

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Unit-1:

Introduction - Meaning of Office, Importance of Office, Functions of Office, Office Management, Functions of Office Manager

Unit-2:

Principles of Management - Office Manager - Functions of Office Management, Qualities of Office Manager - Office Administration-Meaning and Objectives of Administration

Unit-3:

Layout & Office Accommodation - Location of Office - Office Layout; Office Environment -Types of Lighting Systems – Ventilation – Functions - Sanitary Requirements

Unit-4: Documentation - Meaning of Documentation, Objectives of documentation, Records - Importance of Records, Maintenance of Records Management - Filing and Indexing - Office Forms and Essentials of Good Filing System - Methods of Filing. Retention and weeding out of papers

Unit-5: Office Correspondence - Report Writing - Types of Reports - Specimens of Reports - Precis Writing

Module 1:

Introduction

An office is a crucial and an essential part of every organisation, large or small. Whether it is a government institution, trading or manufacturing organisation, a hospital or an educational institution, the existence of an office is vital for the appropriate functioning of any kind of organization. The office acts as a storehouse and a nervous system of every operation within a business organization. A well-managed office is an essential assistance to the management and administration. It assists the management to plan its operations intelligently and to put them into action in a competent manner. The office co-ordinates all the activities and functions of the business. Without an effectual and a well-organised office, the business activities and functions cannot be implemented in a methodical and a systematic manner.

Importance of an Office

The significance of an office arises from the fact that modern business, with its varied and complicated operations cannot be managed without the clerical and technical assistance and other functions such as record keeping, hence, office is an integral part of any organization or an institution. Without a well-organized office, it is not possible to implement all the activities and functions. Production, marketing, finance and personnel are the primary functions of any organization and office is stated to be the place where these functions are adequately put into operation. Information, knowledge and awareness are the key aspects that the workforce is required to possess, hence, office is an area where collecting, processing, storing and distributing of information is carried out. Therefore, it is vital to understand the concept of office management.

Functions of a Modern Office

1. Receiving Information
2. Collecting Information
3. Recording Information
4. Creating Records
5. Processing or Arranging Information
6. Computation and Statistical Work
7. Analysing Information
8. Maintenance of Records
9. Retention of Records
10. Communication of Information

The functions of a modern office can be divided into two. They are basic functions and administrative management functions. These functions are common to every business unit whatever may be the nature of business. This article discusses some of the basic functions of modern office briefly.

Basic Functions of a Modern office

Basic functions are differed from administrative management functions. Basic functions may be termed as primary functions. Here, the primary or basic functions are presented below.

1. Receiving Information

The information may be received from within the organization or outside the organization. If information is received from various departments and executives of the organization, it is termed as information received within organization. If information is received from outsiders say customers, government departments, shareholders, suppliers, they are termed as information received from the outside organization.

2. Collecting Information

Collecting information is differing from receiving information. If an office gets information voluntarily, it is receiving information. If an office gets information after an enquiry or demands, it is collecting information. Enquiry or demands may be made through letters and/or telephone calls. Managers or departmental executives can visit other offices to collect information. Information may be received or collected if it helps the management in taking decisions.

3. Recording Information

Both received and collected information should be properly recorded in suitable form. An office determines the form, number and nature of records to be maintained according to the needs. Some forms are specified in the respective statutes. For example, Indian Companies Act requires the companies to maintain books and registers in a specified way.

4. Creating Records

The information should be converted into according to the needs and prepare financial and cost accounts, production details, sales particulars, man hours worked, price list and the like. These records are used as a reference library of the management.

5. Processing or Arranging Information

The received and collected information have to be arranged in a systematic way. If not so, there is no use of such received and collected information. Financial statements and statistical statements are examples of arranged information.

According to J.C. Denyer, The basic functions of an office can be said to be receiving, recording, arranging, analysing and the giving of information

6. Computation and Statistical Work

Calculations have to be made for preparing statistical charts and / or diagrams. Cost Sheet, Production Budget, Sales Budget, Purchase Budget, Master Budget, Fund Flow Statement and Cash Flow Statements are also prepared.

7. Analysing Information

One has to analyse the information to find a truth. The hidden fact has to be highlighted through proper analysis. Reports are also drawn up out of analysis. Market analysis, Production Report, Financial Report and Employees Report are also prepared.

8. Maintenance of Records

Created records should be maintained in a proper way. The future reference will be very easy through proper maintenance of records.

9. Retention of Records

Records may be classified into two types i.e. necessary records and outdated records. The necessary records should be preserved under the control and supervision of office manager. The outdated records can be destroyed.

10. Communication of Information

The office supplies information from its records as and when required by management for taking decisions. The information may be supplied verbally or in writing. Normally, the urgent information is supplied verbally. The validity of the information depends upon the promptness with which the office supplies information. The giving information should be precious, specific, accurate and complete. Irrelevant information should not be supplied to anybody.

MEANING OF OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Office management refers to the process of planning, organizing, guiding, communicating, directing, coordinating and controlling the activities of a group of people who are working to achieve business objectives efficiently and economically.

ELEMENTS OF OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Elements of office management are termed as pillars of a building. If pillar is strong, certainly, the building is also strong. Hence, efficient functioning of office management is based on the elements of office management. Following are the essential elements of office management.

1. Personnel

Office personnel are actually performing the office work. Generally, the selection and placement of office personnel is carried on by the office manager in small organization. In large organization, staffing is carried on by the human resource management department. In both the case, the office work is to be performed by allocating the work to each individual according to their efficiency, guide the personnel to do the work with the help of means available in an office within a specified time and control the activities of office personnel. The office manager has to do all these activities.

2. Means

Means refers to tools used to perform the office work. Means include pen, pencil, eraser, paper, ink, office forms, typewriter, computer, printer, calculator and the like. Adequate tools have been supplied in an office and put them to the most efficient and economical use for achieving objectives.

3. Environment

The nature of business determines the environment of an office. The various office works have to be carried on under a particular condition or environment. A working environment is created and maintained for the smooth performance of office work. It is the duty and responsibility of an office manager to bring suitable environment by adopting various procedures and practice.

4. Purpose

The office personnel must be aware of the purpose for which a particular work is carried on and the impact of such work on others' performance. The office manager teaches the purpose to office personal. If not so, the performance of office work does not bring the most efficient and economical use of office resources and achieve the objectives.

Office Manager

Office managers are responsible for the efficient functioning of an office through a range of administrative, financial and managerial tasks.

Office managers essentially ensure the smooth running of an office on a day-to-day basis and may manage a team of administrative or support staff. Responsibilities typically include:

- Organising meetings and managing databases
- Booking transport and accommodation
- Organising company events or conferences
- Ordering stationery and furniture
- Dealing with correspondence, complaints and queries
- Preparing letters, presentations and reports
- Supervising and monitoring the work of administrative staff
- Managing office budgets
- Liaising with staff, suppliers and clients
- Implementing and maintaining procedures/office administrative systems
- Delegating tasks to junior employees
- Organising induction programmes for new employees
- Ensuring that health and safety policies are up to date
- Using a range of software packages
- Attending meetings with senior management
- Assisting the organisation's HR function by keeping personnel records up to date, arranging interviews and so on.

However, depending on the size and structure of the organisation, the role of office manager can also be combined with another office-based job role, for example:

- HR assistant
- Company secretary
- Facilities manager (by taking responsibility for the upkeep of the building)
- Marketing assistant

Typical employers of office managers

Any organisation with more than a few members of staff may employ an office manager. Major employers include:

- Hospitals
- Universities
- Financial organisations
- Local authorities
- Central government
- Charities
- Small Businesses
- Manufacturers.

Jobs are typically advertised via jobs boards and local, regional and national newspapers (online and in print) as well as by specialist recruitment agencies.

Duties will often include some of the traditional duties of a personal assistant or administrator, but the role can be more wide-ranging.

Qualifications and Training required:

A degree can sometimes be beneficial and this career is open to graduates from all degree disciplines. However, many employers do not specify academic qualifications as a requirement, instead stressing the importance of:

- Experience in an administrative role
- Knowledge of software packages
- Good interpersonal and time management skills.

Previous office-based, secretarial or customer-facing work experience is essential (some employers may expect at least two years). Some employers also ask for previous experience of working within an office-based role in the same sector. Relevant experience can be gained via temporary agency work, which may in turn lead to permanent office work.

Key skills for office managers

- Reliability and discretion: you will often learn of confidential matters
- Adaptability
- Communication, negotiation and relationship-building skills

- Organisational skills
- IT skills
- Problem solving skills
- Initiative
- Leadership and the ability to 'make things happen'
- Budgeting skills
- Attention to detail.

Important Functions or Role of an Office Manager

1. Staffing
2. Leadership
3. Training
4. Coordination
5. Work Measurement
6. Motivation
7. Discipline
8. Accounting
9. Stationary Control
10. Secretarial Services
11. Costing
12. Organiser
13. Supervisor

Since the office work is basically a service function, office manager performs a significant role in the performance of office work. The main functions of an office manager are explained below.

1. Staffing

An office manager is requested to recruit and select the office staff by the top management. For this purpose, he determines the number of staff required, their qualification and experience if any, decide the sources of recruitment, receiving applications, conduct the interviews and tests and finally select the right personnel.

2. Leadership

He has complete control over the work done in an office. An office manager is necessary for smooth, efficient and performance of office work economically in an organization. Being a leader of office, he is in charge of public relations and helps other departments to achieve their goals set forth.

3. Training

The need of training has been decided by office manager. Besides, the training programmes are also devised and imparted to the new recruits as well as existing staff. Orientation training programme has been provided to new staff and refresher course programme is provided to existing staff.

4. Coordination

The various activities of office staff are coordinate by the office manager. He has to bring coordination between the top management and the workers. He must please both the parties.

5. Work Measurement

An office manager devices methods of work measurement in terms of the output of the staff. It is a difficult task. The reason is that the office work cannot be measured in physical terms. Hence, it is the duty of office manager to decide the accepted norms of work measurement.

6. Motivation

The efficiency of staff is increased by providing proper motivation. The type of motivation can be decided by the office manager. The right type of motivation ensures effective and economical performance of work and lead to the promotion of the staff.

7. Discipline

The implementation of rules and regulation of office is in the hands of office manager. There should not be personal bias while implementing rules and regulations. He also attends to the grievances of office staff. In this way discipline is maintained.

8. Accounting

He has thorough knowledge on accounting. Every figure should be kept in finger tips.

9. Stationery Control

Office manager has to exercise proper control on stationery purchase and issue. For this purpose, he has to frame clear cut procedure for the purchase, for the issue and storage of office stationery.

10. Secretarial Services

All the accounts books are kept under the custody of office manager. An officer manager is responsible to conduct meetings, drafts reports and minutes etc. on behalf of secretary. In this way, he does the functions of secretary.

11. Costing

In small organization, an office manager is responsible to maintain costing records and do the costing work.

12. Organizer

The office work has been assessed and assigned to office staff according to their knowledge, ability, experience, qualification and the like by the office manager.

13. Supervisor

An office manager is head of office. Hence, it is the duty of office manager to supervise the office correspondences, procedures, policy implementation, record maintenance, filing, indexing and the like.

There is no hard and fast rule for determining the functions of office manager. Generally, the type and size of an organization are the deciding factors of functions of office manager. The functions of office manager vary from time to time and from office to office. The office manager is expected to perform his functions within the limit of authority and responsibility entrusted to him by the employer.

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Seven Major Functions of Office Management

Office management is the profession where you are responsible for the design, implementation, evaluation and maintenance of work within an office or an organisation. The aim is to improve productivity and efficiency and people who undertake the roles have gone through an Office Management Course in order to learn the seven major functions of office management.

Functions of Office Management

Planning

Planning is the first step in the process, as well as the first step in office management. It is the creation of a well-defined course for future actions and lays out what people within the office need to do. It creates stages or methods for people to follow to ensure consistency and improve productivity.

Staffing

Staffing is a function of management so in this context, it is about selection, recruitment, compensation and training of staff. It can also include areas such as promotion and retirement of staff and managers to ensure the right balance of staff is maintained.

Directing

Creating plans is one thing but you need to implement them and that means directing staff in what is required of them. This involves training as well as continued guidance to ensure that processes are understood and followed. It can also cover any systems in place to handle people who don't follow the processes.

Communicating

In order to direct people to follow processes laid out in the plan, communicating with staff is key. It is about building good human relations and understanding what staff need to, therefore, enable them to follow the office management plan. Clarity, integrity and the strategic use of information organisation are three key points that should be mastered within this skill.

Controlling

Controlling isn't about micro-managing but ensuring that the high-level plans are followed while allowing room for people to do things as they find best

within it. It can apply to the physical processes that are carried out, the computerised processes or even areas such as financial processes to ensure consistency. There should also be a firm basis in the principle of flexibility and the needs and nature of the office that are applied to any controlling actions.

Coordinating

Coordinating can be one of the trickier principles of office management – the need to coordinate within the team but also with other areas of the business to ensure everyone is working harmoniously. There are several key principles used to guide actions in this area including that of direct contact – reducing the red tape involved with processes and ensuring they are clear and easy to follow. Continuity is another principal – ensuring everyone is following the plan laid out.

Motivating

Motivating staff is definitely the hardest role of the office manager. There is self-motivation and external motivation and these both need to be used to achieve aims and goals. Keeping morale high while maintaining discipline is important and setting examples of subordinates should also be done – leading by example.

Qualities of an office manager

1. Optimism

Your office manager may be the first person someone meets when they enter your office. Whether it's a potential investor, new hire, or returning customer, the office manager's demeanor will help create their first impression of your organization.

Looking at excellent office managers, you will notice they often have a naturally positive attitude and friendly communication style. Being in a position where they interact with so many employees, customers, and stakeholders, having an optimistic outlook is a critical skill as the company will look to them to keep morale high and be a positive influence in the office.

2. Initiative and the Anticipation of Needs

Office managers need to be able to react well to challenges and anticipate needs. In their reactive role, office managers will be faced with endless requests from employees across the organization. They will need to possess the initiative to prioritize requests and find ways to streamline their own workflow. To maximize their effectiveness, they should also be able to anticipate certain needs and re-occurring requests.

3. Active Interest in the Company's Well-Being

A strong office manager will strive to move forward the overall success of the organization. This active interest in the company's well-being will allow them to address each task and request in the context of the functioning of the entire office. It will also allow them to identify and improve areas of office life that will promote the company's future success.

4. Excellent Communication Skills

Office managers don't often communicate with clients, and as such, the importance of communication skills in this role is often overlooked. However, it's important for an office manager to be an effective communicator.

Often, the office manager oversees the implementation of company-wide policies. They must carefully and clearly communicate the reasoning behind the changes and successfully encourage their co-workers to buy into these new policies. They will often be the first point of contact for questions about company policies, changes, and new directions. As you can see, communication skills are a must.

5. The Ability to Be Accessible and Friendly

An office manager needs to be accessible both in terms of availability and in terms of having a warm, approachable personality. Employees should feel as though they can always talk to their office manager about requests and questions.

Being approachable and easily accessible will also help new office managers settle into their new roles and quickly foster important relationships with their new team. If employees feel they have a

personal and professional relationship with their office manager, they will feel as though they have a voice in the organization and are valued by someone who can affect organizational change.

6. Ability to adapt & learn

The covid-19 pandemic has led to several changes in workplaces where employees needed to pivot and quickly adapt to the new way of remote or hybrid work. In such circumstances, the role of an office manager assumes even greater responsibility and an active role. Your office manager must be adept at quickly learning new technology and be able to smoothly manage the needs of and help employees remotely.

The office manager is a specialized management position that requires being in touch with all elements of a company. A good office manager is often a sign of a successful and productive office environment, and having that kind of impact takes a certain set of skills. Look for a candidate with these traits to find an office manager who can really make an impact.

OFFICE ORGANIZATION

Office management is an integral part of general management.

It refers to the process of **planning, organizing**, guiding, communicating, **directing, coordinating** and **controlling** the activities of a group of people who are working to achieve business objectives efficiently and economically.

CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICE MANAGEMENT

- **Objectives and Purpose.** The very **purpose** of any office organization is to avoid waste of time and duplication of work. ...
- Division of Work or Specialization. ...
- Principle of **Efficiency.** ...
- **Unity** of Command. ...
- Principle of Definiteness. ...
- Scalar Principle. ...

- Principle of Span of Management. ...
- Principle of **Authority**.

TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS

There are several types of organizational structures, each of which workbest for certain sizes or types of business.

- Flat Organizational Structure. ...
- Functional Organizational Structure. ...
- Product Organizational Structure. ...
- Geographical Organizational Structure. ...
- **Matrix** Organizational Structure.

FUNCTIONS OF AN OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Office Administrator

An Administrator provides office and administrative support to either a team or individual. This role is vital for the smooth-running of a business.

Duties may include fielding telephone calls, receiving and directing visitors, word processing, creating spreadsheets and presentations, and filing. Additionally, Administrators are often responsible for specific projects and tasks, as well as overseeing the work of junior staff.

Administrator job description duties and responsibilities

Extensive software skills, internet research abilities and strong communication skills are required. An Administrator job description may also have the title of Department Assistant, Coordinator or Personal Assistant. The job description should feature:

- Answering incoming calls; taking messages and re-directing calls as required
- Dealing with email enquiries
- Taking minutes

- Diary management and arranging appointments, booking meeting rooms and conference facilities
- Data entry (sales figures, property listings etc.)
- General office management such as ordering stationary
- Organising travel and accommodation for staff and customers
- Arranging both internal and external events
- Possibly maintaining the company social media accounts
- Providing administration support to Sales Reps, Property Managers and Senior Management
- Administrator job qualifications and requirements

Although an undergraduate degree isn't required for an Administrator role in every company, some employees do prefer to hire graduates. The following degrees would be valuable:

Administrators are required to use a variety of software packages including Microsoft Word, Outlook, PowerPoint and Excel. Aside from this, candidates will need to have excellent communication, organizational abilities and time management skills.

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What is Office Management?

Office Management is the art of planning, organizing, designing, controlling the employees, and creating the activities to achieve the mission, vision, and goal of a company. The management is applicable at a strategic level, tactical level, and even at the operational level. It aims at increasing the focus and attention of the office personnel on their duties and responsibilities.

What is the Objective of Office Management?

Let us try to understand the key objectives of Office Management. It will further help to substantiate the importance and criticality of the matter.

1. Streamline the workflow

A program or an engagement in an office comprises a set of activities or tasks. Smooth and seamless execution of the entire workflow magnifies the efficiency factor. To ensure such a result, robust project governance and control is essential. The management and leadership need to be strong and powerful enough to guide and steer the entire team to the path of success.

2. Collaboration and Coordination

A vital factor and key success criteria when it comes to the future growth of a company. Collaborating with the internal and external stakeholders to prevent ambiguities and disconnect is an important objective of office management. Further coordination between the various departments and business units to prevent miscommunication and conflicts is critical.

3. Inventions and Innovations

Execution of daily mundane work in the regular traditional methods invite stagnancy in growth and efficiency. Companies fail to achieve a reduction in effort and cost, thus decreasing the chances of revenue increase. Office management aims to encourage and stimulate inventions, innovations, deep dive analysis and research work. These in turn will contribute largely to increasing productivity, decreasing the expenditures, and thus a better future growth.

4. Market competition

In today's business world, there are a lot of players in various industrial sectors and domains. Standing ahead among them and facing the competition smartly and intelligently is a real challenge. CEOs, CFOs, CIOs, etc. are struggling day in and day out to meet up to the numerous hurdles of tough market competition. Office management focuses on equipping the company leadership to adapt to the ever-increasing demands and the changing business environment. Organization change management and training are some of the tools leveraged for achieving the result.

5. Effective Resource utilization

Resources in any form people or the office infrastructure must be leveraged in an optimal way for their effective utilization. Wastage, underutilization, and overutilization all drastically impact the efficiency and smooth functioning of an organization. Office managers strive to ensure the resources are systematically tuned to the activities on hand. Segregation between value and non-value added activities is a key activity for proper resource utilization.

6. Imbibe leadership

Office management helps to instill leadership acumen into the heart of the organization. A leader is one who can influence behavioural change in the way of working in an organization. He or she can judge the capability of the people in action and drive them to operate at their best of abilities. A company with strong and robust leadership is bound to attain faster growth compared to one devoid of a guided leader.

Centralization and Decentralization of office Services

Centralization is said to be a process where the concentration of decision making is in a few hands. All the important decision and actions at the lower level, all subjects and actions at the lower level are subject to the approval of top management. According to Allen, “Centralization” is the systematic and consistent reservation of authority at central points in the organization. The implication of centralization can be :-

1. Reservation of decision making power at top level.
2. Reservation of operating authority with the middle level managers.
3. Reservation of operation at lower level at the directions of the top level.

Under centralization, the important and key decisions are taken by the top management and the other levels are into implementations as per the directions of top level. For example, in a business concern, the father & son being the owners decide about the important matters and all the rest of functions like product, finance, marketing, personnel, are carried out by the department heads and they have to act as per instruction and orders of the two people. Therefore in this case, decision making power remain in the hands of father & son.

On the other hand, **Decentralization** is a systematic delegation of authority at all levels of management and in all of the organization. In a decentralization concern, authority is retained by the top management for taking major decisions and framing policies concerning the whole concern. Rest of the authority may be delegated to the middle level and lower level of management.

The degree of **centralization and decentralization** will depend upon the amount of authority delegated to the lowest level. According to Allen, “Decentralization refers to the systematic effort to delegate to the lowest level of authority except that which can be controlled and exercised at central points.

Decentralization is not the same as delegation. In fact, decentralization is all extension of delegation. Decentralization pattern is wider in scope and the authorities are diffused to the lowest most level of management.

Delegation of authority is a complete process and takes place from one person to another. While decentralization is complete only when fullest possible delegation has taken place. For example, the general manager of a company is responsible for receiving the leave application for the whole of the concern. The general manager delegates this work to the personnel manager who is now

responsible for receiving the leave applicants. In this situation delegation of authority has taken place. On the other hand, on the request of the personnel manager, if the general manager delegates this power to all the departmental heads at all level, in this situation decentralization has taken place.

There is a saying that **“Everything that increasing the role of subordinates is decentralization and that decreases the role is centralization”**. Decentralization is wider in scope and the subordinate’s responsibility increase in this case. On the other hand, in delegation the managers remain answerable even for the acts of subordinates to their superiors.

Implications of Decentralization

1. There is less burden on the Chief Executive as in the case of centralization.
2. In decentralization, the subordinates get a chance to decide and act independently which develops skills and capabilities. This way the organization is able to process reserve of talents in it.
3. In decentralization, diversification and horizontal can be easily implanted.
4. In decentralization, concern diversification of activities can place effectively since there is more scope for creating new departments. Therefore, diversification growth is of a degree.
5. In decentralization structure, operations can be coordinated at divisional level which is not possible in the centralization set up.
6. In the case of decentralization structure, there is greater motivation and morale of the employees since they get more independence to act and decide.
7. In a decentralization structure, co-ordination to some extent is difficult to maintain as there are lot many department divisions and authority is delegated to maximum possible extent, i.e., to the bottom most level delegation reaches.

Centralization and decentralization are the categories by which the pattern of authority-relationships becomes clear. The degree of centralization and de-centralization can be affected by many factors like nature of operation, volume of profits, number of departments, size of a concern, etc. The larger the size of a concern, a decentralization set up is suitable in it.

Module 3

Office Accommodation

Introduction

Office Accommodation refers to the selection of the most appropriate office location, office building and other facilities required for the office. The appropriate office accommodation helps to achieve business objectives. It supports employee for the successful accomplishment of their duty. The office accommodation involves selection of office location, office building and layout for office. The attractive office with all other required facilities will motivate the employee to work better. In other hands, inappropriate office accommodation brings difficulty in performance and negative impact on an employee towards business. Therefore, the management of business must be careful while making the decision of office accommodation. The office accommodation consists of the following factors:

1. Office Location
2. Office Building
3. Office Layout
4. Shape and Size of the office
5. Convenience to the staff and visitors
6. The physical condition of the office
7. The cost of the office accomodation

Meaning of Office Accommodation:

It is the process of selecting appropriate building in a favourable location, establishing different sections and departments, proving or arranging resources in a scientific way. The purpose of office accommodation is to create sound working environment and to bring efficiency and rapidness in office work. It is important for both employees and outsider. Office employees spend a long-time office. Bad accommodation can cause boredom and frustration among employees. Bad environment also may cause bad impression to outsiders.

Selection of office building

1. Shape and size of office building

It is one of the major factors that should be considered while selecting office building. It should have adequate space to accommodate all machines, equipment, and employee with furniture and enough space for flexibility. It should be considered taking the base of both present and future needs.

2. Lighting and ventilation

An office building should have adequate lighting and ventilation. It helps a lot to increase efficiency and enhance worker's morale. Well lighted and ventilated accommodation puts less pressure on the employees and also reduces the physical and mental strain and consequently the efficiency is higher.

3. Convenience to customers and employees

While selecting office building it should consider the convenience of customer and employees. It should not be far from the related trade center, must have proper toilet and canteen services and food hospitality and utilities.

4. Cost

The cost of building effects on total budget of organization. The building purchased or built must be within the budget of organization. There should be balanced between requirement of space, capacity of the organization and the cost for covering the expanses.

5. Flexibility
Flexibility of office building in its shape and size should be considered while selecting the office building. It must also match the nature of organization.

6. Layout facility
The efficiency of men and machine depend upon the layout. The proper layout makes office attraction. For this furniture, machine and other goods are necessary. This also helps in the internal arrangement of office.

Selection of Office Location:

- Nearness to customer: The office should be accessible to customers. They do not like long distances to make business inquiries. The office should be accessible to other parties who are in regular contact.
- Nearness to related business: It is desirable to locate the office near the offices of related business. It should be established in the same line of trade.
- Availability of infrastructure: The infrastructure should be available in office location. It consists of transport, communication, power, water and parking facilities.
- Nature of business: The nature of business affects location of office. Office of manufacturing business is located near the source of raw materials, labor and service facilities. Office of trading and banking business is located in commercial centers near the customers. Office of perishable goods business is located near the market for such goods.
- Availability of human resources: Needed human resources should be available for office. They can be skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled. All facilities must be available for employees
- Environment: The office location should have healthy environment. It should not be near polluted rivers or waste disposal sites. It should be free from noise, dust and pollution.
- Cost of space: Sufficient space should be available at reasonable cost for the office. Space should be available for future expansion.
- Government laws: The selection of location should comply with government laws and regulation at national and local levels.

Office Layout

Meaning of office layout
It is systematic arrangement of office amenities. It is arrangement of staffs, machines, equipment, furniture and other physical facilities within the limit of available floor space. Its purposes are to

utilize space in the best possible manners, to make the outlook of the office attractive and to increase efficiency of the staff. It is defined as arrangement and placing of men, material, machines and money to the optimum level.

Main aims are

- To utilize the floor space properly
- To run the office work smoothly
- To help for the motivation of person.
- To help for the minimization of physical hazards and accident
- To make proper supervision
- To maintain the attractiveness for impressing the customers and visitor.
- To try for the provision of comfort and satisfaction of employees
- To help to provide security

Principle of office layout

1. Principle of flow of work:

It is the layout which helps for smooth and effective flow of office works. Simple, easy and prompt work flow and essential for work progress.

2. Principle of free movement and observation:

Office layout should allow the free movement of employees. There should also be proper supervision and observation of works of movement too

3. Principle of effective supervision:

There should be free supervision of flow of works, movement of personnel, cost, wastage, balance of budget, quality of office works etc.

4. Principle of departmental relationships:

For the office layout related departments are inter related and those inter related departments should be placed side by side.

5. Principle of flexibility:

Office should be flexible enough to facilitate the expansion in the future.

6. Principle of maximum utilization:

As the time flows, there is increase in cost of everything as per the situation of the economy if the country and the area where office is established. There are very fewer cases of deflation basically in developing countries. Therefore, when office is set up then there must be maximum utilization of employees, materials, space, machines and resources. There should be reduction of wastage.

7. Principle of pleasing appearance:
Interior design, lighting, ventilation and cleanliness should be maintained. Office must be well furnished and pleasing enough to make it attractive to all the customers and visitors

8. Principle of good ventilation:
Office must have enough doors, windows, and ventilation for constant supply of fresh air.

9. Principle of good lighting:
Office should try to provide natural light that is sunlight. Dark places should be avoided for establishment of office.

10. Principle of safety:
An office layout must be based on the safety. It should reduce office accidents like theft, fire, damage and so on. Office machine must be implemented properly

11. Principle of service facilities:
There must be provisions of good canteen, lights, lifts, telephone, and toilets.

12. Principle of providing private offices:

In an office, separate rooms should be provided to some important employees. If the work is confidential in nature, then private room should be provided. It is better to use movable partition to provide privacy

Steps in designing office layout:

1. Securing the blue print of the organization
It is the first step to secure the blue print of office building to know about the space available of office works. It should be secured from top management. Its blueprint is not available then the space should be measured and the sketch of building should be made

2. Assessing the need of the organization
Need of all department should be identified. Managers should consult the department heads to access space requirement. Number of employees, method and nature of works, equipment and

machines. Present and future requirement should be determined. It is the second step of designing the layout

3. Arranging templates:

It is the third step in designing the office layout. The manager should prepare model known as template. Templates are thin plates of board or metal that represents actual space with decorations. They provide tentative design of office space. Several adjustments, change might be made before final model is finalized.

4. Indicating the electric wiring:

While designing the office layout, electric wiring should be properly managed. The location should be properly wired to avoid the risk of short circuits and fluctuation of voltage.

5. Submitting the plan to top management for approval:

After making plans and policies, it is submitted to the various departments. The plans must be discussed with the departmental heads and supervisors. They check the plans and finally approve it. Then only the plans are ready to be implemented

Office Environment

Definition Of Office Environment

Environment means surrounding, circumstance or influences. Office environment may be defined as the surrounding within which office work is performed and which affects the prestige of the enterprise, the health, the morale and efficiency of the workers.

The main aspects of office environment are the office site, the premises itself, departmental planning, the layout, furniture, appropriate and safe working conditions and the atmosphere.

The importance of office environment is that the worker will generally put in his best under a conducive working environment. Again office work is mainly brain work. The brain and the human body are intimately connected.

So, the efficiency of the worker will depend on his physical and mental fitness. A suitable environment stimulates and motivates the worker. An attractive and cheerful appearance of the office inspires a feeling of confidence in the enterprise and enhances its prestige.

Conditions Suitable for Office Environment

A suitable office environment must ensure adequate standards in respect of the following conditions:

1. Cleanliness
2. Prevention Of Over Crowding
3. Temperature
4. Ventilation
5. Lighting
6. Sanitary Conveniences
7. First Aid
8. Drinking Water
9. Eating Facilities

1. Cleanliness

Cleanliness is said to be next to godliness. The cleanliness of the office is important because it affects the health and well-being of the workers. A clean environment promotes better quality of work and influences the neatness and accuracy with which the workers attend to their assignment.

A clean office environment should be free from dirty, bad odour and infection. The layout of the furniture and equipment should be such that will encourage easy cleaning of the surroundings. Office cleaning can be undertaken by cleaners directly employed as staff in the organization.

For effective performance, a schedule of duties should be prepared for such staff. Alternatively, cleaning contractors may be employed to clean the offices.

In all, it is important that the job of cleaning the office is closely supervised. A time-table should be arranged for cleaning areas that are not readily accessible, e.g. Ceiling, upper walls, top of cupboards and behind filing cabinets.

2. Prevention of Over-Crowding

Office environment should be free from overcrowding. The question is how do we prevent overcrowding? The problems of overcrowding should be foreseen and taken care of at the start of the layout of the office.

Each worker should have sufficient space in which to work effectively, comfortably and to ensure more efficient workflow.

Overcrowding can hamper efficiency. Hence it considered a very great mistake to pack office workers too close together because noise, gossip and movement will interfere with work which can cause mental strain and health hazard. These interferences lower the efficiency of the office work.

The Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963 (A British Government Legislation) prescribed a minimum of 11.3 cubic meter of space per worker as a legal standard. This minimum can be exceeded depending on the nature of office activities performed by the staff and the type of office layout adopted.

3. Temperature

This is the degree or intensity of sensible heat of the atmosphere in the office. The temperature of the office should be conducive for effective performance of duties. It should not be too warm or too cold.

The institute of Heating and Ventilation Engineers recommend around 65°F as appropriate temperature for an office. The Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963 laid down a minimum of temperature of 60.8°F for the office.

The appropriate temperature for an office is essentially subjective: it depends among other factors on the locations whether in a cold region e.g. Jos, or hot humid area e.g. Aba, and the staff members whether male or female.

Whatever it is the case, a very moderate temperature should be maintained that is conducive for the workers.

Excess heat and humidity cause drowsiness and discomfort. Excess cold, on the other hand, is uncomfortable and slows down work, for example, the operation of typewriter keyboard by typists or operating computer keyboard, which require finger dexterity, will be hampered by very cold temperature.

The right temperature in the office can be maintained by the use of air-conditioners, fans, electric room heaters, and reducing cold air from outside entering the office.

4. Ventilation

This is the act of causing pure air to circulate freely in the office rooms. Sufficient fresh air in the office environment is important. Improper ventilation causes the air in the office to become stale.

Stale air causes draught, fatigue, headache, stuffiness, loss of concentration and affects the efficiency of workers.

It is important that there should be a constant flow of clean fresh air through the office because air composition in the office is constantly being polluted as a result of oxygen loss, body odour, temperature changes and the addition of carbon dioxide.

Proper ventilation can be ensured by positioning doors and windows well so that there is always undisturbed flow of air, the doors and windows kept open when air conditioners are not installed; installation of electric fans, air conditioners, the blower to diffuse air evenly throughout the office room.

5. Lighting

Lighting in the office should be of the right quality, quantity and position. Lighting is important because office work involves writing, reading, close-figure work. Poor lighting or too strong light cause eye-strain, fatigue and could lead to inferior quality of work output.

Lighting requirements in the office depend on the office size, ceiling height, the number of people within the office, the nature of work being performed therein and the location of machines and furniture. So, no standard on lighting can be laid.

However, the following qualities of good lighting should be observed:

1. The light should be non-glare and properly diffused to avoid casting shadows on workers.
2. The lighting should have the right degree of intensity for the type of work to be performed. It should neither be too strong nor too dim.
3. It should not produce any glare or dazzle as a result of reflection on polished surfaces on the desks or any other office equipment.

4. The light source should be above the visual field.

5. The light should be as bright as day.

6. Sanitary Conveniences

Sanitary refers to the conditions that affect health especially with regard to dirt and infection. Therefore, sanitary conveniences are those suitable materials provided with a view to improving the sanitary conditions of office workers.

Sanitary conveniences include toilets, cloakrooms, drinking water, urinaries refuse disposal, washing basins, provision of spray with deodorizing and disinfecting liquids, etc.

Sufficient and adequate sanitary conveniences should be provided for office workers. Toilets should be adequate and conveniently located for the users. They should be maintained and kept clean. Separate toilets should be provided for both sexes.

Dirty or unsanitary condition create unpleasant and depressing environment for office workers and cause health-hazards. Therefore, the provision of sanitary conveniences is very important because the workers spend the greater part of his day in the office.

Poor sanitation ultimately affects the morale and efficiency, whereas good sanitary conveniences promote health and boost morale of the workers.

7. Noise Reduction

The effect of noise in the office is distressing. It causes distraction and loss of concentration to the worker. It affects the workers performance through difficulty in hearing clearly. It leads to increased mistakes, and fatigue. It causes annoyance and may lower the workers morale.

Therefore, every effort should be made by the office manager to eliminate or reduce noise in the office.

The better approach to noise reduction is to locate the sources and stop it at the source, if possible. Noise in the office may arise from internal or external sources.

Noise from external source include traffic noises, aircraft noises, and nosy neighbourhood e.g., Office building within a factory site. In these circumstances a great deal of noise enters through the windows.

The solutions include siting the office building away and well back from any busy road and providing sound-deadening barriers such as row of trees within the premises.

The use of air conditioners and double-glazed windows help to insulate external noises. Providing heavy curtains at the windows and locating office rooms at the top or near of the buiding away from sound, help to reduce noise in the office.

Within the office internal sources of noise are; Telephone bell and the user's conversations, Noisy office machines, Noisy Doors and Windows, Coversation and movement of people.

Noise from this source can be reduced by the use of plastic floor covering and carpets which deaden sound. In the case of conversation in the office, the solution is good supervision.

Also, a separate room may be provided to enable staff receive and discuss with their visitors or for interviews.

8. Safety and Fire Precaution

All office workers should be safety conscious. Accidents pose great danger to the staff and are costly to the enterprise because of their disruptive effects. Causes of accidents in the office include carelessness, faulty machines, electrical faults, falling objects etc.

Accident prevention can be enhanced through identification of potential causes by accidents in the office environment, through safety education as well as inspection and provision of mechanical safeguard.

Bett (76:249) suggested the following safety checklist for accident precaution:

- 1 Keep all gangways clear
2. Keep all corridors clear
3. Maintain floors and stairs regularly.
4. Avoid leaving parcels or any items lying around in the office.
5. Erect warning notices of any temporary or permanent hazard.

6. Encourage tidiness.
7. Study work flow between employees and rearrange to avoid possible collisions.
8. Clear-glass doors should be fitted with prominent warning signs.
9. Avoid placing articles in precariously high positions.
10. Check machines and equipment regularly.
11. Remind supervisors periodically of the importance of accident prevention.
12. Ensure that the first aid kit is accessible and well stocked; regularly check that all aids that promote safety are available.

The risk of fire should be minimized by the provision of ashtrays for smokers. They should be persuaded to make use of them. No person should be allowed to smoke within the office environment. Fire extinguishers should be provided and staff should be trained on their use.

Module 4

Documentation

Definitions of Documentation - Documentation is the art in which the records of all the new observations are compiled and classified by subject and made available to the inventors as per their requirements.

To provide greater access and use of the information contained in the documentation, a systematic presentation of specific knowledge recorded is a set of techniques necessary for organization and communication. "

Documentation is the act of collecting, classifying, and distributing all types of documents in all areas of human activities.

The term documentation was first used by Paul Atlet for the presentation, collection, retrieval, and exchange activities of documents at the International Economic Conference.

In 1934, Paul Autlett composed the first treatise on the subject of documentation, the Treaty de Documentation. Thus, the term can be traced to the beginning of the 20th century.

Need for Documentation

The following are the important reasons humans need documentation:

1. For research work - Government and influential institutions started research work to fulfill human needs and for this research work, scientists felt the need for different types of documents. In addition to complete their research work, the results of their research work can also be passed on to the people through documentation. In line with the changing requirements in the present times, while the focus is on behavioural research rather than on basic research, instead of individual research, collective research was being emphasized.

This not only increased literature, but many other problems arise when published in different forms of literature as well. These problems can only be solved by documentation work.

2. Social need - Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, the father of library science in India, cited social necessity as the most important reason for the need for documentation. Earlier the research work depended on the need of the researcher but in the present time, the research work is based on social and economic needs. Documentation is needed to meet the growing population and its requirement.

At present, industrial productivity and research are based on documentation service. Researchers in one country should also take advantage of research conducted in other countries and all this cannot be completed without documentation.

3. Communication problems - In the old times, there was a very small amount of research, due to which the number of users was also very less, due to this, there was no problem in the communication of information, but since the amount of literature increased and research works. Since then, difficulties in information communication has arisen. With the help of documentation service, the communication problem faced by the reader can be solved easily by providing the information on their need.

4. Literary explosion - In ancient times literature used to be handwritten, which used to be very small, but since the printing press and electronics were invented, there was a sudden boom in the publication of literature. It took a long time to find the content of literature so needed in the present time. As a result, the need for documentation was felt. From this repository of literature, methods of abstracting, indexing, photocopying, etc., which are known as documentation, were used to get information about their need.

5. Economic difficulties - At the present time literature is being published at such a the rapid pace that it is not possible for any country and library to collect published researchers from all published literature.

6. Language barrier - At present, literature is being published in about 50 languages all over the world, whereas generally no scientist or person is aware of more than two or three languages.

In such a situation, they will have to face great difficulties in getting the material they need. Different methods of documentation can be adopted to avoid this type of problem.

Objectives of Documentation

Documentation occupies an important place in present times. Documentation services provide that literature on its requirement can be easily obtained from such published literature. The documentation has the following important objectives:

1. In the context of the explosion of information, scientific people today cannot organize both literature and information exploration and specialization together but it can be completed with the help of documentation.
2. At present, literature is being published at such a rapid pace that it cannot be controlled without documentation service.
3. Intellectual consciousness and update cannot be accomplished without documentation.
4. The industrial and commercial need to increase production cannot be met without documentation.
5. To collect and distribute all types of documents from all fields of human activities collected in one place.
6. To collect, organize, and impart the subtle ideas of scientists or researchers.
7. With the help of documentation, works such as book selection, accession classification, cataloguing, exchange, etc. can be done easily.

What is a record?

A record is any document that's created or received in an office setting, and that supports an organization in conducting its business. A record — whether paper or digital — contains information that is made, produced, executed, or received in connection with transactional office activities, and is either preserved permanently or temporarily (according to a predetermined

retention schedule). Records are hard evidence of an agency's unique policies, procedures, and decisions, and often hold significant administrative, historical, and legal value.

All information created, sent and received in the course of your job is potentially a record. Records provide evidence of your unit's business activities and function. Whether something is a university record (as opposed to Faculty records pertaining to teaching / research or personal records) depends on the information it contains and the context of its creation. Records can be in paper, digital or other formats. Some examples include:

- Emails
- Reports
- Databases
- Samples and Objects
- Letters
- Minutes
- Photographs
- Social media sites
- Faxes
- Spreadsheets
- Maps and Plans
- Information in business systems
- Text messages
- Policy and Briefing papers
- Research data

Why is Records Management Important?

Ultimately, Records Management ensures that institutional records of vital historical, fiscal, and legal value are identified and preserved, and that non-essential records are discarded in a timely manner according to established guidelines and identified legislation.

Benefits of Records Management include more effective management of your current records (both paper and electronic); a reduced / eliminated level of record-keeping redundancies; reduced costs for records storage equipment and supplies; and increased usable office space through the elimination of unnecessary file storage. In addition, Records Management provides institutional accountability and timely access to information.

The importance of records management lies in how it oversees information that's been created, received, maintained, and disposed of (regardless of the document's format). In other words, records management is important because it ensures vital records are preserved and supervises records throughout their lifecycle, including compliance with set retention procedures.

Ultimately, leveraging records management is the best way to guarantee records with historical, fiscal, and legal impact are accurately identified and preserved, and that non-essential records are discarded as often as is required by established guidelines.

8 benefits of efficient records management

A quality records management system can bring numerous benefits to your organization, from improved efficiency and faster retrieval, to enhanced workflows and minimized risks. The following are a few of the top reasons for your agency to invest in a records management system of its own, and start enjoying all the perks as soon as possible.

1. Easier compliance

With record compliance growing increasingly stricter, it's crucial for organizations to have a solid record management system in place to ensure they abide by all necessary regulations. These laws and regulations can include things like HIPAA, FACTA, and/or the HITECH Act — all of which merit a well-structured approach to records management. And easier, more seamless compliance is incredibly helpful to your agency as a whole, considering enforcement for noncompliance can be quite severe (ranging from legal actions to other expensive penalties).

To make sure you follow through with regulatory compliance, you'll likely need the help of records management technology, in addition to a trusted policy for records retention.

2. Better workflows

The truth is, most agencies don't analyze the time spent on storing or searching for records, so it's difficult to know how much time is wasted in the process. But when documents are stored onsite in overflowing file cabinets, there's no doubt a lot of time is lost while trying to recover relevant information. Worse yet, after records have been retrieved, they'll eventually need to be refiled, which takes up additional hours that could be better used elsewhere within the office.

Thanks to a unified, comprehensive records management system, your most noteworthy data and details can be conveniently accessed whenever you need them. In turn, this promotes better workflows, and boosts your organization's ability to handle business in a timely fashion and ensure service delivery to constituents.

3. Cost savings

Consider the volume of reports and emails your business produces on a daily basis; out of all of that information, there may be only a small percentage that is actually useful (or that needs to be kept on file). Moreover, handling records — especially the paper variety — demands considerable time and money due to locating adequate storage space and printing or filing all your physical forms. Fortunately, with proper records management, your agency can gain control over the growth of its records and be sure it retains the most relevant or pertinent data.

Digital records management offers notable cost savings by reducing your storage fees and improving the efficiency of your team (i.e. less time spent searching for lost or misplaced files).

4. Effective retrieval

Simply put, information is only useful when it can be retrieved; if you're unable to access your files when (or how often) you need, there's almost no point in storing them at all. But with effective retrieval and accessible systems, your agency can make informed decisions in a snap. Records management software not only makes document retrieval more streamlined, but it disposes of unwanted data so that your most important items can be utilized unencumbered.

Plus, with a cloud-based records management system, data can be shared and updated remotely rather than solely on-premises. This level of retrieval capability allows managers or department leads to have all the information they need right at their fingertips, and enables them to achieve smarter, more deliberate outcomes time and time again.

5. Minimize risks

By implementing records management, your agency can readily reduce the risks of litigation and/or potential penalties. That's because a thorough and thoughtful records management strategy can minimize the liabilities associated with document disposal (meaning it dramatically reduces the risk of fines or other disciplinary actions). In fact, well-executed records management mitigates these risks in much the same way that legal counsel or an insurance policy might — by protecting against unwanted or unforeseen future events.

While most compliance risk comes from documents that are destroyed prematurely, there is equal (or greater) risk in storing documents for too long; records can and should be destroyed after a certain number of years, depending on the file type. If a file is retained beyond when it was supposed to be destroyed, it can still be used against an organization in legal proceedings.

6. Protect data

Protecting your data is one of the greatest concerns of agencies everywhere (as it should be). Every organization, no matter the size, needs intelligent programming to help protect its personnel files and other confidential information from the threat of disaster or theft. The most effective records management systems have the ability to digitize your incoming mail, invoices, client contracts, and more, so each of these documents exists in a searchable archive as soon as it's received. Then, when combined with a trusted IT program, your data will be properly safeguarded and available whenever it's needed.

In that way, records management preserves the integrity and privacy of your records, and makes sure all sensitive content or employee details can't be accessed by unauthorized users.

7. Preserve knowledge

An organization's records are a vast database which holds the contents for any and all future planning and decision-making. Every single record created within a given business day could be used or referenced down the line in pivotal decisions, policy updates, and so on. Since records document the ongoing activities at your place of business, they're a great resource for fact checking or confirming information as it relates to one or more team members.

This preservation of knowledge is essential for the continued success of your agency, as well for improved productivity within your department in both the short and long-term.

8. Boost morale

There's no denying that poorly managed records, unorganized filing systems, and recurrent loss of documents creates a less-than-ideal office environment — which can have a direct impact on employees' morale or motivation at work. Though it's difficult to quantify how much these circumstances negatively affect your team, it's no doubt noticeable. By implementing a strong system for records management, you can boost the overall feeling among everyone on your staff, and give increased confidence that things are running according to plan.

Filing is the process of systematic and scientific preservation of important document in proper location so that they can be obtained as and when required without delay and difficult it. It is an important component office record keeping. It is essential to preserve all the information in such a manner that they remain safe and can be obtained as and when needed.

According to **J. C. Denier**, “Filing is the process of arrangement and storing records so that they can be located when required.”

From the above definitions, filing is the process of arranging and preserving letters, documents, reports and other written documents so that they may be located easily when required in the future. The filing provides important files and documents which helps in decision making, formulation of plans and policies and controlling the results.

FILING:

Importance of Filing

i. Collection and classification of documents: - An office receives and dispatches various documents. It is the first task of office to receive those documents and classify them into various categories on the basis of their nature and importance. After necessary procedures, documents should be collected for filing.

ii. Safety preservation of documents: - After Collecting of documents, this should be preserved safely for future reference. Important documents and records might get the image fire Insect, water and other factors. So, filing help to preserve the documents from all possible damages.

iii. Systematic preservation of documents: - Only safely reservation of documents doesn't fulfil the objectives of finding. It is essential to preserve all important documents in systematic and scientific manner in proper drawer. Document should be arranged in proper file in systematic manner so that at the time of requirement they can be found out without delay.

iv. Provide evidence: - The filing provides proof of evidence to settle the misunderstanding and dispute among different persons and parties. It protects the documents and record which can be used as proof.

v. Rapidity in office work: - Regular functions of the office are carried out with the help of past records and present events. In case, the records are file in systematic manner, they can be is obtainable at the time of requirement. Hence, filing help for rapid performance office.

vi. Provide guidance to staff: - Filing provides guidance to the staff for performing their duties. The existing staffs get support to perform their regular functions whereas new staffs obtain guidance for getting knowledge about the office performance. Hence, it helps to develop working efficiency of the staffs.

vii. Provide information: - The filing provides necessary information for formulation of Future plans and policies. Future plans and policies are made with the help of past information and estimation of future work. It also helps to implement plans and policies in the organizations.

viii. Maintain goodwill and image: - A systematic and scientific filing maintain goodwill and image of the organization. It can provide required information to the customers easily and promptly. It helps to create impression among the customers and ultimately helps to image and goodwill of the organization.

Qualities of Good Filing System

The qualities of good filing system are presented below with the help of following point:

i. Simplicity: - The filing system should be simple to understand and to operate. It should be managed in such a manner that any employee of the office even unskilled employee can operate it easily.

ii. Economical: - The management should not spend more cost by purchasing expensive cabinet, drawers, folders and indices for filing. Depending on the economic condition and available of funds, an office should try to operate filing system at minimum cost.

iii. Flexibility: - The filing system can be minimized or maximize according to the changing value of business. It means when business is expanded the filing system should be adjustable without any technical difficulty.

iv. Safe and Secured: - The filing system should protect the documents and files from insects, water, fire, dust, theft etc. The preserved documents should be available in the original form for a long period.

v. Compactness: - The filing system should take on minimum space in the office. Cabinet, drawers, folders should be layout with minimum space of the office.

vi. Accessibility: - In a good filing system, required letters and document must be available in minimum labor and efforts. It should be available at the right time and place whenever needed. It helps to bring promptness in office work.

vii. Provision of replace: - Filing is essential to replace outdated documents and file from drawers. Removable of old documents means not to destroy them but to preserve them in a proper place for future reference.

Indexing

Concept of Indexing

Indexing is the guide or symbol which indicates the exact location of required files in office, chapter in books, books in library, words in dictionary etc. In office procedure, indexing may be defined as the development of an indicator or guide for locating the files and documents. It is the most important tools of office management.

According to Y.K Bhusan, “ Indexing means a system by which the location of any information can be easily ascertained.”

In office process, indexing helps not only for the location of a documents but also for the systematic arrangement of files and documents in filing cabinets. An organization can provide service to the customers, suppliers and two other stakeholders with minimum time. It help to maintain image and interpretation of the organization.

Importance of indexing

The purpose/ importance of indexing is presented below:

- i. Developing filing system:** - Office needs to develop filing system on the basis of nature and size of the organization. Indexing provides guideline and support to the office staff for the use of proper filing cabinet for preservation of files and document.
- ii. Insures location of files:** - Indexing helps to locate the required files within short time in proper drawer and cabinet. An employee can search out required files within short time when they are needed. It helps to provide quick information and service to visitors.
- iii. Maintains secrecy:** - To maintain secrecy about internal matters, an office can use numerical filing method for preservation of documents and files. In numerical indexing outsiders are unable to understand about how the files are kept. Secrecy of internal matters of the office is essential for business success.
- iv. Brings smoothness:** - Indexing provides guidance for office staff to keep documents and files a systematic way. Therefore, whenever any documents and information are required they can be obtained with short time. So, it helps to provide service to visitors and customers when required and brings smoothness in office work.
- v. Save office time:** - An employee can locate a required files and documents within minimum time with the help of indexing. The office can devote it services to customers and order stakeholders in appropriate time. It helps to save time and efforts of office simply.

vi. Ensures ready reference: - Indexing ensures ready reference of necessary documents. In office, there should be system of lock in cabinet so that documents remain safe. They can be obtained on the basis of need of office.

vii. Minimize operating expenses: - The systematic management of files within minimum space contributes to reduce overhead expenses. Similarly, it also helps to develop efficiency and save the time in office work. Hence indexing contributes to reduce operating expenses.

Qualities of Good Indexing.

The qualities of good indexing are explained below:

i. Simple to understand: - The indexing system should be easy to understand and to operate. The indexing system in the office should be developed on the basis of the need and requirement of the office. It helps to operate indexing easily.

ii. Flexible: - Indexing system must be flexible according to requirement. The number of documents and files may be increase or decrease due to increase and decrease in volume of business.

iii. Safety and secrecy: - The most important requirement of indexing is the safety of records, files and documents and security about the internal matters of the office. For the preservation of files code number or other indices can be used in indexing system.

iv. Economical: - The indexing should be economical both in development of indexing and in regular operation. The indexing should be developed scientifically by considering financial soundness of the organization. It should be installed with minimum space and also within minimum cost.

v. Ensures promptness: - One of the essential qualities of indexing is to ensure from finish in office work. Indexing helps to locate required files and records within minimum time. This helps to develop efficiency of the employees and to bring smoothness in office work which is essential for business success.

vi. Permit cross-reference: - This quality is essential to locate required file within minimum time, even when an index is lost, with the help of another index. In index there should be system of cross reference for valuable files and records. It helps to bring smoothness in office work.

vii. Appropriate of office: - The filing system in office maybe numeric, subject or geographical according to the nature and size of the organization. Therefore, indexing should be developed to support the systematic arrangement of files and documents.

Unit-5:

Office Correspondence

Report Writing-Types of Reports - Specimens of Reports- Précis Writing

Business Correspondence

Business correspondence means the exchange of information in any written format inside an organisation (intra-organisation i.e., within a business), between two or more organisation (inter-organisation i.e., B2B) and between the customer and organisation (i.e., B2C and C2B). E-correspondence has also become extremely essential for modern businesses.

The whole Business Correspondence should, preferably, be done on the letter-head of the organization. It is through letters that an organisation can build good relations with different parties i.e., customers, suppliers and services providers. The image of an organisation depends on what impression is conveyed through the business letters. These letters help to bridge the gap between two parties. Since the basic objectives of a business letter is directly or indirectly to increase the business of the company, it should be drafted and typed with at most care, accuracy and displayed in such a way that it gives a pleasing appearance

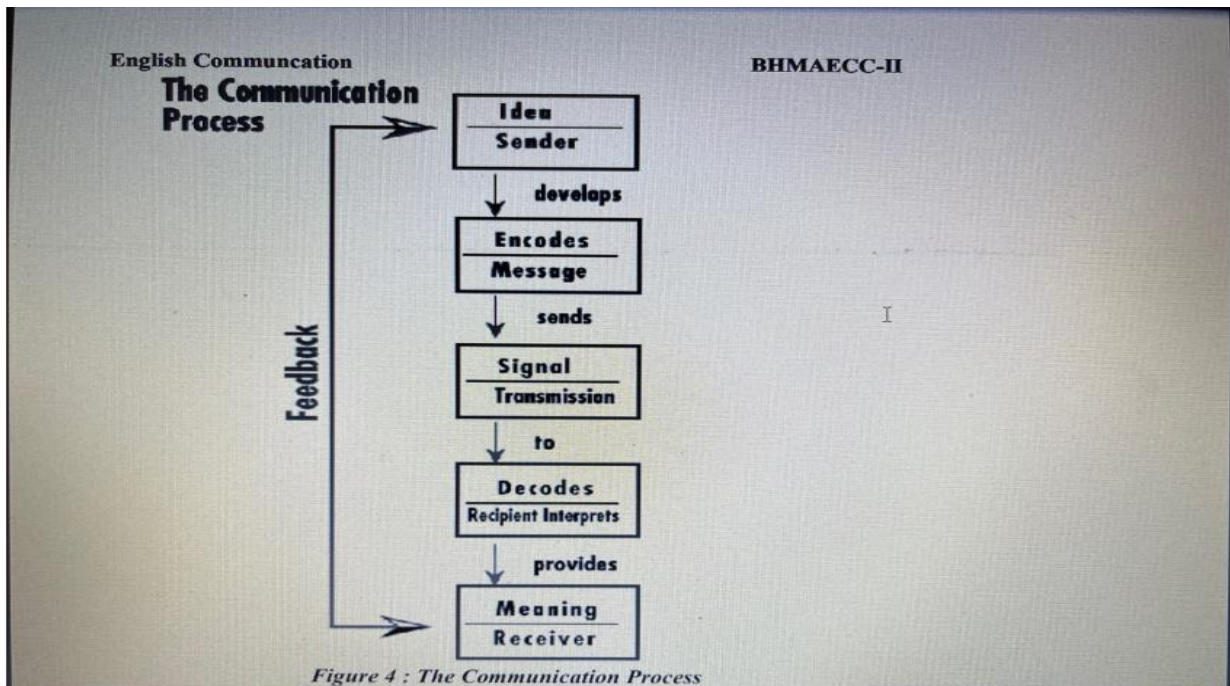
COMMUNICATION:

Communication is a process of exchanging and transferring information, ideas and knowledge from one person to another in organisation.

Business communication is the process of referring the information of the company and how to promote the product and services to potential customers of an organisation. There are four types of communication such as written communication, onscreen communication, verbal communication and web-based communication.

THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another. The communication process involves six basic elements: sender (encoder), message, channel, receiver (decoder), noise, and feedback. Supervisors can improve communication skills by becoming aware of these elements and how they contribute to successful communication. Communication can break down at any one of these elements. Out of the various models of Communication which have been discussed in the previous pages, the Interactive Model of communication is one of the most used, discussed and implemented model of Communication.



Sender Encodes

The sender initiates the communication process. When the sender has decided on a meaning, he or she encodes a message, and selects a channel for transmitting the message to a receiver. To encode is to put a message into words or images. The message is the information that the sender wants to transmit. The medium is the means of communication, such as print, mass, electrical, and digital. As a sender, the supervisor should define the purpose of the message, construct each message with the receiver in mind, select the best medium, time each transmission thoughtfully, and seek feedback. An external stimuli prompts the sender to send a message. This prompt may arrive in a number of ways: letter, email, fax etc. As the sender thinks of the ideas for the message, he also reacts to the various conditions in his external environment – physical surroundings, weather, noise, discomforts, cultural customs and others. Next, the internal stimuli have a complex influence on how the sender translates ideas into a message. When the sender encodes, his own world of experience, affects his choice of symbols – mental, physical, psychological, semantic. Attitudes, opinions, emotions, past experience, likes and dislikes, education, job status and communication skills may also influence the way the sender communicates the ideas. Also especially important are the perception of and consideration for the receiver’s viewpoint, needs, skills, status, mental ability and experience.

Words can be verbal - written and spoken. Words are used to create pictures and stories (scenarios) are used to create involvement. Written communication should be used when the situation is formal, official, or long term; or when the situation affects several people in related ways. Interoffice memos are used for recording informal inquiries or replies. Letters are formal in tone and addressed to an individual. They are used for official notices, formally recorded statements,

and lengthy communications. Reports are more impersonal and more formal than a letter. They are used to convey information, analyses, and recommendations.

Written communications to groups include bulletin-board notices, posters, exhibits, displays, and audio and visual aids. Communication and the need to exchange information are no longer constrained by place and time. Email, voice mail, and facsimile have facilitated communications and the sharing of knowledge. Email is the computer transmission and storage of written messages. Voice mail is the transmission and storage of digitized spoken messages. Facsimile (fax) is the transmission of documents.

Verbal or spoken communication includes informal staff meetings, planned conferences, and mass meetings. Voice and delivery are important. Informal talks are suitable for day-to-day liaison, directions, exchange of information, progress reviews, and the maintenance of effective interpersonal relations. Planned appointments are appropriate for regular appraisal review and recurring joint work sessions. Planning for an appointment includes preparing, bringing adequate information, and limiting interruptions. Telephone calls are used for quick check-ups and for imparting or receiving information. Teams using information technology have access to information, share knowledge, and construct documents.

Meetings take place electronically from multiple locations, saving the organization's resources in both the expenses of physically bringing people from different locations together, and the time lost by employees traveling. Teleconferencing is simultaneous group verbal exchanges. Videoconferencing is group verbal and visual exchanges.

Nonverbal Communication Nonverbal messages include images, actions and behaviours used to communicate. Images include photographs, film, charts, tables, graphs, and video. Nonverbal behaviours include actions, body language, and active listening. Actions and body language include eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, posture, and appearance. The effective communicator maintains eye contact for four to five seconds before looking away. Gestures should be natural and well timed. Grooming and dress should be appropriate for the situation. Listening requires good eye contact, alert body posture, and the frequent use of verbal encouragement. The channel is the path a message follows from the sender to the receiver. Supervisors use downward channels to send messages to employees. Employees use upward channels to send messages to supervisors. Horizontal channels are used when communicating across departmental lines, with suppliers, or with customers. An informal channel is the grapevine. It exists outside the formal channels and is used by people to transmit casual, personal, and social interchanges at work. The grapevine consists of rumours, gossip, and truthful information. The supervisor should pay attention to the grapevine, but should not depend on it for accurate information.

Receiver Decodes

Information technology is revolutionizing the way organizational members communicate. Network systems, electronic links among an organization's computer hardware and software, enable members to communicate instantaneously, to retrieve and share information from anyplace, at any time. The receiver is the person or group for whom the communication effort is intended. Noise is anything that interferes with the communication. Feedback ensures that mutual understanding has taken place in a communication. It is the transfer of information from the receiver back to the sender. The receiver decodes or makes out the meaning of the message. Thus, in the feedback loop, the receiver becomes the sender and the sender becomes the receiver. The receiver, as well as the sender are influenced by non-verbal factors such as touch, taste and smell. All these factors demand interpretation, according to individual experiences.

FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication has been considered to be the bottleneck of Management, where any management function is just not possible to take place without making use of Communication.

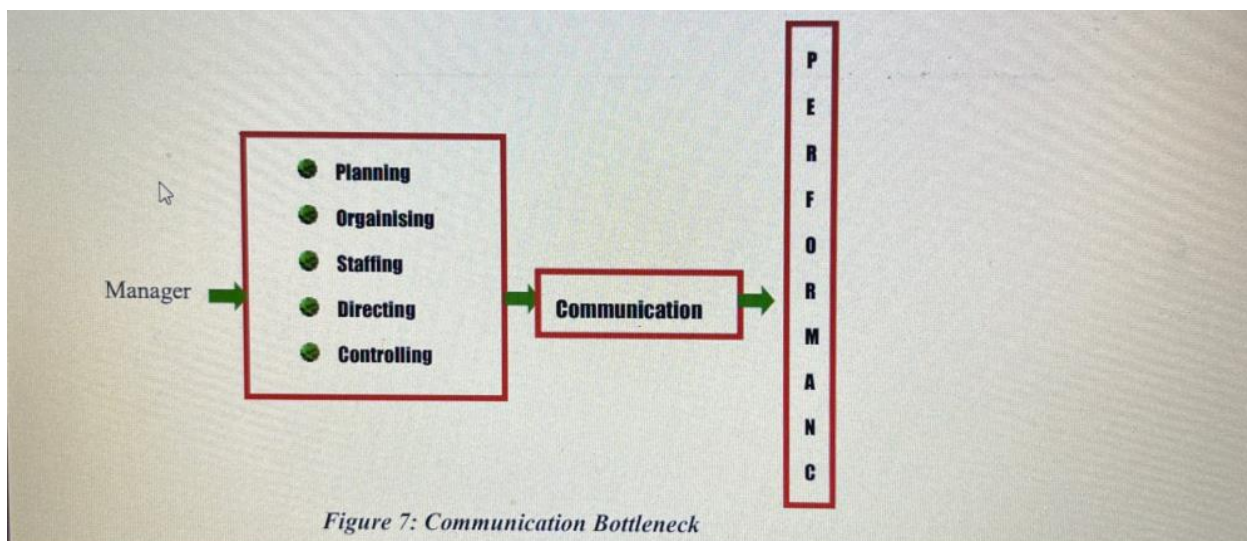


Figure 7: Communication Bottleneck

We can therefore say that Communication serves four major functions in an organisation, these are Control, Motivation, Emotional Expression and Information. Other than these Communication can also be said to fulfil the following functions in an organisation.

- Instructive Function
- Influence Function
- Integration Function
- Informing Function
- Evaluation Function
- Directing Function

- Teaching Function
- Image Projection Function
- Interview Function

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

Good communication has many advantages for a business: strong communication:

- Motivates employees – helps them feel part of the business (see below)
 - Easier to control and coordinate business activity – prevents different parts of the business going in opposite directions
 - Makes successful decision making easier for managers– decisions are based on more complete and accurate information
 - Better communication with customers will increase sales
 - Improve relationships with suppliers and possibly lead to more reliable delivery Improves chances of obtaining finance – e.g., keeping the bank up-to-date about how the business is doing
- Communication is to an organisation what the nervous system is to the human body. Effective Communication will lead to the smooth working of any organisation. The following points illustrate the importance of Communication in Business

- Smooth Working of a Business Firm
- Basis of Managerial Function
- Maximum Production and Minimum Cost
- Prompt Decision and its Implementation
- Building Human Relations
- Job Satisfaction and Good Morale
- Avoids Illusion
- Contacts with external Parties.

TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

Communication may be divided into two areas – verbal and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication, or communication through words, provides the opportunity for personal contact and two-way flow of information. A large part of our communication, whether at work or outside, is verbal in nature.

Verbal communication in turn, may be divided into two areas – oral and written communication. Oral communication may be defined as a process whereby a speaker interacts verbally with one

or more listeners, in order to influence the latter 's behaviour in some way or the other. Oral communication in a business context can take the form of meetings, presentations, one-to-one meetings, performance reviews and so on.

Written communication is a process whereby a writer interacts verbally with a receiver, in order to influence the latter 's behaviour. Written communication at the workplace can take several forms such as letters, memos, circulars, notices, reports and email. We will examine some of these in more detail in later chapters. Non-verbal communication, on the other hand may be defined as communication without words. It refers to any way of conveying meanings without the use of verbal language. The game of —dumb charades is a perfect example.

Non-verbal communication is generally unintentional, unlike verbal communication. All of us tend to communicate silently and unknowingly send signals and messages by what we do, apart from what we say. Gestures, facial expressions, posture and the way we dress, are all part of non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication can have a greater impact than verbal communication, since —how you say something is sometimes more important than —what you say. Although non-verbal communication can affect both our personal and business relationships, it is particularly important in the workplace.

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is the process of transferring information and exchange ideas from one person to another through mouth such as speaking, telephone and radio.

We communicate most of our ideas to others through verbal messages, i.e., through spoken or written messages. However, verbal messages have some drawbacks – the message may not be properly worded, or the message may be misunderstood, or interpreted differently from its intended meaning.

Avoid Words with Multiple Meanings: Words sometimes tend to have different meanings in different cultures. Therefore, when communicating verbally, it is important to use words that are precise, unambiguous and have a single accepted meaning.

Ensure Clarity through Highly Specific Statements: Instead of describing an object or idea in general terms or in abstract language, use highly specific language to avoid a variety of interpretations.

Avoid overuse of Jargon: Jargon refers to technical terms or specialized vocabulary. Every profession has its own jargon which only experts in that field can understand. For example, IT experts use terms like —computer architecture which the layperson may not understand. The use of jargon depends on the audience with whom you are communicating. A certain amount of jargon

may be permissible when writing a technical report for example, but should be avoided when communicating with a general audience, since the terms may not be understood. Above all, never use jargon just to impress your audience.

Avoid Biased Language and Offensive Words: Language has the power to arouse negative feelings, if it is not used with care. This can happen when the words used seem to be objective, but actually contain an intentional or unintentional bias.

Advantages

1. It is simple to detect the problem this means that by using verbal communication it is simple and easy to know the problem by using mouth, for example it helps to know people who can conflict among to people or more than to and this easy to solve the problem.
2. It is one to one communication it is one among advantage of the verbal communication it is simple to talk with people, (employee) face to face without fearing anybody in any place for example in MBPS company manager he talks with his employee by using verbal this is to know employee his or her problem without fearing you as a manager.

Disadvantages

1. It is easy to forget this verbal communication it is easy to forget the words you want to talk to people or employee, for example in MCBS college when you ant to talk to DR. MUNIR sometimes you will forget the questions you suppose to ask. This is one among the disadvantage of verbal communication.
2. It requires special area to conduct this one among the disadvantage of verbal communication because when you want to communicate with people or customer you should have to talk to the special like in the office (between employee and CEO).

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication can be defined as communication done without speaking or writing. Let us now take a look at some of its characteristics, which distinguish it from verbal communication.

* **Non-verbal Communication Cannot Be Avoided** – While one can avoid verbal communication by refusing to speak or write, it is not possible to do the same with non-verbal communication. That is because non-verbal communication is not always intentional, unlike verbal messages, as pointed out earlier. Sometimes, silence itself may convey a lot of meaning.

Example – A speaker making a presentation may find that the audience is not very interactive. Instead, he notices people yawning during his presentation. At the end of the session, when he

asks for some feedback, there is total silence. The message conveyed in the above example is that the audience is bored with the session. The silence indicates that they have not listened to the session and that the feedback is negative.

* **Non-verbal Communication is Powerful** – Non-verbal communication helps us to form first impressions and make judgments of others. First impressions generally tend to be lasting impressions. Let us say you go for a job interview fifteen minutes late and dressed in informal attire. When asked some questions, you avoid eye contact. This immediately reflects on your attitude and the impression formed of you is that of a person who takes things casually, is insecure and lacks knowledge.

* **Non-verbal Communication is Ambiguous** – While precise words can be used in verbal communication to ensure that the message is clearly understood, non-verbal communication is not always clear and easy to understand. For example, sitting back in a relaxed posture may be a signal of boredom or fatigue. Similarly, avoiding eye contact with your audience could mean that either you are nervous or guilty of something! Therefore, it is not possible to accurately understand the messages conveyed by non-verbal behaviour.

* **Non-verbal Communication Cannot Express All Messages** – Non-verbal behaviour can only express a person's feelings, attitudes, level of interest, liking or dislike for something. Certain messages about ideas or concepts can only be expressed through the spoken or written word. Consider the following, example A sales manager wanting to report that sales for the current year have exceeded targets, can only do so through a written report or oral presentation. If he is making an oral presentation, his non-verbal behaviour can only indicate how pleased he is about the increase in sales.

***Non-verbal Communication Varies Across Cultures** – While certain types of non-verbal behaviour are universal, others may be different in different cultures. Examples – There are different rules regarding the appropriateness of the handshake in oriental and western cultures. Generally, in oriental cultures like India, any form of physical contact is not common and is interpreted as being intimate, while it is an accepted thing in western countries. Similarly, a nod of the head means yes in some cultures and no in other cultures. In this age of business communication across cultures, it is important for you to understand these differences, especially when doing business overseas. Failure to do this could lead to costly blunders.

ORAL COMMUNICATION – MEANING

Oral communication implies communication through mouth. It includes individuals conversing with each other, be it direct conversation or telephonic conversation. Speeches, presentations,

discussions are all forms of oral communication. Oral communication is generally recommended when the communication matter is of temporary kind or where a direct interaction is required. Face to face communication (meetings, lectures, conferences, interviews, etc.) is significant so as to build a rapport and trust.

ADVANTAGES OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

- There is high level of understanding and transparency in oral communication as it is interpersonal.
- There is no element of rigidity in oral communication. There is flexibility for allowing changes in the decisions previously taken.
- The feedback is spontaneous in case of oral communication. Thus, decisions can be made quickly without any delay.
- Oral communication is not only time saving, but it also saves upon money and efforts.
- Oral communication is best in case of problem resolution. The conflicts, disputes and many issues/differences can be put to an end by talking them over.
- Oral communication is an essential for teamwork and group energy.
- Oral communication promotes a receptive and encouraging morale among organizational employees.
- Oral communication can be best used to transfer private and confidential information/matter

DISADVANTAGES /LIMITATIONS OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

- Relying only on oral communication may not be sufficient as business communication is formal and very organized.
- Oral communication is less authentic than written communication as they are informal and not as organized as written communication.
- Oral communication is time-saving as far as daily interactions are concerned, but in case of meetings, long speeches consume lot of time and are unproductive at times.
- Oral communications are not easy to maintain and thus they are unsteady.
- There may be misunderstandings as the information is not complete and may lack essentials.
- It requires attentiveness and great receptivity on part of the receivers/audience.
- Oral communication (such as speeches) is not frequently used as legal records except in investigation work.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION - MEANING

Written communication has great significance in today 's business world. It is an innovative activity of the mind. Effective written communication is essential for preparing worthy promotional materials for business development. Speech came before writing. But writing is more unique and formal than speech. Effective writing involves careful choice of words, their organization in correct order in sentences formation as well as cohesive composition of sentences. Also, writing is more valid and reliable than speech. But while speech is spontaneous, writing causes delay and takes time as feedback is not immediate.

Written communication this is the process of transferring information though writing document such as letter, emails, texting faxes and reports. For example, MBPS company they are sending their emails by using computer or laptop form the other organisation in order to get more information about external company.

The source of this information is internal which come from IT department to emails this means that is easy to use internet than other organisation. The purpose of this information it helps people, customer and employee in order to get different ideas and getting information from different people through writing for example email when you have new product and you want to advertise by using emails it will easy to get new customers and existing customers by email.

Advantages

1. It provides proof it is one among the advantage of written communication because it is not easy to exchange the information it is already written so by using written information it is better than using another communication
2. It covered a lot of information this written information it helps people in an organisation to cover a lot of information concerned to different issue because it is not easy to forget you are information.
3. Written communication helps in laying down apparent principles, policies and rules for running of an organization.
4. It is a permanent means of communication. Thus, it is useful where record maintenance is required.
5. It assists in proper delegation of responsibilities. While in case of oral communication, it is impossible to fix and delegate responsibilities on the grounds of speech as it can be taken back by the speaker or he may refuse to acknowledge.
6. Written communication is more precise and explicit.
7. Effective written communication develops and enhances an organization's image.
8. It provides ready records and references.

9. Legal defences can depend upon written communication as it provides valid records.

Disadvantages

1. It takes time written communication when you are writing or sending information from one person to another person it takes time to reach to the place you want to reach because of the transport for example letters if you want to send to the company you should have to give somebody in order to reach.
2. Written communication does not save upon the costs. It costs huge in terms of stationery and the manpower employed in writing/typing and delivering letters.
3. Also, if the receivers of the written message are separated by distance and if they need to clear their doubts, the response is not spontaneous.
4. Effective written communication requires great skills and competencies in language and vocabulary use. Poor writing skills and quality have a negative impact on organization 's reputation.
5. Written communication is time-consuming as the feedback is not immediate. The encoding and sending of message take time.
6. Too much paper work and e-mails burden is involved.

REPORT WRITING:

Every organisation has a routine practice of reporting on the progress and the status of different activities for taking sound business decisions.

Reports may be written by an individual or an organized body, e.g., a committee or Sub- committee or Board of Inquiry, at regular intervals either on usual routine or on special occasions after a special inquiry conducted by them as per the directions of their superiors.

Reports are often submitted by the managers, secretaries, accountants, chief executives and experts in certain fields are often required to submit reports on important issues like decline in sales, the suitability of some premises, the reorganisation of office, the chances of variation in profits, the desirability of setting up a new branch, etc.

Meaning of Report:

A report is a logical presentation of facts and information. It is self-explanatory statement which provides information to management for decision making and follows up actions. Report is a

systematic presentation of established facts about a specific event/subject and is a summary of findings and recommendations about a particular matter/problem.

Definition:

According to **Oxford English Dictionary** a report is defined as “an account given on a particular matter, especially in the form of an official document, after thorough investigation or consideration by an appointed person or body”. Example “the chairman’s annual report”.

Types of Report:

Reports may be 1. Routine Reports 2. Special Reports 3. Formal Reports and 4. Informal Reports.

1. Routine Reports: Routine reports are prepared periodically by filling the printed forms, to convey information about the progress or status of work. They are submitted at regular intervals or soon after the completion of the task. Following are routine reports.

a. Progress Report: This report gives information about the progress of a project or a task which is in the process of being completed, such as construction of a building or manufacture of products.

b. Inspection Report: It is submitted as soon as inspection is carried out. It is necessary for finding out any irregularities or changes from standard practice, in day-to-day work. Example internal audit report submitted by an internal auditor.

c. Performance Appraisal: It is meant for measuring and recording the performance of an employee. Every supervisor has to fill an assessment report for each of the subordinates annually to evaluate the performance of individual employees. It also gives feedback to the employees on their performance.

d. Periodical Report: This is prepared by departmental heads at regular intervals on the working of a section or a department to measure the efficient functioning of each department.

2. Special Reports:

Special reports are prepared when a special situation or problem arises. An individual or a committee of persons, who have knowledge and understanding in the field, is appointed to investigate and study a specific problem, collect relevant information, and make suggestions to help the management for decision making. Following are some of the special reports prepared in the organisation.

a. First information Report (F.I.R.): This report is required when there are sudden accidents occurs like fire accident, building collapse, robbery etc. It is prepared by the person in charge on the spot, and submitted to higher authorities for their deliberation. For example report prepared by the branch manager about fire accident occurs in branch office to Regional Office or Head Office for immediate action. The report has to give all the information which is available immediately after the incident occurs such as nature of loss, extent of destruction, time of accident etc.,

b. Investigation Report: It is prepared after making a thorough inquiry on some specific situations. An investigation is made when there is a problem and the management needs to find out the causes of the problem, and also the suggestions for solving it. Example, reports on falling sales, declining deposits in a bank, many customer complaints, losses in a branch, etc.,

c. Feasibility or Survey Report: This report is prepared when an organisation intends to launch a new product in the market, introduce a new service, or make any major changes that may affect the company's customers.

d. Project Report: This is written after the initial survey has been completed on the research project. It describes the proposal as project to be completed in future by showing the cash flow and expected results. It is used for planning and also for convincing others, especially sanctioning and funding authorities like government departments and banks.

3. Formal Reports:

A formal report is prepared in the prescribed or standard form and is presented according to the established procedure and through the proper channel. Reports submitted by officials or committees of organised bodies (e.g., Companies, Co-operative Societies, Local Bodies, etc.) are usually formal reports. It may be Statutory Report or Non-statutory Report.

a. Statutory Report: Statutory report is one which is prepared by secretary or directory or auditor under the provisions of specific law. E.g., Auditors Report, Directors Report, Inspection committee Report Etc.,

b. Non-Statutory Report: Non- statutory reports are those which are not required under the provisions of any law, but have to be prepared to help top managers for the efficient control and organisations of the business.

4. Informal Reports: Informal reports, on the other hand, do not follow any prescribed form or procedure. It is usually takes the form of a person-to person communication and may even be set up in the letter form.

Layout of Report:

Lay out of the report deals with arrangement and presentation of information in the report. The main purpose of report is to help the receiver to identify the facts relating to the subject under study, draw his own conclusions and take suitable action based on the conclusions and recommendations. In order to achieve its purpose the report must not only be clear, concise and logical but must also be drafted according to a recognised form and arrangement.

It is however, difficult to lay down a specific set of rules for preparation of reports. Except statutory report, the nature, length and style of a report must vary with the circumstances of the case. Following are the general arrangements of content in case of formal and special reports.

a. The Heading or Title: A report must always have a title indicating the subject of the study, the period and the location of the study. A long report has a full title page which gives the title, the name of the person who assigned the report and the name of the person or group who prepared the report, with month and year of submission. In a short report the title appears at the top of the first page, before the text of the report.

b. Table of Contents: Table of contents is a list of chapters or topics contained in the report. The serial number, title and page mark of each topic is given.

c. Body of the Report: It is a main part of the report and is made up of the following sub-section, sub-headings or sub-titles. The body is divided into the following parts:

i. Introduction: It contains the terms of reference and the subject of study. Here the writer analyses the problem chosen by him in the light of the terms of reference and the relevant circumstances.

ii. Development or Findings: In this part the writer presents the facts and data collected with reference to his study along with the outcome of his study. The data collected may include charts, graphs and statistical tables from other published reports and presented in an organised form with heading and sub-heading for better understanding of the reader.

iii. Conclusions or Recommendations: In this portion the writer draws up some definite conclusions on the basis of the facts and data presented after considering all aspects of the problem in hand. He then puts forward some strong suggestions or recommendations of his own.

iv. Appendix: It is supplementary material given at the end of the report. This may be a copy of a questionnaire used, or plans of buildings, maps or other materials which is referred to in the body of the report.

v. References and Bibliography: In case of long reports, the reporter had to conduct extensive research for the preparation of the report. Under such studies, it is practice to add a list of references and bibliography just after the appendix to indicate the sources from which the writer has drawn his materials for the report.

vi. Index: Index comprises of contents of the report and usually added after the bibliography. It is generally found in long reports.

vii. Summary: It contains the essence of findings and recommendations of the report and usually appended to facilitate its consideration by the person or superior body to whom it is submitted.

viii) Signature: All reports should be dated and signed. If it is prepared by a committee or sub-committee and the report is common, it should be signed by the chairman. If it is prepared by an individual, it has to be signed by the reporter.

Characteristics of the Good Report:

A lot of reports are written daily. Some of them are intended to document the progress of some activities i.e., feasibility reports, investigation reports, some of the reports are for monitoring purposes, some are evaluation reports but it is clear that all the reports have some objective and purpose behind it. That objective and purpose can only be achieved if a report has following features or characteristics:

- 1. Precise:** The purpose of the report should be clearly defined. Precision of a report provides the unity to the report and makes it a valuable document for best usage.
- 2. Accuracy of Facts:** Information contained in a report must be based on accurate fact. Since decisions are taken on the basis of reported information, any inaccurate information or statistics will lead to wrong decision. It will cause delay in achieving the organizational goal.
- 3. Relevancy:** The facts presented in a report should be relevant. Irrelevant facts make a report confusing and likely to mislead decision making.
- 4. Reader-Oriented:** A report is read by various stake holders. A good report is always reader oriented. Reader's knowledge and level of understanding should be considered while writing the report. If the report is reader-friendly, it is easy to read, remember and act on it.

5. **Simple Language:** A report should be written in a simple language, avoiding jargons and technical words for easy and clear understanding. The message of a good report should be self-explanatory.

6. **Conciseness:** A report should be brief and not be very long. Lengthy reports affect the reader's interest. Rather it means that a good report is one that transmits maximum information with minimum words and completes in all respects.

7. **Grammatically Accurate:** A good report should be free from grammatical errors. Any faulty construction of a sentence may make its meaning different to the reader's mind and sometimes it may become confusing or ambiguous.

8. **Unbiased:** Recommendations made at the end of a report should be impartial and objective. It shall not be biased with the personal feelings of the reporter. They should come as logical conclusion for investigation and analysis.

9. **Clarity:** Clarity depends on proper arrangement of facts. A good report is absolutely clear. Reporter should make its purpose clear, define its sources, state its findings and finally make necessary recommendation. Clarity of facts enhances the quality of the report.

10. **Attractive:** A good report needs an attractive presentation. Structure, content, language, typing and presentation style should be well designed to make a good impression in the mind of its reader.

Report Writing Format

Following are the parts of a report format that is most common.

1. Executive summary – highlights of the main report
2. Table of Contents – index page
3. Introduction – origin, essentials of the main subject
4. Body – main report
5. Conclusion – inferences, measures taken, projections
6. Reference – sources of information
7. Appendix

Executive Summary

You summarize the main points of the report, such as the report topic, the data obtained, the data analysis methods, and recommendations based on the data. The summary could be as short as a paragraph or as long as five pages, depending on the length of the full report. Usually, the recipient of the report doesn't always have the time to read through the entire report. This summary gives the reader a gist of the important points.

Remember that although attached as the first page, this summary is always putting a perspective for the entire report, meaning that effort-wise, the writer always needs to include it at the end.

Most importantly, the summary should contain:

- the purpose of the report
- what you did (analysis) and what you found (results)
- your recommendations; these recommendations should be short and not go beyond a page

Table of Contents

The report should begin with a table of contents. This explains the audience, author, and basic purpose of the attached report. It should be short and to the point.

Introduction

This section is the beginning of your report. It highlights the major topics that are covered and provides background information on why the data in the report was collected. It also contains a top view of what's covered in the report.

Body

The body of the report describes the problem, the data that was collected, sometimes in the form of table or charts, and discusses with reasons. The body is usually broken into subsections, with subheadings that highlight the further breakdown of a point. Report writing format is very specific that way about clear and crisp headings and subheadings.

This just structures out readers clarity in understanding and further enhances the logical flow that can get hard to follow. Since a report has no personal bias or opinions, you can imagine that reading

through a report can be a bit boring and people may find it hard to follow through. In such a case, it's always best to create pointers and lay out the points in short and simple methods.

Conclusion

At the end of our main body lies the tying of ends together in the much-awaited conclusion. The conclusion explains how the data described in the body of the document may be interpreted or what conclusions may be drawn. The conclusion often suggests how to use the data to improve some aspect of the business or recommends additional research. This solution then may be implemented to solve a given problem the report was made for in the first place. Big consultancies or service providers prepare reports in the form of Microsoft PowerPoint or the Keynote in Mac to present to the stakeholders. At the end of which lies the conclusive suggestion section.

Reference

If you used other sources of information to help, write your report, such as a government database, you would include that in the references. The references section lists the resources used to research or collect the data for the report. References provide proof for your points. Also, this provides solid reasoning for the readers so that they can review the original data sources themselves. Also, credit must be given where credit is due.

Appendix

Lastly, comes the appendix. Although this one is not necessary, more like an optional element. This may include additional technical information that is not necessary to the explanation provided in the body and conclusion but further supports the findings, such as tables or charts or pictures, or additional research not cited in the body but relevant to the discussion. Note: Tables and figures must all be labelled. In case you want to closely look at report writing format example or take a look at the report writing sample, our next chapter will have a clear example of the same.

Types of Reports

Informal versus Formal Reports

While there is no single difference between informal and formal reports, we can typically distinguish between the two based on their length and sections.

Some say the wording and phrasing changes between informal reports and formal reports from more conversational to more formal. Writing issues such as those are explored throughout this module. Specifics of wording and phrasing vary by company and by type of report. In any case, authors must remember their reports enhance their image and credibility in the workplace. The accuracy of each report, the professionalism in the layout, and the clarity of the writing all reflect the writer's reliability, validity, and full comprehension of the proposed solutions. Essentially, you should focus on simple, clear phrasing and organization. Focus on how to make the full meaning easiest to grasp for the audience.

Informal Reports

Informal reports tend to be shorter, although the quantity of pages or words is not defined. Think of informal reports as documents of under ten pages. An informal report usually has specific topics grouped in paragraphs, and these topics tend to have simple headings. Note that while informal reports often don't have required headings, you can take inspiration from the headings required in formal reports.

Formal Reports

A **formal report** tends to be longer; although, again, the quantity of pages or words is not defined. It may start at ten pages and in some cases exceed one hundred pages. With a formal report, the topic of the report or the policy of the company it's being written for determines which sections, labels, content, and purpose should be used as the basis for the report. These reports address complex topics that require substantial description of background, research on the topic, and evidence to support any proposed solutions. Both the data gathering and the summary of the topic generate length. To keep this abundance of information organized, the report requires formal headings and tight organization in order to help the reader stay on track.

Informational versus Analytical Reports

Now that we've defined the difference between informal reports and formal reports, let's dive in a little deeper. Informal reports and formal reports have two major categories: informational and analytical reports. It's important to keep in mind that both informal and formal reports can fall

into these categories (i.e., you can have an informal informational report or a formal informational report).

Informational Reports

An **informational report** provides a summary of information and data found on a particular topic. One such report is the expense report: this report is a set of information that is used to request allocation of funds. The format is strictly pre-determined and it is often completed at the end of a business trip.

Analytical Reports

The other category of report is an **analytical report**. In this report type, information is researched and collected, then the report provides an analysis that leads to one or more recommendations. For example, consider a report that helps a company determine where to open a new store. The report might look at three properties with respect to road traffic, cost of the land, and adjoining stores, and then recommend the best site from the alternatives.

PRECISE WRITING

Precise Writing is a part of the descriptive paper conducted for various competitive and Government exams under the English Language section.

In this article we shall discuss at length about what is Precise writing, the important points that need to be kept in mind while writing a Precise, the Dos and Don'ts, followed by some sample Precise writing examples and questions.

Candidates can also check the General English for competitive exams page to know more about the English language descriptive and objective type paper.

Before moving to other attributes related to the topic, let us first discuss what Precise writing is and what the candidates are supposed to do in a question based on this topic.

What is Precise Writing?

Precise writing is summarising a comprehension in limited words, covering all the important aspects and details of the passage given

Rules of Precise Writing

To avoid making any errors in writing a Precise, follow a set of rules as mentioned below:

1. Read the comprehension carefully
2. Note down the important points
3. Make a rough draft of the Precise
4. Make use of simple and Precise language, as much as possible
5. Draft the final Precise once all the points have been included

The topic of Precise writing is not included in all exams, but the most common exams where this topic is included in the syllabus are SSC exams, RRB exams, etc.

The links given below will help candidates work on their grammar and help them avoid making any grammatical errors while writing a Precise:

IMPORTANT FEATURES OF A GOOD PRECISE

There are various components that make a good Precise. For candidates who have just started their preparation for the upcoming Government exams, knowing the features of a good Precise is extremely vital.

Discussed below are a few of the features which shall help you write a good Precise:

- **Length of the Precise:** Do not write a lengthy Precise. In most cases, the number of words must be almost one-third of the word count of the passage or comprehension.
- **It should be convenient to read:** Make sure that the Precise you write does not have too complex a vocabulary or is too complicated to understand.
- **Cover all the essential points:** While reading the passage, make a note of the important points and ensure that no point is skipped.
- **Must be coherent:** The important terms with respect to the passage must be included in the Precise as well.
- **Use an appropriate Title:** The Precise needs to have a title. So, the candidates must ensure that the title is in sync with the comprehension.
- **Details in Precise must match the details in the passage:** No other information apart from the one given in the passage must be included in the Precise and all the important information mentioned in the passage must certainly be included.

If a candidate keeps the above-mentioned points in consideration while writing the Precise, he/she shall be successful in writing a good Precise.

Dos & Don'ts in Precise Writing:

Every year lakhs of candidates appear for the competitive exams conducted in our country. Out of those only a few are able to crack the exam and get appointed. Since most competitive exams have now become computer-based, the descriptive test is still checked offline.

Candidates must know that with thousands of entries that need to be checked, there are certain quick points which the examiner looks for and which may get the maximum marks for your Precise writing.

Based on the same information, given below are a few Dos and Don'ts, which a candidate needs to understand before starting to write a Precise.

Do's for Precise Writing

- Begin with the basic idea of the passage to make the Precise convenient to read.
- Give a clear idea pertaining to what the reader is about to read.
- While reading the passage, make a note of all the important points and include them in the Precise.
- Follow the main idea of the passage with the facts/points of improvement/ methods,, etc. as mentioned in the comprehension.
- Include all the important keywords and terms which are used in the passage.
- Keep a track of the tenses you use. Data related to historical events of the past must be described in the past tense only.
- There must be a relation between the data you are writing in the Precise. It should have some common links.

Don'ts for Precise Writing

- The length of the Precise must be shorter than the length of the passage.
- Do not overcomplicate the Precise and use easy vocabulary.
- Do not make assumptions or add information in the Precise as per your own imagination.
- Do not give your own opinion or criticism over the comprehension.
- Avoid using abbreviations.
- Do not enter statements in the question format in the Precise.
- Don't focus on any one point for very long. Keep the information as Precise as possible.

The above-mentioned dos and don'ts will help candidates get a better idea of the concept and also learn the correct approach with which the Precise needs to be written.