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Way to Professional Success

Welcome to the MRCET lineage.

We would like to take this opportunity to tell you a small biblical story about David and Goliath.

This is how the story goes:

“Long ago Philistine army marched into southern Israel to make war on the Israelites, but instead of immediately engaging in battle, they camped in the Valley of Elah. The Israelites under King Saul made camp nearby.

Goliath, of the philistine army who is described as a "champion" in the Biblical text, positioned himself between the armies and challenged the Israelites to send out a warrior to challenge him. If that man won, the Philistines would become the subjects of Saul's army. If Goliath won, the converse would occur. For 40 days, morning and evening, Goliath issued his challenge. However, no man stepped forward to accept it.

So here David (Our Hero) steps in. David was the youngest of the eight sons of the Bethlehemite Jesse and the smartest in his family.

When delivering roasted grain and bread to his brothers on the battlefield, David heard Goliath's haughty challenge and burned with anger. The youth went before Saul and offered to fight the giant, who stood six cubits and a span (three meters, or 9' 9").

David's brothers were terrified of goliath and they said to him “Don't you see he is too big to hit?”

But David said, “No, he is not too big to hit, he is too big to miss”. (*Remember this!!!*)

Though initially skeptical of David's capacity to defeat Goliath, Saul was persuaded to allow the match.

David rejected the king's offer of armor and a sword and went out to fight Goliath with a staff and five smooth stones he had taken from a nearby stream. Goliath mocked David for coming against him with "sticks," cursed him, and then closed in to attack. David drew a stone from his bag and used his sling to send it flying into the giant's head. David killed the giant with the sling shot. ”

Here, what we wanted to tell you is that it was the same giant for all, yet different perceptions.

Why different perceptions and which one is the right one? How will you know?

Right Perception = Right Attitude + Right Direction

This way to professional success handout is our first step towards your right perception. WPS manual is a compilation of different topics by our faculty keeping the freshmen in mind to become industry-ready engineers. We hope this will help you in your future endeavors.

Thanks,

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ATTITUDE

There's a well-known quote that goes "Our attitude towards life determines life's attitude towards us." Attitudes do make a difference. Salesmen using the ideal attitude beat their sales quotas; students using the proper attitudes make A's. Suitable attitudes pave the way to a truly happy married life.

Correct attitudes make you powerful in coping with other people to ensure that it is possible to be effective as a leader. Among the very first qualities men and women notice when they meet you is what your attitude is towards whatever you are responsible for. If your attitudes are negative, then you might want to undergo an "attitude tune-up".

Fully grasp the importance of attitude. Your attitude impacts every little thing you do, feel and say. If you wish to turn your attitude about and get into action towards your destiny, you might want to have the ability to resist negative or pessimistic thoughts that creep into your consciousness. Surround yourself with positive men and women, and maintain in mind your ultimate objective of achieving the, respect, good results and wealth which you deserve. **Be in a Positive environment.**

Opt to remain positive. Power to choose is God given. You are going to encounter some hurdles and encounter some failures in life; but it is really crucial that you simply manage how you respond to whatever takes place, and maintain your positive attitude, whilst working towards your objective. The bible says "I have set before of you, blessings and curses, life and death. So choose life" What will likely be your choice? Program" your attitude by training yourself to remain upbeat. Identify negative attitudes that continually set you back. **Maintain Positive attitude.**

Assess your present day attitude and identify aspects of which could be stopping you from becoming prosperous. What are the underlying causes of one's negative attitudes? Remind yourself that you simply are far better than you believe. Take a walk if you are frustrated. Just look at life as you walk until the disappointment is out of your system. **Assess your everyday attitude.**

Determine to live your life with purpose and passion. Reassess exactly where you wish your life to go and all which you would like to accomplish. Get a clear vision, to ensure that you've got something to reach for. When you have got your objectives firmly established, then you'll be able to turn your new positive attitudes into action. **Establish goals firmly.**

Create a method for sustaining the proper attitude. Prepare yourself to deal with any difficult scenarios that may well threaten your attitudes and throw you off course. You ought to create some self-motivation tactics like affirmations, visualization, positive talk, enthusiasm and heightened expectations Read books and articles on these subjects and build understanding and abilities to boost your attitude. **Self motivate is best motivation.**

Follow the five steps outlined above, and create attitudes which will transform your life and assure that you get the success you deserve.

A motivational story: The one armed Judo champion

A 10-year-old boy decided to study judo despite the fact that he had lost his left arm in a devastating car accident. The boy began lessons with an old Japanese judo master. The boy was doing well, so he couldn't understand why, after three months of training the master had taught him only one move.

"Sensei," (Teacher in Japanese) the boy finally said, "Shouldn't I be learning more moves?" "This is the only move you know, but this is the only move you'll ever need to know," the Sensei replied. Not quite understanding, but believing in his teacher, the boy kept training. Several months later, the Sensei took the boy to his first tournament.

Surprising himself, the boy easily won his first two matches. The third match proved to be more difficult, but after some time, his opponent became impatient and charged; the boy deftly used his one move to win the match. Still amazed by his success, the boy was now in the finals. This time, his opponent was bigger, stronger, and more experienced. For a while, the boy appeared to be overmatched. Concerned that the boy might get hurt, the referee called a time-out. He was about to stop the match when the sensei intervened.

"No," the Sensei insisted, "Let him continue." Soon after the match resumed, his opponent made a critical mistake: he dropped his guard. Instantly, the boy used his move to pin him. The boy had won the match and the tournament.

He was the champion. On the way home, the boy and sensei reviewed every move in each and every match. Then the boy summoned the courage to ask what was really on his mind.

Sensei, how did I win the tournament with only one move?"

"You won for two reasons," the Sensei answered. "First, you've almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defense for that move is for your opponent to grab your left arm."

The boy's biggest weakness had become his biggest strength.

Sometimes we feel that we have certain weaknesses and we blame God, the circumstances or ourselves for it but we never know that our weaknesses can become our strengths one day.

Each of us is special and important, so never think you have any weakness, never think of pride or pain, just live your life to its fullest and extract the best out of it!"

8 SUCCESS SECRETS

The views on success of many of the nation's top motivational speakers and authors can be summarized into 8 success secrets. These ideas were taken from interviews with 15 of the nation's top motivational speakers and authors, including motivational speaker Brian Tracy, authors Les Brown and Dr. Wayne Dyer, sales motivator Mike Ferry, seminar leader Patricia Fripp, and "Chicken Soup" authors Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen.

This is an effort to study how successful people think and uncover what drives them. If you truly understand their belief systems, levels of commitment and positive attitudes toward life--and integrate these ways of thinking into your own belief system--you should be able to succeed at anything you put your mind to.

These 8 "secrets" are:

1. Take 100 percent responsibility for your life
2. Live your life "on purpose"
3. Be willing to pay the price for your dreams
4. Stay focused
5. Become an expert in your field
6. Write out a plan for achieving your goals
7. Never give up
8. Don't delay

1. Take 100 percent responsibility for your life

In a society where people blame everything from their parents to the government for their failure to get ahead in life, these men and women refused to buy into the mentality that says "I could succeed if only it weren't for ____."

They realized that when you say someone or something outside of yourself is preventing you from succeeding, you're giving away your power to that someone or something. You're saying, "You have more control over my life than I do!"

Successful people don't buy into this victim thinking. Rather, their personal credo is "If it's to be, it's up to me!"

Consider Les Brown. Abandoned by his parents at birth and labeled "educable mentally retarded" by his schoolteachers, he had every reason for giving up on himself and his dreams. But when a high school teacher told him "Someone else's opinion of you does not have to become your reality," Brown realized in that moment that his future lay in his own hands. He went on to become a state legislator and author, and today earns \$20,000 per hour as one of America's top motivational speakers.

What Brown understood was that there are certain things in life you can't control, such as nature, the past and other people. But there are things you absolutely can control, such as your thoughts and your actions. Taking 100 percent responsibility for your life is one of the most empowering things you can do for yourself.

2. Live your life "on purpose"

Perhaps what separates these motivational superstars from others more than anything else is that they live their lives "on purpose." That is, they are doing what they believe they were put here to do.

Professional public speakers will tell you that the time they feel most alive is when they are on stage, connecting with an audience. Wayne Dyer opines, "Having a sense of purpose in your life is the most important element of becoming a fully functioning person!"

The difference between living your life on purpose and not living it on purpose is like night and day. The latter consists of simply getting through the week with the least amount of problems while expending just enough effort to get by.

But, when you live your life on purpose, your main concern is doing the job right. You love what you do--and it shows. Your conviction is as evident as it is persuasive. And you will find that people want to do business with you because they sense your commitment to giving your all.

How do you live your life on purpose? By finding a cause you believe in and creating a business around it. For example, Mike Ferry, who was once a top salesperson selling audiotope programs, believed realtors needed help developing sales skills. So he started The Mike Ferry Organization, a seminar and training company for the real estate industry. Today, he earns more than \$10 million a year from seminar and product sales. Like Ferry, once you get your life on purpose and focus on providing value for others, the money will take care of itself.

3. Be willing to pay the price for your dreams

Wanting a big house, a luxury car or a million dollars in the bank is all very nice, but the problem is that practically everyone wants these things. The question then is, "Are you willing to pay the price to get them?"

This is one of the major differences between the successful and the unsuccessful. Successful men and women find out what it's going to cost to make their dream come true. Then they find a way to make it happen. Most importantly, they don't complain about the work it takes to achieve their dreams.

Les Brown says he has a callus on his left ear. Why? "When I decided to get into speaking, I had no credentials, no reputation, no credibility and no experience. So I had to call a lot of people," Brown explains. "I called over a hundred people a day, day in and day out, to ask for an opportunity to speak to their group. This callus is worth several million dollars!"

You can get practically anything you want in life--if you are willing to pay the price.

4. Stay focused

Every day, we are bombarded with hundreds of tasks, messages and people all competing for our time. This is why the ability to focus on your goal is so critical to achieving it. Focusing requires giving up some things in the present because you know the time invested will pay off big-time down the road. Focus on dreams.

Spend as much of your day as you can focusing on achieving your goals and dreams. Every day, ask yourself, "Is what I'm doing right now bringing me closer to my goal?" If it's not, do something that will. Focusing is like any habit: the more you do it, the easier it gets.

5. Become an expert in your field

One striking factor about all 15 motivational speakers I interviewed is how seriously they take their profession. Their drive to be the best at what they do is phenomenal. They'll do almost anything if they think it will help improve their speaking skills.

For example, Patricia Fripp, who speaks to Fortune 500 executives on how to become more successful, took a comedy workshop and hired a private speech coach because she wanted to improve her speaking ability. Fripp did this after she had already been named "One of the Ten Most Electrifying Speakers in North America" by Meetings & Conventions magazine. To Fripp, being one of the best simply wasn't good enough; she wanted to be the best she could be.

If someone followed you around at your business all day with a video camera to make a how-to tape for people who want to do what you do, would it be a tape you'd be proud of? Or will you be embarrassed? If the one who is shooting the video of your activities would like to work towards being the best in the field you are working in, then he believes that you are better than him. So the quickest way to become successful is to find out what the best are doing, and then do what they do.

6. Write out a plan for achieving your goals

Taking the time to write out an action plan, or map, for how you're going to achieve your goals is one of the best ways to get there faster.

Brian Tracy, one of America's most successful business sales trainers and speakers, points out, "Goals that are not in writing are not goals at all. They are merely wishes or fantasies."

Most people try to reach their goals without taking the time to write out an action plan. This is like trying to drive from Los Angeles to Denver without a map. Forget the fact that your odds of reaching your destination are extremely slim. The frustration and wasted time, energy and money will probably cause you to give up long before you get to the Rockies. With a map in hand, however, you'll not only enjoy the trip much more, but you're also virtually assured of arriving at your destination in the shortest time possible.

7. Never give up

It may sound simple, even obvious, but when you're truly committed to achieving your goal, giving up isn't even an option. You must be willing to do whatever it takes to make it happen.

In the mid-1970s, Wayne Dyer quit his job as a professor at Wayne State University to promote his new book, *Your Erroneous Zones*. However, no major talk show would book the then unknown Dyer. Did he give up? Not on your life. He loaded his car from floor to roof with hundreds of copies of his book, and then spent a year on the road traveling from small town to small town and appearing on any radio or TV talk show that would have him.

Once on the air, Dyer would give out the number of the local bookstore and say that his book was available there. After the interview, he'd quickly drive over to that bookstore, where the manager would say, "Oh, you're Wayne Dyer? We've been getting lots of calls for your book!" Dyer would reply, "Well, I have a case in the car--would you like some?" "Oh, yes! And would you sign some while you're here?"

By the end of the year, *The Tonight Show* was calling him. And by the end of the 1970s, *Your Erroneous Zones* had become the number-one best-selling nonfiction book of the entire decade. This is what the power of perseverance can do for you.

8. Don't delay

In his book *Live Your Dreams*, Les Brown recalls talking on the phone one day with a friend named Marion. The very next day, Marion's husband called to tell Brown she had died.

A few days later, Les was helping the husband clean out Marion's office when he came across some notes for a play she had been working on. Unfortunately, the play would never be published. Marion was the only one who knew how it was supposed to end, and now she was gone.

The lesson here is that Marion didn't know how much time she had left to accomplish her dreams, and neither do you or I. We must remember that we don't have forever. The clock is ticking, there are no time-outs, and sooner or later your number is going to be called. Top achievers know this, but rather than seeing it as something negative or depressing, they use it to spur them on to go after what they want as energetically and as passionately as possible.

Summary

Follow the 8 "secrets" from motivational experts and take 100 percent responsibility for your life, live your life on purpose, be willing to pay the price for your dreams, stay focused, become an expert in your field, and write out a plan for achieving your goals, never give up, and don't delay. These ideas follow well within the School for Champions philosophy.

Success doesn't have to be a secret

SUCCESS WINNING FORMULAE

Winners are not born. People are converted to winners by themselves

What is success?

Success is fixing, reaching and achieving goals in life. Success is victory, success is prosperity and Success is happiness. What is success for one may not be success for other. To become a winner in life, we should have right kind of attitude, the attitude of a winner.

Once upon a time, in a village, there lived a young and strong man. The only problem with the young man was that he was jobless. After searching & searching, he got a wood cutting job. The owner of the timber camp gave him a new axe. With this new axe he started cutting the trees with zeal and enthusiasm.

First day, he was able to cut 8 huge trees. The second day 7, Third day 6 and the performance went down daily and on the 8th day he was unable to cut even a single tree. The owner of the timber camp asked the young man "How come your performance is coming down & down everyday?". The Young man said "Sir, I have been working for the same length of time with the same zeal and enthusiasm and with the same axe you gave me. But I don't know why my performance is going down every day. Bose asked him, "Young man have you taken sometime of your schedule to sharpen your axe". The young man said "No Sir, I was too busy."

The owner looked at the eyes of the young man and told "Young man, please understand, it is not important to work harder, it is very important to work sharper.

So working sharper is the secret of success. So let us analyze the tools which can help us to work sharper.

"All things are done twice in this world: once in our mind and secondly in the physical world. Whatever you want to become, picturize it in your mind and the subconscious mind will make you happen, provided you follow certain winning formulae. Let us list out some of the winning formulae.

given to us in equal amount. Irrespective of cast, creed, gender, age, country etc., everyone gets equal amount of time i.e. 24 hours. Once you have lost it, you cannot get it back. The person who wins is the person who properly utilizes his time. So winning formulae no.1 is Time Management.

Communication & speaking skills: It is always very important to convey your thoughts and messages properly to the people you are dealing with. This is possible only through improving your communication and speaking skills. Speaking skills gives you a lot of courage and confidence and earns respect and admiration from the society. Remember, Poets are born; Orators are made," . So winning formula 2 is mastering communication & speaking skills.

Self confidence: It is the strong belief in yourself and your abilities. A talented man without confidence is like a powerful car without spark plugs. It gives you exceptional courage to perform unbelievable tasks. Self confidence is a psychological steroid that boosts our power. "The man who wins is the man who thinks he can." So winning formulae 3 is developing Self confidence.

Human relationship: No one is independent in life. We depend on others right from our birth till our death. Every person, no matter how big or small he is a stepping stone to our success. Remember, "A single flower does not make a garland." So winning formula 4 is keeping excellent relationship with people around you

Fixing Proper goal in life: There should be proper goals in life. By setting a goal, you decide what you want to achieve. Then create step by step moves toward the achievement of these objectives. To reach this goal, you will come across different situations which may give you enjoyment in life. So winning formulae 5 is fixing sharp & clearly defined goals

Health: If wealth is lost, something is lost. But if health is lost, everything is lost. Health is the most important aspect in life. Stress is one thing which affects the health. When stress is increased, it becomes distress and body starts showing continuous head ache, bronchial asthma, lack of memory, concentration, heart attack, High blood pressure, indigestion etc. Stress cannot be avoided and only can be managed. Relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation etc. can help to manage stress. Hence winning formula no6 is practicing relaxation techniques

Knowledge: Knowledge is power. Earning latest knowledge & skills, will remove fear of losing jobs and it gives extra courage to deal with life's different situations. So acquiring knowledge is winning formula 7

Creative thinking: All of us are gifted with a lot of creative potential. But it lies deep. Just as the sculptor has to chip away some stone with his chisel to release the statue, we have to chip away some of our conventional thinking to release our creative potential. Developing creative thinking is formulae no.8

Sharp memory: Memory is a yardstick to measure one's personality. The secret of sharp memory lies in systematic storage that facilitates instant retrieval. Every one of us can have a sharp memory irrespective of age, education and intelligence. Remember, "If you don't use it, you will soon lose it". Winning formula 9 is sharp memory.

There are some more aspects which affects the success of a person.

Optimist Attitude

Respecting Elders & Superiors

Controlling Anger

Honesty in your dealings

Fellow FRIENDS, There is a beautiful saying that whatever a mind of a person can conceive and believe, it can be achieved. If you master these habits or skills, you can surely become winner. These habits are to be consciously acquired, sub-consciously adhere to and finally practiced. When you take care of these, success becomes mandatory and you will be sure winner.

What is Success?

To laugh often and much;
 To win the respect of intelligent people
 And the affection of children;
 To earn the appreciation of honest critics
 And endure the betrayal of false friends;
 To appreciate beauty;
 To find the best in others;
 To leave the world a bit better, whether by
 A healthy child, a garden patch
 Or a redeemed social condition;

"Any man may commit a mistake, but none but a fool will continue in it."

Success? What is it? What is the way to it? What are the rewards? Do you have a right to succeed? The answers to these questions are in this brief article. It is about success. It is about how you can succeed and, in particular, in the profession of exercise physiology.

All too often we hear others saying, "Get in line and wait your turn." This idea is all too common. It isn't the road to success, but rather failure. It turns our hopes into forgotten dreams. So, we must be on the lookout for such statements, particularly if they are designed to keep us from realizing success.

Yes, being successful can spoil some people. They begin to think everything revolves around them. They become egotistical and, unfortunately, believe only they have the right answers to every question. The dangers of success have been written about for years, but that is not the purpose of this article.

This article is about "What is success, the way to it, and your right to be successful?" It is about you and how you can become a success. In this article, I am especially concerned with the compelling vision and objectives of the *American Society of Exercise Physiologists* (ASEP). I take the view that success is just minutes away from fulfillment by joining the Society. I won't pretend that you can't succeed in other organizations -- of course anything is possible. The truth is that I want you to consider membership in the Society of exercise physiologists.

Through hard work and dedication to ASEP's vision, members of the Society are working hard to achieve the extraordinary. They are working together to design and secure the future for all exercise physiologists. But, before you read any further, stop and tell yourself:

- It is O.K. to want your own organization.
- It is O.K. to think as an exercise physiologist.
- It is O.K. to look out for yourself.
- It is O.K. to believe that sports medicine is not exercise physiology.
- It is O.K. to recognize the need to professionalize.
- It is O.K. to want to succeed as an exercise physiologist.

It is O.K. to be an exercise physiologist! You don't have to apologize to anyone. You don't have to feel guilty about what is logical. You have the right to your feelings even though others may tell you that success can't be realized outside of sports medicine.

Success begins, therefore, first with your instincts to follow logical thinking. Then, the best way to succeed is to begin with a reasonable plan for realizing your hopes and expectations. The process is a journey if not an adventure with surprises on every front. It begins with the first step, however small even if your goals should change along the way. At least, take the step and become part of history.

Common Characteristics of Winners:

- a. Time Managers:** Time is your life. If you waste time, you waste life. Winner manages the time and never managed by the time. You need to identify the time wasters & utilize the available time constructively. If you want to become a winner, start becoming conscious about time, its management thereby optimize your performance.
- b. Effective communication skills:** Communication is the life blood of relationship. Mastering effective communication means rest of the things will follow on a mandatory basis in life. A man who can communicate acceptably has given credit far more than he really deserves. We will get umpteen number of examples who are accrescently successful than their eternal worth, entirely because they can communicate effectively.

- c. **Manage the stress & maintain health:** If health is lost everything is lost. Stress is the one thing that kills human beings alive. Stress evokes emergency reactions within the body. When stress crosses the border of tolerance it becomes distress & leads to destruction of health. Exercise & relaxation are the best ever available weapons for managing stress as well as health. Hence exercise regularly and enjoy a healthy & stress free life.
- d. **Have short term & long term goals:** Fixing worthwhile & right kind of goals is mandatory for a winner in life. The goals you fix must be personnel, Practical, Positive, time bound and measurable. When you disseminate any goal firmly within your mind, the right kind of guidance you will get from the right people at right time.
- e. **Maintain excellent relationships:** Smile is a powerful tool, a winner can ever have to develop the relationships. D. L. Kharney rightly said, if you want to become a winner in life maintain excellent relationship with the people around you. Treat others as you expect to be treated. Don't criticize, condemn or complain, because what you don't like people don't like. Give sincere & honest appreciation whenever it is due. Become genuinely interested with the people you interact.
- f. **Have a positive mental attitude:** One is a product of once thinking. Always count your blessings, not the troubles. It is not necessary to win each & every battle. You may fail once or twice, but failure is the high way for success. Analyze your failure & make a fresh attempt. Luck follows, only to those who work with positive attitude.

The success formulae:

➤ Convert Thoughts into Action

As the fruit to the tree and the water to the spring, so is action to thought. It does not come into manifestation suddenly and without a cause. It is the result of a long and silent growth; the end of a hidden process which has long been gathering force. The fruit of the tree and the water gushing from the rock are both the effect of a combination of natural processes in air and earth which have long worked together in secret to produce the phenomenon; and the beautiful acts of enlightenment and the dark deeds of sin are both the ripened effects of trains of thought which have long been harbored in the mind. Actions are more important than thoughts. *If thoughts are not converted into actions, they are of utter waste.*

➤ Convert Troubles into Opportunity.

We have a live example how Indefatigable Anna Hazare, was so successful in converting the trouble into opportunity, just by sitting inside the jail. He became an icon & got accrescent support throughout the world. Optimistic person looks for an opportunity in every problem. On the contrary, Pessimistic person looks for a problem in every chance & does not proceed in life.

➤ Develop abundant enthusiasm & self confidence:

All winners have abundant enthusiasm & self confidence. Enthusiasm & Self confidence is alleger of life. Enthusiasm makes the difference & it adds spice to the life. Self confidence is a medicine without prescription.

➤ Sharpen your memory.

All winners in life have phenomenal memory. There is nothing like good memory and bad memory. There is only tuned & un-tuned memory. Constantly practicing recalling techniques improves the whole system. A winner practices recalling techniques regularly & sharpens his memory.

➤ **Develop a healthy self image.**

People who feel good about themselves produce excellent results in life. Napoleon said, Feeling good about yourself is not a luxury but an absolute necessity.

Friends, let us integrate these disseminated principles, which formulates the winning formula & let us emerge as an indefatigable winner in life & imbue success.

Motivational story 1: NARAYANAN KRISHNAN

After going through many success formulae's....it would be nice to take a break and learn about a man who embraced success not with his hands but with his heart.....

Madurai, India (CNN) -- Narayanan Krishnan was a bright, young, award-winning chef with a five-star hotel group, short-listed for an elite job in Switzerland. But a quick family visit home before heading to Europe changed everything.

"I saw a very old man eating his own human waste for food," Krishnan said. "It really hurt me so much. I was literally shocked for a second. After that, I started feeding that man and decided this is what I should do the rest of my lifetime."

Krishnan was visiting a temple in the south Indian city of Madurai in 2002 when he saw the man under a bridge. Haunted by the image, Krishnan quit his job within the week and returned home for good, convinced of his new destiny.

"That spark and that inspiration is a driving force still inside me as a flame -- to serve all the mentally-ill destitute and people who cannot take care of themselves," Krishnan said.

Krishnan founded his nonprofit Akshaya Trust in 2003. Now 29, he has served more than 1.2 million meals -- breakfast, lunch and dinner -- to India's homeless and destitute, mostly elderly people abandoned by their families and often abused.

"Because of the poverty India faces, so many mentally ill people have been ... left uncared [for] on the roadside of the city," he said.

Krishnan said the name Akshaya is Sanskrit word for "imperishable," and was chosen "to signify [that] human compassion should never decay or perish. ... The spirit of helping others must prevail forever." Also, in Hindu mythology, Goddess Annapoorani's "Akshaya bowl" fed the hungry endlessly, never depleting its resources.

Krishnan's day begins at 4 a.m. He and his team cover nearly 125 miles in a donated van, routinely working in temperatures topping 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

He seeks out the homeless under bridges and in the nooks and crannies between the city's temples. The hot meals he delivers are simple, tasty vegetarian fare he personally prepares, packs and often hand-feeds to nearly 400 clients each day.

Krishnan carries a comb, scissors and razor and is trained in eight haircut styles that, along with a fresh shave, provide extra dignity to those he serves.

He says many of the homeless seldom know their names or origins, and none has the capacity to beg, ask for help or offer thanks. They may be paranoid and hostile because of their conditions, but Krishnan says this only steadies his resolve to offer help.

"The panic, suffering of the human hunger is the driving force of me and my team members of Akshaya," he said. "I get this energy from the people. The food which I cook ... the enjoyment which they get is the energy. I see the soul. I want to save my people."

The group's operations cost about \$327 a day, but sponsored donations only cover 22 days a month. Krishnan subsidizes the shortfall with \$88 he receives in monthly rent from a home his grandfather gave him.

Krishnan sleeps in Akshaya's modest kitchen with his few co-workers. Since investing his entire savings of \$2,500 in 2002, he has taken no salary and subsists with the help of his once-unsupportive parents.

"They had a lot of pain because they had spent a lot on my education," he said. "I asked my mother, 'Please come with me, see what I am doing.' After coming back home, my mother said, 'You feed all those people, the rest of the lifetime I am there, I will feed you.' I'm living for Akshaya. My parents are taking care of me."

For lack of funding, the organization has been forced to halt construction on Akshaya Home, Krishnan's vision of a dormitory where he can provide shelter for the people he helps. Despite the demands and few comforts his lifestyle affords, Krishnan says he's enjoying his life.

"Now I am feeling so comfortable and so happy," he says. "I have a passion, I enjoy my work. I want to live with my people."

And finally....

One should not judge a book by it's cover.....

Motivational story 2: The Cookie Thief

A woman was waiting at an airport one night, with several long hours before her flight. She hunted for a book in the airport shops, bought a bag of cookies and found a place to drop.

She was engrossed in her book but happened to see, that the man sitting beside her, as bold as could be... grabbed a cookie or two from the bag in between, which she tried to ignore to avoid a scene. So she munched the cookies and watched the clock, as the gutsy cookie thief diminished her stock.

She was getting more irritated as the minutes ticked by, thinking, "If I wasn't so nice, I would blacken his eye." With each cookie she took, he took one too, when only one was left, she wondered what he would do. With a smile on his face, and a nervous laugh, he took the last cookie and broke it in half. He offered her half, as he ate the other, she snatched it from him and thought... oooh, brother.

This guy has some nerve and he's also rude, why he didn't even show any gratitude!

She had never known when she had been so galled, and sighed with relief when her flight was called. She gathered her belongings and headed to the gate, refusing to look back at the thieving ingrate.

She boarded the plane, and sank in her seat, then she sought her book, which was almost complete.

As she reached in her baggage, she gasped with surprise, there was her bag of cookies, in front of her eyes. If mine are here, she moaned in despair, the others were his, and he tried to share.

Too late to apologize, she realized with grief, that she was the rude one, the ingrate, the thief.

MORAL: Those who jump before looking end up on head first in the shallow end. When you jump to conclusions you often skip over the truth & sometimes it is too late to make amends.....

SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT Analysis is a useful technique for understanding your Strengths and Weaknesses, and for identifying both the Opportunities open to you and the Threats you face.

Used in a business context, a SWOT Analysis helps you carve a sustainable niche in your market. Used in a personal context, it helps you develop your career in a way that takes best advantage of your talents, abilities and opportunities

Business SWOT Analysis

What makes SWOT particularly powerful is that, with a little thought, it can help you uncover opportunities that you are well placed to exploit. And by understanding the weaknesses of your business, you can manage and eliminate threats that would otherwise catch you unawares.

More than this, by looking at yourself and your competitors using the SWOT framework, you can start to craft a strategy that helps you distinguish yourself from your competitors, so that you can compete successfully in your market.

How to Use SWOT Analysis

Originated by Albert S Humphrey in the 1960s, SWOT Analysis is as useful now as it was then. You can use it in two ways - as a simple icebreaker helping people get together to "kick off" strategy formulation, or in a more sophisticated way as a serious strategy tool

To help you to carry out a SWOT Analysis, write down answers to the following questions.

Strengths:

- What advantages does your organization have?
- What do you do better than anyone else?
- What unique or lowest-cost resources can you draw upon that others can't?
- What do people in your market see as your strengths?
- What factors mean that you "get the sale"?
- What is your organization's Unique Selling Proposition (USP)?

Consider your strengths from both an internal perspective, and from the point of view of your customers and people in your market.

You should also be realistic - it's far too easy to fall prey to "not invented here syndrome." Also, if you're having any difficulty with this, try writing down a list of your organization's characteristics. Some of these will hopefully be strengths!

When looking at your strengths, think about them in relation to your competitors. For example, if all of your competitors provide high quality products, then a high quality production process is not strength in your organization's market, it's a necessity.

Weaknesses:

- What could you improve?
- What should you avoid?
- What are people in your market likely to see as weaknesses?
- What factors lose you sales?

Again, consider this from an internal and external basis: Do other people seem to perceive weaknesses that you don't see? Are your competitors doing any better than you? It's best to be realistic now, and face any unpleasant truths as soon as possible.

Opportunities:

- What good opportunities can you spot?
- What interesting trends are you aware of?

Useful opportunities can come from such things as:

- Changes in technology and markets on both a broad and narrow scale.
- Changes in government policy related to your field.
- Changes in social patterns, population profiles, lifestyle changes, and so on.
- Local events.

Tip: A useful approach when looking at opportunities is to look at your strengths and ask yourself whether these open up any opportunities. Alternatively, look at your weaknesses and ask yourself whether you could open up opportunities by eliminating them.

Threats

- What obstacles do you face?
- What are your competitors doing?
- Are quality standards or specifications for your job, products or services changing?
- Is changing technology threatening your position?
- Do you have bad debt or cash-flow problems?
- Could any of your weaknesses seriously threaten your business

Tip: When looking at opportunities and threats, PEST Analysis can help to ensure that you don't overlook external factors, such as new government regulations, or technological changes in your industry.

Example SWOT Analysis

A start-up small consultancy business might draw up the following SWOT Analysis:

Strengths:

- We are able to respond very quickly as we have no red tape, and no need for higher management approval.
- We are able to give really good customer care, as the current small amount of work means we have plenty of time to devote to customers.

- Our lead consultant has strong reputation in the market.
- We can change direction quickly if we find that our marketing is not working.
- We have low overheads, so we can offer good value to customers.

Weaknesses:

- Our company has little market presence or reputation.
- We have a small staff, with a shallow skills base in many areas.
- We are vulnerable to vital staff being sick, and leaving.
- Our cash flow will be unreliable in the early stages.

Opportunities:

- Our business sector is expanding, with many future opportunities for success.
- Local government wants to encourage local businesses.
- Our competitors may be slow to adopt new technologies.

Threats:

- Developments in technology may change this market beyond our ability to adapt.
- A small change in the focus of a large competitor might wipe out any market position we achieve.

As a result of their SWOT Analysis, the consultancy may decide to specialize in rapid response, good value services to local businesses and local government.

Marketing would be in selected local publications to get the greatest possible market presence for a set advertising budget, and the consultancy should keep up-to-date with changes in technology where possible

MIND AND MEMORY

Tips and Techniques for Memory Enhancement

If our brains were computers, we'd simply add a chip to upgrade our memory. However, the human brain is more complex than even the most advanced machine, so improving human memory requires slightly more effort.

Just like muscular strength, your ability to remember increases when you exercise your memory and nurture it with a good diet and other healthy habits. There are a number of steps you can take to improve your memory and retrieval capacity. First, however, it's helpful to understand *how* we remember.

What is memory?

Simply put, memory is the mental activity of recalling information that you have learned or experienced. That simple definition, though, covers a complex process that involves many different parts of the brain and serves us in disparate ways.

Memory can be short-term or long-term. In **short-term memory**, your mind stores information for a few seconds or a few minutes: the time it takes you to dial a phone number you just looked up or to compare the prices of several items in a store. Such memory is fragile, and it's meant to be; your brain would soon read "disk full" if you retained every phone number you called, every dish you ordered in a restaurant, and the subject of every ad you watched on TV. Your brain is also meant to hold an average of seven items, which is why you can usually remember a new phone number for a few minutes but need your credit card in front of you when you're buying something online.

Long-term memory involves the information you make an effort (conscious or unconscious) to retain, because it's personally meaningful to you (for example, data about family and friends); you need it (such as job procedures or material you're studying for a test); or it made an emotional impression (a movie that had you riveted, the first time you ever caught a fish, the day your uncle died). Some information that you store in long-term memory requires a conscious effort to recall: episodic memories, which are personal memories about experiences you've had at specific times; and semantic memories (factual data not bound to time or place), which can be everything from the names of the planets to the color of your child's hair. Another type of long-term memory is procedural memory, which involves skills and routines you perform so often that they don't require conscious recall.

Tips for memory improvements:

Do you feel that you have a poor memory? You may just have some less-than-effective habits when it comes to taking in and processing information. Barring disease, disorder, or injury, you can improve your ability to learn and retain information.

Brain exercises

Memory, like muscular strength, is a "use it or lose it" proposition. The more you work out your brain, the better you'll be able to process and remember information.

Novelty and sensory stimulation are the foundation of brain exercise. If you break your routine in a challenging way, you're using brain pathways you weren't using before. This can involve something as simple as brushing your teeth with your non-dominant hand, which activates little-used

connections on the non-dominant side of your brain. Or try a “neurotic” exercise – an aerobic exercise for your brain – that forces you to use your faculties in unusual ways, like showering and getting dressed with your eyes closed. Take a course in a subject you don’t know much about, learn a new game of strategy, or cook up some recipes in an unfamiliar cuisine. That’s the most effective way to keep your synapses firing.

General guidelines to improve memory

In addition to exercising your brain, there are some basic things you can do to improve your ability to retain and retrieve memories:

1. **Pay attention.** You can’t remember something if you never learned it, and you can’t learn something — that is, encode it into your brain — if you don’t pay enough attention to it. It takes about eight seconds of intent focus to process a piece of information through your hippocampus and into the appropriate memory center. So, no multitasking when you need to concentrate! If you distract easily, try to receive information in a quiet place where you won’t be interrupted.
2. **Tailor information acquisition to your learning style.** Most people are visual learners; they learn best by reading or otherwise seeing what it is they have to know. But some are auditory learners who learn better by listening. They might benefit by recording information they need and listening to it until they remember it.
3. **Involve as many senses as possible.** Even if you’re a visual learner, read out loud what you want to remember. If you can recite it rhythmically, even better. Try to relate information to colors, textures, smells and tastes. The physical act of rewriting information can help imprint it onto your brain.
4. **Relate information to what you already know.** Connect new data to information you already remember, whether it’s new material that builds on previous knowledge, or something as simple as an address of someone who lives on a street where you already know someone.
5. **Organize information.** Write things down in address books and datebooks and on calendars; take notes on more complex material and reorganize the notes into categories later. Use both words and pictures in learning information.
6. **Understand and be able to interpret complex material.** For more complex material, focus on understanding basic ideas rather than memorizing isolated details. Be able to explain it to someone else in your own words.
7. **Rehearse information frequently and “over-learn”.** Review what you’ve learned the same day you learn it, and at intervals thereafter. What researchers call “spaced rehearsal” is more effective than “cramming.” If you’re able to “over-learn” information so that recalling it becomes second nature, so much the better.
8. **Be motivated and keep a positive attitude.** Tell yourself that you *want* to learn what you need to remember, and that you *can* learn and remember it. Telling yourself you have a bad memory actually hampers the ability of your brain to remember, while positive mental feedback sets up an expectation of success.

Healthy habits to improve memory

Treating your body well can enhance your ability to process and recall information.

- ✓ Healthy Habits that Improve Memory

Regular exercise

- Increases oxygen to your brain.

- Reduces the risk for disorders that lead to memory loss, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
- May enhance the effects of helpful brain chemicals and protect brain cells.

Managing stress

- Cortisol, the stress hormone, can damage the hippocampus if the stress is unrelieved.
- Stress makes it difficult to concentrate.

Good sleep habits

- Sleep is necessary for memory consolidation.
- Sleep disorders like insomnia and sleep apnea leave you tired and unable to concentrate during the day.

Not smoking

- Smoking heightens the risk of vascular disorders that can cause stroke and constrict arteries that deliver oxygen to the brain.
- ✓ Nutrition and Memory improvement

You probably know already that a diet based on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and “healthy” fats will provide lots of health benefits, but such a diet can also improve memory. Research indicates that certain nutrients nurture and stimulate brain function.

B vitamins, especially B6, B12, and folic acid, protects neurons by breaking down homocysteine, an amino acid that is toxic to nerve cells. They’re also involved in making red blood cells, which carry oxygen. (Best sources: spinach and other dark leafy greens, broccoli, asparagus, strawberries, melons, black beans and other legumes, citrus fruits, soybeans.)

Antioxidants like vitamins C and E, and beta carotene, fight free radicals, which are atoms formed when oxygen interacts with certain molecules. Free radicals are highly reactive and can damage cells, but antioxidants can interact with them safely and neutralize them. Antioxidants also improve the flow of oxygen through the body and brain. (Best sources: blueberries and other berries, sweet potatoes, red tomatoes, spinach, broccoli, green tea, nuts and seeds, citrus fruits, liver.)

Omega-3 fatty acids are concentrated in the brain and are associated with cognitive function. They count as “healthy” fats, as opposed to saturated fats and trans fats, protecting against inflammation and high cholesterol. (Best sources: cold-water fish such as salmon, herring, tuna, halibut, and mackerel; walnuts and walnut oil; flaxseed and flaxseed oil)

Because older adults are more prone to B12 and folic acid deficiencies, a supplement may be a good idea for seniors. An omega-3 is a supplement (at any age) if you don’t like eating fish. But nutrients work best when they’re consumed in foods, so try your best to eat a broad spectrum of colorful plant foods and choose fats that will help clear, not clog, your arteries. Your brain will thank you!

- ✓ Memory and aging

Several factors cause aging brains to experience changes in the ability to retain and retrieve memories:

- **The hippocampus is especially vulnerable to age-related deterioration**, and that can affect how well you retain information.
- **There's a relative loss of neurons with age**, which can affect the activity of brain chemicals called neurotransmitters and their receptors.
- **An older person often experiences decreased blood flow to the brain** and processes nutrients that enhance brain activity less efficiently than a younger person.

However, in healthy older adults, these changes represent more of a *slowing* in the ability to absorb, store, and retrieve new information, not a loss. The factual information you've accumulated over the years remains largely intact, as does procedural memory. You can make and recall new long-term memories; the process just takes a little longer.

Of course, some older adults do develop more significant problems with memory that are the result of diseases such as Alzheimer's or stroke; injury; poor nutrition; other physiological issues; or emotional problems.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

In a complex and culturally diverse world, the ability to communicate effectively has become increasingly important. In our professional as well as personal lives we are constantly using language to convey our thoughts and ideas to others. Effective communication skills are therefore essential in whatever we do or say. For, if our thoughts and ideas are not successfully conveyed, we might end up with a conundrum that could be difficult or impossible to resolve.

This lesson will help you understand the process of communication skills. It will introduce you to the basic concepts and processes relevant to understanding oral and written communication in a variety of interpersonal, academic and business contexts. The lesson is designed to promote insight into the communication processes of self and others, critical thinking, intellectual growth and communicative competence.

In spite of the increasing importance placed on communication skills, many individuals continue to struggle with this; many of us are unable to communicate our thoughts and ideas effectively – whether in verbal or written format. This inability makes it nearly impossible for us to compete effectively in the workplace, and stands in the way of career progression. This lesson is for all those who fall in this category and for all those who don't; because it also helps you to become better at whatever you are good at.

In a recent survey of recruiters from companies with more than 50,000 employees, communication skills were cited as the single most important decisive factor in choosing managers. Communication skills, including written and oral presentations, as well as the ability to work with others, are among the main factors contributing to job success.

The importance of speaking effectively in public is extremely crucial for professional success. Research reveals that the higher an employee is placed within the professional hierarchy the more she is expected to speak. With the latest communication technology at their fingertips, employees now spend more time speaking than writing, whether talking on the phone, through videoconferences, through net telephony, conversing informally with colleagues, conducting meetings, or making sales presentations. It therefore pays to hone our oral communication skills.

The effectiveness of written communication is largely dependent on three key factors: thinking, planning and executing. Whether you are drafting a letter or writing a subject of purpose, you cannot blindly begin writing. Remember fools rush in where angels fear to tread. You need to think about what you are going to write before you put pen to paper. Once you have got some idea about what can go into your text, you need to plan how best you can present the information ideas that you have thought about. And finally once you have penned down your ideas you need to revise and edit the text before you submit that essay/report or post that letter/proposal or hit the send key for an email.

All communication works on the **3-T principle**

- Tell them about what you are going to tell them
- Tell them
- Tell them that you have told them.

In other words, arrange your material into introduction, body and a conclusion. In the opening statement/introduction, give your speakers an overview of the topic on which you are going to speak, clearly delineating the purpose of your subject. Then go on to talking about the main relevant ideas and thoughts related to that topic in an interesting, lucid and informative manner. When concluding ask if there are any questions. Do not leave your audience with questions; clarify all uncertainties. Then sum up by reiterating the main points and leave the audience with some food for thought so as to leave a lasting impression. If you follow this principle in all oral communication, you will go a long way as an effective speaker.

Always keep in mind the 4Cs of good communication:

- Correctness
- Clarity
- Conciseness
- Courtesy

Correctness of language creates the right impression in a reader's listener's mind. If you are grammatically inconsistent or inaccurate in your writing or speaking, your purpose of communication will be diluted and there may be chances of miscommunication. Correctness of information is also a very important issue in communication. Withholding facts from your audience or giving misleading information are unforgivable acts in communication.

Clarity of ideas is what differentiates a mediocre communicator from an effective one. Ambiguity of ideas leads to confusion. For example consider this well-known illustration. A panda walked into a restaurant, ordered some bamboo shoots, ate them and then took out a revolver and began shooting at random. The waiter asked the panda why he did that. The panda opened a dictionary and said this is what I read in the dictionary about myself: panda: a mammal found in China. Eats, shoots and leaves. Said the panda, I am being true to my style! A wrongly placed comma can cause havoc, literally! Therefore clarity in terms of ideas, language and punctuation (in writing) is of utmost significance.

Conciseness is another important principle in all oral communication. Remember the KISS factor: Keep It Short, Stupid. There is nothing more boring in this world than a long-winded lecture by a windbag or a long essay that never gets to the point. Do not digress, keep to the time allowed, and be considerate of the audience by keeping the presentation short and sweet.

Courtesy in the communication process is like salt in your food. Without it everything is tasteless. Your tone, whether in speaking or writing, must always be polite and considerate. While beginning a speech, it is convention to thank the receiver for a prompt reply, or for interest shown in your company or whatever the context may call for. Whether you are speaking or writing, courtesy pays and well! You are most unlikely to receive a courteous reply to a rude letter or email and similarly nobody is going to sit quietly through an impolite presentation or speech.

While in the forthcoming chapters you will come across several do's and don'ts, let me take this opportunity to make a list of the most obvious, yet crucial do's and don'ts:

- Do speak clearly (judge the acoustics of the room).
- Don't rush or deliberately talk slow.
- Don't tell jokes that are culturally offensive or gender biased.
- Don't speak in monotones (vary speed, pitch, and tone).
- Do maintain eye contact (do not look at only one individual).
- Do keep an eye on audience's body language (watch audience reactions).
- Don't move around too much (i.e., pacing or nervous twitches).
- Do keep appearance clean and professional.
- Don't talk to your visual aids. Look at your audience.
- Do be enthusiastic and confident (it will reflect in your presentation).

And above all, SMILE your way through presentations. It will take you miles ahead in whatever you do!

Listening as a Tool

We often take listening for granted, never realizing that it is a skill that can be learnt. Everyone wins with beneficial listening

Watch people who listen attentively. They make eye contact and focus on the speaker while they listen. They listen with their eyes as much as with their ears, taking in all that the person is saying and nodding or making attentive noises from time-to-time. Even the persons speaking feel a sense of communication.

Active, effective listening is a habit, as well as the foundation of effective communication. It focuses on the person you are listening to, whether in a group or a one-on-one, in order to understand what he is saying. As the listener, you should then be able to repeat in your own words what the speaker has said, and to his satisfaction. This does not mean you agree with, but rather understand, what he is saying.

Food for Thought

“We were given two ears but only one mouth, because listening is twice as hard as talking.” Most of us do not realize the importance of listening as a communicative tool. Yet studies have shown that we actually spend 50% more time listening than we do talking.

External Factors

Some of the external factors that influence effective listening are:

- What do you think of the subject matter?
- Is it new or have you a lot of experience with it?
- Will it be difficult to understand, or simple?
- Is it important to you, or just fun?
- Is the speaker experienced or nervous?
- What are the non-verbal cues of the speaker?
- What frame of mind is he or she in?
- How personable, threatening, intelligent is the speaker?
- Is the voice volume too low to be heard?
- Is the speaker making the message too complex, either by including too many unnecessary details or too many issues?
- Is he getting lost, forgetting his point or the purpose of the interaction?
- Is his body language or nonverbal cues contradicting or interfering with the verbal message, for example, does he smile when angry or hurt?
- Is he too concerned with how the other person is taking the message, or how the person might react?
- Is the message illustrated with visuals or examples?
- Is technology used effectively?
- Are concepts introduced incrementally, or with examples?

The listener: As a listener we can work on the listening process in the following ways:

- ✓ **Focus on the subject:** Stop all irrelevant activities beforehand to orient yourself to the speaker or the topic.

- ✓ **Briefly review your knowledge on the subject matter:** Make sure all relevant material is organized in advance (previous lectures, TV programs, newspaper articles, websites, prior real life experience, etc.)
- ✓ **Avoid distractions:** Seat yourself appropriately close to the speaker. Avoid distractions (a window, a talkative neighbor, noise, etc.)
- ✓ **Take control of your emotional state:** Suspend emotions until later, or passively participate unless you can control your emotions.
- ✓ **Keep your prejudices and your opinions aside:** You are there to learn what the speaker has to say, not impose your views on him

Basic Models of Listening

There are three basic kinds of listening they are:

Passive Listening our focus is on listening but not on verifying. We do not express our understanding of what the speaker says. Passive listening involves techniques, which encourage the person to continue talking, without directing the person actively.

Combative listening happens when we either listen for openings to take the floor, or for weak points when we may or for weak points when we may attack the speaker. This happens more often when we are interested in getting our own point across rather than understanding someone else's view.

Active listening involves the process of feedback. The listener is genuinely interested in what the speaker is feeling and thinking; he reviews his understanding of the subject before reacting, and recapitulates it in his own words, and then responds to it. He does not evaluate, offer opinions, advise, analyze or interrogate. We all act and respond on the basis of our understanding, and too often there is a misunderstanding that neither party in the conversation is aware of. With active listening, if a misunderstanding has occurred, it will be known immediately.

There is a distinction between hearing words and listening for the message. We are effective listeners only in the latter case. You need to place yourself in the speaker's shoes and look at the world through his eyes in order to understand his perspective. You cannot remain a passive listener if you wish to be an active participant. You need to be actively involved in the communication process. If your friend is telling you how hurt she was by something, and you focus only on the facts of the situation without acknowledging her feelings, she is likely to become even more upset.

Active listening has three phases:

1. Listening
2. Understanding
3. Responding.

There are four main responses:

1. To **reflect** on the feelings or the underlying feelings.
 2. To **restate** what was heard in other words-and then **reflect** on the content of what was said.
 3. Asking appropriate **questions**.
 4. **Summarizing what has been heard**.
-
1. Reflection involves focusing on the speaker's feelings.
"You sound so upset."
"You appear to be absolutely exhausted."
"I guess that made you rather annoyed."

2. Restatement involves absorbing what you just heard and expressing it in your own words.
Speaker: "The child was frightfully upset."
Listener: "It appears as though the child was rather timid."
If your understanding is wrong, the speaker will correct you. This technique helps in exploring the problem.
3. Questioning helps the person talk and opens the path to communication.
Always remember, feelings come before facts, and the person is more important than the problem. There are several types of questions that elicit subjective answers and mostly cannot be answered by "yes" or "no". Ask open-ended questions, such as:
"Can you explain what you meant by....?"

The Role of Silence

Silence mostly makes us uncomfortable. Long phases of silence prompt us into uttering the first thing that comes to our mind, which may be avoided. However, silence also gives both the speaker and the listener a chance to think things through.

"Do you mean that...?"

"How often does this happen?"

"How do you want me to help you?"

Place hypothetical situations such as

"Suppose we made this project, how would the teacher react?"

4. Summarizing
Summarizing is assimilating what has been heard, briefly going over it together, and agreeing on the problem and the next course of action. This, when resorted to by doctors, is a great comfort to the patient, primarily because he feels understood.

Some of the **benefits** of active listening are:

- It helps people to spot the flaws in their reasoning when they hear it played back without criticism.
- Active listening helps people become less afraid of negative feelings. It promotes a warm relationship between people and helps to solve problems.
- Sometimes a person just needs to be heard and acknowledged before he is willing to consider an alternative or soften his/her position.
- If we accurately understand the other person's view, we can be more effective in helping.
- Active listening helps identify areas of agreement, so that the areas of disagreement are put in perspective and are diminished rather than magnified.

So, after your next important conversation, test your ability to benefit from listening to that conversation.

Analyze and ask yourself:

- Who did more listening?
- What did I learn from the other person(s)?
- Did anyone interrupt?
- What questions should I have asked?
- What questions should I have answered more thoroughly?
- Was I absolutely certain I understood everything?
- Did I ask for clarification?

- Did I practice acknowledgment?
- Did he or she practice acknowledgement?
- Were both parties attending?
- Was the conversation balanced?
- Did anyone keep changing the subject?
- Did anyone get angry?
- Did anyone appear sad?
- Was everyone paying attention?
- What will I do differently in my next conversation?

The ability to listen is a skill that can be honed with practice and time. This skill can and will improve all your relationships with friends, mates, partners, children, and co-workers, even your boss!

NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non Verbal Communication as the name implies is when communication takes place without the use of words. Body language, the size of an office, the dress, how long you keep your visitor waiting, your expressions, the gestures, -all these communicate power, position, distance, familiarity or friendliness, pleasure or displeasure etc.

It is a very effective and potent medium of communication and needs a lot of careful thought and schooling. It can be easily misinterpreted and therefore needs a lot of consideration

- Body Language – Body Movement
- Eye Contact
- Facial Expression,
- Gesture
- Posture
- Spatial Relativity
- Paralanguage

These are some of the areas of non-verbal communication that are explored in this module.

a) Body Language-Body Movement

We communicate not just with words, but the whole of our being. Each shrug, raising of the eye brow, lopsided smirk, radiant smile, conveys a message; a message which is far more potent and significant than the use of words. When you use words, you have an advantage, if you say something you did not mean or intend to, you could always apologize and correct ourselves. But body language is non-reversible. How would you reverse an offensive yawn, a disinterested slouch? This is especially more so, when you aren't aware of your body talking. Positive body language, can earn you rich rewards. Even when you aren't saying a word, you are sending very distinct messages to other people. Your eyes, your gestures, your posture and the space around you are all communicators.

When your words don't match the signals that your body is sending, others will believe what they see, more than what they hear. That is why it is said it is not just 'what' you say that is important but 'how' you say it, and how you listen when somebody else is having their say, that matters. Understanding body language will enhance your professionalism. Having a positive body language, means more than half the battle is won.

- b) **Eye contact:** When talking or listening to somebody, lock your eyes with him/her. This is not to say that you disconcertingly stare at the poor chap. Frank and earnest eye-contact is a must in any communication, at whatever level, no matter what the topic of discussion might be. Fleeting and poor eye-contact, staring into space or the wall, looking down, construes a kind of underhandedness, not only that, it dissuades the other person from sharing information. It shows you are not interested, or worse you are not somebody who values integrity and honesty in your

dealings. Unwittingly you may downplay your intelligence as well. Steady eye contact reveals your intelligence and sharpness of perception. Poor eye contact also reduces your confidence levels. Also, you come across as a person who is incapable of inspiring confidence in anybody else. However in some cultures lowering your eyes when you talk is taken as a sign of deference. Culture sensitivity is needed when interpreting non verbal communication. Eyes are indeed a mirror to your soul and your mind too. The way you talk with your eyes, is more voluble than the way you use words.

c) Facial expressions:

- A smile: A smile is the most volatile, expressive opening that you could ever have to any communication. As a facial expression it is the most expansive, encompassing tool in your kitty: your unerring, ever ready ally. Include everyone present in your radiant smile and see miracles happen. A genuine smile can open doors, that hard talk can't, same way a plastic smile, is the biggest put off.
- A smirk: Smirking can be the most irritating facial expression. Especially in a business environment it exhibits arrogance and unwillingness.
- Knitting your brows: Though knitting of brows is usually done when somebody is concentrating hard on the matter at hand, it is not a very positive facial expression. It controls your features and makes you come across as unapproachable and distant. When you are pouring through material, keep you face relaxed. Don't knit your brows, when you come across something unsavory, or something you cannot comprehend. It's best to open up and ask for clarification.
- Gritting your teeth: I don't need to tell you how big a no this particular expression can be. We all face particularly excruciating situations in the course of our working day or otherwise. Most of us cannot suffer fools gladly. It is very difficult to control yourself at such times. Do not grit your teeth. Remain calm and cool. Your relaxed and empathetic expression will defuse some of the tension. Then go ahead... smile. Yes you read it right, a smile can work wonders inside you, and it completely relaxes you, the matter stops looking so despairingly irritating after a smile.
- Raising a brow: When you are talking and somebody raises a brow, it could mean there is a question in the offing. It could also be a disbelieving stance, something like "oh yeah... I don't believe it, but if you say so..." when you see the person across do that, take time to stop and take stock of what you just said. It might help to revamp it or at least rephrase it.
- Yawning: We've all been through this one, the irrepressible urge to yawn, in the middle of an important talk. Yes, we all know, it is a biological need: the body crying out for more oxygen, but this isn't enough to save your skin. In spite of all the talk of being more relaxed and expressive, you still don't have the luxury of yawning when you feel like it. Needless to say, it comes off as if you are bored and can't wait for the whole thing to end.
- Making faces: Many of us have this habit of contorting our faces, when we are ill at ease, or when things don't match our sense of right. We unwittingly contort our faces, unaware of how big a put-off it is, to the people around us.

Conclusion: - So smile and smile, smile when you start, smile when you end, smile when you are disbelieving, smile when things are not quite right. Be earnest and receptive and it will be expressed on your face.

- d) Gestures:** - Talking without gestures is like a model in a shampoo ad without the wind in her hair. The right gestures add a lot animation and spice to your style. Using your hands when you talk makes your material livelier, emphatic, and captivating. However over use, and too expansive gestures are distracting, and look very funny and affected. So don't go overboard. A handshake for example speaks volumes about your levels of comfort, warmth, confidence. Stuffing your hands in your pockets carries a pejorative sense of being non-complying. Wet, cold and clammy hands in you like the notorious Uriah Heep in Dickens's *David Copperfield* can be repulsive. Gestures are also culture specific. In our Indian culture, we join our hands to welcome and show our reverence (Namaste). It echoes warmth and camaraderie. Latin Americans and Italians use a

lot of gestures; it makes their speech warm and animated. North Europeans are relatively colder. In some cultures warm hugs and even kissing is considered a welcome gesture exuding positivism. However in many others, it is taboo.

Nodding your head when listening communicates positive reinforcement to listeners and indicates that you are listening empathetically.

Folding your arms across your chest can mean a variety of things, none of them positive. You might appear to be hiding something or protecting yourself in an unpleasant situation. You could seem disinterested. Most often, folded arms signal disagreement. It also shows rigidity and a much closed unreceptive outlook towards the world in general.

- e) **Posture and body orientation:** You communicate numerous messages by the way you walk, talk, stand and sit. Standing erect, but not rigid, and leaning slightly forward communicates to the listeners that you are approachable, receptive and friendly.

Make sure you sit straight, without slumping, or do not rest your head on your hands as if it can't support itself. Your gait reveals your personality as well. Graceful, brisk and even strides make you come across as a confident person; someone whom you can depend on. A slow slumber, dragging your feet, meandering can be very disenchanting.

- f) **Space and proximity:** Cultural norms dictate a comfortable distance for interaction with people. It is very disconcerting to have your personal space invaded. In a business interaction, maintain a comfortable distance. Look for tell-tale signs like drumming of fingers, gaze aversion, tapping, etc and tune yourself as much as possible into making the other person comfortable. Leaning slightly forward, when speaking or listening, is construed as a positive stance. But in all circumstances a person's personal space should definitely not be invaded. A corner office, with a large area and a closed door connotes more authority and power than a desk in a common area. But in Japan only the highest executives will have their own offices, and that too having their desks in common areas.

- g) **Para linguistics:** Paralanguage is communication that goes beyond the specific spoken words. It includes pitch, amplitude and voice quality of speech. It also includes gestures, emoticons (in case of e-mails). Paralanguage reminds us that people convey their feelings not only in what they say, but also in how they say it. This facet of non-verbal communication includes elements like tone, pitch, rhythm, timbre, loudness and inflection. Make sure you do not talk in a monotone, because however interesting the content might be, it will be lost on your audience. Varying these elements when conversing or public speaking can make a world of difference to your text. Not only that it can make or break your speech.

"Paralanguage" also means short sounds that are used to show your feelings. These feelings are so strong and instantaneous that you simply cannot convey them via words. It works by way of reflex action. They are sounds, not words, but many a time they carry more weight than words.

For example, we say "Ouch" to express pain.

"Ouch, I hit my finger with the hammer."

Thus non-verbal communication occupies a large chunk of our daily interaction with people. Interpersonal skills are not just about using your words: the right word, at the right time, in the right place, but it is also about not using the inappropriate word. To reiterate, we must remember, at all times, that we communicate with our whole body, our whole being. Make your positive non-verbal communication your most dependable ally in the bewildering, sometimes befuddling, but always fascinating world of effective communication.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Christine Start in her book, 'Effective Speaking' cites a survey in the USA where 3,000 adults were asked to list their ten worst fears. Speaking in public came out as the number one fear. So, what is it about this phrase and phase called public speaking that's so very scary? It is daunting because it is you out there, the real you, not some acquired self as in the case of an actor on stage who plays a make-believe role. In public speaking, you reveal your true self; therefore, it is like having your veneer pulled off. It is the fear of being exposed. It is the fear of making a fool of you in front of an audience. But, you don't have to fear. The good news is that learning to speak in public is like learning to cook: anyone can do it-and almost anyone can do it well.

Good public speaking like good food needs a good and a willing cook i.e. a willing speaker. Whether you have been forced, coaxed, persuaded, threatened, bribed, tempted or obliged, you are up there. You have chosen to speak and sound a lot better, effective and most importantly entertaining and interesting, rather than groan in the microphone and tell your audience that you didn't want to be there. Well in that case, even your audience doesn't want to be there.

Just like good food, a good speech also needs the right ingredients. That is your content- a very striking beginning, a gripping middle and an "I will stay with you for a long time" kind of an end. The right ingredients for this maybe a bit of humor, recent facts, loads of information on the topic, the audiences etc. last but not the least if you are a novice in the kitchen there is nothing like a good cook book to help you conjure a delicious, lip smacking dish. I hope this chapter serves as a cool guide, for anyone who would like to give a speech that receives thunderous applause.

LEARNING THE FUNDAMENTALS

1. Set your main objective:

Why are you going to speak? Surprisingly, most speakers often overlook this million-dollar question. Establish your main aim behind delivering this particular speech. Jot it down. Remember the reason is different from the topic. Your topic might be 'Mercy Killing,' your objective could be "Convincing doctors that the patient should have the right to request his own end." Once this is achieved, you cannot go wrong. You will spare yourself the gravest sin of public speaking, the sin which the most accomplished of them often commit: deviating from the topic and the objective. Once you have decided on that make sure every sentence that you write somehow builds your argument and strengthens it. You must be absolutely sure of why you are going to speak. What do I want this audience to do or think because of my speech?

2. Know your audience:

Once you are sure about your objective, know your audience. Only then can you be **relevant**, the most important requirement for public speaking.

If you want to hold the attention of your audience, speak about what matters to them. If you do not get a chance to know your audience well, before you are actually on stage you could try something like this:

"Hi, I am Anil Sharma and I am the chairman of the Parents-Teachers Association. I understand some of you have come here to address issues regarding kindergarten children, would you raise

your hands please... Thank you. And those of you who have come here to tackle the primary school building problem, would you please raise your hands... Thank you!

An audience friendly speech will always go down better than a scholarly speech addressed at best to your own self and worse, to nobody in particular.

3. Do not overstay your welcome

Finish your speech before the audiences expect you to. If you are speaking for a contest or a competition, observe the time limit strictly. In that case, do not end too early or it will look like you ran out of things to say.

As John Bowden, an author and a professional trainer and senior lecturer in communication skills very aptly said, “Don’t suffer from the illusion that you can make your speech immortal by making it everlasting”

4. Do not shoot facts, give messages

Many speakers that we come across, and even good ones, end up sounding verbose and artificial. They give so many facts in an effort to sound well rehearsed and learned that the effect of those facts is numbering. Listeners respond more to messages than facts.

For example instead of saying, “This is the statistics of rape and homicide in India year 1998: Rapes _____, Murders _____, Burglary _____, etc.”

It is much more effective when you say: “Even as we are sitting here in an air conditioned comfort and airing our concern for the alarming crime rate taking place in our city let us not forget since the time I started my speech that is in the last five minute three human beings have been killed, and four women are being raped right now. Two of them could be minors...”

Figures do give authenticity and add flair to your speech, but make sure you present them in an interesting manner. Make sure they affect the audience.

5. What ground will you need to cover to elicit an emotional response from your audience?

Before you start making your speech, stick your core message on a yellow note on your computer screen. Your message must be heart of your speech. Mind map your speech. Do not start from the beginning. Draw a circle and put your core message in the center. Connect all the points you can think of to the circle. Encircle your points too. Suppose you are to speak to your sales staff, and your major intention behind giving the speech is to bring about an increase in the sales by motivating your employees. You will have something like this.

6. Give the speech a good beginning

Sir Thomas Beecham, talking about an orchestra once remarked, “The great thing is to begin together and end together, what happens in between does not matter very much”. It is true to some extent as far as public speaking is concerned provided of course the middle is accurate and relevant.

The aim of your opening is to arouse the interest of the audience and to whet their appetite so they are eager for more. Although there are no limits to innovative ways of starting a speech, for beginners, ‘tried and tested ways’ work best.

- a. Humorous openings:- This is a very effective way. A smile or a laugh is like measles, it spreads and there is no better way to break the ice. The flip side here is humor can be biting too. Make sure your humor is at nobody's expense...certainly not in bad taste for somebody sitting in the audience.
- b. Starting with a question:- This can stimulate the listeners' interest and set them thinking. You may have a serious and important point to make, and a challenging opening question may be the simplest and the best way of leading to it:

"Have we ever tried to find out why the public sector company Jessop, a Rs. 2400crore company was sold for Rs. 18crore when it had Rs. 14crore in its bank account? Or, for that matter why were the VSNL stakes sold to the TATAs for Rs. 1500crore when the cash assets they get in return amount to Rs 1100crore?"

- c. Hard hitting statements: - Yet another way of starting a good speech would be to make a hard-hitting statement. Instead of the usual and boring figures and statistics, you could try putting it like this

"If all the food Grain lying unused in our warehouses was to be packed in gunny bags and placed one after the other, it would make a path to the moon and back. Yet this country bears the cross of over 200million starving Indians."

This particular statement from 'The Great Indian Dream' would serve as a wonderful beginning to a speech that seeks to portray India as the rich poor country. Check out the visionary detail the sentence provides.

You could also use something like this from the same book...

"When capacity utilization fell from 85% to 70% during the 1930s in America, it caused the Great Depression. What do we do but bemoan our capacity utilization of 60%..."

- d. Quotation and Poems:

Oh! It is excellent to have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant!-(William Shakespeare)

There is no dearth of such brilliant quotations and poems, which you could be used from the internet or books and use them as effective beginnings.

7. How you conclude your speech is equally important.

Set about making each point, as interesting and relevant as possible, and wrap it all in a striking end. You could use all the above tricks as endings too. Do not forget to clinch your beginning in your end. It produces a very neat effect to end at the very point you started. Offer a solution or a recommendation at the end, and let it always be an optimistic end. Remember ending is your last attempt to woo your audience; I is what they carry home with them. Checkout this ending from a speech by Richard Nixon: "... Our destiny offers not the cup of despair but the chalice of opportunity. So let us seize it, not in fear, but in gladness- and "riders on the earth together", let us go forward firm in our faith, steadfast in our purpose, cautious of the dangers, but sustained by our confidence in the will of god and the promise of man."

Now that you have jotted down a captivating beginning, a comprehensive, relevant and interesting middle, and an impressive and memorable end, it is time to write your final script.

Yes, you read it right. No matter how good you are at making speeches, always write your full speech. Memorize the beginning and the end. Shortlist the key words of the middle. Mentally divide the middle into points and remember the subheading of each point. You can jot these down on fist sized cards, that way you are not required to fumble for it in your nervousness.

Rehearse your speech.... In front of your family, your friends and your mirror at any opportunity you get. Sir Winston Churchill, the world's greatest orator, used to rehearse his speeches aloud in his bathroom. Once you are actually out there, you should forget the script. If you have rehearsed well, it will never desert you.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Group Discussion is a discussion which involves participation in a systematic way on a particular topic to arrive at a general consensus.

A group discussion (GD) is a simulated exercise, where you cannot suddenly put up a show, since the evaluators will see through you easily.

How is it Different from a Debate?

Human beings love debates because we like to win and see others lose. A debate is a perfect situation for expressing intense emotions. A GD, however, calls for a lot more maturity and logic.

The purpose of a GD, though conducted in a competitive mode, is not to establish you as a winner and others as losers. Its purpose, as far as you are concerned, is to help you come across as a person with sound, logical reasoning and the ability to respect another's viewpoint.

A critical difference between a GD and a debate is that, while a debate begins with two groups' bids to outwit each other, a discussion is evolutionary; this essentially means participants have the opportunity to refine their views in the course of the discussion. Thus, every member needs to contribute substantially and add to the existing knowledge base instead of pulling each other down.

The difference thus lies not just in style, but also in the mindset that is required to tackle either challenge.

What is the Purpose of Conducting a Group Discussion?

Group Discussion is used by an organization to gauge whether the candidate has certain personality traits and skills that it desires.

Company's Perspective

The reason why organizations put you through a Group discussion and an interview, after testing your technical and conceptual skills in an exam, is to get to know you as a person and gauge how well you will fit in their institute. The Group discussion tests how you perform as a part of a team.

A GD is a simulation of what you can expect in a meeting at your workplace. The company gauges your personality type and performance through this simulated exercise to ascertain whether you possess those qualities that are required of people in that job profile.

Candidate's Perspective

The prospect of a GD tends to leave most of us petrified. You can get rid of that feeling of fear by remembering you have experienced group discussions right from childhood. Remember those heated discussions you had across the dinner table with family members, friends and relatives? Consciously or unconsciously, they have helped you learn a thing or two about discussing in a group.

A Group Discussion is the platform for you to showcase your qualities and skills - the ability to work in a team, lead, be creative and innovative, analyze situations to provide solutions, thereby gaining the employer's favor.

How does it Work? - Flow and Structure

- You would be put in groups of 8-10 candidates with no leader, and given a specific situation to analyze and discuss within a given time limit.
- Your group may be given a case study and asked to come out with a solution for a problem.
- Or, be given a topic and asked to discuss on the same.
- The instructor will briefly outline the guidelines of the GD and also give the topic to be discussed.
- A panel or a facilitator may be present during the GD
- A panel/facilitator will observe the proceedings and evaluate the members of the group.

The aspects which make up a GD are verbal communication, non-verbal behavior, and conformation to norms, decision-making ability, and co-operation.

Topics Given for Group Discussion

A wide range of topics could be given for a group discussion. This may range from current affairs to historical events, from entertainment to news, or anything in general. You may also be given controversial topics to test your ability to form unbiased opinion and handle the issue tactfully.

Some topics that are commonly given for GD:

1. Who are better managers/drivers? Men or Women?
2. Free electricity to farmers. Boon or Bane?
3. Who are better politicians? Younger or older generation?
4. Is education necessary to get a good job?
5. Family planning in India has not been successful in India. Discuss to find a solution to the population problem in India.
6. What if there is no information technology? Discuss.
7. Should Sex education be really made compulsory?
8. Corruption is a necessary evil for success in any sphere?
9. Love marriage Vs Arranged marriage.
10. How safe to work in Call centers at night for girls?
11. India towards westernization or modernization.

What qualities and skills do organizations test you on?

Depending on the organization's profile and their current requirements, you may be tested on any of the following traits and skill sets.

- Verbal and non verbal Communication skills
- Confidence
- Listening ability

- Ability to present your views logically
- Reasoning ability
- Being proactive
- Assertiveness
- Time management
- Ability to work in a team
- Communication skills
- Leadership skills
- Facilitation skills
- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Ability to think on ones feet

Nailing GD – Guides to display the qualities and skills tested in a GD

1. You should be noticed by the panel.

Merely making a meaningful contribution and helping the group arrive at a consensus is not enough. You have to be seen by the evaluating panel to have made the meaningful contribution. How do you ensure this happens?

- You must ensure that the group hears you. If the group hears you, so will the evaluator. That does not mean that you shout at the top of your voice and be noticed for the wrong reasons.
- You have to be assertive. If you are not a very assertive person, you will have to simply learn to be assertive for those 15 minutes. Remember, assertiveness does not mean being bull-headed or being arrogant.
- And most importantly, you have to make your chances. Many group discussion participants often complain that they did not get a chance to speak. The fact is that in group discussion no one gives you a chance to speak. There is nothing more unacceptable in a GD than keeping one's mouth shut or just murmuring things which are inaudible.
- Participate in as many GDs as possible before you attend the actual GD. There is nothing like practice to help you overcome the fear of talking in a GD.

2. Making just any sort of contribution is not enough.

Your contribution has to be meaningful. A meaningful contribution suggests that:

- You have a good knowledge base
- You are able to put forth your arguments logically
- You are a good communicator

The quality of what you said is more valuable than the quantity. There is this myth amongst many group discussion participants that the way to succeed in a group discussion is by speaking loudly and at great length. One could not be more wrong. You must have meat in your arguments.

Therefore, think things carefully. Carry a piece of paper and a pen with you and write down as many ideas as you can.

When you jot down points, keep these pointers in mind.

If it is a topic where you are expected to take a stand, say for example, "Are cable channels good for our society?" note down points for both sides of the argument. It will be useful on two counts –

1. If you did not start the GD and are not amongst the first five speakers and find that everyone in the group is talking for the topic; then it makes sense to take the alternate approach and oppose the topic even if you initially intended to talk for the topic.
2. It helps to have an insight to how group members who take a stand diametrically opposite to you, will put forth their argument and to be prepared with counter arguments.

3. Everybody else will state the obvious. So highlight some points that are not obvious.

The different perspective that you bring to the group will be highly appreciated by the panel. Some pointers on being relevant while having a different perspective are:

- Be careful that the "something different" you state is still relevant to the topic being debated.
- Can you take the group ahead if it is stuck at one point?
- Can you take it in a fresh and more relevant direction?

4. You must be clearly seen to be attempting to build a consensus.

Gaining support or influencing colleagues is the mantra adopted by many a successful Business Leaders.

Nobody expects a group of ten intelligent, assertive people, all with different points of view on a controversial subject to actually achieve a consensus. But what matters is "Did you make attempts to build a consensus?"

The reason why an attempt to build a consensus is important is because in most work situations you will have to work with people in a team, accept joint responsibilities and take decisions as a group. You must demonstrate the fact that you are capable and inclined to work as part of a team.

Important Notes:

- Be proactive and initiate discussion.
- Always be polite. Use phrases like: 'I would like to share my views on...' or 'One difference between your point and mine...', 'I beg to differ with you', or 'that's a nice point...'
- Be as natural as possible. Be yourself.
- Portray positive body language: Maintain eye-contact with all participants. Sit alert. Your body language says a lot about you - your gestures and mannerisms are more likely to reflect your attitude than what you say.
- A group discussion is your chance to be more vocal. The evaluator wants to hear you speak. Come to the point and give proper reasoning for your views
- Take time to organize your thoughts. Think of what you are going to say. Seek clarification if you have any doubts regarding the subject.
- Work out various strategies to help you make an entry: initiate the discussion or agree with someone else's point and then move onto express your views.

- Language skills are important only to the extent as to how you get your points across clearly and fluently.
- Be assertive not dominating; try to maintain a balanced tone in your discussion and analysis.
- Practice tact and diplomacy. Remain unemotional to the subject and don't personalize it.
- Brush up on your leadership skills; motivate the other members of the team to speak, and listen to their views. Be receptive to others' opinions and do not be abrasive or aggressive.
- Do not assume or jump into conclusions.
- If you have a group of like-minded friends, you can have a mock group discussion where you can learn from each other through giving and receiving feedback.

Some common mistakes made during group discussions:

1. Deviating from subject
2. Treating the discussion as a forum to air your own views
3. Losing objectivity and making personal attacks

Preparing for a GD

Here are some steps you can follow to ensure that you bring out the best of you in a Group Discussion.

1. Never go to a GD before knowing why you go there and what you want to achieve. Decide what you want to say and what the words to communicate it are. Your objective is to send a strong message using a few simple words.
2. Scan newspapers and Popular Magazines regularly for the latest news.
3. Research the various companies that you would like to apply to. Or, the companies that run campus recruitments in your college or institute.
4. Form a study group. Take some of the sample topics given (or find more of your own) and practice mock GD sessions. Keep in mind the pointers and techniques discussed. Give each other feedback and help each other to improve. This will also strengthen your leadership and team skills.
5. Practice your speech style, taking care of your pronunciation and language.
6. Try speaking in front of the mirror and observe your body language. Do you like what you see?
7. Avoid putting yourself under too much stress. Have a glass of water, breathe deeply or share a joke to ease the tension. Be comfortable.
8. Be yourself and be at your best.
9. Smile. It does wonders!
10. Believe in yourself! Say to yourself, "I believe I can do it" "I believe in myself and my abilities". Back it up with strong foundation of knowledge and preparation.

RÉSUMÉ PREPARATION

What is the purpose of a Résumé?

Résumé is a tool with one specific purpose: **to win an interview**. A résumé is an **advertisement**, nothing more, nothing less.

A great résumé doesn't just tell one what one has done but makes the same assertion that all good ads do: If one buys this product (candidate), one will get these specific, direct benefits. It presents one in the best light. It convinces the employer that one has what it takes to be successful in this new position or career.

It should be so pleasing to the eye that the reader is enticed to pick it up and read it. It whets the appetite, stimulates interest in meeting the candidate and learning more about him or her. It inspires the prospective employer to pick up the phone and ask you to come in for an interview.

What is the information one should include and one shouldn't include:

1. Name and Contact Details

Include your Full Name and Contact Details:

- Address
- Phone Numbers
- Email address

If one is planning to move to a new place, they should include the new address and the date in order to be reachable on the phone at the new location. For example:

2. Job Objective

Choose an objective that describes the **responsibilities** that one is interested in taking on in the position one is applying for. Avoid using Narrow job titles or a very general job objective. Employers are looking for candidates who can **express clearly the type of position** they want.

Therefore, the job objective becomes the backbone of one's résumé providing the ultimate goal one wants to obtain.

Objectives and Goals

Helpful Hints:

1. Be specific about the position or the department one wants to get into.
2. Let the company know what value addition one can make (skills, strengths, and qualities.)
3. Be brief to the point. Cut out the fancy terminologies. Job objective shouldn't be longer than two sentences.

Employers Perspective:

1. The area of work ("Hardware and Networking," "Software Engineering," "Electronics and Communications Engineering").

2. The title, if you know it ("Hardware Design Engineer," "Network Administrator," "VLSI Design Engineer").
3. Areas of specialization ("with an emphasis on Designing and documentation on New Products," "focusing on Logic design and RTL Implementation (Verilog / VHDL)"). [This should be used only if a simple objective statement needs to be more clearly defined. In most cases it isn't necessary.]

With the job objective clearly defined one will be able to decide on the experiences, training, and abilities that one possesses and that are the **most relevant** to the position one wishes to obtain.

If one is applying for several different positions, one should adapt one's resume accordingly to the positions applying for.

An alternative to the job objective statement - One could use a title next to one's name or near the top of one's resume:

Sally Jones, Marketing Professional Henry Mathews, Investigative Reporter
--

3. Education and Training

1. Focus on the relevant educational and training experiences. If you are a recent graduate, list your academic achievements such as good grades, recognitions and achievements. Remember to focus on the subjects that directly support your job objective.
2. Mention the name of the course and specialization (if any), the institute and the year. If you have excellent grade, please do mention them.
3. List it with the most recent one first, or in relevance to the job profile.

4. Skills (Language Skills, Computer Skills, Etc.)

Include Language(s) you are fluent in, Computer Program(s) Proficiency, and any other skills relevant for the Position you are applying for.

5. Extra Curricular Activities

These usually demonstrate interpersonal, communication and leadership skills. Were you elected to various offices? Did you organize any college festivals? Were you instrumental in organizing any symposia? Did you contribute to the college magazine? If these are presented and defined well, these activities can be useful marketing device to land you with the right job.

6. Work Experience

Starting with your **Most Recent Position** list the jobs you have held. For each position indicate the Organization you worked for, your Job Title, Employment Dates, Major Responsibilities and Achievements. If you worked for a small, not so well known organization, include the type of business it is. Remember that when listing this information you want to present yourself as Qualified and Experienced for the position you are applying for. Therefore, be sure to focus on details about

your previous jobs that support your job objective. Include a job title that describes your Duties and Responsibilities Best.

For the inexperienced, please give the details of the project works that you have undertaken in your institution. Give the following details:

1. Project Name
2. Organization
3. Project Code and Duration
4. Tools/Language
5. Aim/Goal of the Project
6. Team members – Mention if you were the Project Lead
7. Description of the Project

7. Personal Information

Try to avoid personal information, unless it strongly supports your job objective. Or, it is required/preferred by the company.

8. References

You can include the Names and Contact Details of 2 to 3 References. Your references are people who will characterize you and your work in a Positive light. Avoid using people who you feel might give any negative information. You can either include the names and contact information of your references along with your resume or have 2 to 3 of your references write **Letters of Reference/Recommendation** and provide them only upon request

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Mobile no: 98888 55555
Email:

Objective:

To seek a position as an Electronics and Communications Engineer, where my specialization in Electronic systems design, commissioning and maintenance will add value to designing and documentation on new products for the organization.

Education & Qualifications:

Course	Specialization	University/Institute	Year	%
B.Tech	Electronics and Communications	ABC College of Engineering	2007	85%
CCNA		karROX Technologies Ltd	2006	
Inter	Science	XYZ Junior College	2003	80%

Professional Skills

- Highly motivated and energetic professional with good framework in communication
- Proven ability to target and reach high standards; widely perceived as a technical resource.
- Strong team builder skilled in leading a team

Technical Skills

- Electronics circuit analysis
- Digital / Analog circuits for analytical instrumentation
- Electronics and circuit board design
- SPICE and simulation tools, ORCAD schematic capture
- Languages: C++, Java, C, ASP.NET, SQL
- Applications: MS Visual Studio, Eclipse
- Certifications: CCNA, Certified Unicenter Engineers.

Professional Experience:

- Project Name: Disaster monitoring System
- Organization: Alpha Labs, Hyderabad
- Duration: 2 months
- Language: C
- Project Members: 5

Objective: Monitor disaster occurrence (e.g. fire and smoke) using GSM and send alerts.

Description: Developing an alert system for monitoring disasters in at least one monitored area, utilizing a telecommunications network that provides timely warning at optimally reduced costs. The invention further provides an alert system and method for monitoring geographic or natural disasters utilizing a telecommunications network that is flexible and efficient i.e. GSM in providing timely warning for preventing loss of human life and property in the event of a geographic or natural disaster. The microchip controller embedded in the system is programmed to automatically send a message (SMS) to the numbers that is built into the program (e.g. fire station), whenever the system detects fire or smoke.

References

[Name]
[Contact Address]
[Phone No]
[E-mail Id]

[Name]
[Contact Address]
[Phone No]
[E-mail Id]

Dated: _____

[Your signature here]
(Sanjeev Reddy)

Make your Resume Interesting to Read

To have a Successful résumé you must view your resume as a way to **‘market’ your strengths and achievements**. You must remember that the employer is looking for the **best person** to do the job. Therefore, write what the employer wants to hear!

The Presentation of Your Résumé

Your résumé should be visually enticing and reflect your state of mind. It is your first introduction to the interviewer and explains your complete background, like education, experience, achievements and character.

- Never handwrite your résumé. Always type it, preferably on a computer in Word format.
- Print on white, clean, un-creased/un-crumpled paper.
- Simple clean structure. Not crowded. Symmetrical/Balanced. Very easy to read.
- Uniformity and consistency in the use of italics, capital letters, bullets, boldface.
- Absolutely no errors; spelling, grammar, syntax or punctuation
- No errors of facts, information, date, etc.
- Contact information should be clearly visible on top of page. This includes your mobile number, home number and email address.
- Your name should be at the top of the page (first name, middle name then surname).
- Date of birth (if provided) should be in order of date, month in words, and the year in full. e.g.: 28th January 1986.
- Address for contact.
- Academic qualifications (most recent/relevant qualification first).
- Work experience (present first).
- Extracurricular activities (adequate knowledge of the activities).
- Don't forget to sign at the bottom.

Format and Structure of your Résumé

The formatting of your resume should ensure that the employer, scanning the resume, quickly notices the most important things you want to convey!

- Do not use fancy font styles.
- "Arial" and "Times New Roman" with Font Size between 10 and 12 are the most appropriate.
- Use Bullets - Bullets help to structure your resume by considerably improving the appearance and reading easiness.
- Utilize White Space - A crowded resume "hides" the things you want to say.

Résumé Length

For the inexperienced, it is suggested that one keeps his résumé 1 page long by presenting the key points. Only present the things that will benefit you.

Additional tips:

- Use short sentences.
- Drop "I". Instead of "I achieved 10 percent increase in sales", write: "achieved 10 percent increase in sales".

Résumé Writing Tip: Focus on the Employer's Needs, Not Yours**Ask yourself:**

- What would make someone the perfect candidate?
- What does the employer really want and need?
- What special abilities would this person have?
- What would set a truly exceptional candidate apart from a merely good one?

If you are seeking a job in a field you know well, you probably already know what would make someone a superior candidate. If you are not sure, you can gather hints, from asking other people who work in the same company or the same field. Don't make wild guesses unless you have to do so. It is very important to do this step well. If you are not addressing their real needs, they likely will not respond to your résumé.

The Resume Checklist:

1. Proofread again and again. Check for grammar, spelling errors and consistency. Be especially consistent in typing every accomplishment and every activity in the past tense. Do not switch from past to present tense.
2. Do not use the pronoun "I". Just don't.
3. Show your enthusiasm! You want the employer to sit up and take notice. Energy and excitement are contagious.
4. If you go into too much detail about your work experience, you will bore the reader to death. Employers want relevant information. They are not especially concerned if you opened the mail or filed personnel records.
5. Are you using good quality paper?
6. Exclude personal information, such as weight, height, age, etc. unless specified by the employer.
7. Does your resume have a clear and concise Objective Statement? Have you told the truth? Presenting your accomplishments and skills in the best possible light is highly recommended. If you start leaning toward stretching the truth, then you might be crossing a very important line. What line? Oh, the line that determines whether you might get fired or not.
8. Does the overall layout of your resume look pleasing to the eye? That is a hard thing to qualify, yes. Having someone else give you their opinion might be the best approach here. After all, you have looked at this piece of paper for days or weeks by now, right?
9. Of all the things to proofread again, look at your contact information. Make sure your phone number(s) and email addresses are accurate. One wrong number or letter and you might never know what you missed. That sounds strange, but you get the idea, we hope.

Powerful Words for Your Résumé

Employers today want to know concrete things about you, and what you can produce. Avoid empty generalizations and show employers you are capable of tactical strategic thinking and have proven results. Here are some powerful words to get you started:

Accelerated	Led	Supported
Accomplished Achieved	Lectured	Surpassed
Adapted	Maintained	Taught
Administered	Managed	Trained
Analyzed	Mastered	Translated
Approved	Motivated	Used
Conceived	Operated	Utilized
Conducted	Ordered	
Completed	Originated	
Controlled	Organized	
Coordinated	Participated	
Created	Performed	
Delegated	Pinpointed	
Demonstrated	Planned	
Designed	Prepared	
Developed	Produced	
Directed	Programmed	
Earned	Proposed	
Effectuated	Proved	
Eliminated	Provided	
Established	Proficient in	
Evaluated	Purchased	
Expanded	Recommended	
Expedited	Reduced	
Facilitated	Reinforced	
Found	Reorganized	
Generated	Revamped	
Implemented	Reviewed	
Improved	Revised	
Increased	Scheduled	
Influenced	Simplified	
Initiated	Set up	
Inspected	Solved	
Instructed	Streamlined	
Interpreted	Structured	
Launched	Supervised	

INTERVIEWS

WHAT IS AN INTERVIEW?

An interview is a conversation between an employer and a candidate for both parties to learn more about each other for the purpose of filling a position within a company or organization. You and the interviewer have a need: you want a job and the interviewer wants to find the right person to fill the job.

If you receive an interview call, chances are you have already been “prescreened” and meet all or most of the requirements the employer is looking for. Typically this prescreening has been done through an application process and/or résumé review. The interview is an opportunity for further screening. Through an interview both parties start to form impressions of whether a “fit” exists between your qualifications/personality and the organization/position.

Critical Success Factors in Interviews

Following is the list of the top ten critical success factors that nearly every employer is seeking:

1. Positive attitude towards work
2. Proficiency in field of study
3. Communication skills (oral and written)
4. Interpersonal skills
5. Confidence
6. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills
7. Flexibility
8. Self-motivation
9. Leadership
10. Teamwork

Show your competence in as many of these critical success factors as possible and you will rise above the competition.

About Organization

- Key people in the organization
- Major products or services
- Size in terms of sales and employees
- Locations other than your community
- Organizational structure of the company
- Major competitors
- View of the company by clients, suppliers, and competition
- Latest news reports on the company or on local or national news that affects the company

During the Interview

The job interview is usually a two way discussion between you and a prospective employer. The interviewer is attempting to determine whether you have what the company needs, and you are attempting to determine if you would accept the job if offered. Both of you will be trying to get as

Mental fear of the unknown is often what produces the physical symptoms of nervousness.

much information as possible in order to make those decisions.

The interview that you are most likely to face is a structured interview with a traditional format. It usually consists of three phases. The introductory phase covers the greeting, small talk, and an overview of which areas will be discussed during the interview. The middle phase is a question and answer period. The interviewer asks most of the questions, but you are given an opportunity to ask questions as well. The closing phase gives you an opportunity to ask any final questions you might have, cover any important points that haven't been discussed, and get information about the next step in the process.

Introductory Phase

This phase is very important. You want to make a good first impression and if possible, get additional information you need about the job and the company.

- **Make a good impression.** You only have a few seconds to create a positive first impression which can influence the rest of the interview and even determine whether you get the job. The interviewer's first impression of you is based mainly on non-verbal clues. The interviewer is assessing your over-all appearance and demeanor.
- When greeting the interviewer, be certain your handshake is firm and that you make eye contact. Wait for the interviewer to signal you before you sit down.
- Once seated, your body language is very important in conveying a positive impression. Find a comfortable position so that you don't appear tense. Try to appear relaxed and confident.
- Let your hands lie loosely on your lap or place them on the armrests of your chair. From these positions, it's also easy to support your words with hand gestures.
- Lean forward slightly and maintain eye contact with the interviewer. This posture shows that you are interested in what is being said.
- Smile naturally at appropriate times.
- Show that you are open and receptive by keeping your arms and legs uncrossed.
- Nodding your head while speaking is good way of supporting your words or adding meaning to them. Hand movements can also help liven up the interview.
- Pay attention to the inadvertent movements that you make sometimes due to nervousness. For example, shuffling with your feet or kicking against the leg of a table can be very irritating for other people.
- Avoid keeping your briefcase or your handbag on your lap. Pace your movements so that they are not too fast or too slow. **Get the information you need.** If you weren't able to get complete information about the job and the company in advance, you should try to get it as early as possible in the interview. Be sure to prepare your questions in advance.

Knowing the following things will allow you to present those strengths and abilities that the employer wants:

- ✓ Why does the company need someone in this position?
- ✓ Exactly what would they expect of you?
- ✓ Are they looking for traditional or innovative solutions to problems?

Development Phase

During this phase of the interview, you will be asked many questions about your work experience, skills, education, activities, and interests. You are being assessed on how you will perform the job in relation to the company objectives.

All your responses should be concise. Use specific examples to illustrate your point whenever possible. Although your responses should be prepared in advance so that they are well phrased and effective, be sure they do not sound rehearsed. Remember that your responses must always be adapted to the present interview. Incorporate any information you obtained earlier in the interview with the responses you had prepared in advance and then answer in a way that is appropriate to the question.

Closing Phase

During the closing phase of an interview, you will be asked whether you have any other questions. Ask any relevant question that has not yet been answered. Highlight any of your strengths that have not been discussed. If another interview is to be scheduled, get the necessary information. If this is the final interview, find out when the decision is to be made and when you can call. Thank the interviewer by name and say good-bye.

Interview Questions

It is not enough to have solid answers for only the above questions. You need to be prepared for the full spectrum of questions that may be presented. For further practice, make sure you go through the required mock interview and for further review; look at some of the following questions:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Tell me about your experience.
3. What is your most important accomplishment to date?
4. How would you describe your ideal job?
5. Why did you choose this career?
6. When did you decide on this career?
7. What goals do you have in your career?
8. How do you plan to achieve these goals?
9. How do you personally define success?
10. Describe a situation in which you were successful.
11. What do you think it takes to be successful in this career?
12. What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction in your life?
13. If you had to live your life over again, what one thing would you change?
14. Would you rather work with information or with people?

15. Are you a team player?
16. What motivates you?
17. Why should I hire you?
18. Are you a goal-oriented person?
19. Tell me about some of your recent goals and what you did to achieve them.
20. What are your short-term goals?
21. What is your long-range objective?
22. What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
23. What do you want to become ten years from now?
24. Do you handle conflict well?
25. Have you ever had a conflict with a boss or professor? How did you resolve it?
26. What major problem have you had to deal with recently?
27. Do you handle pressure well?
28. What is your greatest strength?
29. What is your greatest weakness?
30. If I were to ask one of your professors (or a boss) to describe you, what would he or she say?
31. Why did you choose to attend your college?
32. What changes would you make at your college?
33. How has your education prepared you for your career?
34. What were your favorite classes? Why?
35. Do you enjoy doing independent research?
36. Who were your favorite professors? Why?
37. Why is your score or percentage not higher?
38. Do you have any plans for further education?
39. How much training do you think you'll need to become a productive employee?
40. What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?
41. Why do you want to work in this industry?
42. What do you know about our company?
43. Why are you interested in our company?
44. Do you have any location preferences?
45. How familiar are you with the community that we're located in?
46. Are you willing to relocate in the future?
47. Are you willing to travel? How much?
48. Is money important to you?
49. How much money do you need to make to be happy?
50. What kind of salary are you looking for?

Don't just read these questions—practice and rehearse the answers. Don't let the employer interview be the first time you actually formulate an answer in spoken words. It is not enough to think about them in your head—practice! Sit down with a friend, a significant other, or your roommate (an especially effective critic, given the amount of preparation to date) and go through all of the questions. If you have not yet completed a mock interview, do it now. Make the most of every single interview opportunity by being fully prepared!

Interview Questions and Answers

In addition to preparing yourself physically, you need to prepare yourself mentally. The best way to prepare mentally is to know what may be coming. Fear of the unknown can only exist when there is an unknown. Take the time to understand some of the “standards” when it comes to interviewing questions.

The following are some of the most difficult questions you will face in the course of your job interviews. Some questions may seem rather simple on the surface—such as “Tell me about yourself”—but these questions can have a variety of answers. The more open ended the question, the wider the variation in the answers. Once you have become practiced in your interviewing skills, you will find that you can use almost any question as a launching pad for a particular topic or compelling story.

Others are classic interview questions, such as “What is your greatest weakness?” Questions most people answer improperly. In this case, the standard textbook answer for the “greatest weakness” question is to provide a veiled positive such as: “I work too much” or “I just work and work and work” - wrong. Either you are lying or, worse yet, you are telling the truth, in which case you define working too much as a weakness and really do not want to work much at all.

The following answers are provided to give you a new perspective on how to answer tough interview questions. They are not there for you to lift from the page and insert into your next interview. They are provided for you to use as the basic structure for formulating your own answers. While the specifics of each reply may not apply to you, try to follow the basic structure of the answer from the perspective of the interviewer. Answer the questions behaviorally, with specific examples that show that clear evidence backs up what you are saying about yourself. Always provide information that shows you want to become the very best for the company and that you have specifically prepared yourself to become exactly that. They want to be sold. They are waiting to be sold. Don’t disappoint them!

1. Tell me about yourself.

It seems like an easy interview question. It’s open ended. One thinks that he/she can talk about whatever he / she wants from the birth canal forward. Wrong. What the hiring manager really wants is a quick, two- to three-minute snapshot of who and what you are and why you’re the best candidate for this position. So as you answer this question, talk about what you’ve done to prepare yourself to be the very best candidate for the position. Use an example or two to back it up. Then ask if they would like more details. If they do, keep giving them example after example of your background and experience. One should always point back to an example when you have the opportunity.

“Tell me about yourself” does not mean tell me everything. Just tell me what makes you the best.

2. Why should I hire you?

The easy answer is that you are the best person for the job. And don’t be afraid to say so. But then back it up with what specifically differentiates you.

For example: “You should hire me because I’m the best person for the job. I realize that there are likely other candidates who also have the ability to do this job. Yet I bring an additional quality that makes me the best person for the job--my passion for excellence. I am passionately committed to producing truly world class results. For example . . .”

Are you the best person for the job? Show it by your passionate examples.

3. What is your long-range objective?

The key is to focus on your achievable objectives and what you are doing to reach those objectives.

For example: “Within five years, I would like to become the very best accountant your company has on staff. I want to work toward becoming the expert that others rely upon. And in doing so, I feel I’ll be fully prepared to take on any greater responsibilities which might be presented in the long term. For example, here is what I’m presently doing to prepare myself . . .” Then go on to show by your examples what you are doing to reach your goals and objectives.

4. How has your education prepared you for your career?

This is a broad question and you need to focus on the behavioral examples in your educational background which specifically align to the required competencies for the career.

An example: “My education has focused on not only the learning the fundamentals, but also on the practical application of the information learned within those classes. For example, I played a lead role in a class project where we gathered and analyzed best practice data from this industry. Let me tell you more about the results . . .” Focus on behavioral examples supporting the key competencies for the career. Then ask if they would like to hear more examples.

5. Are you a team player?

Almost everyone says yes to this question. But it is not just a yes/no question. You need to provide behavioral examples to back up your answer.

A sample answer: “Yes, I’m very much a team player. In fact, I’ve had opportunities in my work, school and athletics to develop my skills as a team player. For example, on a recent project . . .” Emphasize teamwork behavioral examples and focus on your openness to diversity of backgrounds. Talk about the strength of the team above the individual. And note that this question may be used as a lead in to questions around how you handle conflict within a team, so be prepared.

6. Have you ever had a conflict with a boss or professor? How was it resolved?

Note that if you say no, most interviewers will keep drilling deeper to find a conflict. The key is how you behaviorally reacted to conflict and what you did to resolve it.

For example: “Yes, I have had conflicts in the past. Never major ones, but there have been disagreements that needed to be resolved. I’ve found that when conflict occurs, it helps to fully understand the other person’s perspective, so I take time to listen to their point of view, and then I seek to work out a collaborative solution. For example,

Focus your answer on the behavioral process for resolving the conflict and working collaboratively.

7. What is your greatest weakness?

Most career books tell you to select strength and present it as a weakness. Such as: “I work too much. I just work and work and work.” Wrong. First of all, using a strength and presenting it as a weakness is deceiving. Second, it misses the point of the question.

You should select a weakness that you have been actively working to overcome. For example: “I have had trouble in the past with planning and prioritization. However, I’m now taking steps to correct this. I just started using a pocket planner . . .” then show them your planner and how you are using it.

Talk about a true weakness and show what you are doing to overcome it.

8. If I were to ask your professors to describe you, what would they say?

This is a threat of reference check question. Do not wait for the interview to know the answer. Ask any prior bosses or professors in advance. And if they’re willing to provide a positive reference, ask them for a letter of recommendation.

Then you can answer the question like this:

“I believe she would say I’m a very energetic person, that I’m results oriented and one of the best people she has ever worked with. Actually, I know she would say that, because those are her very words. May I show you her letter of recommendation?” So be prepared in advance with your letters of recommendation.

9. What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?

Focus on two words: leadership and vision.

Here is a sample of how to respond: “The key quality in a successful manager should be leadership--the ability to be the visionary for the people who are working under them. The person can set the course and direction for subordinates. The highest calling of a true leader is inspiring others to reach the highest of their abilities. I’d like to tell you about a person whom I consider to be a true leader . . .”

Then give an example of someone who has touched your life and how their impact has helped in your personal development.

10. If you had to live your life over again, what one thing would you change?

Focus on a key turning point in your life or missed opportunity. Yet also tie it forward to what you are doing to still seek to make that change.

For example: “Although I’m overall very happy with where I’m at in my life, the one aspect I likely would have changed would be focusing earlier on my chosen career. I had a great internship this past year and look forward to more experience in the field. I simply wish I would have focused here earlier. For example, I learned on my recent internship...” ...then provide examples.

In reviewing these responses, please remember that they are only to be viewed samples. Please do not rehearse them verbatim or adopt them as your own. They are meant to stir your creative juices and get you thinking about how to properly answer the broader range of questions that you will face.

Dressing for Interview Success

Campus fashions and work fashions are two different worlds.

Unfortunately, most college grads are sadly underprepared. They feel they can “get by” with what is already in their wardrobe. Dressing for the world outside college is quite different from the campus

scene. Remember that stylish is typically not conservative. Conservative is “in” for interviewing because you should be doing the talking, not your clothes. This is not to say that you need to go out and buy a whole new wardrobe. Go for quality over quantity. Then, when you are making some money (and have a chance to see what the standard “uniform” is for the company), you can begin to round out your wardrobe. For now, no one will fault you for wearing the same sharp outfit each time you interview. If you desire some variety within a limited budget, you might consider varying your shirt/blouse/tie/accessories as a simple way to change your look without breaking your wallet.

For those of you, who need a quick review of the basics, follow these guidelines for successful interview dress:

MEN AND WOMEN

- Conservative long-sleeved shirt/blouse (white is best, pastel is next best)
- Clean, polished conservative shoes
- Well-groomed hairstyle
- Clean, trimmed fingernails
- Minimal cologne or perfume
- Empty pockets—no bulges or tinkling coins
- No gum, candy, or cigarettes
- Light briefcase or portfolio case
- No visible body piercing (nose rings, eyebrow rings, etc.) or tattoos

MEN

- Dark shoes (black lace-ups are best)
- Dark socks (black is best)
- Get a haircut; short hair always fares best in interviews
- Fresh shave; mustaches are a possible negative, but if you must, make sure it is neat and trimmed
- No beards (unless you are interviewing for a job as a lumberjack!)
- No rings other than wedding ring or college ring
- No earrings (if you normally wear one, take it out)

WOMEN

- Wear a suit with a jacket and skirt or Trousers; Punjabi dresses or sarees with minimal work
- Shoes with conservative heels
- Conservative hosiery at or near skin color
- No purses, small or large; carry a briefcase or portfolio case instead
- If you wear nail polish, use clear or a conservative color
- Keep your makeup simple and natural (it should not be too noticeable)
- No more than one ring on each hand
- One set of earrings only (preferably no hangings)

ETIQUETTE

ETIQUETTE is a code that governs our behavior in a society according to a set of pre-defined norms within a society, social class, or group. Usually unwritten, it may be codified in written form. Etiquettes may reflect an underlying ethical code, or it may grow more as a fashion, as in eighteenth century Britain, where apparently pointless acts like the manner in which a tea cup was held became important as indicators of upper class status.

Etiquette fundamentally prescribes and restricts the ways in which people interact with each other, and show their respect for other people.

Modern etiquette instructs people to:

- Greet relatives, friends and acquaintances with warmth and respect
- Refrain from insults and prying curiosity
- Offer hospitality equally and generously to guests
- Wear clothing suited to the occasion
- Contribute to conversations without dominating them
- Offer assistance to those in need
- Eat neatly and quietly
- Avoid disturbing others with unnecessary noise
- Follow the established rules of an organization upon becoming a member
- Arrive promptly when expected
- Comfort the bereaved
- Respond to invitations promptly.
- Accept gifts or favors with humility and gratitude.
- Acknowledge gifts or favors with prompt tokens of thanks (e.g. a thank-you card)

In the ancient Hindu epic Mahabharata, the entire world-destroying conflict between the armies of two clans begins when one ruler, Duryodhana, commits a couple of minor *faux pas* at his cousin's castle, and impolitely made fun of for it. One can reasonably view etiquette as the minimal politics required to avoid major conflict in polite society, and as such, an important aspect of applied ethics.

Etiquette can vary widely between different cultures and nations. In China, a person who takes the last item of food from a common plate or bowl without first offering it to others at the table may be seen as a glutton and insulting the generosity of the host. In most European cultures a guest is expected to eat all of the food given to them, as a compliment to the quality of the cooking.

In this chapter, we are going to discuss the various types of Etiquettes for all- round professional development:

- 1) **Office etiquette**
- 2) **Telephone etiquette**
- 3) **Email etiquette**

- 4) Dining etiquette
- 5) Handshake etiquette
- 6) Interruption etiquette

1. OFFICE ETIQUETTE

The etiquette of business is the set of written and unwritten rules of conduct that make social interactions run more smoothly. Office etiquette in particular applies to co-worker interaction, excluding interactions with external contacts such as customers and suppliers. The conventions of office etiquette address unique, office environmental issues such as cubicle life, usage of common areas, meetings, and other forms of social interaction within the context of a work setting. The rules of office etiquette may vary by region, office size, business specialty, company policy, and, to a certain degree, various laws governing the workplace. Larger organizations tend to have stricter, written rules on etiquette. These rules are often echoed throughout an industry or economy.

Following are some unwritten conventions, the Do's and Don'ts which you need to follow regularly:

1. Do not carry a casual attitude at work. When one is off the cuff for any meetings or projects or even your daily work leaves a bad impression on others. You are paid to work and be the asset for the company, not the liability for your colleagues.
2. Never peep into other employees work stations, computer screens or cubicles. This would be a kind of interference into their personal space. Always seek permission before entering a cubicle or cabin.
3. Do not keep your cell phone with loud and weird ringtone which can disturb others. Always try to keep your phone on vibrate or mute mode.
4. Checking someone else's notepad or files or register or laptop without permissions is a strict no-no. You are expected to respect others' privacy.
5. Criticizing others for their ideas and work or making fun of them are considered bad manners. When you do not like somebody's idea you may express your opinion without adding any negative emotions and reconcile on a point which is acceptable to all.
6. When you are sick, do not cough and sneeze without keeping your handkerchief on your face as otherwise you may spread it to others.
7. Popping a chewing gum in front of others is not at all considered positive. You are not in your college; it is your office so behave decorously.
8. Never engage in offensive gossip and office politics. The blame games have never brought success to anyone.
9. Do not keep your workstation messy. Your desk/ workstation reflect your thoughts so if it is untidy you are intercepted as a person with ambiguous thoughts. While a clean and tidy desk is considered as a sign of organized and more responsive employee.
10. Do not scream on your colleague or on your juniors. Using a pitch higher than normal or with reflection of anger and aggression is not at all allowed and is highly unprofessional.
11. Do not attend a seminar or meeting without a pen and notepad. Meetings usually discuss a long list and remembering all of it is difficult and asking others about those missed points is not at all professional. Nobody will spoon feed you in office.

12. Never assume. Whenever you are required to communicate any information, you cannot assume that telling a few means all will know it. You should mark a mail to all concerned personnel regarding the information.
13. Do not be late for work. It leaves a bad impression about your sincerity.
14. Dress properly and do not keep yourself in rags, or in revealing attire.
15. Do not pass any vulgar comments to your colleagues.
16. Do not take the office stationery home.
17. Be a responsible employee and switch off the computer, lights, fans and other machinery attached to your cubicle while leaving even for lunch or tea break.
18. Do not bring your personal work at the office.
19. After using the washroom do not leave the taps on.
20. Do not leave used cups, glasses or any other such cutlery on the tables. You have to dispose them yourself.

2. TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

An individual needs to follow a set of rules and regulations while interacting with the other person over the phone. These are often called as telephone etiquettes. It is important to follow the basic telephone etiquettes as our voice plays a very important role in creating an impression of our personality, education, family background as well as the nature of job we are engaged in. The person giving the information is called the sender and the second party is the recipient.

Let us now study the various telephone etiquettes. Please find below the various telephone etiquettes.

- Always remember your voice has to be very pleasant while interacting with the other person over the phone. Don't just start speaking, before starting the conversation use warm greetings like "Good Morning", "Good Evening" or "Good Noon" depending on the time.
- Never call any person at odd hours like early morning or late nights as the person will definitely be sleeping and will not be interested in talking to you.
- In any official call, don't use words like "Any guess who I am?" "as the person on the other side might be occupied with something and can get disturbed. Always say "Is it Ted?", and do ask him, "Is it the good time to talk to you?" and then start communicating. If the person sounds busy always wait for the appropriate time.
- Make sure your content is crisp and relevant. Don't play with words, come to the point directly and convey the information in a convincing manner. First prepare your content thoroughly and then only pick up the receiver to start interacting.
- After dialing, always reconfirm whether the person on the other side is the desired person whom you want to interact with. Always ask "Am I speaking to Mike?" or "Is this Jenny?" before starting the conversation.
- Always carefully dial the numbers, never be in a rush or dial the numbers in dark as it would lead to a wrong call. If by mistake you have dialed a wrong number, don't just hang up, do say sorry and then keep the phone courteously.

- Never put the second party on a very long holds. Always keep the information handy and don't run for things in between any call as the listener is bound to get irritated.
- While interacting over the phone, don't chew anything or eat your food. First finish your food and then only dial the number. If you are reading, please leave the book aside, first concentrate what the other person wishes to convey and then continue with the book.
- After completing the conversation, don't just hang up. Reconfirm with the receiver whether he has downloaded the correct information or not and do end your conversation with pleasant words like "Take care", "nice speaking with you" and a warm bye. Never say Goodbye.
- Always speak each and every word clearly. The person on the other hand can't see your expressions so remember your tone should be apt to express your feelings in the correct form.
- Don't take too long to pick up any call. If you miss the call, make sure you give a call back as the other person might have an important message to convey. Avoid giving missed calls at work places as it irritates the other person.
- In professional talks, never keep the conversation too long as the other person might be busy. Always keep the content crisp and relevant and do come to the point after formal greetings.
- If you are not the correct person and the speaker needs to speak to your fellow worker always say "one moment please- I will call him in a minute". If the colleague is not in the office premises, always take a message on his behalf and don't forget to convey him when he is back.
- Decrease the volume of the television or turn off the speakers while speaking over the phone as noise acts as a hindrance to effective communication
- If there is any disturbance in the network, don't just keep speaking for the sake of it; try to call after sometime with a better line.

Remember all the above telephone etiquettes must be practiced for an effective and healthy telephonic discussion and smooth flow of information.

3. E- MAIL ETIQUETTE

Always include a subject line in your message. Almost all mailers present you with the subject line when you browse your mailbox. Very often it is the only clue the recipient has about the contents when filing and searching for messages. The email subject should be detailed enough to give the recipient an idea about the email content without having to open it. Single words like "Hi" or "Hello" or "Help" are a strict no-no. Think of meaningful but short titles.

- Good Subject Line Examples
 - FYI ONLY: Meeting minutes from 3/14 discussion
 - AGENDA: Staff meeting Thurs 3/12 10:00 pm
 - Mary: I will attend the WW FTF & present summary. (EOM)
- Poor Subject Line Examples
 - Weekly Minutes
 - Re: presentation
 - (blank subject line)

If you can type your entire message in the subject line and don't need to write anything in the body of the message - do so. Type (EOM) at the end of the subject line. EOM means "end of message".

Do not hit the Send button without doing a spell check. An email with spelling mistakes or grammatical errors indicates that you have written the message in a non-serious mood and may convey a bad impression. Always read the message before broadcasting it to the world.

Do not attach large attachments in your email since not everyone is on a broadband connection. If you have to send a large file over email, upload it to services like "***Yousendit***" and then pass on the link in the email.

Do not request a Read Notification Receipt.

Always reply to emails especially the ones specifically addressed to you. The sender is still waiting to hear from you.

USING ALL CAPITAL LETTERS IS RUDE AND IRRITATING, IT'S ALSO HARD TO READ. Use Caps only when you want the recipient to know you're shouting.

When replying to an e-mail message and you want to include what the sender wrote, add your comments at the top of the mail, not at the bottom.

4. DINING ETIQUETTE

In today's inter-reliant, international and culturally diverse world economy, cross-cultural differences can have an impact on business success. Both at an individual and organizational level understanding the values, etiquette and protocol of different cultures can positively influence your dealings in the worldwide marketplace a lack of cross cultural awareness can result in misinterpretations which may cause offense. Such outcomes may end in your reputation being tarnished and your business objectives impacted. Cross cultural understanding and appreciation of foreign etiquette is important for today's globetrotting business person to avoid such negative repercussions.

One area of importance in cross cultural awareness is the different dining etiquettes of the world. Understanding dining etiquette can help international business people polish their conduct and behavior while dining or entertaining.

Cross cultural dining etiquette involves considering the following points:

Seating – is there a protocol as to who sits where? Should one wait to be seated? Is it acceptable etiquette for men/women to sit next to one another?

Eating - what utensils, if any, are used? Is it a knife and fork, hands or chopsticks? Is there any etiquette around using them?

Body language – how should one sit? Is it bad etiquette to rest elbows on the table? If seated on the floor what is the correct position?

Conversation – is the meal the proper place to engage in conversation? If so, is discussing business appropriate?

The food – what foods are common to eat? Is it good etiquette to compliment the cook and how? Does one finish everything on the plate? Is it polite to ask for more?

Home/restaurant - what differences in etiquette or protocol would there be? Does one take a gift to the home? Who pays the bill at a restaurant?

Here are some essential dining etiquette rules that you should follow:

- Turn off your cell phone before sitting down. It is rude to talk on your phone or text while in the company of others.
- Never talk when you have food in your mouth. That's just gross. Even if someone asks you a question, wait until you swallow before answering.
- Taste your food before you add salt, pepper, or other seasoning. Doing otherwise may be insulting to the host or hostess.
- Don't cut all your food before you begin eating. Cut one or two bites at a time.
- Never blow on your food. If it is hot, wait a few minutes for it to cool off. Scoop your soup away from you.
- Some foods are meant to be eaten with your fingers. Follow the lead of the host or hostess.
- If you are drinking from a stemmed glass, hold it by the stem.
- Break your bread into bite-sized pieces and butter only one bite at a time.
- Try at least one or two bites of everything on your plate, unless you are allergic to it.
- Compliment the hostess if you like the food, but don't voice your opinion if you don't.
- Use your utensils for eating, not gesturing.
- Keep your elbows off the table. Rest the hand you are not using in your lap.
- Eat slowly and pace yourself to finish at the same approximate time as the host or hostess.
- Avoid burping or making other rude sounds at the table.
- If you spill something at a restaurant, signal one of the servers to help. If you spill something at a private dinner party in someone's home, pick it up and blot the spill.
- When you finish eating, leave your utensils on your plate or in your bowl.
- Never use a toothpick or dental floss at the table.
- You may reapply your lipstick, but don't freshen the rest of your makeup at the table.

5. HANDSHAKE ETIQUETTE

Do you ever wonder what to do when you first meet someone? Should you extend your hand or wait for the other person to do so? It's important to learn the proper way to shake hands because making a good first impression is essential in many social and business situations.

This gives you the opportunity to establish your friendliness and accessibility, whether you are meeting your neighbors or starting a new job. Practice with friends or family members before you start shaking the hands of strangers.

Remember that people often initially judge you by your handshake, so make sure it shows your confidence and pleasant personality.

Occasions you will need to shake hands:

- Initial introduction
- Job interview
- Seeing someone you haven't seen in a long time
- Greeting guests when you are the host or hostess
- Greeting a host or hostess when you are the guest
- Saying goodbye to a friend or business associate
- Whenever someone else extends his or her hand

Important tips

a. Know when to initiate the handshake.

The person in a higher position of authority or age should be the first one to extend a hand. For example, if you are interviewing for a job, the interviewer should be the one to take the lead.

If you make a mistake and initiate it, don't withdraw your hand because that would be rude. Always follow through with a handshake. Smile and continue with the introduction. Don't apologize.

b. Stand and look the other person in the eye before shaking hands.

If you are sitting, rise before extending your hand. This shows respect and puts you on the same level as the other person. Make eye contact and offer a sincere smile to show that you are happy to be where you are. Be still and face the other person to prevent giving the impression that you are in a hurry to get away. If you are walking, try to stop, turn, and face the other person, unless it creates an awkward situation.

c. Offer a greeting before and during the handshake.

If your palms are damp, you can delay extending your hand if you introduce yourself while blotting your palm on the side of your slacks or skirt. Your greeting should include his or her name and a pleasantry, such as, "It's so nice to meet you, Ms. Jones." If you have more nice things to say, include them at this time, but don't go overboard. In order to remember the other person's name, you might want to say it several times during the conversation. Once during the initial handshake, shortly afterward, and again while shaking his or her hand before you part ways. This will make a very strong, positive impression because people like knowing you care enough to remember their names.

d. Your handshake should be firm but not crushing.

You don't want to offer a limp hand because it gives the impression of weakness. However, this does not mean you should crush the other person's hand. Be firm but not overpowering. If the other person offers a limp hand, give a gentle squeeze. This can be a cue for him or her to grip more firmly.

e. The handshake should be approximately two to five seconds in duration.

Most people prefer shorter handshakes. Be observant and follow the lead of the other person, particularly if he or she is in a superior position to you in business or social position.

If the other person continues holding onto your hand longer than five seconds, politely withdraw your hand. Maintain eye contact and a pleasant expression afterward to maintain a positive interaction.

f. Be aware of your other hand.

Most people use their right hands unless they have a reason to use the left. Ideally, your left hand should be visible and unclenched. Don't have your left hand in your pocket because this appears defensive. In most business situations, you shouldn't use your left hand to touch the other person's arm or cup his or her hand.

g. Shake hands in an up-and-down motion.

The handshake shouldn't go back and forth or side to side. Don't pump the other person's hand more than three times, or the greeting may become very uncomfortable.

6. INTERRUPTION ETIQUETTE

Interrupting is typically a rude thing to do. In fact, most of the time interrupting a conversation isn't recommended, but there are situations that call for speaking up.

If there is an emergency, the person is saying something that you know is incorrect, the group is gossiping about someone who isn't there, or there is any other strong reason to stop the discussion, you may interject as long as you do it politely.

Knowing when and how to interrupt is essential if you want others to see you as a polite, gracious, and interesting person.

Another reason to interrupt may be that it's someone else's turn to say something. Conversations should be inclusive of everyone in a group, but we all know some people who don't give other people the opportunity to speak. Being a good conversationalist involves actively participating in a discussion and knowing when to interject. When it's time to listen, stop talking but look for opportunities to interject with questions or brief statements.

Tips on how to interrupt a conversation:

- 1) **Have a specific purpose.** Whether you are jumping into other people's conversation or you're stopping someone's monologue, it's essential that you have a reason for doing it and the ability to relay that to the person talking. State the purpose as briefly as possible.
- 2) **Use proper timing.** It's best to wait until the person speaking stops to catch a breath before speaking up.
- 3) **Be as polite as possible.** Always speak politely and start the conversation with a polite introduction to your interruption. Some things you might say include, "Excuse me," "I need to say something here," "Do you mind if I interrupt?" "I have an idea that relates to what you just said," "I'd like to add something to that," or "I beg your pardon, but I need to say something."

- 4) **Use a gesture.** If your interruption isn't acknowledged, lift a hand or use eye contact to get the person's attention. Never hover. When you make your gesture, you can say, "Excuse me for a sec. I'll keep this brief." Then say what you need to say as quickly as possible so they can get back to their conversation.
- 5) **Keep a noticeable distance when interrupting someone else's conversation.** If you walk right up to whoever is chatting, it may appear that you want to simply listen. Stand back a bit as you make eye contact to show that being part of their conversation isn't what you want.
- 6) **Get clarification.** When you are in a business or committee meeting, and the discussion is heading in a direction that you and perhaps others don't understand, it is okay to interrupt to get an explanation. You may be surprised by how many will thank you later. Chances are if you don't understand others don't either.
- 7) **Thank the others for allowing you to interrupt.** After you say what's on your mind, show your gratitude for the others allowing you to speak.
- 8) **When someone starts to gossip, you can just interrupt at any point to stop it in its tracks.** One of the most important times to interrupt a conversation is when it turns to trash talking someone who isn't there. If you stand there listening, even if you don't say a word, you're participating and encouraging this sort of thing. And chances are, when you're not with these people, they're gossiping about you. Simply speak up and change the subject. If they don't get the hint, you can say, "I'd rather not discuss her when she's not here to defend herself." If they continue, leave it.

PRESENTATION SKILLS

Be it any Corporate Organization or B-School, these days making Presentations has become a tool to judge the candidate's communication skills and public speaking ability. In any Organization some time or the other you will have to make Presentation.

So, it's high time to brace yourself if you lack confidence or don't know how to make an effective presentation.

Below are a few dos and don'ts that are to be kept in mind while making a presentation.

1. **Smile!** When audience sees a genuine and sincere smile, it makes them want to smile too. What could be better than looking out on an audience of happy, smiling people?
2. **Move:** Don't hide behind your podium. Presentations can be scary, but the audience won't eat you alive. This doesn't mean you should pace furiously from one end of the stage to the other, but a little movement will help keep your audience awake.
3. **Test your setup before the presentation:** Can you see your visual aids, slides or overheads clearly from the back of the room? Is everything working as you had expected?
4. **Present to the crowd:** Consider your audience before your presentation. If your audience is a group of university students, leave your suit at home and make your presentation less formal. If your audience requires more formality, perhaps it's best if you forget the animation. It's unlikely that swirling text and funny noises will impress this crowd.
5. **Don't try to impress with jargon:** Never speak above the crowd in hopes of impressing people. The audience may also see you trying too hard to impress and you may come across as false or insincere.
6. **Use a computer and multimedia projector:** Professional presenters use a computer and projector, so why shouldn't you? Overheads projectors are a little old-fashioned and printing those overhead slides is a nuisance. Get out of the comfort zone and try using new technology. If you're worried about its reliability, bring your overheads as back-up.
7. **Be yourself!** Be honest, open and sincere. You're best at being yourself, so let your true self show. People relate to honesty and expressiveness.
8. **Update your slides for each presentation:** Don't use the same slides again and again. In the world of visual aids, fresh is good.
9. **Place your company logo in the bottom right-hand corner of your slides:** The eye looks naturally to the bottom right corner, so if you want your company's name reinforced, place it there. While you're at it, why not use corporate colors for your slides? Not only is it a double-whammy but it's also a way to stay consistent with the use of color throughout the presentation.
10. **Use light colors on a dark background and vice-versa:** This seems obvious but it's important to keep in mind. The easiest combinations to read are white or yellow bold text on a dark background.
11. **Forgetting to turn off your screen saver.** Your presentation is going smoothly, and you're taking a little extra time to explain each of your PowerPoint slides. You turn to look at the projection screen and, in horror, realize that the audience has been watching cute little tropical fish swim for the past five minutes. If you're using a laptop for your presentation, be sure to turn off your screen saver *before* you begin.

12. **Beeping laptop.** If you usually present using a laptop, you've probably experienced the low-battery warning. It screams for attention and successfully irritates any well-intentioned audience. Bring an extension cord if you're using a laptop and plug it in. This way you won't have to worry about low batteries interrupting the flow of your presentation.
13. **Speaking too quickly.** It's natural to speed up when feeling nervous. But when you speak at record speeds, not only is it difficult for the audience to understand what you're saying, but it's a dead giveaway that you're sweating bullets.
14. **Overusing animation.** Animation is great for capturing the audience's attention and adding interest to any presentation, if used in moderation. However, when things are whirling, whizzing and zooming across the screen, they direct the people's attention away from your message. They'll be too busy trying to figure out how you got your visuals to do those amazing tricks.
15. **Unexpected animation.** Be sure to rehearse your animated presentation before you give it. This ensures the animation you've used is working properly and is appropriate for the audience. Don't let any unexpected sights or sounds catch you off guard.
16. **Using too many bullets and fonts.** Keep it simple by using only a few bullets and a maximum of two fonts per slide. If you get too many fonts and bullets, the design becomes cluttered and the information more difficult to read.
17. **Forgetting to delete all guidelines.** If you're using PowerPoint, there's nothing worse than a slide that appears as "Click to add title." Of course the audience will forgive you, but it certainly won't help you look like a pro.
18. **Using a font that's too small.** The smaller the font, the more difficult it will be for the audience members at the back of the room to read your information.
19. **Placing too many words on a slide.** Keep the information in your presentation concise. The words that appear on the slide should spark the larger thought, not explain it. Follow the 7 x 7 rule, which limits the words on a visual to no more than seven words per line and a maximum of seven lines, for a total of 49 words or less per visual. Headings or titles should be kept to four words or less.
20. **Using red lettering on your slides.** Typically, red has negative connotations. It's almost always interpreted as a warning sign or danger, and in business it symbolizes failure or financial loss.
And last but not the least, REHEARSE, REHEARSE, REHEARSE is the mantra to make an effective confident presentation.

Words and Phrases to Avoid in Your Presentations

1. **"I" or "me".** This presentation is not about you! Even though you may be self-consciousness and feel anxious, it's still all about the audience. Replace every "I" or "me" with "you," "we," or "us." Keep the focus on your listeners, and you'll serve them and you.
2. **"A little bit."** This is a phrase guaranteed to water down your content. "I'd like to talk a little bit about . . ." pales next to, "Let's discuss this year's important industry trends."
3. **"Just."** Similar problem as with #2. For instance, compare these two options: a) "I just want to say that I think we face some problems"; and b) "Listen! — Our backs are to the wall here regarding these profit margins."

4. **"So . . ."** Is this frequently the first word out of your mouth? Why? "So" indicates a continuation of a previous thought. Since this is the *start* of your presentation, what is there to be continuing?
5. **"Talk about."** Often used repetitively and monotonously, sometimes with bullet points: "First, I'll talk about our competition. Then I'll talk about why we have to think differently. Then, I'll talk about our new initiatives. Then, I'll talk about how I'm watching you all now shoot yourselves!"
6. **"My topic is . . ."** If you want to engage listeners immediately, you need to launch your presentation strongly. An opening that blandly announces your topic will fail in this respect. What's engaging about telling people something they already know?
7. **"I've been asked to speak about."** A variation of item #6. Sometimes an attempt by the speaker to seem important.
8. **"Sorry if" or "Sorry for."** Uh-oh. The speaker is *apologizing* for his or her presentation? "Sorry for this lengthy explanation. I couldn't figure out a way to say it simply." Okay, I invented that last sentence—but isn't that what it sounds like?
9. **"Excuse the eye chart."** (Variation: **"I know this slide is really busy."**) Boy, haven't you heard *that* one before? Here, the speaker actually *is* apologizing for making a PowerPoint slide incomprehensible. If a presenter can't speak to *everything* on a slide in the time he or she shows it, the slide doesn't work. It needs to be boiled down or broken up into more slides, or the speaker needs to tell the audience that the full data are in the handout.
10. **"I'd like to start out with a story."** Actually, this is only half-bad. A story is one of the flat-out most effective ways to open a speech or presentation. Its effect is considerably weakened, however, if you announce that you're about to tell a story. I call it "introducing the Introduction."
11. **"There's a funny joke . . ."** Well, there may be. But you're setting yourself up for failure if the one you're now about to tell *isn't* funny. Just get right to it, i.e., start telling the joke as if you're relating something serious. When the audience recognizes the humor, it will be that much funnier. Even better than all that: use humor rather than a joke. It won't contain a punch-line, but it's much easier to relate to your actual topic.
12. **"Excuse me if I seem nervous."** Although some people think saying this will get an audience on your side, I think announcing your nerves is a bad idea. Most nervousness isn't visible. Let the audience make the decision as to whether you look nervous. If they don't notice it, why tip your hand?
13. **"I'm not good at public speaking."** Then go away.
14. **"I'm not a speaker."** Yes, you are. Aren't you giving a presentation? Besides, you don't need to be a *speaker* unless you're on the speaking circuit. Just share what you have to say with us. We'll probably love it.
15. **"I've never done this before."** You guessed it: this is instant death to your credibility. Again, do a good job and we'll L-O-V-E you!
16. **"Here are our key differentiators."** A fine phrase except those last two words has been used a gazillion times and are now meaningless. Besides, your company's "key differentiators" are probably exactly the same as the next guy's.
17. **"I've divided them here into three buckets."** Unless you work on a farm, are wearing a pail on your head, or are planning to kick said bucket as part of the entertainment value of your talk, I would avoid the "buckets" *cliché*.

18. **"Bear with me."** (Not "bare with me," which would actually be interesting.) Typically said when the speaker is experiencing technical difficulties. We all do, of course. Why not have back-up plans for keeping your audience interested if the technology doesn't cooperate? I tell my clients—and I really mean it—that they should be prepared to give their talk if they leave their laptop with their slides on it in the cab on the way in from the airport.
19. **"The next slide shows . . ."** Transitions are vital elements of your speech or presentation. They help audience members negotiate the logic of your argument. You need to think about how to *organically* link your previous talking point with the one you're about to discuss. Don't appear to discover yourself what the next segment is all about only when the slide pops onto the screen.
20. **"Moving right along . . ."** Truly the worst example of throwing one's hands up in the air because you don't know how to transition to your next point.
21. **"Obstacles!"** or **"Mergers!"** or any single word or phrase that you blurt out to indicate what you're going to talk about next. Find that organic and logical transition, per item #19 above.
22. **"I think I've bored you enough."** Oh, let's hope you haven't bored your audience at all. And if you have, do you have to twist the knife this way?
23. **"I didn't have enough time . . ."** Whether what you say after these words is ". . . to prepare," ". . . to figure out what your needs were," or ". . . to do the necessary research for this presentation," you shouldn't be clueing your audience in to this dismal reality.
24. **"I'm running out of time, so I'll go through this quickly."** It's probably not a good idea to announce to everyone your lack of time management skills in this presentation, wouldn't you say?
25. **"That's all I have." . . .** "And so I didn't give any thought to considering carefully how to end a speech vividly and memorably. So I'll just jump off this cliff, and take you all with me!"

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

A leader is "*a person who influences a group of people towards the achievement of a goal*". Leaders are designers, stewards, and teachers where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarity of vision, and improve shared mental models-that is, they are responsible for learning.

Leadership is the *ability* of an individual or a group of individuals to *influence* and *guide* followers or other members of an organization.

Leadership involves making sound (and sometimes difficult) decisions, creating and articulating a clear vision, establishing achievable goals and providing followers with the knowledge and tools necessary to achieve these goals.

Leadership means *responsibility*. It's adventure and often fun, but it always means responsibility. The leader is the guy the others look to get the job done. So don't think your job as a troop leader or a staff member will be just an honor. It's more than that. It means that the other Scouts expect you to take the responsibility of getting the job done. If you lead, they will do the job. If you don't, they may expect you to do the job all by yourself.

That's why it's important that you begin right now to learn what leadership is all about.

You are searching for the secrets of leadership. Many of them lie locked inside you. As you discover them and practice them, you will join a special group of people-skilled leaders.

THE JOB OF A LEADER

As a team leader, you will be the contact point for all team members, so your communication skills should be excellent. You should also be able to act proactively to ensure smooth team operations and effective collaboration.

1. Creating an inspiring team environment with an open communication culture
2. Setting clear team goals
3. Delegating tasks and set deadlines

THE TASKS OF LEADERSHIP

- Delegate work to team members.
- Allocate resources.
- Check the quality of the work.
- Control the pace of work.
- **Setting direction** is the articulation of mission, vision, values and purposes. Key questions are: Where are we going? What are we going to do? Why are we doing it?
- **Building commitment** involves the creation of mutual trust and accountability, including addressing questions such as: How can we stay together? How can we work better as a group? What can improve cooperation?

- **Creating alignment** is about finding common ground and areas of interrelated responsibility. Effective leaders ask: How can we develop a shared understanding of our situation? How can our actions be better coordinated?

WHAT AFFECTS LEADERSHIP?

Leadership refers to the behavior of a leader in a specific situation. Many factors affect the behavior of any leaders which are as follows:

- Cultural social background
- Education
- Knowledgeable in leadership and another area
- Social political and economical environment

Cultural social background: A leader may be from a different culture, social habit, belief and economic status too. They may be autocratic, democratic nature. For proper leadership, they have to adjust in any environment. Adjustment is the main ability of a leader. He/she can't run leadership without adjusting to the culture and society of his/her environment, institution, hospital, community.

Education: Education is one of the factors which affect leadership. It plays a vital role in it. Education makes people polite, instills confidence for all work. It helps to make the good understanding between each other. It helps to produce the ability to motivate others. These help to make good leadership.

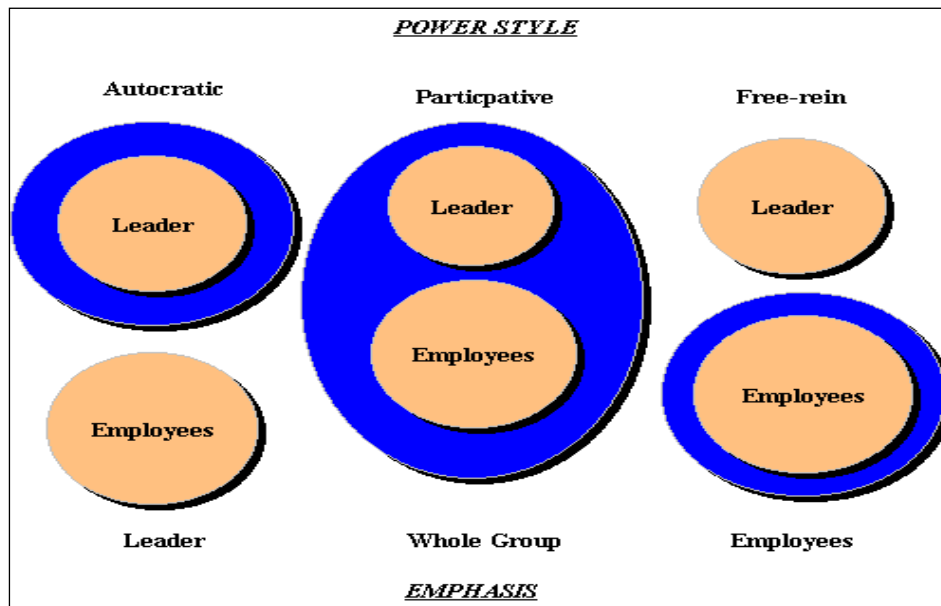
Knowledgeable in leadership and another area: This is one of the important qualities of a leader which directly and indirectly affects leadership. Knowledge is gained with one's own capability and experience. So, here when a leader is knowledgeable, he/she will confident towards his/her activities.

Social, political and economical environment: This is also one of the factors that affect leadership. Political environment not only affects in leadership but also its every aspect of life (political instability and inconsistency affect in leadership). In the same way, economic crisis and problem lead to ineffective leadership and management.

LEADERSHIP CAN BE DEVELOPED

Leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. There are normally three styles of leadership:

- Authoritarian or Autocratic
- Participative or Democratic
- 'Delegative' or Free Reign



Although good leaders use all three styles, with one of them normally dominating, bad leaders tend to stick with one style.

Authoritarian (autocratic)

This style is used when the leader tells the employees what is to be done and how it is to be done, without getting the advice of the followers. Some of the appropriate conditions to use this style is when you have all the information to solve the problem, you are short on time, and your employees are well motivated.

Some people tend to think of this style as a vehicle for yelling, using demeaning language, and leading by threats and abusing their power. This is not the authoritarian style...rather it is an abusive, unprofessional style called **bossing people around**. It has no place in a leaders repertoire.

The authoritarian style should normally only be used on rare occasions. If you have the time and want to gain more commitment and motivation from your employees, then you should use the participative style.

Participative (democratic)

This type of style involves the leader including one or more employees in on the decision making process (determining what to do and how to do it). However, the leader maintains the final decision making authority. Using this style is not a sign of weakness; rather it is a sign of strength that your employees will respect.

This is normally used when you have part of the information, and your employees have other parts. Note that a leader is not expected to know everything -- this is why you employ *knowledgeable* and *skillful* employees. Using this style is of mutual benefit -- it allows them to become part of the team and allows you to make better decisions.

Delegative (free reign)

In this style, the leader allows the employees to make the decision. However, the leader is still responsible for the decisions that are made. This is used when employees are able to analyze the situation and determine what needs to be done and how to do it. You cannot do everything. You must set priorities and delegate certain tasks.

This is not a style to use so that you can blame others when things go wrong, rather this is a style to be used when you have the full trust and confidence in the people below you. Do not be afraid to use it, however, use it wisely!

A good leader uses all three styles, depending on what forces are involved between the followers, the leader, and the situation. Some examples include:

- Using an authoritarian style on a new employee who is just learning the job. The leader is competent and a good coach. The employee is motivated to learn a new skill. The situation is a new environment for the employee.
- Using a participative style with a team of workers who know their job. The leader knows the problem, but does not have all the information. The employees know their jobs and want to become part of the team.
- Using a 'delegative' style with a worker who knows more about the job than you. The employee needs to take ownership of her job. Also, the situation might call for you to be at other places, doing other things.
- Using all three: Telling your employees that a procedure is not working correctly and a new one must be established (authoritarian). Asking for their ideas and input on creating a new procedure (participative). Delegating tasks in order to implement the new procedure (delegative).

Forces that influence the style to be used included:

- How much time is available?
- Are relationships based on respect and trust or on disrespect?
- Who has the information - you, your employees, or both?
- How well your employees are trained and how well you know the task.
- Internal conflicts.
- Stress levels.
- Type of task. Is it structured, unstructured, complicated, or simple?
- Laws or established procedures.

QUALITIES THAT A LEADER MUST POSSESS

1. **Be a Visionary:** People will only follow a vision that is perfectly clear in their minds, therefore, it's extremely important that you yourself must possess a crystal clear vision of what you want to accomplish and the direction that you want to go. If your vision is the slightest bit blurry in your mind, then how can you expect to lead people if you don't know where you are going yourself? You must be able to see the big picture and then develop the plan on how to get there because in order to lead people, you have to keep things simple enough for them to take action on and you must be able to convey your vision to them.

2. **Be Passionate about what you do:** A leader must possess the highest level of passion for their vision in order to inspire those around them with that same level of energy. A leader who does not demonstrate passion for what they're doing will instead emit a negative energy to their team, which will cause chaos and de-motivation towards their goals. Always be passionate about what you are doing and strive to share that passion with others. Remember the saying, "Energy flows where attention goes."
3. **Be true to yourself:** Always strive to display the highest degree of integrity that you can. Integrity is simply the act of being the same on the inside as you claim to be on the outside. People want to believe that you practice in your own life what you preach to them. The lack of integrity is the reason why politicians have such a tarnished reputation today because some of them lacked the integrity that people desire from their leaders. Most people fail becoming leaders because they display a poor level of integrity.
4. **Be Courageous:** Rudolph Giuliani once said that a hero is not one who is fearless. A true hero is one who feels the fear and yet moves forward regardless. A leader is a hero who must be strong enough to face their fears of failing, kick it aside, and move forward anyways. Leaders realize not to cover or hide their fear, but rather, they acknowledge it like everyone else, but they also manage their fears rather than allow their fears to manage them. Remember that even the best leaders make mistakes, but what separates the great leaders from the mediocre ones is that the great leaders are willing to admit they made a mistake and they use it as a tool to create a better future for themselves and their team. Mediocre leaders, on the other hand, live in self-deceit and allow their ego to get in the way of doing what's right for themselves and everyone who follows them.
5. **Be Action Oriented:** The universe doesn't reward people for what they know, it rewards people for what they do and leaders are doers. Leaders are geared towards taking action and they realize that for a team to come together, it requires moving from potential to action. The decision is yours to make. While making a decision might lead towards failure, the act of failing to make a decision will absolutely guarantee failure. It's important to remember that leaders rarely have 100% of the information needed to make an informed decision. Those leaders, who wait until they have all the information before they act, usually act too late. A true leader is intuitive and listens to their "gut instincts" because it usually gives them the right answer when uncertainty exists.
6. **Be a Builder of Outstanding Teams:** In any team sport, it's not always the case where the team with the best players wins. Exceptionally talented players are important, but it's not as important as how those players work as a collective whole, as a single and powerful unified force. Therefore, it stands to reason that most of your time as a leader needs to be committed towards selecting, evaluating, coaching and strategically placing your players. As a leader, you must be a great team-builder because if people don't work together on a common goal, then that mission will ultimately fail. Realize that the people that you have on your team won't simply come together by themselves. They need someone who can organize them into an efficient team.
7. **Be a Learner:** Leaders are learners. Our wisdom for making the right decisions is shaped and molded by our experiences in life. Leaders not only immerse themselves into experiencing as much as they can throughout life, but they also learn from the wisdom of other people as a way to leverage the time that they have. We can learn from our own mistakes and accomplishments, but we can also learn from the mistakes of others as well and it's for this reason that leaders must be learners. Strive to maximize your own personal development by taking courses, reading books,

listening to audio programs and immersing yourself into something new that will cause personal growth to happen.

8. **Be a Great Communicator:** Great leaders know how to communicate to their team effectively. They know how to deliver their message in a way that will create a lasting impact on the people who are listening to them. A great leader will also listen to the people that follow them.
9. **Be Competent:** A major component of trust is competence. To be a great leader, you have to maintain a level of proficiency at what you do.
10. **Be Compassionate:** People in the position of power often forget simple manners when it comes to delegating responsibilities to their subordinates. A great leader is respectful at all times and follows the platinum rule of giving all people unconditional love and acceptance regardless of whether they deserve it or whether they want it. It's sometimes too easy to allow positional power to go to one's head and when that happens, that person is no longer a leader, but instead a dictator. A genuine leader is one who is compassionate towards others.
11. **Be Intuitive:** The one thing in common among all outstanding leaders is, they have a very keen sense of intuition. They listen to their "gut" feeling and are sensitive to when their body is telling them that something feels bad or doesn't sit well with them and they don't ignore it. Leaders combine their gut feeling with their experience to avoid the pitfalls that sometimes open up underneath an organization at any time.
12. **Be a Mentor:** A great leader does not only see people as they are, they see people as how they could be. A dictator holds his people down and prevents growth, while a leader knows the value of developing his people and enhancing their potential.
13. **Be willing to celebrate:** Many managers get caught up with trying to be professional by not celebrating enough. Celebration delivers positive energy and recognition to their teams for an effort well-done. Make a big deal about achievements as if your team had just won the Super Bowl or the World Cup. Celebrations are an important tool for motivation.

The path towards living a life of significance demands that you become an exceptional leader. Start working on building your leadership qualities as outlined here and never stop building on those skills for the rest of your living days. The better a leader you become, the more people will hear and follow your message and the greater positive change you can influence on the world as part of your legacy. As Major General Perry M. Smith (Ret. USAF) once said, *"All leaders must work hard to build the future, for that is where they and their people will spend the rest of their lives."*

TIME MANAGEMENT

Everyone gets 24 hours in a day, and 168 hours in a week. How we use or misuse this time depends on our ability to appreciate the value of time and manage our priorities well.

Time management is an effective tool that helps us not only to set long-term goals in life but also successfully sees us through them. Time management is the development of processes and tools that increase a business' time-efficiency. Time management is actually more about managing ourselves or how we make use of the time that is available to us. It is the key to success in everything that we do. Hence, time management is mostly about self- management.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Time Management is mainly defined as, "The ability to manage and control time. The use of planners, calendars, and the like are effective tools in managing time. Implementing a routine is a method of scheduling actions which enforce a regiment to fit with a person's flow of work and production activities".

A concrete personal goal setting system is the key to effective time management and life planning. When we set personal goals wisely, we get a heightened sense of achievement that sustains motivation, and ultimately keeps stress away. Going by the old adage, Time is money, time must be explicitly managed. Being successful does not make us manage our time well. Managing our time well makes us successful. Bad time management is equivalent to stress that can lead to a situation called "time famine" in your life. Therefore, managing time well becomes an important parameter to fulfill the dreams of our lives.

If you were to break up your day into daily activities from the time you wake up till the time you go to sleep, you will find that there are some regular tasks that you do daily, and some on an occasional basis. Ideally your tasks should be done within the allotted or estimated time, but you end up taking more time, either because you underestimated the time required to do the task or took up too many tasks without realizing your limitations or got your priorities wrong. Consequently, you end up drawing on your time bank of 'leisure time' or 'family time' to adjust your work schedule and meet work deadlines.

Identifying Time Stealers

The first step is to detect what makes us waste our time. Surprisingly, most of us do not have an accurate picture of how we spend our time. We may think that we know how long we spend on each task, but these impressions may be inaccurate when we discover the actual time we spent on each task.

It is useful to carry out an objective review of how we currently spend our time by keeping a detail of what we do, when and for how long. This is an effective way to identify stealers, which present themselves to us in the form of various interruptions hampering our management of time. A curb on the excessive usage of cell phones and various other social networking sites should be minimized as they steal time.

Procrastination and Indecision

Most of the time certain reasons cause time to run out of our hands without getting our important tasks accomplished. This happens because we put off our important tasks for some other time without even thinking about the consequence of its delay. This tendency to put off tasks is called "procrastination". If you often see yourself in such low productivity situations, then there is a big chance that your life got under control of the procrastination habit and those situations are only the most explicit symptoms. What makes a big difference for your success is your ability to recognize procrastination reasons and expressions in their different forms, and to promptly take them under control, before this bad habit steals your opportunities, damages your career and pride, or destroys your relationships. The causes of procrastination are the greatest time stealers, doing an irreparable damage to our productive selves. An overview of these causes will help you to identify the time stealers.

Causes of procrastination

Procrastination can be caused by the following conditions:

- Waiting for the right mood
- Waiting for the right time
- Having a look at the way you organize your work you may notice other reasons for procrastination like
- Lack of clear goals
- Underestimating the difficulty of the tasks
- Underestimating the time required to complete the tasks
- Unclear standards for the task outcomes
- Feeling as if the tasks are imposed on you from outside
- Tasks may be too ambiguous
- Underdeveloped decision-making skills
- Fear of failure or fear of success
- Perfectionism

Decision-making is an important aspect of time management. For example, when classifying activities on the basis of their importance or urgency, you will need to be decisive and not indecisive over each and every activity. If you want to improve on your ability to make decisions, you will need to identify the types of job you put off and the reasons and excuses you give yourself. Many people admit to putting off jobs because they find the job daunting or unpleasant and they hope that the job will somehow go away or they just do not know where to start. They may justify this procrastination by finding routine tasks to do instead. Alternatively, they may wait until the pressure is really on before starting to take appropriate action. Deadlines are really important, so we must set deadlines, and work smartly to meet it to save the last minute inconveniences.

Lack of planning

An essential time management skill is the ability to recognize the need to plan periods of time when we can concentrate on the main demands of our job. People frequently refer to the sheer volume of

interruptions that they suffer when trying to justify their lack of achievement. With an interruption occurring, on average, every 7 minutes, managers have to do their work between distractions. Whilst each interruption may not seem to take up much time, they can typically account for 25% of a working day and make it very difficult to address tasks that require concentrated effort.

The effect of allowing interruptions to continually distract you is likely to undermine your efforts to plan your working day. One solution is to batch up the interruptions that you cannot avoid and to set aside time slots during your working day when you can break off and address them. For example, you could set aside 20 minutes before lunch and half an hour before the end of each working day to address all the interruptions that have occurred in each half of the day.

Stress and Fatigue

A particularly unpleasant source of stress comes from what is called "Hurry Sickness". Here you can get into a vicious circle of stress, which causes you to hurry jobs and do them badly. This underperformance causes feelings of frustration and failure, which causes more stress, which causes more hurry and less success, and so on. Stress-creating behavior can compound this, as can an inability to relax at home or on holiday. If you do not manage long-term stress effectively, it can lead to long-term fatigue, failure and one of the forms of physical or mental ill health.

We can eliminate this sort of overload by effective use of time management, particularly by learning how to prioritize effectively. We can neutralize the associated stress by effective use of stress management techniques.

Inability to say "No"

Saying 'yes' to requests for your time is not always a bad practice. In fact, the better you are at managing your time and your projects, the more likely it is that you will be chosen to handle important tasks that need to be completed quickly with quality and care.

Taking on and completing important projects can be very rewarding and can lead to promotions and bonuses. The problem occurs when you say 'yes' to almost any request no matter what it is, who is asking, or how much work you already have on your plate.

Always saying 'yes' is a major source of overload and stress, and it can lead you away from your priorities into less important tasks. If you want to avoid the work and stress associated with attempting too much, you need to decide carefully whether to accept new tasks or not. The most common reasons for saying "yes" are a desire to please, fear of rejection, and guilt. You may be saying "yes" because of a payoff you are receiving or because of not wanting to confront the one who makes the request.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, *"A 'No' uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a 'Yes' merely uttered to please, or what is worse, to avoid trouble."*

Desk Management and personal disorganization

For managing a task well and completing it on schedule, it is important that we clear our desk every day before we start work. When too many junk documents keep piling up on our desks along with the

important ones, we tend to develop a condition known as "desk stress". A desk should be clutter free and spacious enough to give you a stress free feel. A tidy desk is not the sign of someone with nothing to do, nor is a messy desk the mark of a busy manager.

A tidy desk is different for everyone. Some people need a clean desktop, with such basic tools as pens, stapler and tape dispenser out of sight in a drawer. Others are comfortable with tidy piles of paper and knickknacks.

Management of Priorities

Management of priorities is the essential skill you need when you want to make the very best use of your own efforts and those of your team. It is particularly important when time is limited and demands are seemingly unlimited. It helps you to allocate your time where it is most-needed, freeing you and your team from less important tasks that can be attended to later.

With careful management of prioritized tasks you can bring order to chaos, massively reduce stress, and move towards a successful conclusion. Without it, you will flounder around, failing to rise up to the existing demands. You can prioritize your tasks based on the time constraints, or on the potential profitability or benefit of the task you are facing, or on the pressure you are under to complete a job.

- Prioritization based on project value or profitability is probably the most commonly used and rational basis for prioritization. Whether this is based on a subjective guess at value or a sophisticated financial evaluation. It often gives the most efficient results.
- Time constraints are important where other people are depending on you to complete a task, and particularly where the task is crucial for the completion of an important project. Here, a small amount of your own effort can go a very long way. And it is normally impossible for a person to resist his or her boss's pressure to complete a task, when that pressure is reasonable and legitimate.

How to Increase Work Effectiveness and Productivity:

The idea that work effectiveness is related to organizational productivity is based on years of research and practice. Work effectiveness comes from organizing people to work systematically for achieving a goal. When building a successful career or a business of our own, our time is perhaps our most valuable asset. We can apply these three practical ideas to increase our effectiveness without working any harder than you do now to increase your productivity.

➤ Keep a detailed Time Log:

The first step to better managing your time is to find out how you are currently spending your time. Keeping a time log is a very effective way to do this, and after trying it for just one day, you will immediately gain tremendous insight into where your time is actually going. The very act of measuring is often enough to raise your unconscious habits into your consciousness, where you then have a chance to scrutinize and change them.

➤ **Cut Back On Total Hours To Force An Increase In Efficiency:**

If you have ever tried to discipline yourself to do something you were not really motivated to do, you are most likely to fail. If your time log shows your efficiency ratio to be on the low side, try severely limiting your total amount of working time for a day, and see what happens. Once your brain realizes that working time is scarce, you suddenly become a lot more efficient because you have to. When you have tight time constraints, you will usually find a way to get your work done. But when you have all the time in the world, it's too easy to be inefficient.

➤ **Gradually Increase Total Working Hours While Maintaining Peak Efficiency:**

Time logging is the intelligent choice to ensure optimal productivity without increasing your hours. Time logging needs to be done only periodically. When you feel your productivity is lower than you would like it to be, raise your awareness via time logging, measure your efficiency ratio, and then optimize your efficiency to boost your productivity back up where it belongs. Time logging is a high leverage activity that takes very little time and effort to implement, but the long-term payoff is tremendous.

➤ **Scheduling and planning:**

It is important to know how to schedule and plan. Plans can be long term and short term. Long term plans are related to the long-term goals of your organization and your long-term career plans. Short-term plans have more to do with what you will be doing in the next one or two months and in the next week. Once you have clear long-term goals, you can break them down into short-term goals and the tasks that you need to do consequently attain priority as required.

It is impossible to plan down to a minute, so schedule work in blocks of time. Try to schedule similar tasks together. Schedule important tasks for peak times (you should know at what time of the day you are most alert). Be smart when making appointments. Make sure you know how much time the meeting will take, how long it will take to get there and any unforeseen activities you might have to take up. For any task, do not underestimate or overestimate the time it will take. This ability comes from experience, but you can also ask your colleagues for advice. Tackle important work, not the urgent and always try to resist unscheduled activities.

A daily planner helps in managing your time well as you can consult it any time and schedule your day accordingly. When you make a daily planner always start with the pre-scheduled activities. Then add the regular/scheduled activities or practices. Remember to keep about 10 minutes before (starting your computer, settling down) and 10 minutes at the end of the day (wrapping up). Sticking to a rigid plan will make it difficult for you to work in collaboration with your colleagues. Sometimes circumstances beyond your control (a colleague calls in sick, a customer wants your immediate attention, technical breakdowns, unexpected events in the family, project requirements change) may require you to adjust your schedule accordingly. Retain the flexibility to handle such exigencies smoothly but ensure your office knows about the change in plan.

Always monitor your daily routine. Review daily time spent on each activity and try to analyze the share of productive time, supportive time and unproductive time. Ideally you should spend at least 60% on productive activities, 30% on supportive activities and 10% on unproductive activities.

➤ **Managing a balanced lifestyle**

When life is busy, or all our energy is focused on a special project, it is easy to find ourselves "off balance", and find that we are not paying enough attention to other important areas of our life. While we need to have the drive and focus to get things done, taking this too far can lead to frustration and intense stress.

➤ **Feeling more in control of daily activities**

It is essentially stress and boredom that deprive us from exerting a control or choice over our daily lives. We see that daily lives are structured by the dominant culture and the high standards society lays down for each one of us to follow as a benchmark for success. The relationship between stress and free time activities is clearly determined by the feeling of having too many things to do and not enough time to do them all. Such a situation clearly reduces opportunities for leisure.

The feeling of being "rushed" or "busy" may be due to high time demands on a day to day basis, or it may be due to a response to high, but intermittent and occasional time demands, or it may be associated with a lack of control over the daily activities of life. Given that, time stress and work stress seem to be increasing in adult society. Stress-related diseases are also on the increase. For professionals, time stress may be due to demands associated with projects and other time bound activities, as well as with the demands of paid work and expectations from peer groups and senior bosses about making contributions to the organization's productivity.

To bring about a feeling of control over the daily activities of life, participation in recreational and home based activities will give a positive feeling of well being and healthy. These constant demands of time on a professional's life should be managed and balanced properly to bring about a control over their daily lives and the activities they do.

How to Reduce Stress with Effective Planning

We have all felt stressed out at one time or another. Stress has been implicated as a possible cause of numerous conditions, including work overload, disease, eating problems, sleep disturbances, and emotional trauma etc. Apart from these, another critical situation of life leads to stress, i.e. lack of effective planning. Learning to reduce your stress levels can help you live happier, healthier, and maybe even longer. Some useful tips to reduce stress are given below:

✓ **Be realistic**

Do not take on everything and learn to say no. Set realistic goals for yourself. If you feel overwhelmed, try eliminating an activity which is not absolutely necessary. Ask yourself, "What really needs to be done? Is the deadline realistic?" No one is perfect, so do not expect perfection from yourself or others. And ask for help if you need it.

✓ **Meditate**

It only takes about 10-20 minutes to meditate but the benefits are immense. These few moments of quiet reflection may bring relief from stress as well as increase your tolerance to it. And it is

simple to do. You can sit quietly, listen to peaceful music, relax, and try and think of pleasant things or think of nothing.

✓ **Visualize**

Take a moment to picture how you can manage a stressful situation more calmly and successfully. This can work with just about anything, whether it is an important presentation at work or moving to a new place or taking an exam. A visual rehearsal can boost self-confidence and help you have a more positive attitude toward a difficult task.

✓ **Take one thing at a time**

When you start to feel overwhelmed, try taking one task at a time. Make a list of things you need to do. Put the most urgent task at the top. Once you have accomplished it, cross it off and move on to the next one. The positive feeling of crossing things off can help in keeping you motivated.

✓ **Exercise**

Regular exercise is a great way to reduce stress, and it benefits the body as well as the mind. Just 20- 30 minutes of physical activity a day can do the trick.

✓ **Get involved in hobbies**

Take a break from the stressors of life and do something you really enjoy. Try gardening, painting, or reading. Set aside time to pursue these activities.

✓ **Practice a healthful lifestyle**

Eating healthfully will make a difference. Avoiding things like smoking, drinking alcohol, and caffeine. Make sure you get adequate rest and exercise, and that you balance work and play.

✓ **Share your feelings**

Talking about things can help you feel better. A conversation with someone can help you relax and listening to someone else can take the focus of yourself, something we all need to do every now and then. Stay in touch with your family and friends and try not to cope alone.

✓ **Give in occasionally**

You do not always have to be right. Be flexible. Be willing to compromise. If you do, others may meet you halfway. If you know you are right, stand your ground. But be calm and rational. And listen and make allowances for other peoples' opinions.

✓ **Go easy with criticism**

When you expect too much from yourself or others, you may end up feeling frustrated, let down, and disappointed. Remember that each person is unique and everyone, including you, has shortcomings. But each person also has many beautiful qualities to share with the world.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Stress is the biggest single problem of the 21st century. This is the major reason why so many people get sick or die prematurely, not being able to handle the demands of modern life. Every health problem, from headaches to heart attacks, from psychosomatic disorders to strokes can be linked to this great malady. There is no defined age at which one is at risk of suffering from stress. Anyone can be stressed at any time if they are not adequately equipped to balance work and home. Many psychologists say that in our frenzy to get into the rat race of becoming successful men and women we often neglect the vital issues of health and we become prone to stress. So, if we cannot get a grip on stress we will have to pay the price physically, mentally and spiritually. At the same time, studies show that even if one has a very demanding job, stress can be avoided. Psychologists and doctors point out that having unrealistic expectations of oneself and striving to live up to that expectation leads to the constant feeling of stress and causes health problems.

Stress is dangerous because many treat the symptoms of stress (headaches or insomnia) without realizing what triggers it. Poor health results in missing important deadlines and assignments and this has a negative impact on their professional growth. When peace of mind and productivity suffers their professional and personal life gets affected. This makes them worry more and become more tensed as they constantly feel the pressure of having to live up to what the organization and their family expect of them. To add to this they have their own expectations to fulfill. Consequently when they feel better they slip into the old stressful routine and the ailments reappear. Medication helps, but only temporarily and their health and mental well-being deteriorate. The vicious cycle continues. If we learn to manage our expectations, both what we expect from ourselves and what others expect of us, we will be able to lead a stress-free life.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress management is a holistic approach that integrates body, mind and spirit using techniques and strategies. This unit includes many techniques to combat and reverse stress. This will be your first step to take on the issue of stress head on and apply the techniques you learn in your day-to-day life. Before learning how to manage stress, it is important for you to know what stress is and what causes stress.

Many researchers have been conducting experiments on stress and stress-related factors.

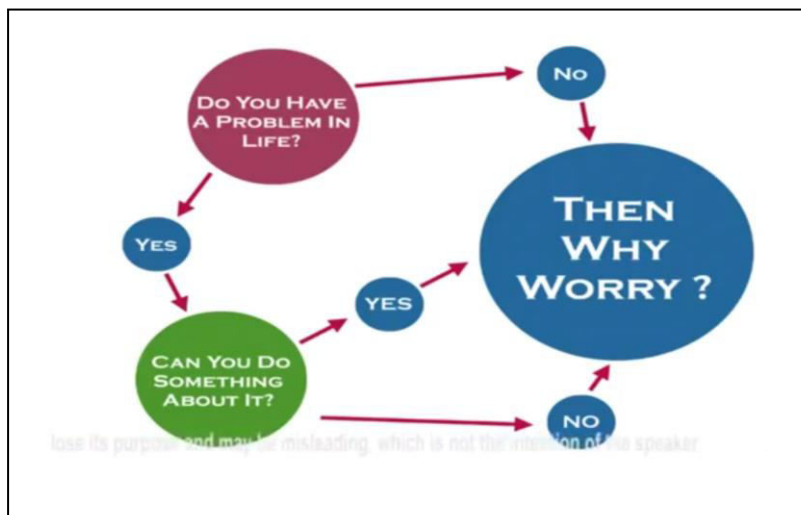
Many of their findings are acceptable while others are debatable. This topic will address the important issues related to stress and also will help us to understand the basic principles of stress as ascertained by current psychological research.

We start by defining stress and then we look at the underlying mechanism that causes it.

Next, we look at the nature of stress and consider the relationships between stress and health, and between stress and work performance. We see how stress can have very negative effects on short and long-term health, performance and career success, as well as on our personal happiness. This emphasizes the importance of good stress management.

Finally, we look at the three types of approach to managing stress:

- Action oriented (reducing stress by taking action).
- Perception oriented (dealing with attitudes and emotional responses to stress).
- Survival oriented (living and coping with stresses that cannot be otherwise resolved).



What Is Pressure and What Is Stress

Pressures of life originate from the demands of everyday life. The pressures of career and all the activities of daily life generally demand a great deal of energy and focus on your part to deport you to higher level of consciousness. You feel torn between your duty in the world and the yearning of your heart, a yearning so important and deep that life seems entirely empty and worthless without that fulfillment. Further, you assume at times you are not progressing. Based on your limited judgment, not knowing much about the situation at all, you can somehow assume you are qualified to gauge your experience as being successful or unsuccessful. Not yet being very subtle or very aware, you usually make false assumptions and fall prey to the pressures of life.

Not only do the regular pressures of life seem agonizing at times but also there are so many unforeseen variables. For example, you strive to lead a balanced, goal-centered life but suddenly something goes wrong and you have to work harder to compensate your loss. Constant problems can be antagonizing unless you understand your perspective from the viewpoint that life's problems and challenges need to be handled in a creative and forthright manner.

We can define stress as **a normal physiological response of the body to situations or stimulus, which are perceived as 'dangerous' to the body.** When it occurs frequently it affects health, both physical and mental. **One major problem of defining stress is, it has so many things included in it that it often becomes hard to evolve a single definition for stress.** In finding a suitable definition for stress different perspectives and circumstances are taken into account. **It is a family of related experience of events and circumstances. Different people therefore, identify with different definitions.**

Hans Selye, one of the founding fathers of Stress Research, says that to a linguist or a lawyer words have very precise and fixed meanings. But to others, belonging to other fields, ideas and definitions are continually evolving due to research and knowledge expansion.

Selye's view in 1956 was that "stress is not necessarily something bad - it all depends on how you take it. The stress of exhilarating, creative successful work is beneficial, while that of failure, humiliation or infection is detrimental." Selye believed that the biochemical effects of stress would be experienced irrespective of whether the situation was positive or negative.

Since then, ideas have moved on. In particular, the harmful biochemical and long-term effects of stress have rarely been observed in positive situations. So the question of how we can define stress in the given circumstances arises. A common consensus on the definition is, "*Stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize.*"

The Three Stages of Burnout

Burnout is not something that happens overnight. It is a gradual process of affecting your physical health by developing undetected symptoms and signs of stress. Burnout is a constant feeling of cynicism, pessimism and hopelessness. Many people grow self-doubts in the face of these debilitating tendencies. They feel they no longer can contribute to their work, which results in low productivity, lesser mobilization of their energy and a dwindling commitment to work. Research shows that there are three stages of burnout that completely demoralizes a person and makes him susceptible to failures. The three stages defined here are based on the book titled *Get a Grip! Overcoming Stress and Thriving in the Workplace*, by Bob Losyk.

Stage one: Turned on

This stage occurs when a person takes up a new job, a new position, or become involved in a new project. The person in his new role displays a high level of enthusiasm, abundant energy and a deep involvement. He tends to get carried away in his endeavor thinking the job is "be all, end all" of his life. Some people may cope well with these changes by handling well the demands and pressures the job brings with it. But one who cannot adapt well with these changes becomes prone to stress and exhibits fatigue syndrome as he starts burning up too much energy in his process of adaptation.

Stage two: Turned off

In this stage the burn up that began in stage one slowly sneaks on the person's life without his awareness. He often overlooks this condition, as it does not show immediately any obvious signs of his deterioration. He gradually discovers his job to be not what he expected it to be, breeding disillusionment in his mind. His earlier enthusiasm is replaced by chronic fatigue now. He starts to withdraw from others and avoids work. He begins to doubt his own ability of getting the job done. Sadness, cynicism and confusion overwhelm him.

Stage three: Wiped out

This is a stage of rude awakening, which leads him to think that he is in deep trouble. The fatigue turns into exhaustion, sadness and confusion into depression. He faces problems in eating and

sleeping. Negative thinking further lowers his resistance to illness and makes him prone to illnesses. Emotionally and physically he feels worn out, loses his focus and interest in the job. Physical symptoms start appearing at this stage exposing him to blood pressure and heart problems.

People feel burnout when they do not enjoy the advantages of a job in a workplace. Too much work pressure and strained relations with one's colleagues and bosses aggravate burnout problems. The type of organization and position plus salary and benefits all play a major role in cutting down the factors of stress in an organization. Therefore, emotional and physical well being of a person is necessary to prevent burnout problems in work place. Last but not the least, every individual must try to relieve stress, recharge one's body, mind and spirit everyday to cope with pressure and stress.

Recognizing your own stressors

While a certain level of stress is necessary to avoid boredom, high levels of stress over a sustained period can damage your health. The sections below show common symptoms of stress, and the negative effects that excessive stress can cause. While the symptoms in isolation may or may not show stress, where several occur it is likely that stress is having an effect. Note that as the stress you are under increases, your ability to recognize it will often decrease. The symptoms are organized into the following sections:

- Short term physical symptoms
- Short term performance effects
- Long term physical symptoms
- Internal symptoms
- Behavioral symptoms

Short Term Physical Symptoms

The following mainly occur as your body adapts to perceived physical threat, and are caused by release of adrenaline. Although you may perceive these as unpleasant and negative, they are signs that prepare your body for the explosive action that assists survival or high performance:

- Faster heart beat
- Increased sweating
- Cool skin
- Cold hands and feet
- Feelings of nausea, or 'Butterflies in stomach'
- Rapid Breathing
- Tense Muscles
- Dry Mouth
- A desire to urinate
- Diarrhea

These are the symptoms of survival stress.

Short Term Performance Effects:

- While adrenaline helps you survive in a 'fight-or-flight' situation, it does have negative effects in situations where this is not the case.
- It interferes with clear judgment and makes it difficult to take the time to make good decisions.
- It can seriously reduce your enjoyment of work.
- Where you need good physical skills it gets in the way of fine motor control.
- It causes difficult situations to be seen as a threat, not a challenge.
- It damages the positive frame of mind you need for high quality work by:
 1. Promoting negative thinking,
 2. Damaging self-confidence,
 3. Narrowing attention,
 4. Disrupting focus and concentration and
 5. Making it difficult to cope with distractions
 6. Consuming mental energy by distraction, anxiety, frustration and temper.

Long Term Physical Symptoms:

These occur where your body has been exposed to adrenaline over a long period. One of the ways adrenaline prepares you for action is by diverting resources to the muscles from the areas of the body, which carry out body maintenance. This means that if you are exposed to adrenaline for a sustained period, then your health may start to deteriorate. This may show up in the following ways:

- Change in appetite
- Frequent colds
- Asthma
- Back pain
- Digestive problems
- Headaches
- Skin eruptions
- Aches and pains
- Feelings of intense and long-term tiredness

Internal Symptoms of Long Term Stress:

When you are under stress or have been tired for a long period of time you may find that you are not able to think clearly and rationally about problems. This can lead to the following internal emotional 'upsets':

- Worry or anxiety.
- Confusion and an inability to concentrate or make decisions
- Feeling ill.
- Feeling out of control or overwhelmed by events
- Mood changes
- Depression
- Frustration
- Hostility
- Helplessness

- impatience and irritability
- Restlessness
- Being more lethargic
- Difficulty sleeping
- Drinking more alcohol and smoking more
- Changing eating habits
- Relying more on medication

Behavioral Symptoms of Long Term Stress:

When you or other people are under pressure, this can show as:

- Talking too fast or too loud
- Yawning
- Fiddling and twitching, nail biting, grinding teeth, drumming fingers, pacing, etc.
- Being irritable
- Defensiveness
- Being critical
- Aggression
- Irrationality
- Overreaction and reacting emotionally
- Reduced personal effectiveness
- Being unreasonably negative
- Making less realistic judgments
- Being unable to concentrate and having difficulty making decisions
- Being more forgetful
- Making more mistakes
- Being more accident prone
- Changing work habits
- Increased absenteeism
- Neglect of personal appearance

These symptoms of stress should not be taken in isolation as there could be other factors causing them. However if you find yourself exhibiting or recognizing a number of them, then it would be worth investigating stress management techniques.

Stress is linked to the six leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide.

Personality types and reactions to stress

Scientists have identified a series of different factors that can influence an individual's vulnerability to stress. While age and sex can seemingly make you vulnerable to stress, the major deciding factor is your personality type. Psychologists have learnt that people respond to stressful situations in different ways. Everyone has different stress 'thresholds'. Someone with a low stress threshold can become highly stressed by simple events, such as being late for a meeting or forgetting their keys. But it

would take something much more threatening, like failing an exam or moving house, to initiate the stress response in a person with a high stress threshold.

Psychologists talk about two personality types when it comes to stress.

Type A and B.

People with Type-A personalities are more likely to rush, be competitive and be perfectionists. They often attempt to do two or more things at once and feel guilty when they take time out to relax or do nothing, even if it is just for a couple of hours.

Type-B personalities, on the other hand, are people who can be described as 'laid back'. They are easy going, able to work at a reasonable pace and can 'relax without guilt'.

Not surprisingly, Type A people are much more prone to stress than Type B people. Any event that disrupts their normal routine or gets in the way of their plans can upset a Type A person, while a Type B person is much more able to take the world in their stride. They tend to be more adaptive in their thinking and are better at putting things in perspective, thinking through how they are going to deal with a situation rather than just stressing over it as a Type A person would.

How your beliefs and perceptions cause stress

Anxiety and fears may result from how we perceive and react to situations. Our adherence to faulty beliefs and perceptions cause us to react severely to different life situations. We may or may not take kindly to bad situations we face in life. The faulty perceptions occur when our unrealistic expectations, subdued fears, or wishes change our way of seeing other people and ourselves. We have a definite "set notion" of viewing an event, which causes us to see the situation in a certain way--we give it our own slant. For example, a person who wants to please others so much will not see the other person's disinterest in him. A person with a pessimistic outlook will consider every event to be the beginning of a catastrophe. Many of these faulty perceptions, called "maladaptive schemas" by Young (1989), arise from emotions or needs and obviously cause stress.

Every irrational idea, stems from beliefs like things must go the way I want them to, and if they do not, I have a right to get terribly upset. This demand for love, success, self-importance is certainly going to produce stress, especially when the demands are not met. These demands surely arise from a long history and a complex variety of emotions, thoughts, needs, fears, and hopes. These cognitive-emotional demands that life unfold differently produce, in turn, many new and disturbing emotions. After perception, we appraise the situation and decide how well we can handle it.

A situation that is identified as a stressor, such as having to give a speech, is perceived and responded to very differently by different people. A person would want to get out of doing it, being unable to think of anything worthwhile to say, and be certain that she would mess up and say stupid things. Another person with no more speaking experience might be thrilled, be eager to begin gathering material, be sure he has important things to say, and fantasize doing well (in spite of some anxiety). The event has very different meaning to these two people. Their expectations of themselves and others are entirely different. **Life is 10% what you make of it and 90% how you take it.**

MANAGING YOURSELF

You should learn to recognize when you have outrun your abilities. You can fall back on the leadership qualities that you have learned previously to take yourself to the next level in managing yourself and others. If you open yourself to being transformed you can effectively listen to others thereby, letting go old notions of leadership. When you cultivate a sense of self-awareness you can understand what works for you better in a hardcore professional world. One can find that the easiest way to manage oneself is to be flexible enough to adapt with changes, people's mindset and stress factors.

Does Your Job Cause Stress?

Here is a set of questions that may help to find out if you are under stress. Answer them honestly.

1. Do you wake up tired first thing in the morning?
2. Have you lost the feelings of satisfaction, accomplishment and enjoyment that always inspired you to live your life to the fullest?
3. Are you more irritable and impatient than usual? Do you often feel like you are not yourself?
4. Do your well-wishers and friends frequently ask you, "Are you all right?" or inquire whether something is wrong?
5. Does taking a vacation give you a temporary sense of relief, but as soon as you return back to your daily life you feel tired and have no energy or enthusiasm for work?
6. Do you take longer lunches and breaks than you used to? Is it hard to make yourself go back to work once you are on lunch, or a break?
7. Does life seem like "all work and no play"?
8. Do you often feel overwhelmed and too tired to do your work?
9. Do you look for excuses to stop what you are doing (procrastinate), and do you welcome interruptions?
10. Do you spend time doing non-work activities so you do not have to face your work?
11. When you are doing your work, is it accompanied by a feeling of inescapable fatigue?
12. Do you daydream about "running away" and quitting your responsibilities towards life?

After answering the questions, evaluate yourselves

- If you answered "yes" to three or more of the questions, you should consider taking action to reduce your stress at work.
- Four to seven "yes" answers means your attitude at work is suffering and serious burnout is on the horizon, so you should take action now.
- Eight or more "yes" answers means you are experiencing acute burnout and should seek help immediately.

Five Ways to Battle Job Stress:

1. Prevention is the key: Tend to your spirit, stay physically fit, have a life outside of work, get plenty of rest and avoid alcohol and drugs. If you are in good health, work will not overwhelm your life. Exercise helps ease tension and keeps the body and mind happier.

2. Meditate, pray, practice yoga or relax daily: Starts your day by meditating to get connected with "the Divine." The important thing is to feed your spirit frequently. Research has shown that meditation leads to a more productive day. Make it a priority, and you will begin to feel more balanced.

3. Prioritize: There are more demands on our time than ever now, with lots to accomplish. To avoid getting overwhelmed, prioritize your workload at the beginning of the day, then reassess later if necessary. By creating priorities, you can better judge, for example, whether you should be replying to a friend's email or not while you are working to meet a deadline? (The answer is no.)

4. Breathe: It is really important to just pause, take a breath and think about your breath. Then pray or meditate.

5. Consider the root of the problem: If you have tried everything and you are still feeling anxiety over work, maybe your job really is the problem. Using your support network of family and friends to help develop an action plan, you can succeed in your efforts. You might also consider contacting a therapist if the problem persists.

Developing a strategy for stress management

Have you ever-experienced stress from obsessive or unwanted thoughts? Did you say to yourself, "Today I am not going to think about....?" What is the first thing you thought about? Was that obsessive" or "unwanted" thought? These negative, stressful thoughts can be stopped by a technique called thought-stopping.

First, picture a scene that brings up wonderful, comfortable feelings, and that makes you feel good about yourself. Imagine the scene in terms of what it looks like, sounds like, smells like, and feels like. For example: You are on a beach. You see the sand and the water; you hear the waves beating against the shore. You smell the salt water and feel invigorated, yet calm. The scene you imagine does not have to be a true experience. The important point is that whatever you picture makes you feel good. Every time one of these unwanted thoughts occur, yell "Stop!" in your mind or out loud. Yelling, "Stop" immediately breaks the thought cycle. Then substitute your positive scene, replacing the negative thought that makes you feel badly about yourself with a positive thought that makes you feel good. The scene will leave your mind but the good feelings will remain.

After a few days the negative thoughts will be less frequent and you will be able to control them. It gets easier every time you do it. It is important to use this technique each time the unwanted thought appears. You can do thought stopping when you feel bad about yourself, guilty about something, when you are obsessed about the future or the past, or when you just want to get rid of a thought that is taking up your emotional energy. If you combine this technique with a conscious breathing relaxation exercise, it will help you sleep at night. You will feel better and experience less stress. There will be more time for you to enjoy your life and be productive in the ways you want to be.

Self-management

Here is a checklist on self-management for you to follow as guidelines. Self-management is a pertinent tool for a better life. Abiding by these rules of self-management, you can manage your life the way you want it.

- **Specify a clear-** cut goal you want to accomplish. And be very specific. Like 'I will write for four hours a day, or 'run three miles'.
- **Specify when you will do it.** Like every day, Monday through Friday, or every morning, seven days a week, or at 10:00 am on Thursday.
- **Record your hit rate.** Make a record of your successes and your failures, like a graph of the numbers of hours per day or a note on your calendar of the number of miles run each day.
- **Make a public commitment.** Tell someone what your goals and your deadline are and ask them to check on you to see if you got it done. This is a subtle way of arranging for a little mild social reward or punishment, approval or disapproval, depending on whether you get the job done.
- **Add an explicit penalty for failure, if you need to.** Tell your monitor that you will pay them a quarter or a dollar or take them out to lunch for each of your failures. But keep the penalty small, almost at a joke level, otherwise everyone will start getting uptight, and you are liable to give the wrong impression
- **Think small.** Do not try to make up for your past sins in a single day. If you have got a hundred letters to write, do not try to do them all right away. A postcard a day may be infinitely better than doing now. Going for too much too soon is why many people fail at self-management. That's a big one so watch out for it.
- **Specify the amount of product you are going to produce.** Simply specifying the amount of time you are going to log in does not do the trick; in other words, specify the amount of work you are going to do.
- **Get a timer that beeps every five minutes and chart whether you are on task, if you find yourself drifting off too much.** This is especially good when you might have trouble measuring the amount of the product.
- **Arrange for regular contact with your monitor, daily or weekly as needed.** This is another one of those week points in the system. It helps to put your self-management project on the agenda with someone you meet with regularly and formally, a superior, a peer, or a subordinate.
- **Arrange for your friend to monitor your graphing as well as your goal attainment.** It is important to keep a good record of your performance so you are motivated not to mess up that pretty record, but you might also need to contract your charting, or that charting may fall out.

- **"Put Satan behind you." Get rid of distractions.** Try to do your work when and where no one can bother you. Watch out for the phone. We might even blow a whole morning sorting through our junk mail and new magazines. Get as many tempting distractions out of your work environment as possible. Put an axe on the TV set.
- **Recycle.** Your self-management project may not work the first time you try it. It might even fall apart from time to time. So be prepared with some scotch tape and bubble gum to put it back together again. Remember, you do not demean yourself by using these explicit self-management techniques. Use them and you will be in the company of some of the world's most productive people.

Managing Change

Change is an effective guide to a better life and greater career opportunities. It is the only constant variable that brings variety and spice to a person's life. There can be no promotion in a goal seeker's life if he does not allow change to intervene in his life. You can manage change only when you welcome change. There are eight tips for you to cope with change beautifully:

- **Increase urgency** - inspire people to move, make objectives real and relevant.
- **Build the guiding team** - get the right people in place with the right emotional commitment, and the right mix of skills and levels.
- **Get the vision right** - get the team to establish a simple vision and strategy, focus on emotional and creative aspects necessary to drive service and efficiency.
- **Communicate for buy-in** - Involve as many people as possible, communicate the essentials, simply, and to appeal and respond to people's needs. De-clutter communications - make technology work for you rather than against.
- **Empower action** - Remove obstacles, enable constructive feedback and lots of support from leaders - reward and recognize progress and achievements.
- **Create short-term wins** - Set aims that are easy to achieve - in bite-size chunks. Manage numbers of initiatives. Finish current stages before starting new ones.
- **Don't let up** - Foster and encourage determination and persistence - ongoing change – encourage ongoing progress reporting - highlight achieved and future milestones.
- **Make change stick** - Reinforce the value of successful change via recruitment, promotion, changing leaders. Weave change into culture.

Relaxation Techniques

Any type of stress triggers physiological responses. Your adrenaline output increases, your heart pumps faster, and your breathing rate goes up. These bodily responses are positive if you channel

them over a short period of time, but if there is no release, however small, then stress becomes a negative force. The strain of negative stress manifests symptoms like chronic fatigue, headaches, a change in eating habits, inability to concentrate, general irritability, as well as other physical problems.

A certain amount of stress, however, is beneficial. So, to purge your body from the evil effects of stress, these relaxation techniques will help you best in soothing and revitalizing your spirit, body and mind.

For quick relaxation from stress you can refer to the following techniques:

- Loosen your clothing and get comfortable.
- Tighten the muscles in your toes. Hold for a count of 10. Relax and enjoy the sensation of release from tension.
- Flex the muscles in your feet. Hold for a count of 10. Relax.
- Move slowly up through your body- legs, abdomen, back, neck, face- contracting and relaxing muscles as you go.
- Breathe deeply and slowly.
- For long-term relaxation, get in a comfortable position.
- Minimally tighten your right fist so that you feel only the smallest amount of tension. Hold for some time. Be sure you continue to breathe... Now let go and relax...
- Observe the difference in feelings between the right and left arm and fist. Now minimally tighten your left fist. Hold for some time. Let go and relax. Let the relaxation spread through the arms and the rest of the body.
- Now tighten ever so slightly the following parts of your body. (Each time tighten only to the point at which you can observe tension. Where you can observe tension, where you become conscious of or can "feel" the tension. Hold the tensions at that level, and be sure you tighten only the intended muscle while the rest of the body stays quiet and relaxed. Be sure you continue to breathe. Each time you let go, let those parts relax further and further.)

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

Personality development is the pursuit of developing, honing and mastering the skills that help us become the best that we can, with all that we have. It is the reaching for, and realizing of our full potential as human beings.

We all want to live full; productive lives, but sometimes, we just don't know where to begin. There is so much information 'out there' that it can be overwhelming and hard to sort out. Depending on the problem, what seems to work for one person, may not necessarily work for everyone. There are so many different programs, strategies and techniques that it's hard to choose the right one.

One thing, however, is certain. If we want to accomplish *anything* in life and realize our full potential, we must have some skills.

In order to excel at a job, a sport or any discipline, a person must acquire and master certain skills. Living life fully and productively is no different.

Furthermore, possessing life skills enables you to deal with the life's inevitable difficulties and adversities more effectively. It lessens your chances of overusing prescription drugs, engaging in addictive behaviors, and experiencing overall despair and hopelessness. When you have the proper tools and strategies at your disposal, you have more control over your life and are therefore happier and more productive.

Where do you begin?

You begin by establishing a firm foundation. That foundation is "you". You must know who you are, what you want, and what you are capable of. You must then determine which values, goals and principles you will set up to guide your actions.

Learning about and applying the **9 Essential Life Skills** will help you. It will help you to:

- know and understand yourself better
- live life more consciously and deliberately
- attain personal satisfaction and fulfillment.

Often, the hardest part in any endeavor is getting started, however once you do, there is a surprising snowball effect. You will begin to feel good about what you're doing and you'll want to continue. You will want to keep improving yourself and you'll want to become the best that you can be.

As you continue on the journey of personal development, you will become aware that there is so much more knowledge and information to be discovered, and uncovered, than you ever thought possible - knowledge about yourself, knowledge about others, knowledge about life and the world around you.

Personal development is about desiring and pursuing knowledge.

To assist you in your pursuit of knowledge and in expanding your horizons, we encourage you to read and explore the pages on the arts, philosophy, and sports. We often tend to overlook how much they contribute to personal development and to the balancing of the personality.

Enjoy also the inspirational quotes, and personal development articles that include helpful tips and strategies, as well as other interesting pointers.

The good news is, that acquiring **Essential Life Skills** will not only contribute to your personal growth and development, it will make you a more interesting and dynamic individual.

Why are these skills essential?

Because without having developed them, you will always feel that something is missing in your life. What good is all the financial success in the world if you don't have self-confidence. Know who you really are, what you want, or what you're doing here? We've all witnessed many outwardly successful and famous people who have not been able to find personal happiness. No amount of fame or fortune could fill the void they felt inside.

Therefore, in order to enjoy the fruits of any achievement we must first be happy with ourselves and possess the following:

A healthy Self-Concept which includes the three skills of:

1. Know Yourself
2. Love Yourself
3. Be True To Yourself.

The Critical Thinking that is needed to work on developing and honing the rest of the skills includes

4. Have a Personal Value System
5. Perspective
6. Have An Open Mind
7. Have a Sense of Humor
8. Resilience
9. Acceptance.

Personal development is an ongoing process and journey.

"To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end of life."

1. Make a distinction between the problem and the person. Formulate the conflict issues as shared problems that you have to solve in conjunction with others. Abstain from blaming and voicing negative opinions about others. State clearly what you feel and want and invite your counterpart to help find the solutions. Opinions and emotions should be expressed in ways that facilitate the process of achieving satisfying outcomes. Keep in mind that there is mostly a positive intention behind people's actions, even if unskillfully expressed.
2. Remain clear, straightforward and concrete in your communications. State clearly what you have seen, heard and experienced that influenced your views in the matter at hand. Tell the other person what is important to you, why you find it important, what you feel and what you hope for. Express your own emotions and frustrated need in clear and concrete terms. Ask for the counterpart's fears and needs in a way that conveys that you care about him.

3. Maintain contact with your counterpart. Breaking off contact with the counterpart in a conflict often leads to a rapid escalation. Do what you can to keep the communication going. Work to improve your relationship even if there are conflict issues that seem impossible to resolve. Offer to do something small that meets one of your counterpart's wishes and suggest small things your counterpart can do to meet your own needs and wishes. Even if marginal, such acts can strengthen the hope it will be possible to change the nature of the relationship in a positive direction.
4. Look for the needs and interests that underline concrete positions. Bargaining about positions often leads to stalemates or unsatisfying solutions. Inquire into what needs and interests would be satisfied by certain concrete demands and explore if there are alternative and mutually acceptable ways of satisfying those needs and interests. Blaming, accusing and/or offering negative opinions point-blank are unskillful ways of expressing emotions. Show understanding for the feelings of the other party without letting yourself be provoked by their attacks. Inquire into what is really important and significant for you and keep those values and needs in mind during the course of the conflict.
5. Make it easy for your counterpart to be constructive. Avoid triggering the defensiveness of your counterpart by blaming, accusing, criticizing and diagnosing. Extend appreciation and respect to your counterpart where you can do so sincerely. Show your counterpart that you care about the issues and needs that are important to him. Take responsibility for your own contributions to the conflict scenario.
6. Develop your ability to look at the conflict externally. Review the conflict history in its entirety. Notice what kinds of actions influence the tensions of the conflict in positive and negative directions. Develop awareness of how you can influence the future course of events in the conflict in a constructive direction. Test the reasonability of your own image of occurrences by talking with impartial persons. Assume responsibility for what happens. Address problems as soon as you sense them, before they have a chance to develop into major conflict issues.
7. Be willing to forgive. Forgiveness is a powerful tool of healing. You have a chance for personal growth by forgiving others for their part in the hurt and pain you suffered. At times, this is the only way to resolve a conflict.
8. Be willing to forget. Once you have "resolved" a conflict and felt like you were listened to, cared for, and understood, then let go! Once you have implemented an agreed resolution, put the conflict behind you. Get it out of your mind and don't bring it up in any future dealings. If you write down the resolution of the conflict, you will have written proof that it is over and needs to be forgotten.
9. Show respect for yourself and for others. You will gain more in resolving a conflict by showing respect, than by maligning or showing disrespect, e.g., being vindictive, taking revenge, threatening, yelling, accusing, belittling, ostracizing, ignoring. If you are on the receiving end of disrespect, distance yourself as soon as possible. When the other party has cooled down, perhaps the discussion can be continued in a respectful manner. If you lose your "cool" and become disrespectful, stop as soon as you can by either removing yourself or by silencing yourself. Maintaining a respectful atmosphere is essential in resolving conflict.

10. Be willing to apologize or admit a mistake. It is necessary to admit to one's mistakes and to apologize for one's behavior before a stalemate in conflict resolution can be overcome. It takes courage, character, and fortitude to admit an error: a lack of judgment, an uncalled for action, disrespectful behavior or a lack of caring, concern, or understanding, stronger relationships can result when such willingness is exhibited.
11. Be willing to compromise. If you cling to your position as the only one to be considered, you are closing out the other person's options entirely. To succeed in resolving conflict, all parties must feel like they have gained in the resolution. In order to resolve a conflict where the opposing parties are at opposite extremes on an issue, there is a need to come to the middle if all are to experience a "winning" posture. Only through compromise can each be a winner in conflict resolutions.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The ability to give and receive criticism well is a skill essential to our personal and professional success. Performance appraisals, team participation, customer service, and quality control, are all examples of daily interaction with others where giving and receiving criticism in a positive light are important.

In all our relationships and interactions, we might get embroiled in conflicts or disagreements. Our habits of listening and giving feedback have a very important role to play where conflicts are concerned. Conflicts can be effectively reduced if we work on these aspects of our interactions in our personal and professional relations.

Good listening takes a lot of practice it requires concentration. Our minds think four times faster than we can speak, so our thoughts tend to wander. But when we listen, we need to focus on a speaker's words, body language and the intended as well as unintended message. We need to listen without judging what we hear.

Similarly, when we speak, we convey feedback by way of expressing feelings, sharing information and ideas, responding and making observations.

Some assertive strategies to reduce conflicts

- 1) Ask yourself what it is you don't know yet. Keep in mind that you don't know what is foremost in other people's minds. Each individual has his or her own reasons for judging what is important and why. Insight into these different reasons can make a great difference in how people handle a conflict. Take on conflict situations with an intention to understand more about what is going on. Ask open-ended questions, question that help you to understand the background of the conflict better, people's images of what is significant in specific situations are important reasons for their actions. These images can change, thereby changing the parties' attitudes and actions. Remember also to remain open to learning new things about yourself and how other people perceive you.
- 2) Make a distinction between the problem and the person. Formulate the conflict issues as shared problems that you have to solve in conjunction with others. Abstain from blaming and voicing negative opinions about others. State clearly what you feel and want and invite your counterpart to help find the solutions. Opinions and emotions should be expressed in ways that facilitate the process of achieving satisfying outcomes. Keep in mind that there is mostly a positive intention behind people's actions, even if unskillfully expressed.
- 3) Remain clear, straightforward and concrete in your communications. State clearly what you have seen, heard and experienced that influenced your views in the matter at hand. Tell the other person what is important to you, why you find it important, what you feel and what you hope for. Express your own emotions and frustrated need in clear and concrete terms. Ask for the counterpart's fears and needs in a way that conveys that you care about him.
- 4) Maintain contact with your counterpart. Breaking off contact with the counterpart in a conflict often leads to a rapid escalation. Do what you can to keep the communication going. Work to

improve your relationship even if there are conflict issues that seem impossible to resolve. Offer to do something small that meets one of your counterpart's wishes and suggest small things your counterpart can do to meet your own needs and wishes. Even if marginal, such acts can strengthen the hope it will be possible to change the nature of the relationship in a positive direction.

- 5) Look for the needs and interests that underline concrete positions. Bargaining about positions often leads to stalemates or unsatisfying solutions. Inquire into what needs and interests would be satisfied by certain concrete demands and explore if there are alternative and mutually acceptable ways of satisfying those needs and interests. Blaming, accusing and/or offering negative opinions point-blank are unskillful ways of expressing emotions. Show understanding for the feelings of the other party without letting yourself be provoked by their attacks. Inquire into what is really important and significant for you and keep those values and needs in mind during the course of the conflict.
- 6) Make it easy for your counterpart to be constructive. Avoid triggering the defensiveness of your counterpart by blaming, accusing, criticizing and diagnosing. Extend appreciation and respect to your counterpart where you can do so sincerely. Show your counterpart that you care about the issues and needs that are important to him. Take responsibility for your own contributions to the conflict scenario.
- 7) Develop your ability to look at the conflict externally. Review the conflict history in its entirety. Notice what kinds of actions influence the tensions of the conflict in positive and negative directions. Develop awareness of how you can influence the future course of events in the conflict in a constructive direction. Test the reasonability of your own image of occurrences by talking with impartial persons. Assume responsibility for what happens. Address problems as soon as you sense them, before they have a chance to develop into major conflict issues.
- 8) Be willing to forgive. Forgiveness is a powerful tool of healing. You have a chance for personal growth by forgiving others for their part in the hurt and pain you suffered. At times, this is the only way to resolve a conflict.
- 9) Be willing to forget. Once you have "resolved" a conflict and felt like you were listened to, cared for, and understood, then let go! Once you have implemented an agreed resolution, put the conflict behind you. Get it out of your mind and don't bring it up in any future dealings. If you write down the resolution of the conflict, you will have written proof that it is over and needs to be forgotten.
- 10) Show respect for your self and for others. You will gain more in resolving a conflict by showing respect, than by maligning or showing disrespect, e.g., being vindictive, taking revenge, threatening, yelling, accusing, belittling, ostracizing, ignoring. If you are on the receiving end of disrespect, distance yourself as soon as possible. When the other party has cooled down, perhaps the discussion can be continued in a respectful manner. If you lose your

“cool” and become disrespectful, stop as soon as you can by either removing yourself or by silencing yourself. Maintaining a respectful atmosphere is essential in resolving conflict.

11) Be willing to apologize or admit a mistake. It is necessary to admit to one's mistakes and to apologize for one's behavior before a stalemate in conflict resolution can be overcome. It takes courage, character, and fortitude to admit an error: a lack of judgment, an uncalled for action, disrespectful behavior or a lack of caring, concern, or understanding, stronger relationships can result when such willingness is exhibited.

12) Be willing to compromise. If you cling to your position as the only one to be considered, you are closing out the other person's options entirely. To succeed in resolving conflict, all parties must feel like they have gained in the resolution. In order to resolve a conflict where the opposing parties are at opposite extremes on an issue, there is a need to come to the middle if all are to experience a “winning” posture. Only through compromise can each be a winner in conflict resolutions.

(Personality development and conflict management go hand in hand, and so certain points have been repeated)

NEGOTIATION SKILLS

The first human instinct displayed by a child across all sects, creed, race and culture is probably that of Negotiation. Consider a small example. A toddler stands in front of a toy rack in a supermarket and insists on having a model car. The mother checks the price, decides not to spend so much money and refuses to buy it. Much to her embarrassment, the child starts screaming and crying. The mother is firm and pretends to walk away from the store; finally the child notices a box of chocolates and urges the mother to buy it. The harassed mother finds the product within budget and decides to buy it. The deal is made!!!

The first lesson on negotiation is learnt instinctively.

Negotiating is an art that impacts every dimension of human life. Whether as an employer, family member or business associate, we all negotiate for things each day like higher salary, better service or solving a dispute with a coworker or family member.

Negotiation can be defined as the process by which two or more parties each of whom have something the other wants, reach an agreement or a mutually acceptable outcome.

Types of Negotiations

Since negotiation touches every dimension of life, it is best classified based on the outcomes. It is on the basis of these outcomes that the preparation, approach, course and nature of negotiation will be determine

- **Day to day (managerial):** This type of negotiation is typically the day –to-day negotiation that goes on internally in an organization. The parties involved could be the management and employees negotiating on incentive structure, the boss and subordinate trying to define roles and responsibilities, the trade-union leader and industrial Relations manager negotiating pay-terms and working conditions or even different functional groups in an organization such as logistics and sales, negotiating the mode of dispatch of goods.

This kind of negotiation is most often carries out between the parties that are directly impacted by the outcome of the negotiation.

- **Commercial Negotiation:** This kind of negotiation is typically carried out between two organizations where the driving factor between the two parties is commercial gain. Examples of such negotiations are those that occur between a buyer organization and the supplier of goods or services, between a sales representative and a retailer, or between a distribution head and the C&F agent.
- **Legal Negotiation:** These negotiations pertain to formal and legally binding issues –as between a manufacturing organization and the local government on issues of compliance, or between two heads of state on bilateral issues, or even between two attorneys fighting the cause of a client party outside the court.

This kind of negotiation is most often carried out between parties that represent a group or organization or country etc., where the negotiators may or may not be affected directly by the outcome of the negotiation.

Stages of negotiation: A negotiation process goes through 3 important stages:

- ✓ **Preparation:** Doing the ground work to meet for negotiation
- ✓ **Proposal:** Putting forward the objective of the negotiation
- ✓ **Discussion & Bargain:** Responding to a proposal so as to maximize satisfaction of self-needs.

Tips for successful negotiation:

1. Know Thyself:

When you go into a negotiation, take a personal inventory. How do you feel about negotiation? Do you want to get over with it fast? If so, you may give in too quickly, or give away too much. Or, do you want to win, no matter what the cost? If so, you may become adversarial and damage the relationship.

2. Do Your Homework

Know whom you're negotiating with before you begin, what's his or her reputation as a negotiator?

3. Practice Double and Triple Think

It's not enough to know what you want out of negotiation. You also need to anticipate what the other party wants (double think). The smart negotiator also tries to anticipate what the other party thinks you want (triple think).

4. Build Trust

Negotiation is a highly sophisticated form of communication. Without trust, there won't be communication. Honor your commitment. Tell the truth, Respect confidences.

5. Develop External Listening

Most people carry on an inner dialogue with themselves. When you're trying to communicate with someone else, this inner dialogue becomes a problem because you can't listen internally and externally at the same time. When you negotiate, only listen externally. You won't miss important nonverbal messages or facial expressions or voice inflections when you listen externally.

6. Own your power

Don't assume that because the other party has a power of position and is therefore all-powerful. That's giving away your power! Your power is your level of self-esteem, and self-confidence.

7. Enjoy the Process

Negotiation is a process, not an event. There are predictable steps to it. With practice, you will gain skill at facilitating each step of the process. As your skill increases, you'll discover that negotiating can be fun.

BODY LANGUAGE

There are various estimates on how much of our communication is verbal and how much is non-verbal. In any case, body language is very important in all aspects of our lives to getting your true message across and interpreting the message of others. Here is a beginner's guide. These are very general, and in many cases, do not apply. Posture is often affected by physical issues, fatigue, an injury etc.

Understanding Eye movements and expressions:

- When you look strangers in the eye, you are saying, "I want to know more about you."
- When you stare at strangers in the eye without a smile, it can be interpreted as antagonism.
- When you look people in the mouth, you are saying, "I am not comfortable looking into your eyes."
- When your eyes are locked onto a specific part of a person's face you are saying, "I am nervous."
- When you look away from a person routinely or lean away from them, you are saying, "I don't like you." This also goes for being made uncomfortable by the person, or shyness.
- When you raise one eyebrow, you are saying, "oh really?"
- When you roll your eyes upwards, you are saying, "I am imagining"
- When you close your eyes halfway, you are saying, "I am suspicious."
- When you look down, you are saying, "I'm thinking."
- When you widen your eyes, you are saying, "I am amazed".

Express Yourself Through Facial Features:

- When you wink you are saying, "It's our little secret."
- When you smile subtly, you are saying, "Here is a gesture of approval."
- When you smile with teeth and close your eyes a bit, you are saying, "I am very happy."
- When you walk constantly looking at the ground, you are feeling unconfident.
- When you frown, you are saying, "I am bored / unhappy."
- When you drop your jaw, you are saying, "I don't believe it."
- When you bite your bottom lip while gazing at a person, you are saying, "I'm flirty."
- When you bite your bottom lip, you are saying, "I'm nervous" or "I'm uncomfortable".

Move Your Head:

- When your head is up, you are saying, "I don't mind people looking at me."
- When your head is down, you are saying, "I don't want people to look at me."
- When you turn your head to look at someone, you are saying, "I enjoy looking at you".

Understand the attitude in the Position of Legs:

- When you hold your legs close together, you are saying, "I am modest."

- When you hold your legs far apart, you are saying, "I am not modest."

Placing Your Shoulders:

- When your shoulders are open and wide, you are saying, "I would like to meet new people."
- When your shoulders are closed and hunched, and the expression unhappy, you are saying, "Leave me alone, please."

Tips:

- Don't sit at a table with your hands clasped together. It means you are closed and although you might seem open, it is not what it is perceived as.
- It is best to be relaxed at all times, because no one wants to be with someone who is uncomfortable.
- When a guy or girl bumps knees with you, they are flirting!
- Note that when you use these in combination, they will be interpreted as such. For example, if a guy looks a female stranger in the eye, but he is tense, he is sending the message, "I want to know more about you, but you make me very uncomfortable." Or if he looks at your mouth he likes your smile or there's something stuck in your teeth. After that the girl may respond by closing her eyes halfway and looking away as if to say, "I am suspicious of your motive and I don't like you."
- If you like them, then keep your body open. Meaning hands to your sides, stand up straight, and look happy or content. If he/she happens to be in a group, stand directly on his/her left side and let your hands hang by your side, giving the other a chance to take hold of your hand.
- Read their signs too. If they are talking to you and have their hands in their pockets, they might be saying, "I'm comfortable, but not totally." If they are talking palms up, then you have a good chance.
- Just to add: Reading body language is "almost" a science. If at all possible it is best if you know the person well enough to be able to see how their body reacts to situations. Just because someone wears sunglasses when it's cloudy doesn't mean they are trying to hide "something" or look cool. But if that same person is wearing them indoors on the elevator, chances are, they believe they are cool and want you to know it. But it "could" also mean they are recovering from a bad hangover, or just got back from the eye doctor and actually need to wear shades to protect their eyes. Learn what 'in-character' is for someone and then notice what is atypical of them. The atypical signs are what you should be looking at.
- Be aware that body language does not have the same meaning everywhere in the world! For example, it is considered impolite in some countries to look the person you are talking to in the eye, and thus, does not always indicate disinterest.
- Some people do these things out of habit or chance. For instance, people with ADHD are often fidgety and restless, but it doesn't necessarily indicate boredom or disinterest. People with Asperger's Syndrome do most of these things but have no idea the meanings that neuro-typical people assume they have. For example, many people on the Autism spectrum look at people's mouths, not eyes when talking to someone, or stare at a part of the person's face. Only use this as a guide for people's nonverbal signals.

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Ask yourself:

- Do you consider yourself to be assertive?
- What does being assertive mean to you?
- Does it mean exercising your rights all the time, every time?
- Does it mean knowing when to let someone else or some other cause or outcome take precedence over your rights?

Assertiveness Vs Aggressiveness:

Assertiveness is based on balance. It requires being forthright about your wants and needs while still considering the rights, needs, and wants of others. When you are assertive, you ask for what you want but you don't necessarily get it.

Aggressive behavior is based on winning. It requires that you do what is in your own best interest without regard for the rights, needs, feelings or desires of others. When you are aggressive, you take what you want regardless, and you don't usually ask.

Being assertive is not necessarily easy, but it is a skill that can be learned. Developing your assertiveness starts with a good understanding of who you are and a belief in the value you bring. When you have that, you have the basis of self-confidence. Assertiveness helps to build on that self-confidence and provides many other benefits for improving your relationships at work and in other areas of your life as well.

In general, assertive people:

- Get to "win-win" more easily – they see the value in their opponent and in his/her position, and can quickly find common ground.
- Are better problem solvers – they feel empowered to do whatever it takes to find the best solution.
- Are less stressed – they know they have personal power and they don't feel threatened or victimized when things don't go as planned or expected.
- Are doers – they get things done because they know they can.

When you act assertively you act fairly and with empathy. The power you use comes from your self-assurance and not from intimidation or bullying.

How to develop your assertiveness

Some people are naturally more assertive than others. If your disposition tends more towards being either passive or aggressive, you need to work on the following skills.

- Value yourself and your rights
- Understand that your rights, thoughts, feelings, needs and desires are just as important as everyone else's.
- But remember they are not more important than anyone else's, either.
- Recognize your rights and protect them.

- Believe you deserve to be treated with respect and dignity at all times.
- Stop apologizing for everything.
- Identify your needs and wants and ask for them to be satisfied
 - Don't wait for someone to recognize what you need (you might wait forever!)
 - Understand that to perform to your full potential, your needs must be met.
 - Find ways to get your needs met without sacrificing others' needs in the process.
- Acknowledge that people are responsible for their own behavior
- Express negative thoughts and feelings in a healthy and positive manner
 - Allow yourself to be angry, but always be respectful.
 - Do say what's on your mind, but do it in a way that protects the other person's feelings.
 - Control your emotions.
 - Stand up for yourself and confront people who challenge you and/or your rights.
- Receive criticism and compliments positively
 - Accept compliments graciously.
 - Allow yourself to make mistakes and ask for help.
 - Accept feedback positively – be prepared to say you don't agree but do not get defensive or angry.
- Learn to say “No” when you need to
 - Know your limits and what will cause you to feel taken advantage of.
 - Know that you can't do everything or please everyone and learn to be OK with that.
 - Go with what is right for you.
 - Suggest an alternative for a win-win solution.

Assertive Communication Techniques

There are a variety of ways to communicate assertively. These can easily be adapted to any situation you are facing.

1. ‘I’ statements

Use "I want.", "I need." or "I feel." to convey basic assertions.

I feel strongly that we need to bring in a third party to mediate this disagreement.

2. Empathy

First, recognize how the other person views the situation: "I understand you are having trouble working with Arlene."

Then, express what you need: "...however, this project needs to be completed by Friday. Let's all sit down and come up with a plan to get it done."

3. Escalation

This type of assertiveness is necessary when your first attempts are not successful in getting your needs met. "John, this is the third time this week I've had to speak to you about arriving late. If you are late one more time this month, I will activate the disciplinary process."

4. Ask for more time

Be honest and tell the person you need a few minutes to compose your thoughts. “Dave, your request has caught me off guard. I'll get back to you within the half hour.”

5. Change your verbs

- Use 'won't' instead of 'can't'
- Use 'want' instead of 'need'
- Use 'choose to' instead of 'have to'
- Use 'could' instead of 'should'.

Key Points

Being assertive means knowing where the fine line is between assertion and aggression and balancing on it. It means having a strong sense of yourself and acknowledging that you deserve to get what you want. And it means standing up for yourself even in the most difficult situations.

It can be learned and developed, and although it won't happen overnight, by practicing the techniques presented here you will slowly become more confident in expressing your needs and wants. As your assertiveness improves, so will your productivity and efficiency. Start today and begin to see how being assertive allows you to work with people to accomplish tasks, solve problems, and reach solutions.

Here are some more guidelines for assertive delivery:

- Acknowledge and be honest about your own feelings to yourself.
- Adopt new positive inner dialogue for situations where you need to be more assertive.
- Be clear, specific and direct in what you say.
- If necessary, keep repeating your message if you encounter objections.
- If necessary ask for clarification if you are uncertain about something.
- If necessary, acknowledge diversion tactics, then again repeat your message.
- Adopt appropriate body language to back up your assertion.
- Keep calm and stick to the point.
- Always respect the rights of the other person.

VOICE & ACCENT NEUTRALIZATION

Introduction to Consonant and Vowel Sounds

In your first year, you have been acquainted to the 44 sounds of the English language. The English alphabet consists of 26 letters. However there are 44 sounds: 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds. The former again divides itself into 12 monophthongs and 8 diphthongs.

How Mother Tongue Influences our English pronunciation?

Very/wary/vary

There/dare

HR Yech HR

Matter/Mutter

Friend:Farend

want/won't

The snacks are in/ The snakes are in

Thirty/Thiraty

There are three levels of English pronunciation:

Level 1: People often don't understand what you want to say. You use the wrong sounds in English words.

Level 2: People understand what you want to say, but it is unpleasant to listen to you. Introduction to Consonant and Vowel Sounds

Level 3: People understand you, and your English is pleasant to listen to. Level 3 will be called good pronunciation. Remember that good pronunciation is not perfect American or British accent: you don't have to sound like the Queen of England or the President of the United States of America.

How to neutralize your accent?

There are many regional kinds of English. In England, people from Newcastle speak English differently from people in London. In America, people from New York City, California, and Texas each have their own pronunciation. So it is no problem if you have your own accent. But our accent must be close to the standards (British English). What does it mean? Turn on your TV and watch channels like BBC to hear many different people (news anchors, reporters, etc.) speaking native English.

Tips to neutralize your English pronunciation:

Tip 1: Do not confuse pronunciation of words with their spelling!

For example, **Threw and through** - although spelled differently, are pronounced the same.

Also, identical letters or letter clusters in words do not always produce the same sound.

For example, **though and through** represents a different sound in each word. Learn to practice what you hear, not what you see.

Tip 2 .Imagine a sound in your mind before you produce it. Try to visualize the positioning of your mouth and face. Think about how you are going to make the sound.

Tip 3. The English language has many different dialects, and words can be pronounced differently. It is important, however, that you pronounce words clearly to ensure effective communication.

Practice these sounds:

The ‘p’ sound

This is an unvoiced aspirated sound. It is pronounced like ‘ph’ with distinct breath coming out.

Example: Problem – Phraablem, Past – Phaest, Promise- Phraamis

- Peter had a problem with his project
- Pickles are more expensive than peas. My parents made the payment for Patricia’s picnic.
- Politicians are publicizing the polished policemen’s work.
- The patient ran in panic for no particular reason

Unvoiced Sounds Voiced Sounds /p/ path /b/ bath /t/ time /d/ dime /k/ came /g/game /f/ fan /v/ van /th/ think /th/them /s/ price z/prize /sh/shoe /zh/usual /ch/chin /dj/gin

The ‘k’ sound

This is an aspirated sound. It has to be pronounced like ‘kh’ with a puff of air thrown out: Examples:

Color- Khalar, Contribute- Khantribute, Customer- Khustomer

- I was coming back home after my coaching classes.
- On my way I saw a cute girl clinging and cringing on the branch of a tree.
- She was crying at the top of her voice. I called out for her and asked her to calm down.
- She requested me to help her come down the tree. I feared that my clothes will get soiled.
- But I somehow gathered the courage to climb the tree.
- Just when I was a little short of clutching her arm, my leg slipped and I came crashing down the road.
- The cream color of my collar became black and I got a cut on my right knee.
- I quickly contained my anxiety and made quick steps towards the cocoon of my home.

This sound is created by placing the tongue behind your teeth touching the upper palate of your mouth.

The voiced ‘th’ usually occurs in function words or pronouns and words that end with ‘the’.

This, That, These, The, They, Breathe, Teethe, Bathe, Sheathe, Father, Brother, Mother

Unvoiced ‘th’ Sound

Thud, Something, With, Thousand, Both, South, North, Thank,
Third, Theatre, Fourth, Author, Thought, Fifth

This is a voiced sound. To produce **the ‘v’ sound** allows your upper teeth to rest on your lower lip and push the sound through the slit. Bite the lower lip and feel the vibration. Examples: Verify, Discover, Voice Introduction to Consonant and Vowel Sounds

Valid, Divide, Above, Invest, Victim, Heavy, Love, Velocity, Save, Leave

The 'w' sound

This is a voiced sound. To produce the 'w' sound, make your lips rounded and the tongue drawn back as in the position of 'u'. Your lips should form a soft circle.

Examples: Work, Wedding, Twenty, Railway, Swim

Difference between the 'v' and 'w'

Very Wary

Verse Worse

Wheel Veal

West Vest Vie

Whale While Vile

The 'ch' sound

This is an unvoiced aspirated sound:

Charlie chose the chilly chicken

Chitra chanced to sit on the Chiming chair

Cherry cheered the charming champion

Check the cheese before you eat

Channel of the chimney was charred

The 'dj' Sound

This is a voiced sound

Gin and tonic water is the gist for success for gigantic parties.

Gillette is the brand of a shaving gadget

Gauge the height of the hill gingerly.

Fit the gauge gently.

The 'sh' sound

This is a voiced sound. Produce the 'sh' sound by pursing your lips in an oval shape resting your upper teeth straight on your lower teeth and blowing the air through the slit between the teeth.

Shell, She, Shoot, English, Chef, Champagne Musician, Ancient, Tension, Pension, Russia, Expression

Practice these Tongue twisters to help neutralization of MTI

- She saw Sharif's shoes on the sofa. But was she so sure those were Sharif's shoes she saw?
- The sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep's sick.
- Nine nimble noblemen nibbling nuts.
- I wish to wish the wish you wish to wish,
but if you wish the wish the witch wishes,
I won't wish the wish you wish to wish.

- How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood? He would chuck, he would, as much as he could, and chuck as much wood as a woodchuck would if a woodchuck could chuck wood.

Practice these phrases to aid Pronunciation

English is tough stuff
Dearest creature in creation
Study English pronunciation
I will teach you in my verse
Sounds like corpse, corps, horse, and worse.
I will keep you, Suzy, busy,
Make your head with heat grow dizzy.
Tear in eye, your dress will tear.

And compare:

heart, beard, and heard,
Dies and diet, lord and word,
Sword and sward,
retain and Britain.

Say break and steak,
but bleak and streak;
Cloven, oven,
how and low,
Script, receipt,

PLANNING YOUR FUTURE

We try to plan our lives as well as our business. So, in planning up your next steps the focus will be to create a life plan and then use it up for your maximum benefit. These are some of the elements of your life plan:

Your Current Status:

Think carefully and honestly about where you are now in your life. Consider work, recreation, relationships, finances and anything else that is important to you. Then, jot down some simple, succinct bullet points in each of these categories:

- Realities of your life, including responsibilities, funds available to start a business, expenses.
- Things that make you happy.
- Things that make you unhappy.

Your Ideal Life:

This is a snapshot of your "ideal" life, in a very brief, bulleted list. Remember, the sky's the limit, so do not be afraid of being bold or maybe even a little grandiose. Factor in things like family, time hobby, charity work, and early retirement - anything that gets you really excited.

Your Likes: What You Love To Do Most?

Think about the types of things that you love to do, whether at work, at home, or at your work place. List these things out briefly. And do not worry if some themes are starting to repeat in each section. It just means you have some really focused ideas about what you want in life!

Your Skills & Capabilities:

List the abilities, experience and strengths you can build on to attain that ideal life. Bear in mind that your skills need not be strictly from your professional life - list skills developed in your personal life as well. It may be a combination of skills that leads you to what is best suited to fit your needs.

Your Track Record: What Experience Do You Have?

List those accomplishments in your professional and personal life of which you are most proud. Pay particular attention to successes you have had that would be helpful in starting a business and managing it successfully. Some of the most successful and happy people we know are self-made professionals who created a name for themselves in perfect synchronicity with what they want out of life. If you do what you love, you will work harder, better and more happily.