ЗАХІДНОУКРАЇНСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ
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Кафедра іноземних мов та інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій

РИБАЧОК С.М.

НАВЧАЛЬНО - МЕТОДИЧНІ РЕКОМЕНДАЦІЇ ДЛЯ ПРАКТИЧНИХ ЗАНЯТЬ З КУРСУ «БІЗНЕС-КОМУНІКАЦІЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ»

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ЗМІСТ

МЕТА ТА ЗАВДАННЯ ВИВЧЕННЯ ДИСЦИПЛІНИ «БІЗНЕС-КОМУНІКАЦІЯ (АНГЛ. МОВОЮ)»

Курс «Бізнес-комунікація (англ. мовою)» є обов'язковою навчальною дисципліною у системі професійної підготовки філологів та входить до циклу професійної підготовки фахівців освітнього рівня бакалавр за спеціальністю 035 Філологія та спеціалізацією 035.041 Германські мови та літератури (переклад включно), перша - англійська.

Ця навчальна дисципліна покликана збагатити студентів філологів та перекладачів знаннями міжнародного ділового спілкування англійською мовою, навчити зіставляти та аналізувати численні лінгвістичні і екстралінгвістичні явища, робити коректний вибір варіантів посередницької мовленнєвої поведінки та приймати відповідні комунікативні рішення у міжкультурному бізнес-середовищі.

Метою викладання дисципліни є підготовка філологів-перекладачів як мовних посередників у сфері міжнародної ділової комунікації, здатних до постійного вдосконалення професійної компетентності лінгвіста-перекладача.

Завдання вивчення навчальної дисципліни

Завданнями вивчення навчальної дисципліни є:

– оволодіння системою сучасних науково-теоретичних знань про мовні, жанрово-стилістичні, соціолінгвістичні, соціокультурні й психологічні особливості ділової комунікації

– формування і безперервний розвиток практичних навичок, що входять до складу когнітивно-дискурсивної компетенції лінгвіста-перекладача усного й писемного ділового мовлення англійської мови.

У результаті вивчення зазначеної навчальної дисципліни студент повинен набути такі інтегровані знання і вміння:

Знати:

– лексико-граматичні та жанрово-стилістичні особливості писемного й усного ділового англомовного спілкування;

– основні соціолінгвістичні та психологічні аспекти ділового спілкування, зумовленого мовленнєвою діяльністю перекладача;

– стратегії та прийоми перекладу ділового спілкування, складнощі в перекладі та шляхи їхнього подолання;

Уміти:

– аналізувати текст оригіналу, виявляти стандартні й нестандартні перекладацькі проблеми й обирати способи їхнього вирішення, що відповідають кожному конкретному акту перекладу;

– виконувати якісні усні та письмові переклади за рахунок адекватної передачі жанрово-стилістичних і референційно-комунікативних особливостей англомовних текстів комерційної, ділової, економічної та юридичної тематики, що існують в сфері міжнародних відносин.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BUSINESS ENGLISH COMMUNICATION FOR CAREERS

- The goal of the Business English Communication Course
- Communicating in General English and Business English
- The Forms and Functions of Business Communication
- Written and Spoken Communication in Business
- Business and Other Styles of Communication

The goal of the Business English Communication Course. In a globally connected world, Business English is becoming increasingly important as more and more companies need their staff to be multi-lingual language. The goal of this Business English Communication Course is to allow its users to effectively communicate in English in the international professional environment.

The main objectives of the course are to expand students' English vocabulary, to improve their ability to write and speak in English in social, cultural, professional and academic interactions, to practice English writing and speaking skills, negotiation skills, to teach terminology and translation skills that they can apply to business conversations and negotiations, written reports and emails, professional and academic presentations. In addition, this course is useful for students who need to participate in international conferences, prepare assignments, articles, and research or diploma papers in English.

Therefore, *the Business English Communication Course* includes topics such as intercultural business communication, professional English speaking skills, professional English writing skills, business negotiation phrases, or terms of sale, academic vocabulary and translating skills.

The aim of English for Business Communication is for you to become more confident and competent when communicating in a business, corporate or organizational context, specifically in giving presentations, conducting meetings, pitching new ideas and delivering a project proposal.

English is recognised as the most internationally popular language, which makes it the most dominant language in the business world. Even if you have a good level of basic English, learning business English will give you the chance to demonstrate a wider professional vocabulary which can result in new opportunities in your career.

Business English communication skills are essential for getting ahead at work. Improving your professional business vocabulary and knowledge will help you work more effectively and open up new career opportunities.

Communicating in General English and Business English. General English focuses more on the day to day conversation and involves the use of basic vocabulary and grammar. It leans more on a casual tone. On the other hand, business English is more extensive and specific. It is mainly used as a language tool for business, as it is applied in a more professional context. Business English differs from General English in that it is specifically targeting corporate language rather than everyday, conversational English.

Studying business English allows you to develop English language skills that are useful in an office or other business environments. By understanding the communication skills needed in the workplace, you can gain the confidence to build strong relationships with your colleagues and clients.

Effective business communication is essential for organizations, especially in this digital age. It helps build teamwork, aids collaboration, boosts productivity, and ensures that organizations meet their goals. As English is considered by many as the global working language, its daily use has become essential for an increasing number of business professionals. For example,

- team-player (n) ...
- collaborate (v) / collaborative (adj) / collaboration (n) ...
- coworking / shared workspace (n) ...
- start-up (n) ...
- entrepreneur (n) ...
- multinational (n)

1. **skill set (n)** *We offered her the job as she has the* <u>*right skills set*</u> *for it.*
2. **launch (n/v)***They're* <u>*launching their new product*</u> *tomorrow.*
3. **diversify (v) diversification (n)** *The company has* <u>*diversified into*</u> *new product areas.*
4. **expand (v) / expansion (n)** *We're planning to* <u>*expand*</u> *our sales division next year, so we'll be hiring 100 new staff.*
5. **freelance (n)** *After working at the company for many years, he decided to* <u>*go freelance*</u>*.*
6. **overheads (n)** <u>*Overheads(oncosts)*</u>*, or ongoing business expenses, include rent, utilities and insurance.*
7. **balance sheet (n)** *A* <u>*balance sheet*</u> *reports a company's assets, liabilities and shareholders' equity at a given point* in time.

Find more business words : https://www.londonschool.com/blog/business-english-work-and-careers-50-words-you-need-know/

The Forms and Functions of Business Communication.

The definition of communication is: the process by which information is exchanged. It can take place in a number of ways:

_ through the written word

_ through the spoken word

_ through pictures and diagrams

_ through facial expressions, behaviour and posture

_ through non-verbal sounds

In business the most common forms of communication are spoken and written, although visual forms can play an important part.

We communicate in business for a number of different reasons, and the methods we use will depend on the reasons, the circumstances, and perhaps the people with whom we are communicating. These are some of the reasons why we may need to communicate with others in a business setting:

_ to pass on information

_ to persuade people to buy a product or use a service

_ to discuss an issue

_ to recommend a course of action

_ to make or answer a request

_ to make or answer a complaint

_ to keep a record of something that has happened or been agreed

_ to explain or clarify a situation

_ to give an instruction

Clearly, to cover such a variety of situations, you will need to be able to use a range of different methods and styles. Your style and tone are unlikely to be the same if you are making a request, for example, as if you are making a complaint. You are also more likely to speak to someone than to write to them if you want to discuss an issue, whereas a record of something that has happened would need to be in writing.

Written and Spoken Communication in Business

Whether you communicate in writing or orally will depend on the circumstances, and to some extent on the person or people you are addressing. The main reasons for communicating orally are:

_ **To have a discussion**. It is very difficult to hold a meaningful discussion by letter, memo or e-mail.

_ **To receive instant feedback from your audience**. Speaking to someone means that you do not have to wait for their response. However, this can sometimes be a disadvantage; in some circumstances, a considered response might be better.

_ **To be able to judge your audience's reaction to what you are saying**. This usually only applies in face-to-face communication, but it can sometimes be useful to be able to judge from your audience's comments, expressions or body language what they think of what you are saying and perhaps adapt your style or tone accordingly.

_ **For speed**. Even the fastest typist or writer cannot match the speed at which we speak, so if you want to communicate something quickly, it might be better to do so orally.

_ **If the person with whom you are communicating has initiated the conversation**. If you are responding to an oral request, for example, you are likely to do so orally, unless your response is so complex that it would be better explained in writing.

The main reasons for communicating **in writing** are:

_ **To retain a permanent record**. A conversation can be forgotten, misunderstood or even deliberately twisted. But if something is in writing (and if it is well written), everyone who reads it will be sure to get the right information. It also provides something to refer to if there is any dispute in the future. This is particularly important if the document constitutes a form of agreement, but it can also be useful in the case of a complaint.

_ **To provide a basis for discussion**. We saw above that a discussion is usually best conducted orally, but it can be very useful for a discussion document to be available beforehand, setting out the facts of the case and perhaps giving the writer's own views and recommendations. This saves time, as it means that the meeting itself can discuss the implications and people's opinions, instead of having to go over the facts before any useful discussion can begin.

_ **To clarify a complex subject**. Some subjects do not lend themselves easily to spoken communication. A graph or bar chart, for example, may be a better way of presenting figures, and it is easier to explain a confused situation in writing than orally .

_ **To send the same message to a number of people**. If you want to give a number of people the same information (perhaps the date and venue of a meeting), then an e-mail or a circular memo or letter would be quicker and cheaper than speaking to each person individually.

_ **To be able to think carefully about what you want to say**. You can plan your document and correct any errors before sending it out. It is easier to make a mistake when you are speaking spontaneously.

The differences between written and spoken English

There are, of course, significant differences between written and spoken English. Let us look at an example. Jane Lee, the Export Manager of John Smith & Sons Ltd, has had a meeting with a prospective agent in South America, Carlos Rodriguez. Below is a transcript of her verbal report on the meeting.

Jane Lee: I must say, I had a really good meeting with Mr Rodriguez. I think he might be the man for us. He seems to know the market very well, and he already does business all over South America.

Peter Morgan (Managing Director): Which countries exactly?

JL: Argentina, Venezuela, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil mainly. He knows the import regulations for the different countries, but I would expect that – we wouldn't be considering him if he didn't! But he also seems to know things like who matters in each country, how they do business there, how we can avoid giving offence without knowing it, any problems there may be about payment, all that kind of thing. He is already agent for quite a few companies – Wilson Fabrics, Richmond Consumer Products and Simon Black Ltd – but they're all in competition with us, so it doesn't matter – sorry, I mean *none* of them is in competition with us. Oh by the way, I forgot to mention that he's based in Argentina, which is our fastest-expanding market in the area.

Sarah Brown (Financial Director): This all sounds too good to be true. Will he accept our usual commission?

JL: Yes, initially, but instead of being paid a fixed percentage, he would want to be able to negotiate his commission on a sliding scale eventually.

James Robinson (Operations Director): Sorry, Jane, what do you mean 'negotiate his commission on a sliding scale'?

JL: He would like his percentage commission to rise as our turnover in his territory increases. Now I know what some of you may be thinking – why pay him more than our other agents? Well, perhaps we should be paying them in the same way. After all, if Rodriguez increases our turnover significantly, then he probably *deserves* more.

Now look at what Jane might have written.

On 25 July I met Mr Carlos Rodriguez of Carlos Rodriguez Import SA, Buenos Aires, who has expressed an interest in becoming our agent in South America. I found the meeting both informative and productive. The main points we discussed are as follows.

Market penetration. He seems to know the South American market well, and he already does business in many of the countries there, in particular Argentina,

Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil. He appears to have a sound knowledge of the business climate of each country. He is based in Argentina, which is our fastest-expanding market in the area.

Existing agencies. His existing agencies include Wilson Fabrics, Richmond

Consumer Products and Simon Black Ltd. None of these companies is in competition with us; indeed their products complement ours, and no other agent has as good a track record as he does.

Commission. The commission arrangements he wants, however, are slightly different from our usual ones. Although he is prepared to accept our standard commission initially, he would like the percentage to rise as he increases our turnover in his territory – the details would have to be negotiated, but that is the

principle behind his request. And as long as the turnover levels at which the new

rates would operate are set at a sensible level, I believe the system would work to

our advantage – he would have an additional incentive to work hard for us, and if

the turnover does increase we could afford to pay him more. Of course, we might

receive complaints from some of our other agents if they were to learn that we

were paying him at a higher level, but it would be worth considering giving all our

agents a similar incentive.

Can you see the differences between the two versions?

_ **Spoken English uses unnecessary words and phrases**. When we speak, we generally use more words than we need to. Even when speaking, we should always try to be as concise as possible, but it is inevitable, unless we have gone to extremes in planning what we want to say, that we will introduce unnecessary and generally meaningless phrases such as:

– ‘I must say’ – which adds nothing to the sense of the report.

– ‘Oh, by the way’ – which means much the same as ‘I forgot to mention’.

– ‘Really’ – which is too vague to add anything to the word it goes with (what is the difference between a good meeting and a really good one?).

These words and phrases do not matter in spoken English – indeed, they give us an opportunity to gather our thoughts, so they serve a useful purpose – but in writing they look sloppy and add to the length of the document.

Spoken English can be vague. Jane talks about:

– ‘A really good meeting’. What does this mean? Was it productive, informative, enjoyable? Was the food good? She could mean any of these things.

– ‘All over South America’. In fact, as she indicates in her reply to Peter Morgan’s question, she means ‘in a number of the major countries’, not ‘all over’.

– ‘Things like who matters in each country, how they do business there ...’ etc. This is a round about way of saying ‘the business climate’.

This vagueness does not matter when you are speaking, because your tone or

gestures will indicate to your audience what you actually mean, or they can ask if anything is unclear. But when you are writing in business you need to be precise. Since your readers cannot ask you to clarify anything that is unclear, they will either make their own interpretations, which may be wrong, or ignore points they do not understand, which may give them an incomplete picture.

_ In spoken English you can go back and correct what you have said. When you are speaking you can stop in midstream and correct yourself if you have said something wrong, or add in something you have forgotten.

So Jane says:

– ‘Sorry, I mean’ – when she realises she has said the opposite of what she means.

– ‘Oh, by the way, I forgot to mention’ – when something occurs to her that she should have said earlier in the report.

EXERCISE 1

You work in the publicity office of a market town. You receive a phone call from Mr Lyndon Charles, who is thinking of visiting the town, but who wants to know what attractions you can offer. This is what you say in reply.

“It really depends on what you’re interested in and when you want to come. We’ve got a very good theatre, which usually has variety shows in summer and plays in winter. And if you’re interested in cultural things, there’s also a good museum and

the church is famous for its carvings. And just outside town there's a medieval castle.

Oh, you've got young children, have you? Yes they may not be interested in the church and the museum. But they may like the castle, because it's supposed to be haunted.

There's also a super play park, with a water feature. And within fairly easy driving distance there are two theme parks. The play park in town, by the way, is free, but you'd obviously have to pay at the theme parks. Of course, they would also have fun on the beaches nearby – the nearest is about ten minutes' drive. Yes it's sandy, not pebbly.

And do you like walking? You do? Well the countryside around here is beautiful, and there are some lovely walks through the woods – and also along the coast, of course, although there's a lot of up and down along this stretch of the Coast Path.

Mr Charles asks if you can put all this information in writing. Write him a letter summarising your telephone conversation.

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EXERCISE 2

Read the spoken text and develop the written version of the text.

Spoken

So you're thinking of investing in Hong Kong? It's a good time to invest as worldwide corporate taxes are being lowered. . . . Um there is a drawback though . . . lower corporate taxes mean that governments may want to cover costs by increasing revenues and introducing changes in companies' compliance, and accounting standards seem to be on the cards. We've done an interesting survey looking at the relationship between tax authorities and business.

We believe you'll find the findings useful. . .

BUSINESS AND OTHER STYLES OF COMMUNICATION

Not all styles of communication are the same; a style that suits one set of circumstances might be totally wrong for another. The way you communicate, even the language you use, will be very different, for example, if you are writing a novel, or e-mailing or speaking to a friend, from the style you would adopt for business.

Business and literary styles

There are three main differences in style between a business document and a work of literature.

Literary writing is usually descriptive. A novel writer would spend some time creating an atmosphere, giving some background detail. If the account of Jane Lee's meeting with Carlos Rodriguez were part of a novel, for example, there would almost certainly be a description of the restaurant where they met, and of Rodriguez himself. This kind of description is out of place in business writing. Your readers do not have time to read descriptions which have no real bearing on the subject. Where description is necessary, it should be factual and objective, not flowery and subjective.

Literary writing uses direct speech. In a novel, the author will describe what people say in the exact words they used – direct speech. This is another way of involving the reader.

But you would very seldom use direct speech in business writing – it tends to be too long-winded. People want to absorb the information you are giving as quickly and easily as possible, so give them a summary of what was said, not the actual words.

Literary writing introduces personal feelings. A work of literature will describe the characters' feelings about others and their surroundings – that is part of the skill of telling a story. So a novel might describe how Jane reacted to Rodriguez on a personal level, what she thought of the meal, etc. These feelings have no place in business writing; they simply clutter up the document unnecessarily. Your opinions might be important, depending on the nature of your document, but your feelings are irrelevant.

What this means is that business communication should be as brief and uncluttered as possible while still getting across the information you want to impart.

Business and personal styles

Although business English is much less formal and more conversational than it used to be, it is still different from the language you might use in personal communication. There are four main differences.

_ **Personal communication uses slang**. As we have seen, a bit of colloquial language is quite acceptable when speaking in a business context, but outright slang is not. So, for example, Jane Lee says of Carlos Rodriguez, 'He might be the man for us', which is acceptable, although it is something of a colloquialism. In a personal letter, she might have said, 'He's got what it takes' or 'He's the guy for the job'; neither of these expressions would be acceptable in business, even when speaking – unless, of course, the person you are speaking or writing to is a personal friend with whom you have a very informal business relationship.

The Three Rules of Business Communication

Business communication should be:

_ clear and precise

_ brief and uncluttered

_ direct and to the point

EXERCISE 1

Below is the text of an e-mail to a friend about a business trip to Germany. What would you need to change in order to make it acceptable as a brief business report?

I had a fantastic trip to Berlin last week. Horst Kuhn, the guy I was doing business with, was great, and we got on really well. He took me to this amazing restaurant one evening for dinner, and then on to a club, where we met up with some of his friends.

The business side went well, too. His company is very interested in a joint venture with us, to supply financial software to banks and other financial institutions across Europe.

Horst reckons that with our complementary markets (they do a lot in Eastern Europe, while we're particularly strong in Scandinavia, France and Holland) we could clean up if we joined forces. The terms he suggested were a bit tricky (he's a persuasive guy, and was trying to get me to agree to them having a 60 per cent share) but I stuck to my guns and managed to persuade him to ask his Board to consider equal shares.

There's still a lot of work to do, but I think we'll get a really good deal out of this. At the risk of blowing my own trumpet, I reckon I'm capable of getting our

Board to take the idea seriously.

In some cases the using of written or spoken form is predetermined by the type of Business communication.

BUSINESS WRITING (LETTERS, OFFICIAL REPORTS ETC)

1. Business Letters and Reports
2. Parts of Business Letter
3. Functions of a Business Letter
4. Planning a Business Letter
5. Types of Business Letters
6. Report; Types of report

Business Letter

Business Letter is a letter which is used by organizations to communicate in a professional way with customers, other companies, clients, shareholders investors, etc. Business letter uses formal language and a specific format.

Companies use it to convey important information and messages.

Business Letter Definition

A letter written for business purpose is a business letter. Inquiry letter, offer letter, order letter, cover letter, notices, termination of employment are some of the business letters. Suppose a person wants to write any of these business letters. The main question is to how to write a business letter?

There is a pre-specified format for writing a business letter. There are some parts of a business letter and rules associated with them. Let us start to know how to write a business letter by knowing the parts of a business letter.

Parts of Business Letter

A business letter will be more impressive if proper attention is given to each and every part of the business letter.

There are 12 Parts of Business Letter

- The Heading or Letterhead
- Date
- Reference
- The Inside Address
- Subject
- Greeting
- Body Paragraphs
- Complimentary Close
- Signature and Writer's Identification
- Enclosures
- Copy Circulation
- PostScript

Functions of a Business Letter

There are many functions of a business letter. We discuss here some functions depending on its paragraphs.

The main function of a business letter is to carry and deliver a message to an intended receiver. Such message is written in the body of a letter and such body is usually short but written in three (3) parts. Each paragraph reflects a particular task i.e.

- The first paragraph states the main idea,
- Second paragraph states supporting details; and
- Third paragraph highlights concluding message.

The functions of each part or paragraph are detailed as follows:Functions of a business letter (First Paragraph)

The first paragraph presents the main idea and aims to:

- Get the favorable attention
- Indicate what the letter is about
- Set a friendly, courteous tone
- Refer to previous correspondence, if appropriate.

Get Favorable Attention

The beginning paragraph is like a newspaper heading. It must be attractive so that it can catch the reader's attention and encourage him or her to continue to read the rest of the letter. The first paragraph determines how the reader will react to the letter.

Three (3) typical reactions to letters are positive, negative, and indifferent.

Naturally, you want to get a positive reaction.

The reader has a positive reaction to your message whenever he or she is interested and will probably take the action you desire.

- Yes, lam interested in your product.
- Yes, I will attend the seminar.
- Yes, I will provide the information you requested.
- Yes, I will consider your proposal.The reaction is yes

The reader has a negative reaction when he or she responds in anunenthusiastic way and will probably not take the action you desire.

- No, I am not much interested in your product to buy it.
- No, I would buy later from you.
- No, I am not coming to any meeting that you chair.The reaction is No

An indifferent response assumes really don't care what this says posture.

- I'll just ignore this letter.
- I don't have enough time to be bothered with this.
- I doubt there is anything new here.
- The reader does not act positively or negatively, neither acts nor reacts tothe message.

The reader is indifferent

The objective of the first paragraph is to obtain favorable attention that will gain a positive response from the reader. Make the beginning paragraph work for you to accomplish this objective.

Indicate the Purpose of the Letter;

Let the reader know what the letter is about by getting to the point immediately. Don’t ask the reader to search information throughout the letter. Give the message now to get the positive reaction.

Set the Tone of the Letter;

The first paragraph should set the courteous and friendly tone which will create a positive image towards outsiders.

The introduction of the business letter should be a complete sentence to provide useful information.

Planning a Business Letter

A business letter is not a place for chit-chat. Unlike business conversations where a certain amount of small talk is used to break the ice, a business letter should be clear and concise. By taking time to plan your letter, you will save time in the writing and proofreading stages. During the planning stage, ask yourself a few simple questions. Jot down your answers to create an outline before you start writing.

Who am I writing this letter to?

Identifying your audience always comes first. Are you writing to more than one person, to someone you don’t know, or to someone you have known for a long time? This will help you determine how formal the letter needs to be. You may need to introduce yourself briefly in the letter if the recipient does not know you. You may also need to find out the updated address and title of the recipient. This is a good time to confirm the correct spelling of first and last names.

Why am I writing this letter?

The main reason for the letter should be understood from the subject line and first few sentences. You may cover more than one thing in one business letter, but there will almost always be a general reason for the letter. Identify your main goal and what you hope to accomplish. Review some example reasons why people write business letters on the introductory page of this lesson.

Are there specific details I need to include?

Gather any dates, addresses, names, prices, times or other information that you may need to include before you write your letter. Double check details rather than relying on your memory.

Do I require a response?

Many types of business letter require a response. Others are written in response to a letter that has been received. Before you start writing, determine whether or not you require an action or response from the recipient. Your request or requirement should be very clear. In some cases you may even need to provide a deadline for a response. If you do require a response, how should the recipient contact you? Indicate this information clearly as well. You may want to provide more than one option, such as an email address and a phone number.

How can I organize my points logically?

Think about how you would organize your thoughts if you were speaking rather than writing to the recipient. First you would introduce yourself. Second you would state your concern or reason for writing. After the main content of your letter you would include information on how you can be contacted. The end of the letter is also a place to express gratitude, wish good-luck, or offer sympathy. Here is an example outline:

Types of Business Letters

The term “business letters” refers to any written communication that begins with a salutation, ends with a signature and whose contents are professional in nature. Historically, business letters were sent via postal mail or courier, although the internet is rapidly changing the way businesses communicate. There are many standard types of business letters, and each of them has a specific focus.

Sales Letters

Typical sales letters start off with a very strong statement to capture the interest of the reader. Since the purpose is to get the reader to do something, these letters include strong calls to action, detail the benefit to the reader of taking the action and include information to help the reader to act, such as including a telephone number or website link.

Order Letters

Order letters are sent by consumers or businesses to a manufacturer, retailer or wholesaler to order goods or services. These letters must contain specific information such as model number, name of the product, the quantity desired and expected price. Payment is sometimes included with the letter.

Complaint Letters

The words and tone you choose to use in a letter complaining to a business may be the deciding factor on whether your complaint is satisfied. Be direct but tactful and always use a professional tone if you want the company to listen to you.

Adjustment Letters

An adjustment letter is normally sent in response to a claim or complaint. If the adjustment is in the customer’s favor, begin the letter with that news. If not, keep your tone factual and let the customer know that you understand the complaint.

Inquiry Letters

Inquiry letters ask a question or elicit information from the recipient. When composing this type of letter, keep it clear and succinct and list exactly what information you need. Be sure to include your contact information so that it is easy for the reader to respond.

Follow-Up Letters

Follow-up letters are usually sent after some type of initial communication. This could be a sales department thanking a customer for an order, a businessman reviewing the outcome of a meeting or a job seeker inquiring about the status of his application. In many cases, these letters are a combination thank-you note and sales letter.

Letters of Recommendation

Prospective employers often ask job applicants for letters of recommendation before they hire them. This type of letter is usually from a previous employer or professor, and it describes the sender’s relationship with and opinion of the job seeker.

Acknowledgment Letters

Acknowledgment letters act as simple receipts. Businesses send them to let others know that they have received a prior communication, but action may or may not have taken place.

Cover Letters

Cover letters usually accompany a package, report or other merchandise. They are used to describe what is enclosed, why it is being sent and what the recipient should do with it, if there is any action that needs to be taken. These types of letters are generally very short and succinct.

Letters of Resignation

When an employee plans to leave his job, a letter of resignation is usually sent to his immediate manager giving him notice and letting him know when the last day of employment will be. In many cases, the employee also will detail his reason for leaving the company.

Report

Reports are documents designed to record and convey information to the reader. Reports are part of any business or organization; from credit reports to police reports, they serve to document specific information for specific audiences, goals, or functions. The type of report is often identified by its primary purpose or function, as in an accident report, a laboratory report, a sales report, or even a book report. Reports are often analytical, or involve the rational analysis of information.

Essentials of a Good Report!

1. The report should have a proper title to describe the subject matter reported therein. The report should be in a good form and should have subheadings and paragraph divisions. The name of recipient of the report should be written on the top of the report.

2. The report-should be factual. The whims and ideas of the person preparing the report should not be allowed to influence the report.

3. The report should relate to a certain period and the period of time should be indicated on the top of the report.

4. The report should be clear, brief and concise. Clarity should not be sacrificedat the cost of brevity.

5. The reporting must be prompt because information delayed is information denied. If a considerable time elapses between happening of events and reporting, opportunity for taking appropriate action may be lost or some wrong decisions may be taken by management in the absence of information.

The periodicity of a report should be kept in mind and reports should be submitted in time. The report should be in a good form and should have sub-headings and paragraph divisions.

6. A report should distinguish between controllable and non-controllable factors and should report them separately. It is because management can take suitable action regarding controllable factors.

7. Appropriate remarks should be given in the report. It saves valuable time of the management and ensures prompt attention. Adequate data should be given to suggest possible course of action.

8. A report should be periodically reviewed. The form and contents of a report should not be of permanent nature. They should go on changing with the change in circumstances; otherwise the recipient will take them as stale useless and routine type.

9. The report should be taken as correct within the permissible degree of inaccuracy. The margin of error allowed will depend upon the purpose for which the report is prepared.

10. The report should draw manager's attention immediately to the exceptional matters so that management by exception may be carried out effectively. Thus, reports should highlight significant deviations from standards.

11. Visual reporting through graphs, charts and diagrams should be preferred to descriptive reports because visual reporting attract the eye more quickly and leaves a lasting impression on the mind.

12. Where comparison is reflected in a report it should be ensured that the same is between comparable (i.e., like) matters so that meaningful comparison maybe made and idea about efficiency or inefficiency may be formed.

13. In all possible cases a detailed analysis should be given for all the resultant variances between actual for the period compared to standards/budgets, be it sales,

purchases, production, profit or loss, capital expenditure, working capital position, etc., so that exact causes of low performance may be known and timely corrective action may be taken.

14. The format of a report should not be changed from period to period, if the format is to be changed for making any improvement, justification for change in the format or contents should be given.

Purposes or Objective of Business Reports

Reports are the primary means of communication in organization. In large-scale organizations, there is no alternative to use reports. Reports also play an important role in small-scale organizations. Some points highlighting the **purposes or objectives or important of business report** are presented below-

Transmitting Information:

Business report is very important for transmitting information from one person to another or form one level to another. Although a manager can personally collect required information in a small scale enterprise, it is not possible in the context of a large scale organization. In the latter case, the managers rely on reports for obtaining necessary information.

Making decisions:

A report is the basic management tool for making decisions. The job of a manager is nothing but making decisions. Reports supply necessary information to managers to solve problems.

Communication with external stakeholders:

In addition to internal use, reports also communicate information to the external stakeholders like shareholders, creditors, customers, suppliers, government officials and various regulatory agencies. In the absence of formal business report such stakeholders would remain at dark about the organizations.

Types of Business Reports

The information may be facts figures or a detailed analysis of any situation. Businesses make important decisions and plan for the future of the company based on these reports and hence the importance of such reports is self-established. Major decisions like investments and expansions are based entirely on Business reports.

Thus, business reports form a very important part of every business. There different types of business reports based on their need and the situation.

Types of Business Reports used by Organizations

1) *Formal Business Reports*

These reports are prepared in a given format and they are presented to the authorities in an already established manner. They are submitted to committees and bodies or heads of various departments or organizations. Since the report talks only about business in a formal way they are termed as, formal business reports.

Formal reports of other classified into the statutory report and non-statutory report.

2) *Informal Business Reports*

These reports are prepared in a convenient format which is convenient to the reporter and presented to the required person immediately after demand. These reports can also be presented in the form of a memorandum or a Business Letter. Since there is no fixed format for these reports it is termed as informal reports.

3) *Informative Business Report*

These are types of Business reports which are prepared with the intention of providing information in a descriptive way which address is a particular issue or situation or a problem. They provide information in an exhaustive and detailed manner which is used for the by the authorities to gain an insight on the matter that is why they are termed as informative reports.

4) *Interpretative Business Report :*

Unlike informative report which contains only information, the interpretative report contains facts opinions views or numbers which help to interpret a certain information situation or a problem. The interpretative report may also contain reasons for a certain issue as to why a certain event or an issue occurred and what would be the course of action along with a recommendation for the same.

5) *Verbation Business Reports*

The report which is prepared by secretaries or any other individual which record word to word discussions that are made in the meeting are called Verbatim reports. For example, in case of auditor appointment resolution has passed in the

meeting and that reservation is recorded as word to word as Verbation report. Also, in the case of voting where joint votes of different members are taken into consideration, the verbation reports include names and manners of voting along with the results. These types of business report should not be confused with minutes of the meeting which is a record of proceedings and decisions a summary of the meeting.

6) *Summarized Business Reports*

The report that is made with the assistance of important details that have been discussed in the meeting is called a summarized report. These types of business reports are made with the intention of sending it for the press release or for the shareholders of the company or a member of the certain institution.

7) Problem Solving Business Report

As the name suggests, problem-solving business report help to solve a problem by suggesting or recommending a plan of action regarding a certain situation. The report also contains causes of such problems and the conclusion is done in various ways that can be adopted to solve the problem. The report also contains ways in which that problem can be avoided in the future by implementing certain steps.

8) Fact Finding Business Report

There are numerous situations in an organization where a finding of a fact is required. For example, the breakdown of machinery in factory premises or rivalry between associate and the manager. The situations require in-depth reasoning for the situation that has arisen. In those cases, the fact-finding report comes in handy which presents facts in the report from a third person view. These reports are presented to the top management based on which they can take action about the situation at hand.

9) Performance report :

The management likes to know the performances of each department on a regular basis. Not only that but also about the newly opened branch, newly appointed employee or even the performance of existing employees who are due for promotion are analyzed by the management for which the performance report is generated. These reports are important for the management to arrive at a decision and hence these reports are prepared by the seniors of the respective people

10) Technical Business Reports

Technology is advancing faster than the speed of light and that is the reason why companies upgrade themselves with new technology is from time to time. Whenever such a monumental change and Technology is taking place in an organization a Technical Business Report is prepared to assess the level of Technology. These reports include a detailed way to undergo the change including time and money that will cost, which helps the top management to take a decision.

11) Standing Committee Report

A committee which is appointed for a specific reason is called standing. The reason may be financial assessment, employee Assessment, or departmental assessment, the standing committee is expected to submit a detailed analysis of these things. The report submitted by the committee is known as a standing committee report. In many organizations please reports are submitted at frequent intervals.

12) Ad-hoc Committee Report

Adhoc reports are also termed as special committee reports. As the name suggests special committee is appointed to deal with the investigation and that committee is dissolved as soon as the report is presented. Special communities are found in special cases like fire in factory premises are employee accidents during work.

13) Minority Report

A team of the special committee is appointed to submit a report which will be based on an investigation of a special subject. 3 members may be selected to form the committee one of each is the chairman of the said committee. If members have a difference of opinion on the subject the other members may submit the report separately. This separate report submitted by dissentient members is called minority report.

14) Majority Report

The members of a committee which including the chairman, usually have unanimous decision amongst them. In such cases, only one report is prepared and presented to the official committee. If that is not the case then the majority of the member from their own report and submitted to the examining authority. Such a report is termed as majority report.

15) Annual Report

A yearly report, which consists of the yearly processes of the business including the sales profits and the turnovers is called the annual report. Such a report generated only once a year and is submitted to the corporate heads for studying the business year in detail. Majority of crucial decisions like investments, product portfolio changes, marketing strategies, marketing campaigns etc. are planned on the basis of the Annual report. Pre-decided plans may be modified or changed based on Annual reports.

Report Writing

- **Title Section** – This includes the name of the author(s) and the date of report preparation.
- **Summary** – There needs to be a summary of the major points, conclusions, and recommendations. It needs to be short as it is a general overview of the report. Some people will read the summary and only skim the report, so make sure you include all the relevant information. It would be best to write this last so you will include everything, even the points that might be added at the last minute.
- **Introduction** – The first page of the report needs to have an introduction. You will explain the problem and show the reader why the report is

being made. You need to give a definition of terms if you did not include these in the title section, and explain how the details of the report are arranged.

- **Body** – This is the main section of the report. There needs to be several sections, with each having a subtitle. Information is usually arranged in order of importance with the most important information coming first.
- **Conclusion** – This is where everything comes together. Keep this section free of jargon as most people will read the Summary and Conclusion.
- **Recommendations** – This is what needs to be done. In plain English, explain your recommendations, putting them in order of priority.
- **Appendices** – This includes information that the experts in the field will read. It has all the technical details that support your conclusions.

Remember that the information needs to be organized logically with the most important information coming first.

EXERCISE 1

You have received information about a course that will be of benefit in your personal professional development. You would like to attend, but it is a week-long residential course and the fee is J1,500. You have spoken to your manager, who is in favour of you attending, but who says that the departmental director must agree. Write a memo or e-mail to the director asking whether you can have the time off to attend the course, and whether the organisation will pay the course fee.

Use Tips for Making and Answering Requests

_ When making a request, be friendly and courteous.

_ Give the background to your request or your reasons for making it first, and build up to the
request itself.

_ When agreeing to a request, do so early in the document or conversation.

_ When refusing a request, give your reasons first, then your refusal.

_ Do so politely and offer some kind of consolation or hope if possible.

EXERCISE 2

You are refurbishing your office and have ordered 30 workstations and chairs. You only receive 28 of each, and of these 12 are not the style you ordered. Prepare notes for a telephone call complaining to the supplier.

Consider the following tips to prepare your complaint:

_ a polite introduction, perhaps pointing out the good relationship you have enjoyed
with the other person or organisation so far

_ the specific details of your complaint
_ a request for corrective action.

EXERCISE 3

Look again at Exercise 2. Imagine that you work for the supplier of the office equipment, and you have received the telephone call for which you made notes in that exercise. You have conducted an investigation and find that the company is indeed at fault.

Write a letter accepting the complaint. The answer to a complaint can be divided into two or three parts, depending on whether you are accepting or rejecting it:

_ the apology if you accept the complaint, or an expression of regret or concern if you
reject it
_ the explanation
_ the remedy if you accept the complaint

BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

1. Understanding Etiquette
a) Etiquette Defined
b) The Importance of Business Etiquette
2. Networking for Success
a) Creating an Effective Introduction
b) Making a Great First Impression
c) Minimizing Nervousness
d) Using Business Cards Effectively
e) Remembering Names
3. The Meet and Greet
a) The Three-Step Process
b) The Four Levels of Conversation
4. Business Email Etiquette
a) Addressing Your Message
b) Grammar and Acronyms
c) Top 5 Technology Tips
5. Phone Etiquette
a) Developing an Appropriate Greeting
b) Cell Phone Do's and Don'ts
6. The Written Letter
a) Thank You Notes
b) Formal Letters
c) Informal Letters
7. Dressing for Success
a) The Meaning of Colors
b) Interpreting Common Dress Codes
c) Deciding What to Wear
8. International Etiquette
a) General Rules
b) Important Points

Good manners can open doors that the best education cannot.
Clarence Thomas

UNDERSTANDING ETIQUETTE

Before we look at etiquette rules across multiple business-related scenarios, it's best to level off everyone on what etiquette means. We would also look at the many ways business etiquette can improve a company or an organization's bottom line.

Etiquette Defined

Josy Roberts, author of *'Business Etiquette Your Questions and Answers'*, defines etiquette as 'conventional rules of polite behavior.' They are guidelines on how to behave befitting good manners while in the company of other people. They show sensitivity to the needs and feelings of the person or people that you are with. Etiquette covers most aspects of social interactions, including self-presentation, communication, courtesy, and hospitality. Business etiquette, in particular, covers expectations in the interactions between co-workers, the company and their clients, as well as the company and their stakeholders. Etiquette guidelines are many and can be quite complicated. In this workshop we will focus on basic etiquette guidelines for situations typically found in most business settings.

Thus, **Business etiquette** is a set of manners that is accepted or required in a profession. Often upheld by custom, it is enforced by the members of an organization. Those who violate business etiquette are considered offensive. The penalty for such behavior frequently lies in the disapproval of other organization members.

Business etiquette is important because it creates a professional, mutually respectful atmosphere and improves communication, which helps an office serve as a productive place. People feel better about their jobs when they feel respected, and that translates into better customer relationships as well.

Watch the video below to learn the basics of business etiquette.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=63&v=qWbWL0l3ySk&feature=emb_logo

The Importance of Business Etiquette

Etiquette can help businesses improve the following areas:

• ***Branding:*** Everything we do will reflect on our company and our products.

By acting professionally, we send the message that our business is credible and trustworthy. Personalized care may very well be your edge against the competition.

• ***Customer Care:*** The best way to show customers that their patronage is valued is to treat them with respect and consideration. This in turn can inspire customer loyalty and positive feedback.

• ***Employee Engagement:*** Good manners will help improve morale and confidence between employees and team members.

• ***Team Synergy:*** Good manners will help establish smooth working relationships within a team, which contributes to greater productivity.

NETWORKING FOR SUCCESS

When you're networking, it is important to make the most of the first meeting. In this lecture, we'll discuss how to create an effective introduction, make a good impression, minimize nervousness, use business cards effectively, and remember names.

Creating an Effective Introduction

Three steps to introducing yourself effectively:

1. Project warmth and confidence.

Many people size you up even before you say a word, which is why it's important to mind your body language. When you introduce yourself, stand up straight, relax, and establish eye contact.

2. State your first name and your last name. Depending on the situation, you may also state your affiliation or your position in the company.

Example: "Hello. I'm Jill Smith. I'm the Quality Control Officer."

3. When the other person has given their name, repeat it in acknowledgment.

"It's nice to meet you, Mr. Andrews." or "It's nice to meet you, Joseph." Repeating their name is an acknowledgment that you heard their introduction.

When you are networking is not just about presenting yourself. You may also find yourself introducing two strangers to one another. Here are some guidelines to introducing others:

• Take note of the pecking order. In business, introductions are made based on a person's seniority in a company. This is regardless of age and gender. When you make an introduction, present a person with the lesser status to the person with the higher status.

Example: "Caroline Daniels, I would like you to meet President Andrews. Caroline is the head of the Public Relations Department."

• Introduce strangers first: If you are introducing two persons of equal rank to one another, start with the person that you don't know. This way you can use the introduction to make the newcomer feel welcome.

• Mind titles: Unless invited otherwise, stick to using formal address such as "Mr. Gallagher" or "Attorney Louis Harris".

Making a Great First Impression

If you want to make a good impression, know that you need to project 3 C's:

• **Confidence**

* Having a straight but relaxed posture. Hold your head high and

steady. Don’t slouch or slump.

* Moving in a natural, unaffected manner.

* Maintaining eye contact with the people you are talking to.

• **Competence**

* Exhibiting knowledge of your craft. Know your way around the agenda. Being prepared for the meeting. Bring supportive materials to emphasize your points.

* Answer questions in a clear and professional manner, avoiding the use of slang or technical jargon.

* Asking relevant questions.

• **Credibility**

* Arriving on time.

* Being presentable (well-groomed and mindful of dress codes.

* Keeping true to your word.

Minimizing Nervousness

Meeting people can be anxiety-provoking. The need to impress another person can be a lot of pressure.

Here are some ways to minimize nervousness while in a social situation:

• ***Be informed:*** If possible, take time to research about the people you’re

going to meet: their work, values, and preferences. Knowing what is expected from you can prepare you adequately. Nervousness is amplified by going into a situation blind.

• ***Practice! Practice! Practice:*** Networking is a skill, which means that you can develop it with practice. Practice your introduction in front of a mirror and note what you need to improve. You can also practice with peers. Get feedback from others about the kind of impression you give. Try to meet as many people as you can! The more you do it, the easier it gets!

• ***Learn relaxation techniques:*** There are many activities that can help relax a nervous person.

These activities include:

* Meditation

* Self-talk

* Visualization

* Breathing exercises

* Listening to music.

• ***Identify your triggers:*** If nervousness is a real problem for you, it is recommended that you identify what triggers your nervousness. Is it lack of confidence? Is it fear of authoritative people? Awareness can help you catch yourself in time and respond accordingly.

• ***Believe in what you have to offer:*** It's easy to get intimidated by how successful or famous the other person is. But remember, they're people--- just like you! They would be willing to listen to someone who can offer them something that they want or need. Have faith in your business. Have faith in your personal worth. Adopt the mindset that you are doing them a service, and it's your duty to not let them miss the opportunity of meeting you!

Using Business Cards Effectively

Networking is not complete without receiving or giving a business card. The business card is a way for you to follow up on the people you have met. Likewise, it is a way for them to contact you for further meetings.

More than that, your business card is a way to brand yourself. Professional-looking

business cards send the message that you're professional. Adding your company motto or tagline in your business advertises you and what you're all about.

5 Tips on Using Business Cards Effectively:

1. Never be without your business cards! (Make sure there's always a stack in your office desk, and in your wallet. You'll never know; even a trip to the grocery story can present an opportunity to network.

2. Follow the protocol on hierarchy. Cards should not be given to senior executives that you meet, unless they've asked for one.

3. Time the presentation of your card.

Don't just hand over your business card at any random moment. Handing a business card in the middle of a discussion can be an interruption, as parties would need to take a moment to give it a look. You also want to make sure that your card is perused at point when the other person can give it his or her full attention.

The best moments to hand a card is when you're asked for one, when you're asked to repeat your name, or when someone offers to send you something.

If the two organizations that you represent are well-known to each other, although you haven't met your host before, offering your card is probably best left to the end of the meeting. If your host is unfamiliar with your company, offering your card at the beginning of the meeting is good practice.

4. Accompany your business card with an explanation of what you can offer them.

When you hand another person your card, give a brief "action recommendation." This can increase the likelihood of them contacting you again. For instance you may say: “I think I can help with your PR concerns, Mr. Johnston. Here is my card.”

You may also ask for referrals. Invite the other person to send your contact details to anyone they know who can use your services or products.

5. When receiving a business card, show the other person that you value their card.

Look at the business card for a few seconds. Comment about the card. Let them see that you take care in storing their card as well, instead of just jamming it in your pocket.

Remembering Names

Remembering names may be difficult for some people, but it’s not impossible. It’s

a skill: something that you can improve with constant application.

Here are some ways to remember names:

• Repeat: When someone is introduced to you, repeat their name. “It’s a pleasure to meet you, Mark.” This can help reinforce your memory of the name. You may also introduce them to someone else so that you can create an opportunity to use their name.

• Use mental imagery: We think in pictures, therefore associating an image with a name can help in assisting recall. *For example,* after meeting Bill the plumber, imagine the word Bill spelled with pipes. If Jason Smith is marathon runner, imagine Jason running on a treadmill in a gym called Jason’s. Or just imagine a person’s name written on their forehead. Pick an imagery that works for you. The more striking or exaggerated your mental picture, the bigger are the chances of recall.

• Put it on paper: Write the name down as soon as you can. Or write their details on the business card they give you so that you would remember them the next time you see them around. (Just make sure you don’t let the person see you writing on their business card.)

• Use their name in creative sentences: Mentally construct sentences that are fun and a bit frivolous, to make name recall less stressful. Alliterations, or repeating consonant sounds in succession, are a great way to remember names. For example, to remember Jane who sells kitchen ware, you can repeat in your head: Jane makes jam and juice in January.

• Be genuinely interested: Remembering names begin with attitude. If you are sincerely

interested in a person, then they would make an impact on you. If you adapt the attitude that everyone is interesting, and are a potential ally in business, then remembering names would come as second nature.

THE MEET AND GREET

An introduction is almost always accompanied by a handshake and conversation. In this module, we would discuss the three steps that make an effective handshake and the four levels of conversation.

The Three-Step Process

A handshake is a part of many social interactions. It’s a way to introduce one’s self, offer congratulations and even a way to conclude a business deal. A handshake is a gesture of goodwill.

The Three-Step Process to Handshake:

• Facial Expression: Start non-verbal's that show openness and sincerity. Maintain eye contact. Smile.

• Shake Hands: Your handshake gives an impression. If your grip is too lax, you send the message that you’re hesitant and possibly indecisive. If your grip is too tight, you might come across as too brash, even intimidating. Go for a grip that’s in between. It sends the message that you’re confident.

For most occasions, two or three pumps of the hand are appropriate. Longer handshakes can make some people feel uncomfortable. But there are people who do prefer longer handshakes.

If uncertain, go with the flow, and follow the lead of the other person. If you feel that it’s time to let go, just relax your hand to signal the other person.

• Greet the Person: Talk to the person whose hand you are shaking. A simple ‘hello’ or ‘how do you do” is appropriate.

The Four Levels of Conversation

The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but to leave unsaid the wrong thing at a tempting moment. It requires sensitivity at this stage of a relationship, the context of the conversation and the comfort level of the person you are talking to depend on it.

There are four levels of conversation based on the degree and amount of personal

disclosure. They are:

1. ***Small Talk:*** This is commonly referred to as the ‘exchange of pleasantries’ stage. In this level, you talk only about generic topics, subjects that almost everyone is comfortable discussing.

These subjects include the weather, the location you're both in and current events.

The small talk stage establishes rapport; it makes a person feel at ease with you. It's also a safe and neutral avenue for people to subtly 'size up' one another, and explore if it's a conversation or relationship that they'd want to invest in.

If the small talk goes well, you can proceed into the next level: fact disclosure.

2. ***Fact Disclosure:*** In this stage, you tell the other person some facts about you such as your job, your area of residence, and your interests. This is a 'getting-to-know' stage, and it aims to see if you have something in common with the other person. It's also a signal that you are opening up a little bit to the other person while still staying on neutral topics. If the fact disclosure stage goes well, you can proceed to sharing viewpoints and opinions.

3. ***Viewpoints and Opinions:*** In this stage of the conversation, you can offer what you think about various topics like politics, the new business model ---or even the latest blockbuster. It helps then to read and be curious about many things, from politics to entertainment to current events. Sharing viewpoints and opinions require the 'buffering effect' of the first two stages for two reasons:

First, a person needs rapport with another before they can discuss potentially contentious statements, even if they're having a healthy debate.

Second, sharing viewpoints and opinions opens a person to the scrutiny of another, and thi requires that there is some level of safety and trust in a relationship.

The controversial, and therefore potentially offensive, nature of an opinion exists in a range; make sure that you remain within the 'safe' zone in the early stages of your relationship.

4. ***Personal Feelings:*** The fourth stage is disclosure and acknowledgment of personal feelings. For instance you can share about your excitement for the new project, or your worry about your son's upcoming piano recital. Depending on the context and the level of the friendship, you can disclose more personal subjects. This stage requires trust, rapport, and even a genuine friendship, because of the intimate nature of the subject.

Different people have different comfort levels when it comes to disclosing feelings, and there are case when you'd need several conversations before they would trust enough to open themselves. In some cases, you never get to this stage. Just make sure to be sensitive and test the other person's readiness before opening an intimate topic.

Listening is vital in all stages of the conversation but especially so in this fourth stage. Listen with empathy and understanding to acknowledge that you heard the feeling that they have shared.

BUSINESS EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Email is a convenient and effective medium to conduct business communication. In this module we will discuss etiquette guidelines on how to address an email message, the use of grammar and acronyms in the letter body and top 5 technology tips.

Addressing Your Message

Here are two basic guidelines in addressing an email:

1. Know when to use the To, Cc and Bcc fields.

There are three common ways to address an email, and each way is most appropriate to specific contexts.

a. Using the ‘To’ field.

The ‘To’ field is used when sending a direct message to someone.

You may send the same email to multiple addresses using the ‘To’ field. Do so when your email is meant to be addressed directly to all recipients, as in the case of a manager

directing his team.

Note though that when you use the ‘To’ field, all email addresses can be viewed by all

recipients. Put multiple addresses in the ‘To’ field only when every recipient is okay with his or her email address being released to everyone.

b. Using the ‘Cc’ field.

Cc stands for carbon copy.

You use the ‘Cc’ field to send a copy of the email message to people who are not meant to be the direct recipients of the message, but still need to be kept on the loop.

For instance, if a manager has ordered his secretary to send a memo to everyone in the

department, the secretary may place all the department employees’ email address on the ‘To’ section, and the manager’s email address on the ‘Cc’ field.

Note that, like the ‘To’ field, all email addresses entered in a ‘Cc’ field can be viewed by everyone.

c. Using the “Bcc’ field.

Bcc stands for Blind carbon copy.

When you place email addresses in ‘Bcc’ field, recipients are ‘blind’ to other recipients’ email address. The use of the ‘Bcc’ field is most appropriate if the recipients have not given permission for their email address to be released, or if there is reason to keep the email address private.

Because the ‘Bcc’ field offers privacy that the ‘To’ and ‘Cc’ fields do not, you may use the blind carbon copy field for both direct and indirect email messages where privacy of email addresses is needed. If you wish to send an email to many direct recipients, but you don’t wish to disclose anyone’s email address, just use your own email address in the ‘To’ field, and use the ‘Bcc’ field for the recipients’ addresses.

2. Address the receiver by name in the first sentence of your email. Mary, I received copies of the file. Use the proper address, like Dr. or Mr. until told to use first names. You may take your cue from the way they sign their email.

Grammar and Acronyms

While online mediums of communication have developed their own vocabulary, it’s best to remember that business emails the same formality as any business letter. Here are some key things to remember with regards to grammar and the use of acronyms in an email.

• Always follow the rules of good grammar. You may refer to English writing style guides for these rules.

• Always use full sentences and words with proper sentence structure. Don’t use text-speak.

Example: use “The reports are due on Monday.” instead of “D reports r due Mon”

• Proper capitalization and punctuation are a must! In email, all caps give the impression that you’re shouting, and small caps are hard to read.

Example: use “The report should include an evaluation report.” instead of “The report SHOULD INCLUDE AN EVALUATION REPORT."

• In business emails, avoid text-speak abbreviations such as BTW (by the way), IMHO (In my honest opinion,) and LOL (laugh out loud). Avoid the use of emoticons, as well.

Top 5 Technology Tips

Here are 5 tips when using technology:

1. Medium is the message: There are some things that are better done face-toface rather than through the net. An example of this is delivering negative feedback. Don’t use technology when a personal approach is much more appropriate and or desirable.

2. Always re-read your letters: Some statements don’t come across well when written. An ironic joke, if people can’t see the twinkle in your eye, can end up sounding insulting. Read everything twice before you send it.

3. Think security: Do not assume privacy when communicating online. Do not use emails to discuss confidential and speculative information.

4. Think of your recipient's convenience: Since reading from a screen is more difficult than reading from paper, the structure and lay out is very important for e-mail messages. Use short paragraphs and blank lines between each paragraph. When making points, number them or mark each point with bullets.

Also don't attach lengthy documents in your email. Forcing your client to read a long document through a screen is insensitive, not to mention the time it would cost them to download bulk files. If a hard copy is possible, then send a hard copy instead.

5. Skip it if it's not necessary: Remember that most emails now go into PDA's. Before sending a message in the late hours, ask yourself: how will they react to me sending a text message?

Before you forward a memo you've received to your staff, think if they really need this piece of information. It's nice to keep your staff up to date, but not to the point that you're clogging their inboxes.

PHONE ETIQUETTE

This time we will look at telephone etiquette. Particularly, we will discuss how to develop an appropriate greeting, how to deal with voicemail and cell phone do's and don'ts.

Developing an Appropriate Greeting

How to create an appropriate phone greeting:

• Say your greeting:

Business telephones should always be answered with a phrase like, "Good morning" or "Good Afternoon." Speak clearly and distinctly, in a pleasant tone of voice. Some trainers recommend smiling before one answers the phone in order to project a positive energy into one's voice.

• Identify yourself and the company. It's only polite to tell the other person on the line that they've reached the right place.

"This is ABC Company, Carol speaking." Or "You've reached Marks and Spencer, this is Jonathan."

• Inquire how you might be of assistance.

"How may I be of service?" or "How can I help you?" can set the tone.

THE WRITTEN LETTER

Even in written communication, appropriate tone, content and format must be observed. In this module, we would discuss how to write a 'Thank You' note, a formal letter and an informal letter.

Thank You Notes

Expressing appreciation is always a good idea, whether it's for a gift, an act of kindness, or a business courtesy. You can do this by sending a 'thank you' note. The formality of your thank you note depends on your relationship with the person you're sending the note to. A thank you note to a senior who gave you a promotion would be more formal than, say, a thank you note to a long-time client for hosting your lunch. Formal ones can be written on the company letterhead, and non-formal ones can simply be a handwritten letter on a piece of stationary. A thank you note need not be a long letter. Most thank you letters mention:

- Your thanks
- What you're thanking them for
- What their gesture, gift, or action meant to you or the company

Example:

August 14, 2010

Joseph Marvin

Sinclair Enterprises

Walt Whitman

Dear Joseph,

I would like to express my appreciation for your hard work in preparing the presentation for the Widget account. It was a last minute notice and I knew you pulled in some overtime to get it done. Despite your limited time to prepare, the materials were top-notch and on-target. The presentation went well and we owe it all to you.

Thanks again,

Velma Torres

Formal Letters

A formal style is recommended for most business correspondence. It shows courtesy, professionalism, and knowledge of protocol. As a rule, use a formal style unless invited otherwise or you have already established a relationship with the person you're writing to.

Here are some basic rules when composing formal letters:

Stationary: Formal letters are written in plain white (or shades of white like cream) 8 1/2-by-11 inch paper. Stationary that bears the company letterhead may also be used.

Content: A formal letter usually contains the following sections:

- Sender's full name and address
- Addressee's full name and address

• Date the letter is sent (or assumed to fall into the hands of the receiver)
• Formal Salutation e.g. “Dear + Formal Address”
• A Subject Heading e.g. “Re: Job Opening for Quality Control Officer”
• Letter Body
• Formal Closing e.g. “Respectfully yours, Sincerely yours,”
• Name and Signature of the Sender

Lay-out on Page: There are two commonly used lay-outs for a formal letter: the block and the semiblock. In the block format, all text is aligned to the left margin and the paragraph is not indented. In the semi-block format, all text is aligned to the left margin but the paragraphs are indented. Both formats are considered appropriate for business correspondence.

Tone: Formal letters are formal in tone. Words are spelled out and the sentences follow grammatically correct sentence structure. Comments are organized in a clear and concise manner, and avoid unnecessary information. Slang is avoided.

Informal Letters

An informal business letter is a shorter and more straight-forward version of a formal letter. Standard rules on grammar and spelling correctness still apply, but with certain flexibilities.

For instance, contractions, abbreviations, and slang may be permissible as long as the professional tone of the letter is preserved.

The tone in an informal business letter is more relaxed and conversational. Salutations and closings can be more personalized, for instance you may use “Hey Jim,” instead of “Dear Mr. Wentworth;” and close with “Cheers,” instead of “Respectfully yours,”

Content can be less technical or academic. Familiarity is assumed but the respect is still there. Example, you can replace “This letter is in reference to your letter dated July 4, 2009…” to “Regarding your message last week…”

DRESSING FOR SUCCESS

A significant part of practicing etiquette is proper self-presentation. The way you look talks to people, not just how you want to project yourself, but also the courtesy you have for the people in your company. In this module, we will discuss guidelines in dressing for success. Particularly, we would talk about the meaning of colors, the meaning of dress codes and guidelines on how to choose the right clothes to wear.

The Meaning of Colors

Here are some guidelines in the use of colors in business attires:

• In general, conservative colors are perceived as more professional and appropriate for business-related situations. These colors include black (which is perceived as the most formal), white, dark-gray, and navy blue.

Conservative colors are recommended for formal occasions; you can be more playful during casual days.

• Wear these conservative colors in solid blocks instead of as part of a printed pattern.

• The main suit is recommended to have conservative colors but louder colors can be mixed with the accessories. E.g. the tie and pocket squares for men or scarf for the women.

Some of the common interpretations associated with colors are:

* Red – dominance and power

* Orange – warmth and enthusiasm

* Yellow – optimism and confidence

* Green - vitality and harmony

* Blue - serenity and peace

• A lot of companies use color dress code for building their brand as employees interact with the consumers. Also, when the workforce dresses the same color, it further brings unity among the employees.

Interpreting Common Dress Codes

Dress codes often depend on the company or industry where you work in, and even in the type of job that you do. It is also not unusual for different activities in the same job to call for different dress codes.

• Dressy Casual: Dressy casual means dressed up versions of casual looks. For men, it could be neatly pressed slacks and a sports coat. For women, it can be slacks, but also skirts, dresses. This can be matched with solid color t-shirts, mock turtleneck, polo shirt, collared or button down shirts/blouses.

Casual means anything goes but in the business setting, casual is recommended to be interpreted as dressy casual.

• Semi-Formal: Semi-formal means a medium between formal and informal. For men, semi-formal can translate to neatly pressed dress pants, slacks, button shirts, and ties. Jackets are optional but preferred. For ladies, it’s evening dresses, dinner dresses (knee length) or some pants suits.

• Formal: Formal means tuxedos, dark suits, and ties for men. For ladies, it’s cocktail to floor length dresses, nylons and dress shoes.

• Black Tie: Black tie is the most formal dress code. Men wear black tuxedo coats, trousers with satin ribbon, cummerbunds and bow ties. Ladies are to wear ball gowns. There are dress codes that state ‘Black tie optional’. This means that the men have the option of wearing a regular suit with a tie instead of a tuxedo. Ladies have the option of wearing a cocktail gown or a dinner dress. Long to full-length skirts are preferred.

Deciding What to Wear

Tips when deciding what to wear:

• When attending a work-related social function, try to determine how your host or hostess would like you to dress and go with their response. There is nothing wrong in making inquiries about dress codes beforehand.

• Casual generally means that you can wear whatever you want. But in business, casual carries with it a lot of do’s and don’ts. You should dress comfortably but not too comfortable. Business casual means avoiding flip-flops, shorts, cut-off jeans and halters.

• When dressing in the office, refer to the company dress code or if none is written, check the company culture.

• Note the context of the meeting, the seniority of the company, as well as the venue. Obviously, lunch at a burger place is more casual than lunch at a star-rated restaurant. A meeting with board members is more formal than a meeting with your staff. Dress accordingly.

• When in doubt of your client’s dress policy, err on the side of conservative. It’s better to be overdressed than underdressed.

INTERNATIONAL ETIQUETTE

Etiquette is heavily influenced by culture; each country and nation has their own set of rules for polite behavior. When dealing with an international clientele, or when conducting business in a foreign country, it’s best to be aware of local etiquette guidelines. In this module we would discuss general rules in international etiquette, important points, and ways to prepare.

General Rules

Etiquette is heavily influenced by culture; what may be good manners in one country

or to one nation may not be good manners in another. As most businesses today are

operating with a global mindset, it pays always keep international etiquette in mind.

• Always take the time to research cross-cultural etiquette when dealing with a foreign client, or when conducting business in a foreign country.

• Awareness of international etiquette is important not just in face-to-face meetings but also in non face-to-face encounters such as sending gifts, conversing over the phone or communicating online.

• Areas you need to look at include:

* Religion
* Dress Codes
* Social Hierarchy
* Rules on Meet and Greets
* Use of titles and forms of address
* Exchanging business cards
* Valuing Time
* Physical Space
* Dealing with embarrassment

• When uncertain, err on the side of what you presume is conservatism. And be observant; check if people are becoming uncomfortable.

• Etiquette mishaps in international setting can range from merely embarrassing to potentially insulting to the other person. When you realize that you have committed a faux pas, apologize immediately and ask how you can make up for it.

Important Points

Here are some important points when dealing with other cultures:

• Some cultures dress conservatively as the norm.

Americans tend to be more relaxed when it comes to dress codes, and even recommends dressing for comfort in certain fields and professions. People from other parts of the world are generally more conservative. The Japanese, for example, dress according to rank. Some Muslim nations find short dresses for women as offensive. If uncertain, err on the side of conservatism.

• Some cultures meet and greet people with a kiss, a hug, or a bow instead of a handshake. A handshake for greeting is mostly universal. However, don't be surprised if you are occasionally met with a kiss, a hug, or a bow somewhere along the way.

• Stick to formal titles for business interactions unless invited otherwise.

Approach first names with caution when dealing with people from other cultures. Some cultures are very hierarchical, and with consider it disrespect to be addressed without their title. Some cultures never accept first names in the business setting, and this should be respected.

• Some cultures are less time-conscious than others.

Don't take it personally if someone from a more relaxed culture keeps you waiting or spends more of that commodity than you normally would in meetings or over meals. Stick to the rules of punctuality, but be understanding when your contact from another country seems unconcerned.

• Understand differences in perception of personal space.

Americans have a particular value for their own physical space and are uncomfortable when other people get in their realm. If the international visitor seems to want to be close, accept it. Backing away can send the wrong message.

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Business etiquette – is something everyone needs to be aware of. Not only does it affect your personal image but that of your professional persona, and your business brand and identity. We’ve all been on the receiving end at some stage in our business careers of bad business etiquette, and beyond annoyance – it can leave a bad taste in your mouth.

Why business etiquette is important?

With the power of social media and the never-ending universe of the internet – we need to think carefully about how we treat others, and we can do that by simply showing appropriate manners and respect. The power of reviews and customer experiences lends more weight than ever before and does impact on whether someone will want to do business with you.

Don’t kid yourself for a second that bad reviews don’t matter or that no one really reads them! Customers, clients, potential business partners – they all do. Don’t become complacent – yes, being in business makes you a busy person, but so is everyone else.

No one wants a reputation tarnished by bad manners. Unfortunately, it can be quite commonplace for people to simply not use their manners or forget them. Being late, impolite, using your phone at inappropriate times, and not following up are all some of the most common issues seen in businesses today.

Stop and consider for a minute…

How do you want to be perceived? How do you think people perceive you?

There may be a stark contrast between how you want to be perceived versus how you actually are perceived, and some of this may be down to one or more of these common business mistakes. Below we’ve put together seven of the most common etiquette mistakes people make in business.

If you want to improve your customer relationships, your professional or business identity, here are some common business etiquette issues you should really take note of.

Punctuality

Punctuality is extremely important in the world of business because it shows that you are respectful of other people's time.

"Arriving late was a way of saying that your own time was more valuable than the time of the person who waited for you." ― Karen Joy Fowler

Not everyone has the luxury to spend time waiting for people who are running late for meetings. We've all got things to do and people to see. So, ensuring you are on time for meetings or appointments, goes a long way in showing people who you are and what you deem important.

Tardiness, irrespective of whether you are really busy – can become part of an organisation's culture. In effect you are telling people you are more important; therefore, they need to wait for you.

Punctuality shows you respect people and their time.

Be polite

If you're in business then you should know how and why good customer service should be one of your core values.

Don't believe it?

Have a read of this article last year about New Zealand's rudest café – it says it all!

Don't be that person or that business. Be polite and professional.

"Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning." Bill Gates

All it can take for a reputation to become tarnished is for one customer to have a bad experience with your business – and generally, that occurs when someone is impolite. They go on and tell other people who tell other people and so on and so forth.

With online reviews becoming the norm it is vital to take customer service seriously. The customer service index has been used to measure customer service experiences with businesses – you may want to check to see how your industry ranks.

Making introductions

First impressions in business count for a lot more than we may give credit for.

Whether it's introductions between co-workers, employers, suppliers, customers or shareholders – a good introduction is going to do wonders for your personal reputation and business image.

"You can tell the character of a person by their handshake." —Kathy Magliato

Know what is appropriate and when during introductions. Make sure you give your attention to the person you are being introduced too. Try not to forget their name straight away, look them in the eye and shake hands with them. It's an age-old sign of respect.

Cross-cultural communication can also fall into this category. If you are meeting someone in business from another culture – show your respect for them by doing your research first.

What is okay in one culture may not be so for another.

Getting straight down to business

This one can relate directly to bad introductions – waving off a proper introduction or speeding through one is disrespectful and inconsiderate. Ignoring the general rule of greeting people and getting straight down to business, is disrespectful of individuals.

Make sure you understand what it means to greet someone. Say hello, introduce yourself – it's respectful and also considerate of the people or person you are meeting with. It shows others you care about them.

"Politeness and consideration for others is like investing pennies and getting dollars back" – Thomas Sowell

The way you treat and deal with other people in business is going to reflect on you personally and your business image.

Be considerate of other cultures, and other people you are meeting with. This can be a tricky one to navigate. But do your research first and if you understand other cultural norms will prove you to be respectful and considerate.

Effective ongoing communication is key in all areas of business, not only business but in everyone's everyday lives. We can all give each other the common courtesy of communication.

The way you conduct yourself and your business show you take your core values and customer service seriously.

"It is nice to be important, but it is important to be nice" – US Businessman, John Templeton.

EXERCISE 1

Think of two business situations that went wrong with you (at lectures, classes, conferences, meetings, interviews etc). Tell about them, express regret or criticism as you can.

EXERCISE 2

Describe some ways how to minimize nervousness while in a social or business situation.

EXERCISE 3

Speak about on the topic 'Why business etiquette is important?'

РЕКОМЕНДОВАНІ ДЖЕРЕЛА ІНФОРМАЦІЇ

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