, purpose, scope, and the direction of the report.

4. The Main Body, or Text

The largest part of the long report is the main body, or text. This usually contains three sections:

- introduction
- discussion
- conclusion & recommendations

Format each of these sections for clarity and readability. Use headings and sub-headings. Use spacing to add clarity. Never cramp the information to save space.

Use clear, concise and simple language. Effective sentence construction, logical paragraphs, order of development, outlines and headings give coherence and clarity to the presentation.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The final section of the report text contains the conclusions and recommendations. Format these as separate subsections in the final section. As discussed in the lecture on Report Writing, conclusions and recommendations may, in fact, precede the main body of the report and appear in the Executive Summary, or Abstract.

The conclusion is the summary of the report's findings; it evaluates the main facts discussed in the report. It is usually short, half to one page. No new ideas or findings are written into the conclusion. If the purpose of the report is to investigate and analyze findings, it may be enough to use a conclusion to summarize findings.

Recommendations should aim to solve the problem or to provide the answers to questions asked in the report's terms of reference. Recommendations should always be based on the research findings and the analysis and discussion in the central part of the text. Present each recommendation in a separate point or paragraph.
N.B. Recommendations are not needed when the report is used as a database by others who will plan actions to be taken to solve problems.

6. Signature Block

The writer(s) usually place their signature, names, and job titles in a signature block at the end of the final section of the main text. This is usually after the recommendations and before the addendum.

7. Addendum, or End Matter

This section includes all supplemental information: appendices, glossary of terms, bibliography, etc.
Facts and findings relevant to the report, but disruptive to its main flow of ideas are placed in an appendix. Information that is too long or too technical is also placed here.

The reader is referred to the appendix from the main body of the report and is able to use this information if needs be.
Examples of the types of information that can be included in an appendix are detailed statistics, copies of surveys or questionnaires used in the research, supporting data and/or visuals, extracts from journals, newspapers or articles, etc.

Bibliography

The bibliography lists all the references and sources of information used. These may include

- primary sources such as interviews or responses to surveys
- secondary sources such as books, journals, newspapers, government publications, etc.

Arrange your bibliography in alphabetical order by authors' surnames rather than by title. Reference accurately and include details on the author, book title, place of publication, the publishers, and date of publication – in that order. Finally, cite the pages you are making the reference to.
This is the *Traditional Style* of referencing.

The Harvard System of Referencing

To acknowledge ideas and information, references of the sources must be included in the text of the report. There are two ways of doing this: the *Harvard System* and the *Footnote System.* The Harvard System is now preferred by many universities, including UPNG.

In the Harvard System, a short reference is given in brackets within the body of the text. The reference can be given at the end of a sentence, or within the sentence itself, following the relevant statement. The short reference should state

- the author's surname followed by a comma (it is sometimes necessary to include the author's initials, to distinguish between authors of the same name; where a reference contains the names of more than three authors, the first name only is used, followed by et al. (an abbreviation of et alii, the Latin words meaning 'and others')
- the date of the publication followed by a colon, and
- the page number (where appropriate).

The short reference must be enclosed in brackets (parentheses).
Full information about the source is provided in the Bibliography. Where there is more than one item by the same author in any one year, they are numbered a, b, c, etc. The titles of publications are listed in alphabetical order.

Documentation is a systematic method for acknowledging sources. Documentation is also a service to your readers and to later scholars. Knowledge in the academic community is cumulative, with one writer's work building on another's. After reading your paper, readers may want to know more about a source you cited. Correct documentation helps readers find the sources quickly and easily.

8. The Report Writing Sequence – A Quick Review

- create an outline
- write the introduction
- write the main text
- draw the conclusions from the information gathered
- write the recommendations after the conclusions
- prepare the Executive Summary, or Abstract after the facts and findings have been analyzed and discussed
- construct a bibliography as you research, plan, and write the report; each time another source of information is used, add it to the bibliography
- construct the table of contents and the table of graphs, placing each item in order of presentation
- write the letter of transmittal
- prepare the title page to complete the report writing package

Public Relations:

From Concept to Completion

Prepared for
Ms Jane Stevens
Teacher of Psychology/Communications
Social Sciences
School of Business and Administrative Studies

Prepared by
The Public Relations Professionals
Kathy Jenkins, Heather Dawson, Marie Lamb
Tim Sebastian and Jean Sauillart

29 May 2001

Example: Title Page of a Long Report

Table of Contents

(iv)

Example: Table of Contents

PROFESSIONALS

5 Elite Way, Prestige Point, N.S.W., Australia
Telephone: (02) 555-0121
Fax: (02) 555-0001

29 May 2001

Ms Jane Stevens
Teacher of Psychology/Communications
School of Business and Administrative Studies
Department of Technical and Further Education
500 Chapel Road
Bankstown N.S.W. 2200

Dear Ms Stevens,

Here is the report that you requested as a component for assessment in the subject Business Communication in the course Advanced Marketing Certificate.

This report provides an overview of the role and importance of Public Relations in any organization. It emphasizes the need for planning, stresses the importance of customer relations with respect to the opinions of the consumer public.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the P.R. professionals if you have any questions regarding this report.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Sebastian
Market Research Manager

Assignments

1. Your employees have some concerns about their work environment. On your request, they submit a report stating the problem and documenting their concerns. What would be the goal of their report?

2. How do argumentative reports differ from persuasive reports?

3. List the items included in the letter of transmittal in a long report.

4. Why is the summary of the long report placed before the body?

5. What does the introductory section of the long report usually include?

6. What information is included in the discussion section of the body of the long report?

7. What information is included in the conclusion and recommendations section of the body of the long report?

8. What information can be included in the addendum section of the long report?

Lecture 2: SURVEYS: QUESTIONNAIRES & INTERVIEWS

1. **Definitions**
2. **Reasons for Carrying out a Survey**
3. **Characteristics of an Effective Survey**
4. **Criticisms of Surveys**
5. **Conducting the Survey**
6. **Survey Tools: Questionnaires & Interviews**
7. **Questionnaire Design: Wording of Questions**
8. **Content of Questions**
9. **Types of Questions: Closed & Open Questions**
10. **Response Formats & Rating Scales**
11. **Characteristics of a Good Questionnaire**
12. **Administering Questionnaires**

1. Definitions:

Survey – an investigation of the behaviour, opinions, etc. of a group of people: *a public opinion survey*, etc.

***Questionnaire* –** a written or printed list of questions to be answered by a number of people, esp. as part of a survey.

Surveys form part of a decision making process in business. One must be informed about a situation in order to make the right decision under given circumstances. A survey is a way of obtaining the necessary information using a specific technique or method (observation, questionnaires, interviews, case studies, documentation review, focus groups, etc. – please refer to the Brief Overview of Basic Methods to Collect Information attached).

2. Reasons for Carrying out a Survey

Use a survey to find information that is not otherwise available. Focus on the issues that you want to investigate and the arguments/conclusions you wish to put forth. You might also have some idea of the probable findings and of the target groups who have the information you need. When properly conducted, surveys can provide accurate forecasts for the management of future employee behaviours or events.

3. Characteristics of an Effective Survey

When surveys are statistically analyzed, they can be checked for validity and reliability. A test is reliable, if it consistently gives the same results under the same conditions over a period of time. Research that measures what it claims to measure is valid. Researchers must present evidence that a test measures what it was designed to measure.

4. Criticisms of Surveys

Four criticisms of surveys are often made:

- Survey highlight problems, not the underlying factors
- Surveys reflect what the participants say, not do (therefore the results may be inaccurate or misleading)
- Surveys depend on the participants' memory
- Responses may be influenced by desire for social acceptance/approval.

5. Conducting the Survey

A survey is successful when the information is collected in an unbiased manner. The persons conducting the survey should have the skills to draw inferences to reach unbiased conclusions. The survey should collect enough facts to justify valid and reliable conclusions.
There are 9 main steps in conducting a survey:

1. Establish the need and define the objectives: is there a need to conduct a survey? You must know the client's needs, the purpose of the survey, and how the information is to be used. If a number of people are involved in a survey, the project team needs to decide on a leader and on how to administer the survey.
2. Explore background information.
3. Establish the method to collect the data.
4. Construct the questions.
5. Design and test.
6. Choose a sampling technique.
7. Administer and collect information.
8. Analyse and evaluate the information.
9. Report back.

In designing your survey you must remember the three fundamental steps in the planning process in communication – you must

- Know what data you need to collect
- Know why you need these data
- Know who your receivers are: there will be little use in designing a questionnaire for the sampling of the opinions of an illiterate, foreign-speaking or hostile/prejudiced population (revise the principles of effective communication).

Thus, before deciding on a particular method of information collection, one must identify the type of information that is required, for which reason/purpose it is required, and have a clear idea of who the target sampling groups are.

6. Survey Tools: Questionnaires & Interviews

Today we are going to consider two survey techniques: Questionnaires and Interviews. Both are used by researchers for a variety of purposes. Questions, used in them, are geared to find out what people know, feel, think, and do/did. In other words, they are designed to measure people's:

- Knowledge & information
- Values & perceptions
- Attitudes & beliefs
- Present or past experiences, etc.

While similar in many ways, questionnaires differ from interviews in that they presume literacy on the part of the respondent: they are printed forms used to obtain written answers to questions. Interviews, on the other hand, are conducted by an interviewer who himself/herself records the answers to questions in a face-to-face situation. For practical and objective reasons, interviews are more frequently used in PNG than questionnaires.

Remember: the tool (method) is merely a template: you must modify it to suit your particular needs.

7. Questionnaire Design: Wording of Questions

Your questions must relate to your purpose and the information you hope to draw from the participants in the survey. Thus, your questions must be effective in drawing out that information while ensuring cooperation and good will on the part of the respondents.
Let us consider the factors that make questions effective: their wording and their content.

<u>Question Wording:</u> careful wording of questions is vital in questionnaire design. The capacity of the researcher to obtain precise and usable information (feedback) depends on the way the question is framed. For this reason it is important to try out your questions before approving the final version of your questionnaire.

<u>**Avoid:**</u>

- **Imprecise or ambiguous questions**, or questions which presume a common understanding of a concept, e.g. *To what extent are you involved in your local community? (not at all, a little, considerably)*
- **Questions which rely on respondent's memory**, e.g. *What grammar items did you study in class last week?*
- **Questions which presume knowledge that the respondents may not have**: e.g. *How many UPNG students are there in the Humanities?* Even though it might seem reasonable to ask about respondents' immediate circumstances,

they can't necessarily be expected to have all the information at hand and may even abandon the questionnaire if they have to search for information.

- **Double questions,** e.g. Do you like singing and dancing?
- **Leading questions:** these questions predispose the respondent to one particular answer, e.g. *Do you think learners should have a right to determine the contents and methods of their learning?*
- **Highbrow questions,** using overcomplicated or technical language.
- **Emotive questions:** these can lead to a reluctance to answer, a false answer, or an incomplete response

Questions should be as neutral as possible. Avoid wording that might influence answers, e.g., evocative, judgmental wording.
Thus, as you create the questions, consider if the wording will:

1. be clear and easily understood, particularly when you are surveying across a large group
2. provide alternatives, allowing the participant the freedom to give accurate information
3. be inclusive and acceptable to all participants

The number of questions depends on the number and importance of the study objectives. A more important objective would have more questions than a less important objective.

8. Content of Questions

Consider the question's <u>content</u> in terms of:

- whether it meets the objectives of the research
- whether the questions will provide useful information
- whether the section requires several questions or a question subdivided into sections
- how easy the questions will be to interpret and answer adequately and accurately
- specific and concrete data provided without leading the participant to the answer you want, that is placing a bias on the answer.

9. Types of Questions

There are different types of questions used:
Closed questions provide structured answers, for example, 'Do you have a driver's license?' These questions are also called *precoded, or structured.* They give the respondent a limited number of alternatives to choose from when answering. This type of question is easy to answer and to score. However, there are few choices for answering it, and it provides less data.
Open questions (also called *open-ended, or unstructured*) give no clues to help the respondent provide answers, i.e., 'What do you look for in a good manager?' More

flexibility is given, but it is more difficult and time consuming to answer and score open questions.

10. Response Formats & Rating Scales

Within these two broad groups of questions (open and closed), there are many different ways, or formats in which questions can be answered. Let us consider several distinct answer formats:

- Fill-in response: These require short answers, i.e.:
    - What is the name of your home village? ___________________
- Checklist response: these questions require the respondent to select one of a number of choices that are offered, i.e., 'I get most assistance in my teaching from (please tick one): ___books, ___fellow teachers, etc.'
- Categorical response: these questions offer only two possible responses (yes/no, or true/false, etc.)
- Scaled response: these questions require the respondent to choose categories where the strength of attitude can be measured, i.e., *strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree,* etc.
- Ranking response: These questions require the respondent to place in order a series of statements in terms of a particular criterion. It forces the respondent to choose between alternatives. For example: 'Which subject do you find the easiest, and which the hardest? Please put a '1' in front of the easiest and '5' in front of the hardest' (5 choices given)

Scaled and ranking responses use *rating scales.* A rating scale is the device that helps the participant answer the question and the researcher to evaluate the response. It is the way you instruct or direct the respondent to answer the question by the format you provide.
The effectiveness of each scale (answer format) should be tested to ensure reliability and validity (the two characteristics of an effective survey) and to check that it is the most appropriate scale for your purpose. Various rating scales are available. Four most popular types include:

- Selection of least preferred to most preferred
- Ranking in order of importance
- Selection of correct or preferred (one choice from a number of alternatives)
- Marking an agreement scale (selection of a feature which best represents your opinion).

Usually several question types are used in the same questionnaire, because different question types have different purposes. A variety of question and answer types will give more flexibility in obtaining the sorts of information required.

11. Characteristics of a Good Questionnaire

The characteristics of a good questionnaire will vary depending on the purpose of the survey. We may, however, outline a number of general features that are typical in a good questionnaire:

1. Relevance of the topic addressed to the respondent: this should be clearly stated in a preamble or covering letter.
2. Exclusiveness of information sought: it should not request information that can be obtained from secondary sources.
3. Conciseness: it should be as short as possible to get the necessary information.
4. Attractiveness: it should be neatly and clearly presented.
5. Clarity: directions with regard to answering the questions should be easily understood by the respondents.
6. Question Characteristics: questions should be
    i. Concrete / specific
    ii. Simply worded
    iii. Unambiguous
    iv. Neutral, unbiased
    v. Single (not double!)
7. Logical Sequence of Questions: questions should be presented in a logical order (from general to more specific – this facilitates the respondent's thought processes)
8. Ease of Analysis & Evaluation: the results should be easy to score or tabulate and interpret.

12. Administering Questionnaires

To ensure that your questionnaire fulfils all these requirements, *a pilot survey* should be conducted to identify possible inconsistencies and faults. This helps to establish:

- Potential problems in the administration of the questionnaire
- The time needed for completing the questionnaire
- The acceptability of questionnaire content and form to participants
- The time needed for analysis of data obtained
- Whether the information collected meets the research objectives and purpose

The pilot test should use a group of respondents who are part of the intended target group. This feedback is not usually included in the final sample, unless the trial questions were good enough to warrant the use of the pilot responses in the final results.

After revision and possible correction, the questionnaire is usually administered to a particular *sample* to gain information about a certain group of people. In sampling, just like in opinion polls*, conclusions are drawn about the relevance of certain attitudes in a group on the basis of projection of percentage representation in a sample to wider social groups.

Poll is a survey of public opinion conducted by putting questions to a representative selection of people (sample).

After the two initial steps have been successfully completed, the actual administering of the questionnaire can then begin. In order to avoid legal implications, official management approval of the survey should be sought for conducting the questionnaire in an organization.

The two most common ways of questionnaire distribution are by mail or personal delivery. The questionnaire should be accompanied by a covering letter, if it is sent by mail. The covering letter should focus on the following points:

1. The purpose of the survey and the purpose for which the data will be used.
2. The anonymity of the survey: it should guarantee the confidentiality of the respondents' identity.
3. Name of sponsors of the survey
4. Identification of the researcher(s) by name and position
5. Why the respondent should help by completing the questionnaire
6. Special instructions regarding the response format and deadline for the return of the questionnaire.

Assignments

1. Discuss the advantages interviews have over questionnaires.

2. Discuss the advantages of questionnaires over interviews.

3. What are the two most commonly used types of questions in surveys? Why should the questions attempt to maintain good will?

4. List the nine steps in conducting a survey.

5. What kinds of questions should be avoided in questionnaires and interviews? How should questions be worded?

6. What determines the effectiveness of response formats and rating scales? List and describe the 5 response formats and four rating scales we have discussed.

7. What are the characteristics of a good questionnaire?

8. Why do you pretest a questionnaire?

9. What is a poll?

Lecture 3.1: REVISION OF MEMOS AND SHORT REPORT LAYOUT

1. **What Are Memos?**
2. **The Advantages of a Memo**
3. **Memo Format**
4. **How to Plan and Write a Memo**
5. **Different Types of Memos:**
    a. **Instruction memo**
    b. **Request memo**
    c. **Announcement memo**
    d. **Transmittal memo**
    e. **Authorization memo**
6. **Reports – Sources of Information for Decision-Making**
    - **Types of Short Reports**
    - **Parts of a Short Informal Report**
    - **Parts of a Short Formal Report**

Having completed the BCA course, we know that

- **Effective communication is a complex two-way process** involving processing and encoding of data, transmission of message via appropriate channels with minimal distortion, decoding of message received and sending feedback to the source.

- **Effective communication is of crucial importance for the very existence of any organization.**

- Effective communication must be carefully planned. **The 3 basic steps in the planning process include the identification of the subject matter for the communication, the purpose of the communication, and the receivers of the communication.**

- The **principles of all business communication**, both oral and written, include <u>clarity, conciseness, coherence, courtesy, completeness, correctness, attractiveness, natural tone, and tact</u>. It is useful to bear in mind the three basic qualities of business writing style (the **3 C's**): *clarity, conciseness,* and *coherence.*

- Business communication often takes the written form, as this allows for records to be kept.

- Business letters constitute an important channel of written communication between organizations and their clients, customers, suppliers, other organizations, etc.

- Memos are essential for effective communication within organizations.

1. What Are Memos?

The term ‘memo’ (‘memorandum’) is used to describe the standard format of written communication within an organization. The parts of a memo parallel those of a business letter. However, they are fewer and simpler, dispensing with some of the courtesies of the letter.

2. The Advantages of a Memo:

- <u>Standard, time-saving format</u>
- <u>Easy distribution</u> to several/many recipients
- Memos are official documents, they provide <u>a written record</u> to refer to or to file.

3. Memo Format:

To:
From:
Date:
Subject:

The parts of a memo are set out in a standard format. The format may vary slightly from one organization to another.
As the memo is an internal means of communication and less formal than a letter, there is no need to include an inside address, greeting, complementary close or full signature. What is normally included are the four headings indicated above.

The body of the memo is made up of a clearly structured message, which is often written in short numbered paragraphs. The content in the body including the first sentence in a paragraph should be blocked to the margin.

A memo is usually shorter than one page and at the longest, three pages. If the memo is two or more pages in length, the header of the second page is:

Subject:	or	Page: 2 of 2, or 2 of 3, etc.
Date:		Subject:
Page: 2 of 2		Date:

4. How to Plan and Write a Memo.

The three basic steps in planning any communication apply here as well:

- Identify the problem/subject matter of communication
- Identify the purpose of communication
- Identify the recipient(s) of the communication

Remember the **3C's** of business writing style:

- **Clarity**
- **Conciseness**
- **Coherence** (coherence = logical sequence of ideas)

In order to achieve coherence, select and order information carefully. Present he main idea first and then move on to secondary ideas and details.

Exceptions to this rule occur when you are sending bad news, such as a refusal. Then it is more appropriate to use the indirect order of information characteristic of 'bad news' letters (present a neutral buffer followed by an explanation, then the refusal. Close positively).

Whatever the structure of your memo, it should suit your purpose and subject.

5. Different Types of Memos

Memos are used for a number of purposes. The purpose of a memo determines its type. Routine memos include

- Instruction memo (provides the receiver with needed information)
- Request memo (asks the receiver to provide certain information or to take certain action)
- Announcement memo (provides information: follows the order of development used in 'good news' letters: the announcement is first, followed by secondary details and then action to be taken)
- Transmittal memo (the cover note for a more formal, lengthy message: it introduces the reader to the content of the message to follow; the order of development is the main point, i.e., the transmittal, followed by the secondary details and the action, if necessary)
- Authorization memo (gives permission or authority; it presents the background information, then the main point followed by the secondary details and action).

Whatever the length and complexity of the memo, it is always important to structure your information clearly and logically and to convey it in simple, suitable language. Do this and your memo writing will be successful.

6. Reports – Sources of Information for Decision-Making

- **Types of Short Reports:**
    - Formal
    - Informal
    - Routine (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual, etc.)
    - Occasional
    - Professional

- For a wider audience, etc.

- **Parts of a Short Informal Report:**
    - Title
    - Background / Introduction
    - Findings / Analysis of Situation
    - Action / Solution / Conclusion

- **Parts of a Short Formal Report:**
    - Title (usually centered)
    - Terms of Reference (th e purpose and scope of the report)
    - Procedure (or Method)
    - Findings (use section headings and subheadings if required to improve readability)
    - Conclusions
    - Recommendations (if asked for)

Assignments

1. <u>Group Activity</u>:
   In response to the authorization document you received, requesting the long report you have been working on, write a transmittal memo to accompany your long report. State clearly and concisely the report's terms of reference, problems addressed, who wrote the report, etc.

2. What are the parts of a short formal report?

3. What are the parts of a short informal report?

4. What are the types of short reports?

Lecture 3.2: REPORTS FOR DECISION MAKING: SHORT FORM

1. **Progress Reports**
2. **Periodic Reports**
3. **Using Visual and Graphic Aids in Reports**

We already know that in order to make the right decisions, we must have the right kind of information. In business, short reports

- provide clear, concise, and coherent information for quick and accurate decision making
- constitute an important aspect of information storage and retrieval.

We are also familiar with a variety of short report formats in which information may be presented (formal, informal, routine, occasional, etc.). Report format is defined by its subject and purpose, and modified to suit its receiver(s). Today we are going to focus on two kinds of short reports indispensable in the functioning of most organizations: progress reports and periodic reports.

1. Progress Reports

<u>Progress reports are written to inform managers about the status of a particular project or activity.</u> These reports tell the manager how the work is progressing, what problems exist, and what is needed to complete the work. In addition, these data provide information for further planning.
Progress reports may be submitted at three different times during the life of a project:

- at the beginning of a project (<u>initial report</u>),
- during the project (<u>status report</u>), and
- at the end of the project (<u>terminal report</u>).

1. **An initial report** may begin by documenting the problem. Next, it outlines the activities necessary to accomplish the task. Finally, it identifies the anticipated outcomes and expected date of completion.
2. **A status report** documents the status of an ongoing project. How close is the project to meeting deadlines? What problems are being encountered? Have any changes from the initial plans been made? Several status reports may be submitted on a single project.
3. **A terminal report** on the project should be written to summarize the activities and findings. It documents any problems encountered during the project and makes recommendations for improving a future project.

Example: Progress report

Progress Report
November 31, 1999

Department:	Accounting
Activity:	New Computer System
Dates:	September 15 – November 15, 1999

Background
The new computer system was installed on September 7, 1999. Staff were to be trained in one of three groups. This marks the end of the first rotation.

Progress
As of today, six employees have been trained (Group #1). On the average, it took the entire eight weeks for personnel to achieve proficiency. However, several hardware problems caused delays. We anticipate that the average training time will be decreased once the 'bugs' are out of the system.

We hope to train the second group of individuals during the next four to six weeks and complete all training by January so we can easily interface with Marketing as scheduled.

Problems Encountered
Only two problems were encountered during this 30-day period:

1. The Continental Hotel was unable to accommodate the trainees because of a recent fire. However, very satisfactory arrangements were made at the Valley Forge Motel at the same rate quoted by Continental.
2. Bert Clark, one of our senior trainers, left our company on September 20. He has since been replaced by a very competent substitute, Betty Campbell.

Future Activities
It is expected that Groups #2 and #3 will be trained according to schedule and that all related activities will be carried through efficiently and completely.

2. Periodic Reports

Periodic reports are submitted on a routine basis. They may be written daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or even annually. Since the contents of these reports change often, they need to be clear and concise. Often companies develop forms to facilitate the periodic reporting of information such as sales, inventory, number of transactions, and so forth.
Periodic reports usually begin with a background statement, followed by specific data about the activity during the period covered. Problems encountered during the period and possible solutions may be reported in the body of the report or in a separate section.

Examples:

Monthly periodic report (blank):

Monthly Periodic Report

_______, 2000

The spaces below should be filled in by each district sales manager each month and forwarded to the Vice President of Sales no later than the fifth of the month following.

Sales in Units

	Contempo	**Futura**	**Traditional**
Model # 101			
Model # 102			
Model # 103			
Model # 104			
Model # 201			
Model # 202			

Sales Personnel

Full-Time

Part-Time

In Training

Remarks:

Signature:

Date:

Quarterly Periodic Report

Production Department

	12/31/19__	9/30/199__	% Change
No. of technicians	27	30	-10%
Model AX4372-5	7200	6000	+20%
Model AX4372-6	2310	2100	+10%
Model AX4372-7	100	50	+100%
Model AX4372-8	6000	3000	+100%

Analysis

As you can see, we have increased our production in the three months reported here. We attribute this improvement to the preventive maintenance schedule initiated on Oct. 15. All problems concerning the time conflicts have been settled, and we anticipate an even larger production increase next quarter.

In recent times, computer-generated periodic reports have become a common feature of accounting.

3. Using Visual and Graphic Aids in Reports

The task of the report writer is to collect, analyse and present information in a clear, concise, and coherent way, making sure that it is intelligible and interesting for the reader. Frequently this task involves discussion of quantitative data crucial to the report's findings, but difficult to explain clearly and concisely. We remember that 80% of our memory is visual, and only 20% is due to other senses, like touch, taste, and hearing. That is why visual aids and graphics enable the writer to incorporate this material effectively and memorably.

Graphics and visual aids help to focus the reader's attention on the main points and add clarity to the discussion and findings. Graphics reinforce the ideas in the written or spoken words and help the reader 'digest' the relationships presented in the graph.

In order to design an effective visual aid, one must consider

- The topic
- The most important concept, or relationship to be illustrated, and
- How to present this in the visual aid.

What do visual aids and graphs do?

Visual aids

- organize information, i.e. percentages, numbers, etc.
- show relationships
- highlight trends and written ideas
- classify data
- show the total picture
- increase readability
- help the reader comprehend and remember the information.

Major types of visuals & graphs

- Tables (dependent/independent of text) – these help convey messages by making data easier to interpret, compare, contrast, comprehend, and retain. If a table is labeled and explained separately from the text, it is considered to be independent of the text. If all explanatory information is in the text, the table is considered dependent on the text.
- Graphs and Charts – these are often used to present relationships among data, as well as trends in sales, losses, inventory levels, and so forth over a period of time. There are many kinds of charts and graphs
  - Line or curve charts – these are a series of points connected by a straight or curved line to reflect a change over a period of time. When different color inks or different line configurations such as a broken line, a dotted line, or a solid line are used, readers can easily note relationships and trends among data.
  - Column or bar charts (either vertical or horizontal) – these show relationships by using bars of different lengths to reflect quantitative differences in the data. Sometimes the actual numerical data are included on or near the bars.
  - Component bar charts – these are segmented, or broken lengthwise bars used to show the relative sizes of the different components of a given overall total.
  - Pie charts – these are drawn in the shape of a circle, representing 100% of a given total. By ‘cutting’ the pie into segments, it is easy to show values as percentages of the total. A pie chart that is broken into segments without any indication of percentages has questionable reliability.
- Miscellaneous Visuals (pictographs, map charts, photographs, cutaways, flowcharts, organizational charts, etc.)

Factors to Consider in Choosing Visuals

The type of visual you select should be appropriate for your audience, your communication purpose, and the type of data you are presenting.
The key to using Graphics

The key to using graphics is to ask yourself whether or not they truly will supplement, explain, complement, or emphasize the information you are presenting. If the answer is yes, use them.

<u>How to design a visual aid or graph</u>

- bear in mind the purpose of the visual: to compare, to contrast, to highlight trends, to show the structure, etc.
- keep your visual simple: too much detail is confusing
- format your visuals or graphs in a consistent style (i.e., similar size, headings, labels, etc.)
- Always show the source of your information.

Lecture 4: PERSUASION & PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES IN BUSINESS

1. **Persuasion and Influence**
2. **What is Argument?**
3. **Types of Arguments: Deductive vs. Inductive**
4. **Bad Arguments – Fallacies**
    - ***Formal Fallacies***
    - ***Fallacies of Relevance***
    - ***Inductive Fallacies***
    - ***False Dilemmas* and**
    - ***Rhetorical Devices* (the Dishonest Argument)**
5. **Message Characteristics: Persuasive Style**
6. **Persuasive Writing: The Sales Letter**

1. **Persuasion and Influence.** Teamwork, cooperation is vital for the success of any organization. How can these be achieved? Management, skilled in the art of persuasion, will be able to influence company employees, shape their attitudes, motivate their cooperative activities, and thus ensure the highest levels of efficiency. From our last term's lecture on Persuasion we are familiar with the nature and power of persuasion, particularly in the business context.

Reminder of the terminology, as the street value of terms like 'persuasion,' 'influence,' and attitude' do not apply here:

Influence is our umbrella term. Any time a source deliberately attempts to change a receiver's thoughts, feelings, or behaviors, influence has occurred.

Persuasion is under the umbrella as a special case of influence. When a source deliberately uses communication to try and change a receiver's attitude, then persuasion has occurred.

Both influence and persuasion concern deliberate change, but diverge because persuasion requires communication (verbal and nonverbal messages) and persuasion seeks attitude change. By contrast influence can proceed without communication and may achieve behavior (external) change without gaining attitude (internal) change.

Now what is 'attitude'? ***Attitude*** is a person's evaluation of an object of thought. A person holds up an evaluative (good to bad) yardstick and judges objects against that scale. Women's Lib: Good or Bad? Smoking: Good or Bad? Repetitive examples: Good or Bad?

Persuasion seeks to change attitudes because *attitudes drive behavior.*

<u>Recap</u>:

- Influence deliberately seeks any change
- Persuasion deliberately seeks attitude change through communication
- Attitudes are evaluations
- Persuasion seeks attitude change because attitudes drive our behavior

How can we achieve attitude, and therefore behavior change? By putting up a convincing argument. We shall next consider the nature and 'anatomy' of argument, the agent of persuasion.

2. **What is Argument?** Once again, let's put aside the commonplace meaning of the word 'argument' ('disagreement,' or 'quarrel'). In school we learned that
   - *Argument is a specific position on an issue with supporting points* (i.e., main claim plus supporting evidence)
   - *Issue* is an essential prerequisite for any logical argument – that is why identifying an issue (= problem evoking strong disagreement among people) is basic to a successful construction of argument
   - Essential *Parts of Argumentative Essays* are:
     i. *Main Idea (Thesis) Statement*
     ii. *Reasons*, supported by
     iii. *Evidence, or facts and examples*
     iv. *Constructive suggestion(s)*

   In *logic*, the branch of philosophy that studies valid reasoning and argument, the word 'argument' is defined as

   "a set of statements ***(premises),*** *one or more of which purportedly constitute support or reason(s) for the truth of one of the others (****the conclusion****)."*

- **Statement:** a meaningful declarative sentence that is either true or false.
  - A question is not a statement – there is no truth value in it:
    - How old are you?
    - Do you like me?
  - Commands are not statements, either:
    - Shut the door!
    - Please sit down.
  - Wishes cannot be a statement for the same reason:
    - If only you could see it!
    - Merry Christmas!
    - Happy Birthday!
- **Premise:** a statement in an argument that provides evidence or support for a conclusion. In other words, a *premise* is a statement from which a logical deduction, or *inference*, may be drawn.
- **Conclusion:** a statement in an argument, which the premises support or imply. In other words, *conclusion* is a statement that can be drawn (deduced) from the premises.

Thus, an argument is composed of 2 kinds of statements:
- *The conclusion* (main claim) is that statement which follows from the other statements, and
- *The reasons* (evidence) are those statements which are intended to support the conclusion.

Put simply, the word ‘argument’ means that **reasons are given to justify a claim.**

Let’s refer to the person stating the claim as its ‘author.’ We all author arguments daily; we give reasons for our claims or beliefs to others, as well as to ourselves. These reasons, or ‘premises,’ are meant to provide convincing grounds for believing the ‘conclusion’ of the argument. So the conclusion of an argument is the ultimate claim that the author, or the person stating the argument, is trying to justify.
Consider the following classic example of an argument:

P1	All men are mortal
P2	Socrates is a man.
Conclusion:	Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

The first two statements, premises 1 & 2, are meant to provide reasons for believing the conclusion that Socrates is mortal. Premises are meant to *justify* the conclusion of an argument.

Normally, arguments will not be laid out so clearly. Think of all the claims we hear daily that people try to justify! Arguments can be found everywhere: in law, politics, science, morality, religion… It is usually necessary for us to ‘interpret’ what we read or hear – recognizing the premises and conclusion in the flow of claims/statements. Look at this example:

> I don’t need to see him, because it’s none of his business anyway.

To someone who has never studied Logic, this may not seem like an argument at all. But consider it with our new understanding of the term. The statement above has a reason which is meant to justify a belief. We see, then, that this would qualify as an argument. Since arguments often do not state their premises and conclusions explicitly, we must be able to interpret them. In order to learn to think analytically, it is important to recognize the parts of an argument. The author of the argument above provides a reason to justify the claim that ‘I don’t need to see him.’ Since the reasons in an argument are always the premises, it is clear that the premise of this argument is ‘It’s none of his business.’ The conclusion is always the claim being supported by the premise; thus, the conclusion would be ‘I don’t need to see him.’

Try it! You might understand the notion of an argument best, if you write down one of your own. Try writing your own argument:

1. At the bottom of a page, write down one belief that you hold on any subject – don’t worry, no one’s looking! ☺ Don’t write down reasons for the belief, but just state the belief itself, plain and simple (i.e., ‘Lying is immoral.’)
2. After step one, ask yourself why I should believe like you do on this subject? What reasons would you give to convince me of this claim? Write down each of those reasons separately above your initial claim, with a separate line for each different reason. You can then number your reasons P1-PX.

You have just written an argument! Your initial claim in Step 1 is the conclusion and the reasons justifying that claim in Step 2 are your premises.

Arguments must have at least one premise, but can certainly have more than one. However, an argument will only have one conclusion. Thus, when reading larger passages, you determine the number of arguments by the number of conclusions being drawn. It takes some practice in recognizing arguments, but when you think of them in terms of reasons for a claim, you will start to see them frequently.

Now, what has the study of logic got to do with our course in business communication? We have already discussed the role of analytical thinking in decision making. Without clear understanding of the relationships that exist between things around us (like analogy, cause and effect, conditionality and consequence, etc.), we cannot objectively assess the situation, see things in perspective and make the right decisions.

Critical thinkers are not easily fooled!

Of course we do not have the time for any detailed study of logic, the science that evaluates arguments. Our aim here is to learn enough about arguments to be able to see if logical relationships exist in them, or not. In other words, our aim is to learn to distinguish good arguments from bad ones.

We all have a belief system of some sort. Reflect, for a moment, on some beliefs that you have. Do you think those beliefs are based on good reasons? What reasons do you have for holding those beliefs? It is not easy to expose your own beliefs to the test of rational reasoning. The courage to do it, however, can be rewarding – both personally and socially. The knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of our own belief systems in rational terms will benefit us in at least two ways:

- It will give us the satisfaction and dignity of having considered our beliefs seriously, thus developing our analytical thinking, and
- It will make us better prepared for those criticisms that we face for holding such beliefs.

Our belief systems contain many arguments within them, so the ability to analyse arguments may be relevant to evaluating our own belief systems, as well as the arguments of others. Think of how many people try to convince you of something every single day! Whether it is advertisers, politicians, friends, parents, children, ministers, or landlords – they all sometimes want us to agree with a particular belief. These attempts to persuade us need not be an evil conspiracy against us. Often they are meant well. Other times, however – in advertising, for example – attempts to 'convince us' may be outright underhanded and extremely self motivated. Whatever the motives involved, we can ask, 'Why should I agree?' and we can then examine these reasons to see if they are rationally persuasive. Thus, we can use our critical thought to detect errors in reasoning, or even outright trickery. The purpose of this little diversion in our Business Communication course is to help us be more critical in our thinking. This will help us take the right decisions and be more *persuasive* (read: successful!) in our dealings with people around us.

3. Types of Arguments: Deductive vs. Inductive

A deductive argument is	an argument whose premises are supposed to *guarantee* the conclusion

An inductive argument is	An argument whose premises are supposed to support, but not to guarantee, the conclusion

Assessing Arguments

In general, we assess arguments as either GOOD or BAD.

We assess deductive arguments as

sound	or	unsound
	but also as either	
valid	or	invalid

We assess inductive arguments as either strong or weak.

There are two ways in which an argument can be a bad argument and fail to take us closer to the truth:

- The argument may have one or more false premises. *Or*
- The premises, whether true or not, do not provide proper support for the conclusion.

In case of a deductive argument, proper support is a *guarantee.* So there are two things we need to know when assessing the merits of a deductive argument:

Would the premises *guarantee* the conclusion if they *were* true?
And
Are the premises true?

Because we can answer either 'yes' or 'no' to both questions, there are 4 possibilities:

- The premise(s) are true, and they guarantee the conclusion'
- The premise(s) aren't all true, but, if they were, they would guarantee the conclusion.
- The premise(s) are true, but they don't guarantee the conclusion.
- The premise(s) aren't all true and, even if they were, they would not guarantee the conclusion.

Here are some examples of deductive arguments, one example for each possibility:

<u>Argument 1:</u> All students in our class did well in the exam.
Peter is a student in our class.
Therefore, Peter did well in the exam.

- The premises of this argument are true, and they *guarantee* the conclusion (there is no way the conclusion can be wrong if both of these premises are true).

<u>Argument 2:</u> All sheep have two biological parents.
Dolly is a sheep.
Therefore, Dolly has two biological parents.

- The premises of this argument aren't all true, but, if they were, they *would* guarantee the conclusion.

<u>Argument 3:</u> If the TV is unplugged, it doesn't work.
The TV is not working.
Therefore, it's unplugged.

- The premises of this argument are true, but they do not guarantee the conclusion. We can think of many other counterexamples that would explain why the TV may be dysfunctional! ☺

<u>Argument 4:</u> Reading is the only way to pass an exam.
Peter read a lot in the past two weeks.
Therefore, Peter has passed the exam.

- The premises in this argument aren't all true, and, even if they were, they wouldn't *guarantee* the conclusion.

Argument 1 is a good deductive argument – it is called a SOUND argument. The remaining three arguments are all bad deductive arguments for one reason or another – so they are all UNSOUND arguments.

If the premises of an argument
Would guarantee the conclusion if they *were* true, Or *Do* guarantee the conclusion because they *are* true,
Then the argument is Valid.

You can see that argument 2 is valid, even though it is unsound. So argument 2 does have something going for it.

If the premises of an argument
Are true, but *do not guarantee* the conclusion, Or *Wouldn't guarantee* the conclusion even if they *were* true,
Then the argument is Invalid.

You can see that arguments 3 & 4 are invalid, as well as unsound. Argument 3 has something going for it – at least all its premises are true, but since it is unsound (the conclusion does not follow from the premises), it is lumped together with the other kind of unsound argument (4), which has nothing going for it at all.

So a really bad argument may have both these flaws, i.e. the premise(s) are false, and would not provide proper support for the conclusion even if they were true.

Inductive arguments do not *guarantee* the truth of the conclusion, provided the premises are true. Inductive arguments claim that the conclusion is *likely* to be true, if the premises are true. Inductive arguments are assessed based on the degree of this *likelihood.* They can be strong or weak:

<u>Argument 1:</u> I was alive last year.
I am alive this year.
So, I shall be alive next year.

- The strength of this argument will depend on so many factors, among them the age of its author: if the author is 99 years old, the strength of this argument may be severely weakened ☺.

Argument 2: Ann loves chocolate.
Ann loves chocolate better than she loves any other food.
So chocolate will be the best present for Ann's Birthday tomorrow.

Argument 3: Peter's car is 20 years old.
Peter's car usually takes one hour to get started.
So, it is likely to take one hour to get started tomorrow.

- We can see how the strength of these inductive arguments varies, depending on the degree of probability of their conclusions.

Some types of bad arguments are quite common, because they tend to persuade us, even they ought not to. Usually they only persuade people who do not reason logically and so cannot recognize the fault in the line of argument.
Because they are so common, these types of bad argument have been given names. Any argument in which the premises do not provide proper support for the conclusion, is called a fallacy.

4. Bad Arguments – Fallacies

Although most textbooks of logic contain discussions of fallacies, there is no universally accepted classification of fallacies. As the early modern logician De Morgan aptly said, 'There *is* no such thing as a classification of the ways in which men may arrive at an error…'

False arguments twist or ignore logic. If you can identify false or weak reasoning, you will effectively defend your argument and influence (persuade) your receivers. Arguments appear in many forms and in many contexts: from advertisements to conversations, from newspaper and magazine articles to speeches. The premises and conclusions are not always easily identifiable so if we do not train our minds to recognize them, we will not be able to tell whether the conclusion truly follows from the purportedly supporting claims. That is why it is necessary to be able to identify the premises and the conclusion they are used to support in order to see if there is a logical connection between them.

Broadly speaking, we distinguish between five major types of fallacies:

- *Formal Fallacies*
- *Fallacies of Relevance*
- *Inductive Fallacies*
- *False Dilemmas* and
- *Rhetorical Devices* (the Dishonest Argument)

1. _Formal Fallacies:_ Each of these fallacies has a _form_ which *superficially resembles a valid argument form*. These include fallacies of *ambiguity,* in which a word or phrase is used unclearly.
    a. *Affirming the Consequent:* [If P, then Q; Q. *Therefore,* P.] – it resembles the valid argument form ‘affirming the antecedent.’ ‘In the wild’ this fallacy often passes unrecognized. It is fallacious because Q might be the consequence of something other than P. So it is possible for the premises to be true, and the conclusion false. Look at this example: *If I am in UPNG, I am in Port Moresby; I am in Port Moresby. Therefore, I am in UPNG.*
    b. *Denying the Antecedent:* [If P, then Q; not P. *Therefore,* not Q.] – it resembles the valid argument form ‘denying the consequent.’ This fallacy is also sometimes hard to spot ‘in the wild.’ Again, it is fallacious, because Q might be a consequence of something other than P. Q may occur even if P does not. So it is possible for the premises to be true, and the conclusions false. Examples:

        - If he denies that he knows her, then he’s been cheating on me.
          He admitted that he knows her.
          So he hasn’t been cheating on me.
        - If she loves you, she’ll marry you.
          She doesn’t love you.
          So she won’t marry you.

    c. *The Existential Fallacy:* a particular conclusion is drawn from universal premises, i.e. She loves green colours. Therefore, she will like to have her hair dyed green. ☺
    d. *Equivocation* is committed when a key word in an argument is used with two different meaning. The resulting ambiguity is what the argument’s appearance of validity depends on. Examples:
        - Insane people shouldn’t be punished.
          Someone who commits murder must be insane.
          So murderers shouldn’t be punished.

        - Alexander the Great was a great general.
          Great generals are forewarned.
          Forewarned is forearmed.
          Four is an even number.
          Four is certainly an odd number of arms for a man to have.
          The only number that is both even and odd is infinity.
          Therefore, Alexander the Great had an infinite number of arms.

        - “You couldn’t have it if you *did* want it,” the Queen said. “The rule is, jam tomorrow and jam yesterday – but never jam today.” “It must come sometimes to Jam today,” Alice objected. “No, it can’t,” said the Queen. “It’s jam every other day: today isn’t every other day, you know." (Lewis Caroll in 'Through the Looking Glass')

2. *Fallacies of Relevance:* Their premises are logically irrelevant to, and therefore incapable of establishing the truth of, their conclusions. *The Personal Argument*, which attacks the Person rather than the Issue; *Appeal to Authority* (If Authority Y says X, then X), *Sweeping Generalization* ('You are a bad journalist, because you are a bad woman), and many others are in this category. Let us first look at those of them that appeal to human emotions, the so-called *Emotive Arguments*:

   Appeal to Force (Argumentum ad Baculum): this fallacy occurs when a threat of the use of force is used to get a person to accept statements they would not normally accept. This is a kind of blackmail, an argument where the author implies that harm will come to person if the conclusion is not accepted. The problem with this is that the real or imaginary threat which may result if the conclusion is not accepted, is irrelevant to *the truth* of the conclusion.

   Appeal to the People (Argumentum ad Populum): This is an argument that attempts to use a person's desire to belong with or be accepted by others as a basis for accepting the conclusion. The need to be part of a group is such a basic human need, that it is often exploited by unscrupulous people in their arguments. Two main varieties of this fallacy, based on the size of the group in question, are common:

   Bandwagon Appeal: Students are often confronted with this appeal when a friend or roommate begs them to go to a party because 'everyone will be there.' The argument for attending the party is simply that you will be doing what everyone else will be doing, and you do not want to be left out. Bandwagon appeals are effective because of the peer pressure they exert, but this pressure is not a justification for accepting any conclusion.

   Snob Appeal: Bandwagon appeals rest on an individual's desire to be part of a large group. But we also often have the desire to 'rise above the masses' and belong to the elite groups of the world. Being better than others is desirable in order to distinguish oneself from everyone else. A *Snob Appeal* is any attempt to get people to accept a conclusion because they will somehow be better than others (remember a car advertisement stating, 'You deserve the Best,' implying that you are better than others, and buying this car will demonstrate this; or the Diners' Club advertisement on CNN, proclaiming that their membership card opens every door, etc.).

   Appeal to Pity: Whenever we see or hear about the problems someone is having, we will generally feel sympathy for their plight. If a person is hurt, or injured, we empathize with their pain and suffering. This is a normal human reaction. But using a person's sympathy to get them to accept the conclusion of an argument is not providing adequate justification for the conclusion. Appeals to pity are often effective, because we feel sorry for people confronted with tragedy. Students will often appeal to teachers for extensions based on an appeal that they are under extreme pressure because they have several tests or papers due in a short stretch of time. The hope is that the appeal for sympathy will make the teacher accept the conclusion that extension should be granted. While they are effective, appeals to pity do not provide any logical basis for determining whether the conclusion is true or false.

Appeal to Desire: Another appeal to emotion that an argument may rest on is the person's desire for some statement to be true. We all have wishes and desires for things to happen. I personally desire to win the lottery, but my wishing it will not make it come true. At times though arguments are based solely on the person's desire for something to be true. *Appeal to Desire* is an argument based on the author's desire for the conclusion to be true. If a friend tells you that he will one day have a big house and lots of money because that is what he most wants out of life, he is committing this fallacy. Just because someone wants something to happen, this does not mean that it will in fact occur. The truth or falsity of statements does not rest on individual's wishes. Arguments must, therefore, rely on premises that prove the truth of the conclusion, and not what a person desires.

Other examples:

- You'd lie to a madman about the whereabouts of their automatic rifle, so it's not wrong to lie.
- Since it is permissible for Jill, who was hit by a truck, to hand in her assignment late, it's permissible for the entire class to hand in their assignments late.
- Glaucoma sufferers benefit from the medicinal use of cannabis, so we should allow everyone to use cannabis.
- Considering the effect of alcohol on those who indulge in it to excess, we may conclude that all liquor is harmful and urge that its sale and use be forbidden by law.

Appeals to force, people, pity, and desire all rest on an appeal to some emotion that is not relevant to the conclusion.

The next set of fallacies identify problems of relevance resulting from an attempt to deliberately divert attention away from the conclusion by some other irrelevant consideration.

The Personal Argument (Argumentum ad Hominem): Attacking the arguments of people who hold opinions different from our own is natural when we care enough about the issue. If, however, our argument targets the opponent, and not the opponent's claims, then we commit the *Fallacy 'Argumentum ad Hominem.'* Who the person is, or what they do is not the basis for rejecting the point they are making. Biased minds can't reason objectively by definition. They are easily manipulated and led to believe that the person's position is false when something negative is said about the person. This though does not make the conclusion false. Politicians make effective use of this fallacy. *The Personal Argument* may take three different forms:

- *Abusive ad hominem,* or character attack: the opponent's character, appearance, or personal qualities come under attack instead of the argument presented. When Bill Gates and his company Microsoft were beginning to gain influence in the software industry, people often dismissed what he had to say by claiming that because he often was untidy and had dandruff, he was not to be taken seriously. How could anyone believe what someone with dandruff had to say?! This fallacy directs us away from the argument to the person making it, which has no bearing on the truth value of the conclusion.
- *Circumstantial ad hominem* is directed at the opponent's situation, rather than at his argument. Any sort of discrimination based on social, racial, sex, or religious prejudice is likely to lead to this fallacy.
- *Tu quoque*, or argument according to the principle 'you also are a fool.' This fallacy questions the validity of a claim simply because the author of the argument has not lived up to it (Why should you, a smoker, tell me not to smoke? You do it all the time – then why can't I? etc.) *Tu quoque* is a fallacy because it shifts focus away from the argument to the beliefs or activities of the person presenting the argument.

3. *Inductive Fallacies* include:

The Fallacy of *Hasty Generalisation*	- the sample size is too small. High risk of the sample being unrepresentative. (Also known as *Inadequate Sample*)
The *Fallacy of Accident*	is committed when a general rule is applied in circumstances, which suggest that the case is an exception to the rule.
The *Converse Fallacy Of Accident*	The Converse Fallacy of Accident is committed when an exception to an accepted general rule is appealed to in order to generate a *contrary* rule, for example: *Since it is permissible for Jill, who was hit by a truck, to hand in her assignment late, it's permissible for the entire class to hand in their assignments late.*

False Analogy	In an analogy, two objects (or events) are shown to be similar. Then it is argued that since A has property Z, B also has property Z: *The provision of separate restroom facilities for blacks and whites is blatantly racist. Providing separate restroom facilities when it comes to men and women is just as blatantly sexist*. Or: *Minds, like rivers, can be broad. The broader the river, the shallower it is. Therefore, the broader the mind, the shallower it is.*
The Gambler's Fallacy	The Gambler's Fallacy is to argue that a chance event is more likely to occur at this next opportunity because of its recent failure to occur.
The Fallacy of *Biased Statistics*	The method used to obtain a sample was biased. Almost guaranteed to result in an unrepresentative sample.

4. *False Dilemmas*

False Dilemma	A limited number of options (usually two) is assumed, but in fact there are more (hence the name of the fallacy, 'False Dilemma'). Also known as *Either/Or Fallacy*. Example: *One reason for studying logic is its value for us in our own lives. Learning how to reason logically will help us to arrive at true conclusions and make the best decisions. There are, of course, other approaches. One can flip a coin, consult a fortune teller, or follow his or her instincts or impulses of the moment.* (Stephen Naylor Thomas, *Practical Reasoning*)
Argumentum ad ignorantiam	Either X is known to be true, or X is known to be false.

5. *Rhetorical Devices* (The Dishonest Argument)

Red Herring	Often arguments are presented in a situation when the person knows that they are unlikely

to prove that the conclusion is true, if they rely solely on relevant facts. When this is the case, an attempt may be made to introduce information that *seems* relevant, but actually subtly changes the subject of the argument. A red herring is presented to throw the opponent off track, to sidetrack the issue and change the subject. If, for example, a person argues that the level of production is down in the US and she knows that the number of products has actually increased, she might argue that production has decreased because there are more claims of inferior products being produced. A shift would occur from talking about production in terms of quantity to a discussion of production in terms of quality. This would throw anyone listening to the argument off track. What is relevant is how many goods are produced. Red herrings use irrelevant information to prevent people from assessing the relevant facts that contradict the conclusion.

Begging the Question

An argument begs the question when a premise of the argument is simply a restatement of the conclusion. Such an argument simply assumes as a premise what it sets out to prove as the conclusion. What's wrong with begging the question? If you needed the argument for the conclusion – that is, if you were inclined to doubt it – you would be equally inclined to doubt the premise. So a question begging argument is not *rationally convincing* – maybe that is why it is also called *Arguing in a Circle.* For example:

A large breakfast is important because you should eat a lot at the start of the day.

We know that God exists because the Bible tells us so. And we know that the Bible is true because it is the word of God.

The Straw Man

An argument commits the Straw Man Fallacy when it misrepresents the opposing point of view. The author attacks an argument which is different from, and usually weaker than,

the opposition's best argument. The Straw man fallacy is so called because it is easier to knock down a straw man than a real man. In other words, the Straw Man fallacy works by setting up a fake argument that's easier to knock down. The arguer then claims victory, when probably they have refuted something which the opposition never claimed.
Examples:

- People who believe we should spend less for defense apparently believe no one will ever attack us.
- We should have conscription. People don't want to enter the military because they find it an inconvenience. But they should realize that there are more important things than convenience.

Shifting the Burden of Proof is replying in kind to an Argument from Ignorance (See *Argumentum ad ignorantiam*). For example:
A: God doesn't exist. So it's up to you to provide a good argument that He does. (Missing premise: Either you have a good argument for the existence of God, or God does not exist.)
B: No it isn't. God does exist. It's up to *you* to provide a good argument that He doesn't.
(Missing premise: Either you have a good argument for the non-existence of God, or God exists.)
In practice, shifting the burden of proof is a satisfying argumentative trick, no matter which side of a debate you are on!

The Fallacy of Presupposition is also called The Complex Question *or* The Loaded Question.
Answer the simple 'yes/no' questions:

- Have you got your act together yet?
- Did you spend the money you stole?
- Have you stopped telling lies?
- Do you plan to continue being a complete waste of space?
- Do you support sex education in schools and the further decline of moral standards?
- Have you quit using illegal drugs?
- Have you stopped beating your wife?

- Have you stopped beating your husband?

Although usually found presented in the form of a question, the form of the fallacy is illustrated by the following example: 1.Either you have stopped beating your spouse, or you haven’t stopped beating your spouse. 2. If you have stopped beating your spouse, then you used to beat your spouse. 3. If you haven’t stopped beating your spouse, then you used to beat your spouse and still do. *Therefore,* 4. You used to beat your spouse or you used to beat your spouse and still do. *Therefore,* 5. You used to beat your spouse.
You can see that the fallacy of presupposition is the fallacy of *Begging the Question* combined with the fallacy of *False Dilemma.*

These and many other bad arguments may have a short-term persuasive effect when used, either deliberately, or from lack of logical reasoning, to confuse or even fool the opponent. They say, however, that you can fool some people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time. Receivers come to realize eventually that they have been tricked or pressured, and in the business context particularly you depend on the good will, trust, and cooperation of the people you attempt to influence.

The Art of Persuasion, essential in ensuring the cooperation of your receivers, does not rest on the logic of your argument alone. As we know, the *form* of your message also plays a crucial role in the overall persuasive effect. Let us now review the strategies which enhance the persuasiveness of your message:

5. Message Characteristics: Persuasive Style

In this section we will consider a variety of ways in which we can use *message characteristics* to influence others. Here is a sampler of some useful message strategies for effective persuasion:

- **Revealing Persuasive Intent.** When receivers believe that a source is trying to change them, they frequently respond defensively. Sources who “forewarn” of their intent to persuade often put themselves at a major disadvantage precisely because of the maxim, “Forewarned is forearmed.”
  As a general rule, persuasion is more effective when the forewarning is minimized.
- **Organization.** Well-organized messages tend to be more persuasive than disorganized messages. The value of message organization is obvious. If your message is incoherent and confusing, then receivers will have difficulty merely

understanding. The source may have good arguments, but the receivers will not comprehend them. (For example, most teachers have had the experience of presenting information to students in a way that was less than well organized. We know what happens: the students get confused. They get worried and anxious because they do not understand. This leads to frustration and creates more barriers to communication).

- **Message Sidedness.** There are two sides on every issue. One sided messages discuss only one perspective. Two sided messages present information on both sides. Now, one and two sided messages still advocate only one position. The one sided message ardently defends a position and makes no mention of competing views. The two sided message also defends a position, but it also "considers" the other side.

  Generally speaking, a two sided message is more persuasive than a one sided message. To be most effective, a two sided message must do two things:
    - Defend one side;
    - Attack the other side.

  When two sided messages merely mention that there are competing perspectives and there is no attack on the competition, two sided messages are no more effective than one sided messages. The question is, why are two sided messages better?

  First, two sided messages may simply appear to be more fair and balanced. Thus, for receivers who are not thinking very carefully, two sided messages make sources more credible.

  Second, for receivers who are thinking carefully, the combination of defense and attack makes them think even more systematically about the issue and to start questioning the validity of the "other" side. Thus, two sided messages can provide a double-barreled strategy where the source gets more support because receivers like one side and dislike the other.

- **Repetition and Redundancy.** If Maggi runs the same ad for maggi noodles 100 times, that's repetition. If Maggi runs 10 different maggi noodles ads 10 times each, that's redundancy. What impact does repetition have, and does redundancy moderate its effect?

  Interestingly, repetition has two different outcomes. First, a little repetition leads to a lot of persuasion. Second, a lot of repetition leads to a lot of frustration. There is a balance point with the lever of repetition. Using repetition up to that point is effective, but once you've got past the balance point, you get diminishing returns.

  In the first outcome a little repetition works for an obvious reason: Comprehension. As you repeat a message, over and over, more and more receivers understand the message. For example, advertisers know that if a hundred people are exposed to a TV commercial, most of them won't even remember it. But if you show that same commercial over many different times, more and more people in the audience will finally begin to 'see' it for the first time. And even if a particular receiver recognized that new ad the very first time, repeated viewings are still effective. They permit the receiver to learn more about the ad and consider it more carefully.

But, if this repetition is overused, the <u>second outcome</u> occurs. You've heard the expression, 'Familiarity breeds contempt.' That is exactly what happens with messages that are repeated too much. The ad comes on the TV and you go, "Oh, no, not that again!" Instead of thinking about this wonderful ad, you start getting angry or frustrated or bored with it. That is not good persuasion.

Now, *redundancy* (saying the same thing in a different way) can permit repetition to work effectively for a while. Redundant messages essentially fool the receivers into thinking that they are seeing something new. However, even with redundant messages, you will still reach that balance point eventually. The moral of this is: do not overuse repetition in an effort to emphasize a point.

- **Rhetorical Questions.** Rhetorical questions are persuasive, aren't they?

  Let's make sure we know the terminology. A *rhetorical question* is an utterance that is really a statement, but looks like a question. Rhetoricals are polite ways of making claims without appearing to take a stand:
    - People who study longer get better grades, don't they?
    - Advanced persuasion courses build character, don't they?
    - He's made his point, hasn't he?

  The research with rhetoricals reveals one very strong conclusion: Using rhetoricals can change how people think. If the receivers are not thinking very carefully about the persuasive appeal, a rhetorical question jerks their attention and makes them think. The reason for this is due to our social training. When somebody asks us a question, it is required that we respond to it. To respond correctly requires that we understand the question.

  A rhetorical question is not a real question, it only looks and sounds like one. If you are really paying attention, when you hear a rhetorical question, you know that the source is not really asking you to do anything. But, if you are *not* paying close and careful attention, when you hear that rhetorical question, it grabs you because you think that the source has just asked you to do something and you must respond to be polite. Now, you start listening and really thinking about the rest of the persuasive message.

  So, rhetoricals can be persuasive because they can make receivers think more carefully. There is also some evidence that rhetorical questions can be persuasive cues. That is, when receivers hear a source using rhetorical questions, they think the source and the message are more believable and correct.

  The timing of the rhetorical appears to determine its effect. If a source uses rhetoricals very early in the presentation, then the rhetoricals will make the receivers pay more attention. If a source uses rhetoricals at the end of a presentation (when it is too late to pay attention), receivers will use that device as a persuasion cue.

- **Examples versus Statistics.** Examples tend to be more powerful and persuasive than statistics. There are several reasons for this.
    - First, examples are easy to comprehend and require less effort.
    - Second, people tend to think more about them. With statistics, about all that people do is learn them. They exist as statements that are either true or false. Examples, by contrast, make people think a bit more. They react more fully as they recollect their own similar personal experiences.

- **Evidence.** Both examples and statistical data are part of a broader category called evidence. ***Evidence* is any factual statement, object or opinion not created by the source, and used by that source as support.** Evidence, then, is something that somebody else created, that a source uses as a means of persuasion. Needless to say, all good evidence must be verifiable.
  Evidence works. Sources who use good evidence persuade their receivers much better than sources who do not use evidence or who use poor evidence. And the use of good evidence also leads to stronger perception of that source's credibility.
    Now, of course, examples will not always be preferred to statistics. If the audience is highly sophisticated and very well informed, statistics would be considerably more effective.

We have looked at seven message variables. They are intent, organization, sidedness, repetition and redundancy, rhetorical questions, examples versus statistics, and evidence. Skillful and appropriate use of each will produce greater influence. Whenever you are trying to influence anyone you can use any or all of these message variables to improve your effectiveness. To recap:

- **Intent:** Forewarned is forearmed. Therefore, simply present the persuasive message without warning.
- **Organization:** Structure produces comprehension. Chaos produces confusion. Therefore, make the message clear and organized.
- **Message sidedness:** There are two sides to every issue. Messages which defend one side and attack the other are more effective. Therefore, support your position, but make sure you point out the weaknesses in other views.
- **Repetition and redundancy:** The frequency with which a message is given enhances influence to a balance point. Past that point repetition will annoy and frustrate receivers. Redundancy will delay reaching the balance point, but will not prevent it. Repetition works to improve comprehension. Therefore, expect to repeat your messages several times to make sure everyone gets the word and understands the word.
- **Rhetorical Questions:** Statements hidden as questions work well when given in advance of the main message. Rhetoricals serve to enhance attention and message processing. Therefore, use rhetoricals to get or regain the attention of your receivers.

- **Examples versus Statistics:** Examples are easier to comprehend and generate greater thoughtfulness than statistics. Therefore prove your points with examples your receivers find compelling.
- **Evidence:** Something created by others that you use to support your point is evidence. Evidence may be the most powerful message variable there is. It produces a simple equation: More good evidence, more influence. Therefore, always include the best evidence for your receivers.

6. Persuasive Writing: The Sales Letter

As we know, persuasion is used to effect a change in the receiver's attitude and thus influence their actions. In business this may mean convincing the reader to buy a product, to pay an overdue account or to consider an application for work.

The writer's task is to arouse a need, for example safety, and then to encourage the reader to satisfy that need, perhaps by buying a very strong car to ensure safety. Some examples of persuasive letters are:

- collection letters
- job application letters
- sales letters.

Clearly the motivation comes from within the reader; the suggestion that stirs that motivation comes from the letter writer. Here it would be useful to refer again to the persuasive tactics and strategies discussed in more detail in our lecture on persuasion. We are already familiar with the special features of collection letters and cover letters. Bearing the characteristics of the persuasive message in mind, let us now consider the specifics of writing a sales letter.

Preliminary Steps.

Before any marketing endeavor is begun, several steps must be taken. Thorough evaluation and planning help the marketing effort.

1. *Analyse the product or service.* What is it? How was it made? How will it be used? What does it compete with?
2. *Analyse the market.* Who is the potential buyer (sex, age, occupation, geographic location, economic status)? How many potential buyers are there? What has been the response to similar products or services?
3. *Identify the major selling point of the product or service.* What outstanding characteristic(s) of this product or service would fill the needs of the customer? This allows the reader to evaluate the product or service in relation to their need, as well as the product's advantage over that of a competing firm.

Components of the Sales Letter.

All sales letters usually have the same components. They are easily remembered if you memorize the acronym **IDPA – interest, description, proof, action**.
IDPA:

1. ***Interest.*** Arouse the attention of the reader. This may be done by using a surprising statement, a different typestyle, or a personalized opening. A sample of the product, although costly, will almost certainly secure the reader's attention.

2. ***Description.*** Highlight the uniqueness of the product or service and how the reader will benefit from it.

3. ***Proof.*** Most of us need proof before we make a purchase or engage a service. Proof may be in the form of testimonials, coupons for purchases, guarantees, or samples.

4. ***Action***. Finally, you want to motivate the reader to run out immediately to buy the product. Strong, positive statements such as "Call your local dealer NOW!" might stimulate response. Alternatively, you might want to limit the redemption date on a coupon or offer a cash discount.

The Cover Letter to the Sales Letter

Many times, companies produce elaborate sales brochures describing their product. The same IDPA formula may be used in the cover letter to briefly describe the product or service and encourage the reader to analyze the enclosure. These cover letters may be changed to match the audience while the enclosure remains the same.

Summary

1. Prior to direct mail marketing effort, the product or service, the market, and the competition must be thoroughly analyzed.
2. In direct mail selling, the major selling point of the product or service must be identified and associated with the particular needs of the specific market segment.
3. A sales letter must arouse interest, describe a product or service, provide proof, and move the reader to action.
4. Reader attention to a sales letter may be obtained by personalizing the message, enclosing a sample of the product, or using a creative typestyle.
5. The unique features of the product or service should be stressed in the description section of the sales letter.
6. Proof of product reliability may be provided by supplying testimonials or guarantees with the sales letter.
7. The reader of a sales letter must be moved to action. Supplying a dated coupon or using a catchy phrase sometimes will motivate the reader to act.
8. A brief cover letter may accompany a sales brochure.

Example: Sales Letter

Culinare Publications
1493 10th Avenue
Los Angeles, California

February 9, 2000

………………………
………………………
………………………

Dear

A Gold Medal Award for your next dinner party?

Well, perhaps we can’t promise that. However, you might just receive a dozen long-stem roses from your husband for the super dinner you prepared last night.

And when you accept the roses, you need not tell him that the ideas for the dinner came from your new <u>Gourmet Cook Book</u>.

Compiled by the prize-winning chef Andre Susan, the collection has already been awarded recognition for its excellence and simplicity by the Culinary Society of America. Its first printing of 100,000 was sold out within a week, and it is now being offered to you on a money-back guarantee for only $9.99 per copy.

Review the table of contents, reprinted on the back of this letter. You will find that the <u>Gourmet Cook Book</u> covers everything from roasts to sauces to pastry delights.

And the holidays are approaching. Why not order a copy for yourself and several as memorable gifts? In fact, we will send your copy and a gift card at no charge when you order a minimum of six copies.

So call us toll free or complete the enclosed order blank today. You’ll be happy you did!

Sincerely yours,

Frank Ahrens
Marketing Director

Assignments

1. We remember that *validity* is a property of the argument's ***form***. It doesn't matter what the premises and the conclusion actually say. It just matters whether the argument has the right form. So, in particular, a valid argument *need not* have true premises, nor need it have a true conclusion. The following is a valid argument:

    All cats are reptiles.
    Bugs Bunny is a cat.
    So Bugs Bunny is a reptile.

    Neither of the premises of this argument is true. Nor is the conclusion. But the premises are of such a form that *if they were both true*, then the conclusion would also have to be true. In other words,

    An argument is valid if there is no way for the conclusion not to be true while the premises are true.

    Thus, in order to evaluate an argument as either valid or invalid, we must think of a possible situation in which an argument's premises are true and its conclusion is not true. This is called a ***counterexample*** to the argument. We may define validity more briefly simply by saying that a valid argument is one without a counterexample.
    When we speak of possible situations, the term 'possible' is to be understood in a very wide sense. To be possible, a situation need not be something we can bring about; it doesn't even have to obey the laws of physics. It just has to be something we can *coherently conceive* – that is, it has to be thinkable and describable without self-contradiction.
    So, to tell whether an argument is valid, we try to imagine a possible situation in which its premises are true and the conclusion is untrue. If we succeed (that is, if we can describe a counterexample), the argument is invalid.

    We appeal to counterexamples almost unconsciously in everyday life. Consider this mundane argument:
    They said on the radio that it's going to be a beautiful day today.
    So, it *is* going to be beautiful today.

    One natural (even though a bit cynical) reply is, 'they could be wrong.' This reply demonstrates the invalidity of the argument by describing a counterexample – that is, a possible situation in which the conclusion ('It's going to be a beautiful day today') is untrue, even though the premise ('They said so on the radio') is true: namely, the situation in which the forecasters are simply wrong.

    A counterexample need not be an actual situation, though it might; it is enough that the situation be conceptually possible. So it need not be *true* that the forecasters are wrong; to see the invalidity of the argument, we need only realize that this is *possible.*

To give a counterexample, then, is merely to tell a kind of story. The story needn't be true, but it must be conceptually coherent (thinkable and describable).

Exercise A: Classify the following arguments as valid or invalid. For those that are invalid, describe a counterexample. Take each argument as it stands; don't alter the problem by, for example, adding premises.

Example:

Sandy is not a man.
So Sandy is a woman.

Invalid:
Counterexample: Sandy is neither a man nor a woman, but a hamster.

Argument 1: All charged particles have mass.
Neutrons are particles that have mass.
So neutrons are charged particles.

Argument 2: If there is a power failure, the computer will not work.
The computer is not working.
So there is a power failure.

Argument 3: Sally does not believe that Peter stole the cake.
So Sally believes that Peter did not steal the cake.

Argument 4: We need to raise some money for our club.
Having a bake sale would raise money.
So we should have a bake sale.

Argument 5: All mathematical truths are knowable.
All mathematical truths are eternal.
So all that is knowable is eternal.

Argument 6: Some fools are greedy.
Some fools are lecherous.
So there are some fools that are both lecherous and greedy.

Argument 7: No one has ever lived for 200 years.
So no one ever will.

Argument 8: DNA contains the code of life.
Life is sacred.
So it is wrong to manipulate DNA.

Argument 9: If there is a hedgehog in my gas tank, then my car will not start.
My car will not start.
So there must be a hedgehog in my gas tank.

Argument 10: If I publicly insult my mother-in-law, then my wife will be angry at me.
I will not insult my mother-in-law.
Hence, my wife will not be angry at me.

Argument 11: Either Rabaul is in PNG, or it is in Australia.
Rabaul is in PNG.
So, Rabaul is in Australia.

Argument 12: Your high idle is caused either by a problem with the transmission, or by too little oil, or both.
You have too little oil in the car.
Therefore, your transmission is fine.

Argument 13: If the moon is made of green cheese, then cows jump over it.
The moon is made of green cheese.
Therefore, cows jump over the moon.

Argument 14: Either Mr. Mustard or Ms Panky is the culprit.
Ms Panky is not the culprit.
Hence, Mr. Mustard is the culprit.

Argument 15: All engineers enjoy dancing.
Therefore, some males enjoy dancing.

Argument 16: Only crows are black.
John is black.
Therefore, John is a crow.

Argument 17: All crows are black.
John is black.
So, John is a crow.

Argument 18: Anyone who lives in Rabaul, also lives in PNG.
Peter lives in PNG.
Therefore, Peter lives in Rabaul.

Argument 19: Anyone who lives in Port Moresby, also lives in PNG.
Peter does not live in Port Moresby.
Therefore, Peter does not live in PNG.

Argument 20: Anyone who lives in the city of Mt. Hagen, also lives in the Highlands.
Saina does not live in the city of Mt. Hagen.
Therefore, Saina does not live in the Highlands.

Exercise B: Here are some sample arguments. Can you tell which ones are valid and which of the valid arguments are also sound? (There are 5 valid arguments and 2 sound arguments.)

- If Socrates is a man, then Socrates is mortal. Socrates is a man. So, Socrates is mortal.
- If Socrates is a horse, then Socrates is mortal. Socrates is a horse. So, Socrates is mortal.
- If Socrates is a horse, then Socrates has four legs. Socrates is a horse. So, Socrates has four legs.
- If Socrates is a horse, then Socrates has four legs. Socrates doesn't have four legs. So, Socrates is not a horse.
- If Socrates is a man, then he is a mammal. Socrates is not a mammal. So Socrates is not a man.
- If Socrates is a horse, then Socrates has four legs. Socrates has four legs. So, Socrates is a horse.
- If Socrates was a philosopher, then he wasn't a historian. Socrates wasn't a historian. So, Socrates was a philosopher.

2. Read the following argument and determine the type of fallacy it commits:

Money:
It can buy you a house, but not a Home.
It can buy you a bed, but not Sleep.
It can buy you a clock, but not Time.
It can buy you a book, but not Knowledge.
It can buy a position, but not Respect.
It can buy you medicine, but not Health.
It can buy you blood, but not Life.
It can buy you sex, but not Love.

So – you see, money isn't everything. And it often causes pain and suffering.
I am telling you this because I am your Friend, and as your Friend, I want to take away your pain and suffering…

So send me all your money, and I will suffer for you –
CASH ONLY PLEASE!!! ☺

3. Your company is trying to promote a range if inexpensive kitchen aids. Write a sales letter to housewives in your area informing them about the products and telling them about special displays and offers at local stores during the coming month.

4. Assume you are a Travel Agent who receives the following: "I booked my holiday to Rabaul on the basis of the brochures you sent me. The holiday was nothing like these brochures. The accommodation was unsatisfactory. I would like a refund, because I was disappointed." Write a reply.

5. Select a sales letter sent by any local company. Evaluate the letter, using the I.D.P.A. formula. Discuss the devices used to achieve persuasiveness.

6. What are the 'dishonest' tactics described in the following joke:

Persuasive Strategies ☺

I argue very well. Ask any of my remaining friends. I can win an argument on any topic, against any opponent. People know this, and steer clear of me at parties. Often, as a sign of their great respect, they don't even invite me. You too can win arguments. Simply follow these rules:

- Drink Liquor

Suppose you are at a party and some hotshot intellectual is expounding on the economy of Peru, a subject you know nothing about. If you are drinking some health-fanatic drink, like grapefruit juice, you'll hang back, afraid to display your ignorance, while the hotshot enthrals your date. But if you drink several large martinis, you'll discover you have STRONG VIEWS about the Peruvian economy. You'll be a WEALTH of information. You'll argue forcefully, offering searing insights and possibly upsetting furniture. People will be impressed!

- Make Things Up

Suppose, in the Peruvian economy argument, you are trying to prove that Peruvians are underpaid, a position you base solely on the fact that YOU are underpaid, and you are damned if you are going to let a bunch of Peruvians be better off. DON'T say: "I think Peruvians are underpaid." Say: "The average Peruvian's salary in 2000 dollars adjusted for the revised tax base is $1,452.81 per annum, which is $836.07 before the mean gross poverty level."

NOTE: Always make up exact figures.

If an opponent asks where you got your information, make THAT up, too. Say: "This information comes from Dr. Hovel T. Moon's study for the Buford Commission, published May 9, 2001. Didn't you read it?" Say this in the same tone of voice you would use to say, "You left your soiled underwear in my bathroom."

- Use meaningless, but weighty-sounding words and phrases

Memorize this list:

Let me put it this way
In terms of
Vis-à-vis
Per se
As it were
Qua
So to speak

You should also memorize some Latin abbreviations, such as "Q.E.D.," "e.g.," and "i.e." These are all short for "I speak Latin, and you do not."

Here's how to use these words and phrases. Suppose you want to say: "Peruvians would like to order appetizers more often, but they don't have enough money."
You never win arguments talking like that. But you WILL win if you say: "Let me put it this way. In terms of appetizers vis-à-vis Peruvians qua Peruvians, they would like to order them more often, so to speak, but they do not have enough money per se, as it were. Q.E.D."

Only a fool would challenge that statement.

- Use Snappy and Irrelevant Comebacks

You need an arsenal of all-purpose irrelevant phrases to fire back at your opponents when they make valid points. The best are:

You're begging the question.
You're being defensive.
Don't compare apples and oranges.
What are your parameters?

This last one is especially valuable. Nobody, other than mathematicians, has the vaguest idea what 'parameters' means.

Here's how to use your comebacks:

You say, "As Abraham Lincoln said in 1873,…"
Your opponent says, "Abraham Lincoln died in 1865."
You say, "You're begging the question."

Or:

You say, “Liberians, like most Asians…”
Your opponent says, “Liberia is in Africa.”
You say, “You’re being defensive.”

So – that’s it: you now know how to out-argue anybody.

N.B. Do not try to pull any of this on people who carry weapons ☺

Lecture 5: PROPOSALS & SUBMISSIONS

1. **Definitions**
2. **How to Plan a Proposal or Submission: The Three Familiar Steps & Their Peculiar Features**
3. **Proposals & Persuasion**
4. **Classification of Proposals**
    a. **Solicited & Unsolicited**
    b. **Internal & External**
5. **Writing & Formatting Proposals**
    a. **Order of Development (Information)**
    b. **Parts of a Proposal**
    c. **Formal Proposals**
    d. **Graphics**
    e. **Two Kinds of Formal Proposals:**
        i. **Work Requests**
        ii. **Funding Requests**
    f. **Letter Proposals**
    g. **Memorandum Proposals**
6. **Writing & Formatting Submissions**
    a. **Formal Submissions**
    b. **Less Formal Submissions**
7. **Summary**

1. Definitions

A <u>proposal</u> is written suggestion of a particular scheme or course of action to solve an existing problem. It is designed to persuade another organization to pay for the services you offer in the proposal.

A <u>submission</u> is a written document requesting approval, funds, or action from within the organization or from another body, usually a government organization.

The proposal or submission is the major means of communicating with the person or organization with the power to make the decision on allocating the resources or money. We shall refer to this person or organization as <u>the funding source.</u>

In Australia the words proposal and submission are often used interchangeably. The main difference is that when the word proposal is used by a private individual or organization, the document usually offers a service or project in exchange for payment.

A submission is more likely to be a proposal put to a government body that has invited formal applications for funding or policy changes.
In government departments the word proposal can describe the initial idea put forward. Then, if the funding source is interested in the proposal, a submission detailing the

project and required funds is offered for approval. This is the interpretation placed on the terms in most contexts.

2. How to Plan a Proposal or Submission: The Three Familiar Steps & Their Peculiar Features

The three familiar steps of the Planning Process in Communication apply here as well:

1. identify the problem/need
2. identify the purpose of the proposal or submission
3. identify the receiver of the proposal.

Now in the case of proposals these three familiar to us steps may not be that straightforward. They involve several levels, or aspects, which all need careful planning and thought. For example, proposals have two ends: to sell a solution and to sell the ability of your organization to provide the solution.

Sell your solution

Proposals may propose anything, though they usually offer a specific solution to a specific problem, to be provided within a specific time at a specific price. Selling your solution to a problem requires two different skills:

1. finding a feasible, economically viable solution;
2. communicating that solution in clear, concise and coherent language.

If either is missing, you have trouble. Almost all proposals are detailed, concrete, and precise – not philosophical abstractions or general statements of intent. They lead to legally binding contracts. They contain details, facts, dates, and budgets. So always include the details: the more precise the proposal, the better.

Sell Yourself

A proposal also sells the proposer as the one to implement the solution. Your organization doesn’t make any money if someone else wins the contract. Selling yourself is also a two-step job:

1. document that your firm has performed well in the past, can do so now, and is likely to do so in the future.
2. Show by the professionalism of your proposal that the work of your firm is expert.

However, the tree steps of the planning process still apply on every one of these levels:

2.1. Research the Project (subject matter of the proposal)

Ensure that the information in the proposal or submission is factual, objective, and complete. Gain a balanced, objective view of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed scheme or change. Selecting and presenting only part of the information is misleading. Decisions taken on the basis of incomplete or inaccurate information can lead to problems which will finally come back to you for an explanation.

2.2. Identify the Purpose

As mentioned earlier, proposals have two ends:

- to sell a solution to a specific problem, and
- to sell the ability of your organization to produce the solution.

To successfully compete with other proposals, your proposal must:

- clearly identify the existing need or problem
- present effective strategies for meeting that need/solving the problem
- outline the direct benefits of the proposed scheme and
- offer a way of evaluating the results.

Proposals or submissions are written for a variety of reasons, or purposes. Some of these are:

- to obtain funds for research
- to present a feasibility study
- to solve a problem
- to express interest in a project
- to request approval for a new course of action
- to request funding

2.3. Identify the Receiver

Gather information on the organization targeted. This can be from brochures, annual reports, newsletters, catalogues or direct interview. In the case of a government organization, check the latest policy statements and procedures set up to implement policy. Study the receiver's <u>needs</u> and base your persuasive strategy on your ability to satisfy those needs.

3. Proposals & Persuasion

Your proposal must compete with other proposals; it must <u>convince</u> the funding source that your solution and your firm are the best. It should therefore be a well-organized and <u>persuasive</u> document.

It might be useful here to re-cap on the major persuasive message characteristics covered in our lecture on Persuasion last term (Re: Message Characteristics: Persuasive style). In that lecture we looked at several message variables, such as intent, organization, message sidedness, repetition and redundancy, rhetorical questions, examples versus statistics, and evidence:

- **Intent:** Forewarned is forearmed. Therefore, simply present the persuasive message without warning.
- **Organization:** Structure produces comprehension. Chaos produces confusion. Therefore, make the message clear and organized.

- **Message sidedness:** There are two sides to every issue. Messages which defend one side and attack the other are more effective. Therefore, support your position, but make sure you point out the weaknesses in other views. With specific reference to proposal writing, emphasize your objectivity by presenting a balanced approach with all the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed solution/change.
- **Repetition and redundancy:** The frequency with which a message is given enhances influence to a balance point. Past that point repetition will annoy and frustrate receivers. Redundancy will delay reaching the balance point, but will not prevent it. Repetition works to improve comprehension. Therefore, expect to repeat your messages several times to make sure everyone gets the word and understands the word.
- **Rhetorical Questions:** Statements hidden as questions work well when given in advance of the main message. Rhetoricals serve to enhance attention and message processing. Therefore, use rhetoricals to get or regain the attention of your receivers.
- **Examples versus Statistics:** Examples are easier to comprehend and generate greater thoughtfulness than statistics. Therefore prove your points with examples your receivers find compelling.
- **Evidence:** Something created by others that you use to support your point is evidence. Evidence may be the most powerful message variable there is. It produces a simple equation: More good evidence, more influence. Therefore, always include the best evidence for your receivers.

Skillful and appropriate use of these strategies may produce greater influence on your receiver.

N.B. Remember the details of two of these variables that may lend your proposal greater persuasiveness:

- **Message Sidedness.** There are two sides on every issue. One sided messages discuss only one perspective. Two sided messages present information on both sides. Now, one and two sided messages still advocate only one position. The one sided message ardently defends a position and makes no mention of competing views. The two sided message also defends a position, but it also “considers” the other side.

  Generally speaking, a two sided message is more persuasive than a one sided message. To be most effective, a two sided message must do two things:
    - Defend one side;
    - Attack the other side.

  When two sided messages merely mention that there are competing perspectives and there is no attack on the competition, two sided messages are no more effective than one sided messages. The question is, why are two sided messages better?

First, two sided messages may simply appear to be more fair and balanced. Thus, for receivers who are not thinking very carefully, two sided messages make sources more credible.
Second, for receivers who are thinking carefully, the combination of defense and attack makes them think even more systematically about the issue and to start questioning the validity of the "other" side. Thus, two sided messages can provide a double-barreled strategy where the source gets more support because receivers like one side and dislike the other.

- **Evidence.** *Evidence* is any factual statement, object or opinion not created by the source, and used by that source as support. Evidence, then, is something that somebody else created, that a source uses as a means of persuasion. All good evidence must be verifiable.
  Evidence works. Sources who use good evidence persuade their receivers much better than sources who do not use evidence or who use poor evidence. And the use of good evidence also leads to stronger perception of that source's credibility.

In addition, here are a few pieces of practical advice:
1. Begin your proposal with an attention-getting device. The most successful attention-getting devices for business center on profits; for government, on competence and reliability.
2. When appropriate, find a theme for your proposal and weave it throughout. Your theme might be your firm's work or the uniqueness, efficiency, or economy of your solution. Use a key word in your title, in the introduction, and throughout the proposal (repetition and redundancy!) to influence your receiver.
3. As often as possible, document your statements with statistics, facts, and testimony from well-known experts. Authority is persuasive
4. Put yourself in the shoes of the people who will evaluate your proposal and try to write positively. An example of this is replacing the *No Smoking in the Theater* sign with *Smoking Permitted in the Lobby.* Both messages convey the same idea, but the second is written more positively and more persuasively.
5. Remember your receiver when you write the proposal. To facilitate your receiver's comprehension and to amplify the persuasive impact of your message
   a. repeat the key words and ideas
   b. signal all transitions
   c. structure your work and reveal the structural logic to your readers.

4. Classification of Proposals

Proposals offer services or products in a specified time, usually for a set fee. The different classifications of proposals help define their nature.

a. Solicited & Unsolicited
Proposals originate in different ways. If someone comes to your organization and requests a proposal, that proposal is said to be solicited. In order to survive the

competition, solicited proposals must meet all the requirements specified by the funding source.

Unsolicited proposals – ones that have not been invited – are harder to write. True, you don't have to meet the requirements of an outside source. But neither have you been asked for a solution. An unsolicited proposal offers a workable solution to a problem, but it must first convince the funding source that a problem exists.

Unsolicited proposals, because they have no audience waiting for them, are less common than solicited proposals and must be twice as persuasive.

b. Internal & External

Proposals, just like other forms of business correspondence, may be internal or external, i.e., they either remain within the organization or travel outside it.

When we talk about proposals, however, we usually are referring to external proposals, proposals written by one organization or individual for another organization.

5. Writing and Formatting Proposals

Proposals come in different shapes and forms. The simplest proposal is one yelled across the room: 'Hey, why don't you try plugging it in!' The most complex might propose the design and construction of a space station to circle the earth. The first takes no writing skill; the second would fill volumes.

A proposal can appear in a memo, a letter, a report, or on a standard form. Memos and letters propose relatively simple projects. More complex projects require more complex proposals and have a title page, table of contents, introduction, discussion, conclusion, and appendices. Such proposals follow the usual report procedures modified by the unique features of a proposal.

Funding sources may have a set format or order of information. Standard-form proposals – in which the buyer/funding source dictates to the proposer the form that the proposal must follow – often appear in government, which seeks uniformity for the sake of standard evaluation.

A proposal or submission, depending on their complexity and amount of detail, may be written in a number of formats - as memorandum reports, short, or long reports.

A submission is often prepared on a pre-printed form or in a memorandum report or short report format.

Re-cap: Thus, the choice of format is based on

- organizational policy,
- the type of proposal (solicited/unsolicited, or internal/external),
- the purpose of the proposal or submission,
- the amount of content and
- the requirements of the organization receiving the proposal.

In the absence of set format, you may use the following guidelines:

a. Order of Development (Information). Present factual information and lead the reader from the proposal's purpose, through the facts and supporting details to the conclusions. In the process,

- clearly identify the subject, the need, purpose and limits or scope of the proposal
- briefly analyse the situation or problem
- detail the steps to the solution in a logical order, usually based on time
- provide a timetable and date of completion
- identify the resources, time and money needed
- use the conclusions to summarise the findings and show how the proposal's results will be evaluated*.

* If the receiver is informed and aware of the project, you may decide to move the conclusions forward. The risk with this order of development is that the reader may disagree with your conclusions and read no further.

b. Parts of a Proposal
Aim to make your proposals effective to gain maximum benefits from the time, energy, and costs involved in preparing the proposal. The acceptable parts in a proposal are the:

- cover page
- executive summary
- introduction, project purpose and description
- detailed management of program
- qualifications and experience of the proposer
- detailed budget
- proposed time schedule
- terms and conditions
- attachments (if any).

c. Formal Proposals are arranged in a similar format to a formal report. Include the following parts in a formal proposal:

- Executive summary: place executive summary that addresses the client's needs before the cover page of the proposal. This executive summary is often circulated to others in the funding organization for comment. It gives a brief description of the proposal, the needs it will meet, the benefits to the funding source, and a brief description of the organization presenting the proposal. It is a clear, concise, coherent and readable summary of the proposed project and is different in purpose from an introduction.
- Cover page includes the name of the proposing organization; contact person's name, designation, address and contact number; title of the project (this must reflect the purpose of the project); the name of the person to whom the proposal is submitted, and date.
- Table of Contents for the lengthy proposals.
- Introduction: Give a clear statement of the proposal's purpose, the problem considered in the proposal, and the expected outcomes. Catch the reader's attention and show the need to act on the proposal. Introduction gives a brief

overview of the background information, identifies the major issues and defines the proposal's limits, or scope.

- Main Body: Outline the plan of action and the procedures necessary to complete the project. Include the research, the organizations and other people involved and the resources needed. Show how the suggestions may be implemented to achieve desired outcomes, and how these will be evaluated and reported.
  Emphasize credibility by including the capabilities, experience, qualifications and any special skills or facilities offered by the proposing organization.
  One section of the main body will detail the budget. Another section presents a time schedule for the project.

  A simplified approach to structuring a large technical document: This formula suggests that the body of a formal proposal should be limited to four parts:
    - Two detailed pages on how the project will be managed
    - Two pages for the costs
    - Two pages for the time schedule
    - Two pages for selling the idea and the special qualities of the proposing organization.

  Detailed technical information is presented as attachments. This approach encourages you to keep the proposal as short as possible. Most people are overwhelmed by a fifty-page document. The suggestion here is a maximum of 8 pages in the body of a proposal.

  Base your conclusions on the information presented in the proposal. Emphasise the benefits and results from the proposal, the advantages offered by the proposing organization and how these can be identified and measured during the project's operation and its successful completion.

d. Graphics

In any type of proposal the graphics should be kept simple and should help the message. Flow charts, bar charts, organization charts, time and schedule charts and pie charts show relationships or details and are easy to interpret. This makes them particularly suited to proposals.
Formal proposals should be bound.

e. Two kinds of Formal Proposals: Two of the many kinds of formal proposals are work requests and funding requests.

i. **Work Request**: In this type of proposal include
    - Work to be completed in detail
    - Description of facilities and capabilities of proposer
    - Complete technical information
    - Detailed cost of the project
    - A time schedule

ii. **Funding Request:** As well as detailing the project, the funding request must emphasize the credibility and ability of the proposer to complete the project. A proposal for funds usually includes:

- An introduction to arouse interest and to gain approval
- Reasons supporting the request such as special facilities or expertise of proposer
- An explanation of the benefits supported by specific data
- A specific and direct request for funds
- A brief summary

Both types of proposal often use graphic or visual aids to provide clearer details and relationships.

f. Letter Proposals use business letter layout with the six basic parts of a business letter:

- The heading (letterhead & date)
- The inside address
- The salutation
- The body of the letter
- The complimentary close
- The signature

The letter proposal is shorter than a formal proposal, usually one to two pages in length. The body of the letter proposal follows the format of the short formal/informal report. Headings introduce the major topics. Subheadings, point form or lists help comprehension and improve readability. Remember the three C's of business writing style and focus on the needs of the reader.

- State why you are interested in the project, and identify the qualifications you have and procedures you will use to complete the project.
- Rather than list the costs in the body of the letter, you may decide to use an itemized cost sheet as an attachment to the letter proposal.
- When the request is for financial funds or support, state the service the organization performs and identify the plans or immediate uses for funds.
- Clearly state the request for support and explain how the support will benefit the community.
- In the closing paragraphs, express appreciation, request an early response or specify deadlines to ensure work can begin on a specified date.

Some organizations ask for the first stage of the proposal to be a brief letter of inquiry. This lets the organization decide if the proposal suits their needs and available funds. Once the organization accepts the idea, a more formal proposal may be requested.

g. Memorandum Proposals use the standard memorandum format. They are often prepared on preprinted proposal forms that include sections for specifications for the work procedures, the costings for labour and materials, and the time schedule for the project.

6. Writing & Formatting Submissions

Prepare a submission when you need to request funds, or approval for a different course of action. A submission is often prepared on a preprinted standard form.

A number of large organizations prepare submissions on subject paper with the organisation's in-house format. If this is unavailable, use memorandum or short report format and include a decision block for the receiver's comments and signature. Clearly identify who will receive the submission.

Format your submission in a way that suits its purpose. The suggested maximum length for a submission is five to six pages including a first page or covering letter that summarises the key points. Most submissions are one to two pages in length.

There are three main points in a submission:

- The nature and scope of the problem
- The current situation
- What should be done about the problem

A successful submission is one that is accepted and approved. Achieve this success with specific, relevant, and accurate information.

<u>a. Formal Submissions</u>

The minimum acceptable parts of a formal submission are:

- <u>The title page</u>: the title, the sender, the receiver, date of submission and sometimes a short summary statement of the submission's purpose
- <u>An introduction</u>: background material; purpose of the submission; need for action or approval
- <u>A body</u>: discussion and analysis of the issue
- <u>A conclusion</u>: summary of findings
- <u>A recommendation</u>: recommendations are that part of the document submitted for approval, therefore the recommendations are the focus of the submission. Clearly state the action, approval or endorsement required. (Place the recommendations at either beginning or end of the submission. The choice on order of presentation is made on considerations of readability and impact.)
- <u>A signature block</u>: The submission should end with your signature, name, job title/designation and date.
- <u>A decision block</u>: Leave space for the receiver to give written approval. This is usually after your signature block. This space is usually called the decision block. Example: Decision Block

Approved/ Not approved	
Signature	
Designation or Title	
Date	

A request to move to a new location, or for new personnel, equipment or procedures can be written as a submission. Research and analyse the issue. You may choose to present a number of different courses of action. However, state clearly which course of action is the most appropriate.

b. Less Formal Submissions may include all the parts in a formal submission except for the title page. It is shorter than a formal submission. Use memo report layout or a pre-printed form in contrast to more formal submissions that use the layout of a short/long report.
Sometimes a suitable subject line replaces the introduction. If an introduction is used, it should be no more than one or two paragraphs in length. The body presents the main findings and reasons for the submission. The recommendations are the focus of the submission.
A signature block is included. It is also useful to include the decision block so that the approval is written on the submission. This means the submission and approval are together and easy to file.

7. Summary
A winning proposal effectively sells the idea (solution/need) and the proposer's ability to perform (to achieve the desired outcomes, or meet the need). It outlines the procedures and expected outcomes of adopting the proposal. It documents the resources required in funding time and money; and provides a method for evaluating the proposal's results.

The submission is a request for approval or endorsement. Approval can come from your own organization or another funding source. Specific and direct recommendations let the reader understand what you want. Present findings that substantiate and support your recommendations.
Use persuasive strategies and tactics to influence the reader. Emphasise the direct benefits of the proposal/submission.

Assignments

1. Define the terms 'proposal' and 'submission'. Briefly describe the main difference in how the terms are used.

2. Name three different purposes for writing a proposal.

3. Why are proposals and submissions called persuasive documents?

4. Where could you research information for a submission or a proposal?

5. What is the main purpose of a proposal's executive summary? How does it differ from an introduction?

6. What are the three points to cover in a submission?

7. Briefly explain the purpose of each of the minimum acceptable parts in a submission.

8. Why are recommendations described as the focus of a submission? Briefly explain why the content in the main body should support the recommendation.

Lecture 6: SPOKEN COMMUNICATION: THE NONVERBAL IMPLICATIONS

- **Interpretation of the Nonverbal Part of the Message: Types of Nonverbal Communication**
    - **Personal**
    - **Common to a Group**
    - **Universal to Mankind**
    - **Random**
- **Classifications of Nonverbal Communication**
    - **Body Motion**
    - **Physical Characteristics**
    - **Touching Behaviour**
    - **Vocal Qualities, or Paralanguage**
    - **Use of Space or Proximity**
    - **Artifacts**
    - **Environmental Factors**

We have spent most of this term discussing the importance of human communication and the particular role of verbal communication in it. However, active, ***spoken*** human communication is a *mixture of verbal and nonverbal signals* perceived in the context of concrete situations. Thus the interpretation of the meaning of the verbal message is greatly influenced by the nonverbal signals accompanying it.
Today we shall consider several types of nonverbal communication: personal, cultural, universal, and random. We shall also attempt to classify the ways in which we, humans, send our nonverbal messages.

If the words do not match with the nonverbal behaviour, people tend to believe the nonverbal part of the message. Words can be contrived, while our 'body language' is more difficult to fake: it reveals the sender's feelings and thoughts more spontaneously and honestly.

N.B. It is important, however, not to jump to conclusions and whenever possible to verify the conflicting signals. For example, if your supervisor reads your report and says in a hesitant voice while frowning and shaking their head, 'This is an excellent piece of work…', you will feel confused by the obvious clash between the verbal and nonverbal messages reaching you. It might be advisable in such a situation to verify your perception of your supervisor's message by saying something like, 'Your voice suggests that you are not sure about the work,' or 'There is some doubt in your voice,' etc.

1. Interpretation of the Nonverbal Part of the Message: Types of Nonverbal Communication

In working towards more effective communication, we should bear in mind that nonverbal behaviour may be considered at different levels:

- Personal to the individual
- Common to a group of people or culture
- Universal to humankind
- Unrelated to the message (random)

<u>Personal Nonverbal Communication:</u> This is the nonverbal behaviour and mannerisms typical of, or peculiar to, a specific person. Here the meaning should be interpreted in the unique context of the sender's personality. Thus, accurate interpretation of this kind of nonverbal messages is impossible without the knowledge of the person and their pattern of interpersonal communication (both verbal and nonverbal). If you are unsure about the meaning of someone's nonverbal behaviour, simply check it out by describing it to the person in question and asking about what the response means. If you don't do this, you may make wrong assumptions about the communication. (Example: kissing in greeting).

<u>Cultural Nonverbal Communication:</u> By contrast, cultural nonverbal actions are characteristic or common to a group of people. These mannerisms/actions are learned unconsciously from observing others in the society or group. In certain cultures, for example, eye contact is interpreted as lack of respect, whereas in most European cultures avoidance of eye contact is interpreted as lack of strength and honesty.

This type of nonverbal behaviour is rule-governed: we learn these rules (etiquette) by participating in the social life of our communities. These rules determine the appropriateness of our nonverbal behaviour and reflect the generally accepted ways. (Examples: contrasts in the conditioned behaviour of men and women, etc.)

Love, anger, irritation, etc. can be expressed by words and actions, such as a touch, a look, how people stand in relation to each other and even by the tone of voice. However, each of these nonverbal cues will vary for each of the feelings and also between cultures.

<u>Context</u>: Because your cultural background influences your perception of others, it is important, particularly in cross-cultural exchanges, to learn about the ways common to the culture you are dealing with. This will minimize the 'cultural noise' that we talked about in our BCA course, discussing the various kinds of interference with effective communication.

<u>Universal Nonverbal Communication</u>: These are universal nonverbal signals expressing human emotions that are common to all humans (laughter, tears, uncertainty, etc.)

<u>Unrelated Nonverbal Communication</u> is random nonverbal behaviour such as a sneeze, a cough, or a lisp – it is unrelated to the message being sent or received. It may cause distraction ('physical noise'), but it does not, as a rule, significantly change the meaning of the verbal message.

2. Classifications of Nonverbal Communication

Now let us consider the various ways in which we manage to send out nonverbal signals that play such an important role in our communication with others. These *nonverbal signals underlie, modify, and complement our verbal communication.*

Nonverbal communication exists in a context or framework. This context often determines the meaning of nonverbal behaviour. On different occasions the same nonverbal gesture may have a completely different meaning from another setting. Examples: spitting or farting in public, etc.

People express meaning with many parts of their bodies at the same time. The various verbal and nonverbal behaviours generally reinforce and emphasize each other. None of the nonverbal signals should be considered in isolation – that may give you the wrong idea. They should be perceived as a bouquet, and in context.

Nonverbal communication is usually classified into seven main areas (our ‘body language’ has generally 7 ‘parts of speech’ - ☺):

1. Body motion
2. Physical characteristics
3. Touching behaviour
4. Vocal qualities or paralanguage
5. Use of space or proximity
6. Artifacts
7. Environmental factors.

<u>Body Motion</u> includes movements of the body, limbs, head, feet or legs; body posture; eye behaviour; and facial expressions. All of the above have an impact on the message. A person standing forward and shaking a pointed finger at someone is perceived as trying to dominate the other person. The type of feedback given on such occasions will determine the flow of subsequent communication ☺!

Body movements may be categorized as

- *Emblems:* nonverbal acts learned through imitation and common to a group of people or culture (nodding, shaking one’s head, rubbing noses, covering the ears, etc.)
- *Illustrators:* nonverbal acts that illustrate the spoken word (pointing to objects or describing a shape). These are usually universal to all humans.
- *Feeling displays:* changes in facial expressions that display emotion. These can be consciously manipulated. The unintentional expression reflects feelings, whereas intentional expressions may disguise or hide feelings. Facial expression and eye contact are effective forms of nonverbal communication. If these clash in meaning with the verbal part of the message, the receiver is more likely to believe the nonverbal signals (examples). Eye contact (in European cultures) indicates

whether communication is open or closed. Direct eye contact shows a readiness to speak and a positive regard for the other person, whereas lack of contact, such as looking away or down, may be interpreted as unwillingness to talk with the other person, a dislike of the other person, or an attempt to hide feelings. Eye contact from a distance indicates understanding and liking, particularly when accompanied by a smile. Eye contact lets both the sender and the receiver exchange feedback on what the other person is thinking and feeling. Looking at another person gives clues to add to the spoken message and lets the other person know you are listening to the message.

- *Regulators:* These are gestures used to regulate communication between people by maintaining and controlling the flow of speaking and listening. Regulators indicate whether one should continue, repeat, or change from speaker to listener. These can vary between cultures.
- *Adaptors:* these are nonverbal acts performed instinctively in response to some inner desire, such as scratching an itchy ear. Adaptors can display instinctive responses, such as shock or horror.

Physical Characteristics such as body shape, general attractiveness, body and breath odours, weight, hair and skin colour are important factors in nonverbal communication. People react and respond to these. This makes people influential in determining the responses in interpersonal encounters.

Touching Behaviour: Stroking, hitting, holding, or guiding the movements of another person send nonverbal messages to the receiver that may modify or reinforce the verbal communication. Each of these adds a different meaning to the message. Touching can console or support the other person and show feelings of affection, sexual interest or dominance. Hand gestures demonstrate feelings and translate thoughts and words into movements. A handshake for example can suggest dominance or equality. A pat on the arm may convey intimacy or control.

Vocal Qualities or Paralanguage

Paralanguage is that part of language associated with the use of the language, but not with the word system. It is how something is said rather than what is said. This includes the range of nonverbal vocal cues surrounding speech behaviour and includes voice qualities and vocalizations. Voice qualities include:

- Pitch range
- Pitch control
- Rhythm control
- Tempo
- Articulation control
- Resonance.

Vocalizations also give clues to the total message. These include

- Vocal qualifiers (vocal pitch, laughing, crying, sighing, yawning, clearing the throat, groaning, yelling, whispering, etc.)
- Vocal segregates (interjections, words like ‘Uh-huh,’ ‘Er..’, ‘Ah,’ etc., as well as silent pauses and other intruding sounds – they are sounds, but they do not form words).

The nonverbal components of spoken communication are an important part of the total message. These include

- The tone of voice
- Rate of speaking, and
- Voice inflection.

A tired person, for example, will speak more slowly than usual, a disappointed person may speak with a flat tone, whilst excitement will manifest itself in rapid, high-pitched speech.

Use of Space or Proximity: How people use their own personal space and the space of others, conveys messages. Tower over another person, intrude into their personal space, and you will cause discomfort and withdrawal.
Personal space varies according to gender, status, roles and culture. People in most cultures usually keep acquaintances/colleagues at about an arm’s length (literally!). Speaking to family and friends, they may leave an elbow’s length between themselves and others. People in intimate relationships allow direct and close contact. This use of space reflects the way people feel with others.
The way space is used can be an indicator of status. Contrast the size of the office of a managing director with that of the personal assistant and you will recognize the symbolic use of space to denote authority and status.

Artifacts are objects used to convey nonverbal messages about self-concept, image, mood, feelings of style. For example, perfume, lipstick, clothes, glasses, etc. project the style or mood of the wearer. Many artifacts are common to the group (i.e., sari in India, chadra in Moslem societies, etc.).
These are important and highly visible aspects of nonverbal communication (choice of clothes reflects one’s attitudes, personality, and mood). Your attitudes, appearance and personality will, of course, be subject to other people’s subjective interpretation.
Some artifacts (police badge, uniform, or an Italian suit, etc.) reflect power or lack of it, as the case may be. Even if you decide not to bother with personal appearance or clothes, others will read this message as part of your nonverbal communication.

Environmental Factors

The environment is the aggregate of surrounding things, conditions or influences. Elements in the environment such as furniture, style, smells, music, and colour all communicate. *The environment in your place of work is part of the organisation’s image and has an impact on staff and customer relations.* The environment should put people at ease and match their expectations, as an inappropriate environment generates 'noise' which interferes with effective communication.

Use of Time

In business, punctuality or lack of it can be powerful nonverbal communication. Disregard for punctuality, like sloppy appearance, merely reflect a casual attitude. However, a deliberate decision to keep a contact waiting may be a way to communicate a negative message.

5. Nonverbal Communication in the Total Message

Nonverbal signals modify or change the spoken words in six ways; it may

- Repeat
- Contradict
- Substitute
- Complement
- Accentuate

the main message.

It can also control the flow of communication.

Examples:

a. A warm smile and a firm handshake will repeat, complement, and accentuate a welcoming greeting.

b. A frown and a groan will contradict an acceptance of invitation to a party.

c. A nod will usually substitute agreement.

How to Check Out the Meaning of the Nonverbal Behaviour

To understand the total message it is important to:

- Hear the words
- Observe the nonverbal signals
- Check out their meaning with the sender when the verbal and nonverbal cues send different messages
- Consider the context or setting.

For communication to be effective, all of the above factors should be taken into account and synthesized to form the total message.

Assignments

1. Why is nonverbal communication an important part of the spoken message?

2. Using examples from your own experience, list two nonverbal behaviours, which can express love and two nonverbal behaviours which can express anger.

3. What is the nonverbal message sent by the larger chairs and office furniture of senior managers?

4. At which position at a rectangular table would the leader of a meeting sit: the head, the foot, or the side? Justify your answer.

5. Explain the difference between nonverbal messages personal to the individual and nonverbal messages common to a group of people.

6. List the main differences between the rule-governed behaviour for sitting and walking between girls and boys. Compare the socially acceptable ways in which arms, legs, and the body are used when men sit and when women sit.

7. Observe the nonverbal behaviour of at least two people. Make a list of these nonverbal behaviours. Do you think the people like or dislike one another? In a few words, justify your assumption/opinion.

8. Work with someone else in your group by standing together.

    a. While one person stays still, on exactly the same spot, the other person places themselves comfortably in relation to the person standing.
    b. The person who has made the decision on comfortable distance can say what made them choose their position.
    c. The person who is standing still, can talk about how they feel, that is, whether the other person is standing too close, the effect of the angle, the amount of contact, the impact of height difference, gender issues, body size and individual space.

9. Name and briefly explain six ways in which nonverbal behaviour can modify or change the spoken words.
10. Why and when is it important to check the meaning of the nonverbal part of the message?

Lecture 7:

APPLYING FOR EMPLOYMENT: RESUME OR C.V. WRITING
JOB INTERVIEW

1. **Applying for Employment: Resume, or C.V. Writing**
2. **Job Interview**
3. **Stages of a Job Interview**
4. **Post-Interview Stage**
5. **Types of Questions Asked in Job Interviews**

1. Applying for Employment: Resume, or C.V. Writing

When you apply for a job, most employers ask for <u>2 important documents:</u>

- A C.V. or resume
- A covering letter

Curriculum Vitae (noun): a brief account of one's education, qualifications, and previous occupation [Latin = *course of life*]

A CV is also called a resume (especially in American English). Your CV is a summary of your professional/academic life until now, and is usually concentrated on your

- Personal details
- Education and
- Work experience.

Your CV and letter are usually the first impression that an employer has of you. And because an employer may have hundreds of job applications to consider, you have about 15 seconds to make sure that first impression is a good one. Remember – you never get a second chance to make the first impression!

Why do you need a good CV? Your CV's job is to get you an interview. To do this, it must:

- Attract
- Inform
- Persuade
- Sell

A good CV is one of your most important tools in the search for employment. For it to be effective, your CV must <u>not</u> be:

- Too long,
- Boring, or
- Difficult to read

A CV is not your life story or autobiography; it is not catalogue of your personal opinions, or list of problems with past employers.

<u>Your CV must be:</u>

- Clear
- Concise (as short as functionally possible)
- Coherent (well organized)
- Interesting
- Attractive
- Easy to read, and
- Relevant to the job offered.

It should be as much about the employer as about you: it should focus on the benefits for the employer. It is an important document, which should answer all employer's questions.

<u>Content:</u>

Your CV is a summary of your professional life. You should include everything that is

- <u>relevant to your employment or career</u>, and
- <u>nothing that is irrelevant to the particular job you are applying for.</u>

Exactly what you include depends largely on your type of work. There are usually 6 general headings to include:

- **Personal details:** name, address, email and telephone number (and sometimes nationality, age/date of birth, place of birth, and marital status).
- **Objective:** a headline that summarises the job opportunity you are seeking.
- **Work experience:** your previous employment in reverse chronological order, with most detail for your present or most recent job.
- **Education:** details of secondary and/or university education, including the establishments and qualifications (but excluding any that are irrelevant to your career)
- **Personal interests:** demonstrating that you are a balanced, responsible member of society with an interesting life outside work

- **References:** names and addresses of usually three unrelated to you people who can recommend you

Sometimes you may need to give additional information for a particular job or because you have special skills and qualifications, which will then come under relevant headings.

In our Bus. Comm. A course, we the Job Application Letter (BCA Lecture 5, p. 45). To re-cap:
The Covering Letter is a Sales Letter: the product it is selling is your CV. Your letter should:

- Confirm that you are applying for the position
- Say where you learned about the position
- Say why you want the position
- Say why you would be a benefit to the company
- Request an interview.

Format:

Word-processed or hand-written?
Your CV and covering letter should be word-processed, for several reasons. Firstly, in the English-speaking world, a hand-written CV or business letter would be considered unprofessional. Secondly, many recruitment agencies and some employers like to electronically scan CVs. Thirdly, it will be much easier for you to update and modify your CV to suit the targeted job/position.

How many pages?
It is usually best to limit your CV to a maximum of 2 pages. You can usually put everything you need to get an interview on 1 or 2 pages. If you put more than this, the employer has too much to read. In addition, if you put everything in the CV, you will have nothing new to say at the interview.

What size paper?
There are basically 2 standard paper sizes, depending on the part of the world:

- A4 (297 x 210 mm) – used largely in Europe and Australia, and
- US Letter Size (8.5 x 11 inches) – used largely in the United States.

What quality paper?
Remember that several people may read and handle your CV. It will also be an important document during your interview. Choose a good quality, fairly heavy paper, so that it will remain in good condition at all times.

What sort of typeface?

Choose an easy-to-read typeface. Typefaces are designed for specific purposes. The standard typefaces, Times New Roman or Arial, are perfect for your CV. Not too small, not too large! A size 10 or 12 point would be appropriate.

DO NOT USE CAPITALS LIKE THIS! CAPITALS ARE VERY DIFFICULT TO READ AND MAY BE CONSIDERED IMPOLITE IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD.

Vocabulary:

Simplicity and Clarity!!!

If you want people to read your CV, your language must be simple and clear.

Use short words and short sentences.

Do not use technical vocabulary, unless you are sure that the receiver will understand it.

Talk about concrete facts ('I increased sales by 50%'), not abstract ideas ('I was responsible for a considerable improvement in our market position').

Use verbs in the active voice ('I organized this exhibition'), not the passive voice ('This exhibition was organized by me').

Power Words!!!

Certain words are used frequently by recruiters in their job descriptions. You can study recruiters' advertisements and job descriptions and try to use these words in your CV and covering letter.

The most powerful words are verbs. And the most powerful verbs are action verbs. (Action verbs describe dynamic activity, not states of being).

So you should use plenty of action verbs matched to your skills, and use them in the active form, not the passive form. Which of these two sentences do you think is more powerful?

> I increased sales by 100%.
> Sales were increased by 100%.

Here is a list of typical action verbs, categorized by skills:

Communication Skills: address, arbitrate, correspond, draft, edit, lecture, mediate, motivate, negotiate, persuade, present, publicise, reconcile, speak, write

Management Skills: assign, attain, chair, co-ordinate, delegate, direct, execute, organize, oversee, plan, recommend, review, strengthen, supervise, train

Research Skills: collect, critique, define, detect, diagnose, evaluate, examine, explore, extract, identify, inspect, interpret, investigate, summarise, survey

Technical Skills: assemble, build, calculate, devise, engineer, fabricate, maintain, operate, overhaul, program, remodel, repair, solve, upgrade

Creative Skills: conceptualise, create, design, fashion, form, illustrate, institute, integrate, invent, originate, perform, revitalize, shape

Financial Skills: administer, allocate, analyse, appraise, assess, audit, balance, budget, calculate, control, compute, develop, evaluate, forecast, project

Sales Skills: sell, convert, close, deal, persuade, highlight, satisfy, win over, sign

Teaching Skills: advise, clarify, coach, elicit, enable, encourage, explain, facilitate, guide, inform, instruct, persuade, stimulate, train, etc.

BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH

There are sometimes differences between British and American English and conventions. Here are some of the most important differences for your CV/resume and covering letter.

UK: CV/curriculum vitae
US: resume, resume

UK: covering letter
US: cover letter, covering letter

UK: Mrs., Miss
US: Ms

UK: Dear Sirs
US: Gentlemen

UK: Yours faithfully
US: Yours truly

UK: Yours sincerely
US: Sincerely, Sincerely yours, Yours truly

UK: Managing Director (MD)
US: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), General manager

Date formats:

UK: DD/MM/YY (30/12/99, or 30 December 1999)
US: MM/DD/YY (12/30/99, or December 30th, 1999)

11 Tips:

Tip 1: use design that attracts attention
Employers do not have time to read through each of your job descriptions to see if you have the skills they need. The design of your CV must do it for them.

Tip 2: Match your headings to the job
Use a job title and skill heading that match the job you want. If you use unrelated job titles or skills, employers will automatically think that you are not right for the job in question

Tip 3: Write convincing content
Good design will get the employer's attention. But after that, you must concentrate on the content of your CV, the actual descriptions of your skills and abilities.

Tip 4: Use 'power words'
To control the image that the employer has of you, use power words that match the position you want.

Tip 5: Use 0123456789
People react to numbers! Numbers are dynamic and powerful. They create vivid images in our minds. General statements are easy to ignore. Be specific, use numbers when describing your duties and achievements. Don't talk about 'managing a major turnover' – talk about 'managing a K27,000,000.00 turnover'!

Tip 6: Put important information first
List important, relevant information at the beginning of your job description. Put statements in your CV in the order of importance, impressiveness, and relevance to the job you want.

Tip 7: Find key words from the job description in the ad
Let the employer do your work for you! Employers spend much time and money writing job advertisements and descriptions that contain key words for the position offered. Read these descriptions carefully to find the key words. Then use them in your job application letter and CV.

Tip 8: Sell benefits, not skills
Holiday companies do not sell holidays. They sell relaxation, adventure, sunshine, the palm trees, the sea, and the sand! They sell *the benefits* of a holiday! You should not sell your skills – many other people may have them too; you should sell the benefits of your

skills. When you write your skills and past duties, be careful to explain their benefits to the employer.

Tip 9: Solve your employer's needs – even if they are hidden!
Your CV and cover letter should show how you can solve the employer's problems and needs.

Tip 10: Create the right image for the salary
Use language that creates the right image for the level of job and salary you want. Position yourself at the appropriate level. The language you use will immediately influence the employer's perception of you.

Tip 11: Target the job
You will have more success if you adjust your CV and cover letter for the specific skills an employer is seeking. This means that you would write one CV for one particular job, and a different, modified, CV for another job. You 're-package' yourself. In that way, an employer will see immediately that you correspond to the job description. It is not dishonest to 're-package' yourself. You are simply presenting yourself and your skills in the best light for a particular employer.

2. Job Interview

A job interview is your opportunity to convince a potential employer that you are the best person for the job. It is the opportunity that your resume and cover letter have gained for you and it is often your first face-to-face contact with the employer.
It is important that you are both well informed and effective in presenting yourself. You need to sell yourself to the interviewer. At the same time, you need to be able to collect information about the job and the organization so that you can decide whether you are interested in the position and whether you would be comfortable in the organization.
The interview itself has a purpose and a structure. The interviewer, from whom you take your lead, should control it. Your own role is to demonstrate your interest in and suitability for the job. Your effectiveness in doing that influences your immediate career opportunities.

3. Stages of a Job Interview

Pre-interview stage: research, prepare, and identify your strengths. Complete a self-evaluation. Know your own aims and the requirements for the job. Analyse the job advertisement for the essential and desirable skills and qualities. Document all the necessary and relevant information about your qualifications and experience. Check these against the information in your resume and the cover letter.

Opening the interview: Begin the interview confidently and courteously. Create a positive first impression by entering the interview room confidently with body upright, relaxed shoulders and good eye contact. Greet the interviewer or panel with a firm handshake. Take time to organize your thoughts and your papers and seat yourself comfortably. Find a comfortable position for your legs and arms so that you can sit comfortably without fidgeting, but can use your hands for emphasis. If you need to change where you are seated, politely state why you are doing so. For example, if you cannot see all the members of the interview panel, say 'I am sure you won't mind if I move the chair so that I can see everybody.' As the interviewee, you are also assessing the company or organization, so behave politely, but assertively.

Firm eye contact shows confidence. Keep your head upright, be careful of frowning and the use of your mouth. Encourage the interviewers by smiling and nodding when appropriate. Voice volume, clarity and knowing what you want to say are important in creating a positive impression. Vocal inflection provides variety and interest to your presentation.

Body of the interview: listen carefully! This is the working stage of the interview where you must present yourself confidently and persuasively. Listen carefully to questions and seek to answer them thoughtfully and confidently. Maintain eye contact with the person who is questioning you, but be sensitive and avoid making them uncomfortable. Consider your posture; it should be relaxed and natural. It almost goes without saying: never chew gum or smoke in an interview.

Answer questions. A variety of questions are used in interviews. Some questions at interviews may seem irrelevant or annoying. If you treat these questions as an opportunity to demonstrate a skill or achievement, you can resist displaying your irritation.

Experienced interviewers design the questions to focus on the job and aim to keep the questions free of bias and discrimination. Carefully constructed questions are unambiguous, unbiased and easy to understand.

Fig. 1:

Questions commonly asked by the interviewer:
How do you organize your day?
What have you done to make your job more satisfying?
What are your hobbies and interests?
Have you conducted a meeting or done any public speaking? What kind of feedback did you receive?
Tell me about the positions you have held.
In your last job, what accomplishments gave you the most satisfaction?
Why did you leave your last job?
What qualifications and skills do you believe the successful person for this position should have?
Do you feel pressure in your job? How do you deal with it?
What do you see as your strengths and weaknesses?
What are your career goals for the next 5 years?
Tell me about a problem you've solved in the past six months.
Can you give me an example of a good decision you have made in the past six months?

What were the alternatives?
What do you understand of Equal Employment opportunity?
What do you consider your best abilities?
Why did you apply for this position?
What can you bring to this position that others can't?
By the interviewee:
How many people are employed in the organization?
Where would I be working?
What are the projects I would be working on if I were employed in this position?
Will training be available?
Is the company intending to expand into other areas?
How many have applied for this position?
When will I hear the results of my application?
When would you like the successful applicant to start in the position?

Close of the Interview
The interviewer will indicate that the interview is over. Recognize this signal and be ready to express thanks for the time and consideration that has been given to you. If you are interested in the position, let them know and ask when their decision will be made.

4. Post-Interview Stage

Learn from your performance in the interview. By reviewing your performance in the interview you can learn from what you did well. If you are unhappy about any part of your performance, decide how to perform better on another occasion. What experiences were pleasant, unpleasant, challenging, awkward, or uncomfortable?
Evaluate the way you answered questions and presented yourself so that your preparation for future interviews will be more focused and you will have greater confidence. Reflect on any aspects of the interview that you handled well and those that you believe you could have handled better.
Follow-up. You may choose to follow up the interview with a telephone call or letter to the company or organization, inquiring about the result. A follow-up letter can demonstrate your interest in the position. In the follow-up letter, include:
A 'thank you' to the interviewer for their time
Elaboration on the points you may have overlooked or covered only briefly
Confirmation of your interest in the position.

A follow-up telephone call also confirms your interest in the position. If you have not heard from the company or organization within seven days, call the interviewer and express your interest and ask when you are likely to hear. The interviewer can explain the reasons for the delay and let you know if you were successful or unsuccessful.

Accept the offer. Consider the job offer. Sometimes it is offered by telephone. At other times it is offered in writing. An offer in writing is clear and the conditions of employment such as hours of work and salary will be clearly spelt out.

Once you have made up your mind, telephone the contact person and let them know you are accepting or rejecting the position. Then you should write a courteous letter to state your acceptance and pleasure in accepting the position.

5. Types of Questions Asked in Job Interviews

Interviewers ask a range of questions during an interview. These different types of questions allow the interviewer scope to gather specific information to evaluate the extent of your knowledge and experience or to gauge your ability to apply that knowledge to practical situations. Five different types of questions are asked in interviews:

1. open questions
2. closed questions
3. mirror questions
4. leading questions
5. probing questions

Questions may cover topics such as communication skills, energy and motivation levels, creativity, ability to handle stress, career ambitions, persuasiveness, initiative, planning, controlling and analytical skills.
We briefly touched upon the principles behind each type of question and examples of each in our lecture on questionnaires; now let us take a closer look.

Open Questions

The open question encourages interviewees to speak freely and talk about themselves while the interviewer listens, observes, and makes notes. The interviewee's trust and confidence increase, because they determine what information and opinions they will offer. The open question is useful to overcome some of the apprehension and defensiveness often felt by the interviewee.

Examples:
"Could you tell me a little about how you got your promotion?" or
"What did you do then?"
As the interviewer listens, they may decide to probe for further information or clarification of a point.
Open questions should be used carefully and sparingly, as they can elicit time-consuming answers and irrelevant information, depending on the communication skills of the interviewee and the skill of the interviewer in analyzing the response.

Closed Questions

The closed question is designed to limit the interviewee's response and to establish familiar facts, such as their address, previous employment, or qualifications. Closed questions can clarify or fill any gaps in the answers to open questions, for example,
"Have you used Excel?" or
"Have you got a driver's licence/First Aid Certificate?"

The main disadvantage of closed questions is that they provide too little information. This type of question discourages further explanation by the applicant.

Mirror Questions

The mirror question restates the interviewee's previous answer and invites them to add further information, for example:
Interviewee's answer: "I thought the group I worked with on the project was great."

Mirror question back: "The group was great?"
Interviewee's answer: "Yes. We shared ideas and I liked the support of the group. I like working in groups."

Leading Questions

The leading question directs the interviewee to clarify answers, for example,
"You like using computers in your work?" or
"Are you satisfied with the quality of the product?"
The interviewer should be careful not to bias the response or create a threatening environment.

Probing Questions

The probing question follows on from the last response of the interviewee. This type of question is spontaneous rather than planned. It aims to probe the basis for the interviewee's response, for example:

Interviewee's response: "My present job requires me to manage my time."

Probing question: "How do you manage your time?"

Each of the five types of questions is asked in a well-structured interview. When you prepare yourself and think about the type of questions that may be asked, you will be able to perform better in a job interview.

Assignments

1. Classify each question in Figure 1 as either open, closed, mirror, leading, or probing question.

2. List the 11 tips for CV and cover letter writing discussed.

3. Describe the content and format of your CV.