

# Applications

## CHAPTER 9

Negotiation Skills

## CHAPTER 10

Presentation Skills

## CHAPTER 11

Summer Project Report

## CHAPTER 12

CVs, Group  
Discussions and Personal  
Interviews

## CHAPTER 13

Business Etiquette

## CHAPTER 14

Written Analysis of Cases



---

*We are what we repeatedly do  
Excellence, then is not an act, but a habit.*

**-Aristotle**

---



# Chapter



## *Negotiation Skills*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explain the negotiation process.
- Understand the factors affecting negotiation.
- Learn subjective factors determining outcome.
- Understand stages of the negotiation process.
- Learn different negotiation skills of initiating, discussing, and concluding the process of bargaining.
- Know how to handle the deadlock.

---

*I'll make you an offer you can't refuse!*

**-Vito Corleone**

---

Negotiation is a process of bargaining in which two parties, each of whom have something that the other wants, try to reach an agreement, on mutually accepted terms.

## WHAT IS NEGOTIATION?

Negotiation is a process of bargaining in which two parties, each of whom have something that the other wants, try to reach an agreement, on mutually accepted terms.

Everyday examples of negotiation are —

- A brother and a sister debating on the choice of a movie.
- Two friends trying to settle the amount for which one wants to sell his old car to the other.
- Two sisters fighting over how a box of chocolates should be divided between them.
- A supervisor making a suggestion to his manager.
- A salesperson trying to arrange a meeting with a prospective wholesaler/dealer.

### Definition

The Oxford Dictionary of Business English defines negotiation as —

- a) The process of trying to reach an agreement through discussion.
- b) A meeting where this discussion takes place.

*The Winston's Simplified Advanced Dictionary* defines negotiation as, "The discussion and bargaining that goes on between parties before a contract is settled or a deal is definitely agreed upon."

According to Alan Fowler, "Negotiation is any form of meeting or discussion in which you and/or the persons you are in contact with use argument and persuasion to achieve an agreed decision or action."

In simple words, negotiation is to bargain for mutually agreed exchange by using persuasion and discussion.

As Bill Scott says, "A negotiation is a form of meeting between two parties: Our Party and the Other Party."

The objective of most negotiations is to reach an agreement in which both parties together move towards an outcome that is mutually beneficial.

Negotiation is a process of bargaining in which two parties, each of whom have something that the other wants, try to reach an agreement, on mutually accepted terms.

## THE NATURE OF NEGOTIATION

The following two points make the nature of negotiation quite clear:

1. Negotiation takes place between two parties. Both the parties are equally interested in an agreed action/result.

2. Negotiation reaches agreement through discussion, not instruction, orders or power/influence/authority.

For example, when a manager deals with other managers, or customers or suppliers over whom he has no power, he tries to achieve results by agreement through discussion, persuasion, and argument. In other words, he negotiates.

Suppose, you are a manager in the marketing department. You need the help of an analyst from some other department for some days to complete the project report urgently. The other department may not be willing to spare the services of the analyst you badly need. You would certainly discuss the matter with your colleague and make him understand your need by using convincing arguments. In short, by negotiating with your colleague.

Negotiation is a form of communication where the objective is agreement.

*Negotiation is a form of communication where the objective is agreement.*

## **NEED TO NEGOTIATE**

Need to negotiate is defined by the situation. Some situations require negotiating, some don't.

### **Situations Requiring Negotiation**

The following situations require negotiation —

- An issue involving more persons than one, Negotiation is required when a problem cannot be resolved by a single person. Whenever two or more persons or parties are involved in deciding a matter/or issue and they have different views or aims regarding the outcome, the way to overcome disagreement is by negotiating, that is by discussing, persuading and influencing.
- Negotiation can take place only when both the concerned parties are willing to meet and discuss an issue. That is to say, they both want to reach an agreed decision by discussion, not force or authority.

There are formal and informal situations of negotiation —

#### **Formal situations**

- A preannounced meeting of the two parties.
- The agenda is already fixed. Both parties know what is going to be discussed.

- Generally, more than two persons are involved in the discussion. The ideal is three.
- For formal negotiation you have time to prepare and fix roles for each party. For instance, one of you puts forth reasons and suggestions of your side, another acts as a softener, and the third keeps closely following the drift/flow/direction of the discussion. And if any important point is being missed by your side, he puts in that point.
- Formal negotiation is simpler to handle than unannounced meetings. You have time to study the total situation. You have time to find out the strength of the arguments of the other party.

Generally, people believe that formal negotiation is something like settling a dispute or a conflict between two warring parties, for example, the labour union or workers' union's strike. Negotiations in such situations is formal; the meeting between the two parties is mostly fixed beforehand and both parties have time to prepare their bargaining steps.

*Formal negotiation is simpler to handle than unannounced meetings.*

#### **Informal situations**

- Unannounced and casual meetings — When a staff member drops by your office and discusses a problem, to which you attempt to find a solution. This is an informal negotiation because:
  - It is unannounced
  - It involves just two persons
  - It appears as casual — your colleague might have planned to approach you for help in this manner
  - It gives you no time to prepare for discussion
  - Its friendly approach is meant to act as an influence on your final decision making
  - It does not allow time to study the strength or weakness of the other side.

#### **Situations Not Requiring Negotiation**

The following situations will not require negotiation —

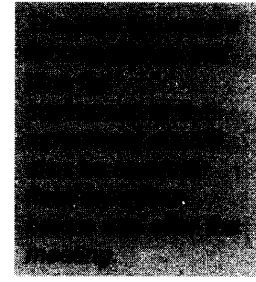
- When one of the two parties/persons immediately accepts or agrees to what the other is suggesting or asking for. In

such a situation there is no need for negotiating. The desired result is already achieved.

- Whenever one of the two parties refuses even to consider or discuss the suggestion or proposal.

For example, a supplier or a dealer completely refuses to reduce the price or consider any other suggestion of making part payments, there is no possibility for any negotiation between the two.

However, often, people encounter situations of neither direct acceptance nor of complete refusal at the very outset. During such times, two persons deal with each other by first discussing the possibility of reaching an agreed end.



## **FACTORS AFFECTING NEGOTIATION**

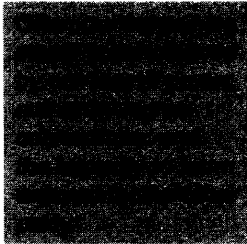
The following factors usually affect the outcomes of negotiation:

### **P**lace

- The place of meeting for negotiations influences the level of confidence. Choosing a place, like your own office, has many advantages. You are in your area of strength.
- You can get whatever information/material is needed during the course of negotiations.
- You can extend social courtesies as a token of goodwill, this would move the negotiation towards agreement.

### **T**ime

- The choice of time for holding discussions should be fixed according to mutual convenience.
- Time should be adequate for the smooth exchange of ideas through different stages of negotiation —
  - Exchanging initial views
  - Exploring possible compromise
  - Searching for common ground
  - Securing agreement
- The time to prepare for negotiation and time for implementing the agreement should also be carefully fixed for action before and after the meeting.



- To be effective, negotiations should be timely. That means, it should be done before it is too late to secure an agreement.

### **S**ubjective Factors

- Often the outcome of the discussion does not depend wholly on the objective factors of logic and facts of the matter under consideration. The final outcome of negotiation is determined by subjective factors of influence and persuasion.

**Personal relationship** The conduct of negotiation is influenced not only by the real situation of the matter but also by the relationship between the two persons/parties involved in the process of discussion.

**Fear** Often our bargaining power is conditioned by our fear of power, authority, higher connections, and the capacity to harm enjoyed by the other party.

**Future considerations** When personal relationships are at stake, we may not wish to win the argument in the negotiations in case the good relations between the two parties are likely to be affected.

**Mutual obligation** The memories of the good done in the past by the other party also acts as a negative influence (fear) on us.

**Practical wisdom** Fear of losing good future chances is a strong factor in our bargaining/negotiation positions and power.

**Categories of influence** The following are the categories of influence —

- Personal relationship, short and long term considerations
- Status difference
- Higher connections with sources of power
- Expectations about outcomes
- Information and expertise
- Reputation of the other person
- Aiming
- Location of the negotiation environment
- Formality
- Work pressures
- Personal likes and dislikes
- Mutual obligations
- Concern for working relationships

*Fear of losing good future chances is a strong factor in our bargaining/negotiation positions and power.*



### Some personal questions

- Both formal and informal negotiations are influenced by such questions raised within you.
 

“Should my position on this proposal/issue take into account the likely effect of our future working relationships?”

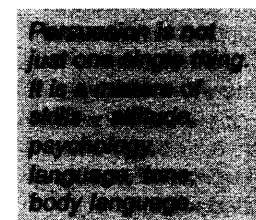
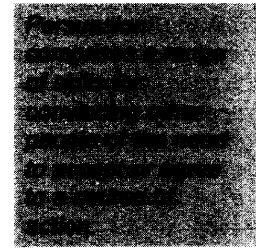
“Am I allowing myself to be unduly influenced by a sense of obligation? Am I hoping to achieve too much by emphasising on past obligation?”
- Such self questioning will help you overcome the effect of influence on your bargaining position and strength.
- As a subordinate, if you have a good case, you should not hesitate to discuss with your boss your part of the matter. Your subordinate position should modify your way but not your content. You should be polite but firm.

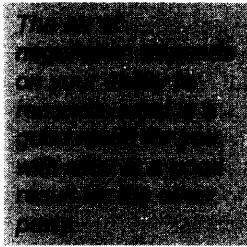
**Persuasion** Persuasion comprises a range of skills for convincing other people of the need to accept or agree to a course of action. It is an essential element of effective business communication. It helps in resolving issues about which two persons have different views but they need to agree about solutions in the interest of all. In negotiations, people are gradually persuaded to accept the other party's view.

As you must have seen yourself, persuasion is not just one single thing. It is a mixture of skills – attitude, psychology, language, tone, body language, and so on, used by you to convince your workers/ partners to accept your view on what should be done, although they earlier objected or argued for a very different solution.

**Different persuasive skills** The whole range of persuasive skills can be classified under the following broad headings:

- Style - Collaborative or confrontational
- Your attitude - The other person's view point
- Talking and listening
- Probing and questioning
- Using breaks when necessary
- Concessions and compromise
- Avoid confrontational tone
- Summarising
- Reaching an agreement





At the final point of your discussion, be sure the final agreement covers all necessary points, it is clearly expressed and understood.

#### **“You attitude”**

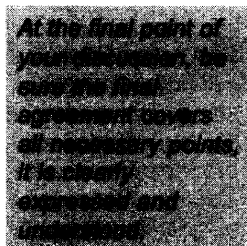
- Nothing convinces more than facts. But in order to persuade people, the facts should be discussed from the other party’s point of view. You should be able to highlight how the other person stands to gain from your suggestions.
- As a successful negotiator, understand the other party’s needs.
- The art of negotiation depends on your ability to reconcile what is a good result for you with what is a good result for the other party.
- Persuasion is a means to make negotiations/discussions end with a satisfying conclusion for both sides (win-win situation).

### **STAGES OF THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS**

Generally, the process of negotiation moves from the stage of ‘Offer’ to that of ‘Agreement’ through ‘Counter-offer’, ‘Concession’ and ‘Compromise’ stages.

#### **S** **Sequence of Discussions**

1. All discussions that progress successfully from opening differences to final agreed outcomes/conclusions usually move through the same general sequence. During informal discussions this sequence may not be always obvious, yet it is there with respect to the most important aspects of negotiations.
2. In the words of Alan Fowler, the stages of an effective discussion are —
  - Preparing and planning
  - Exchanging initial views
  - Exploring possible compromise
  - Searching for common ground
  - Securing agreement
  - Implementing the agreement.
3. These six stages can be grouped into three basic phases —
  - A preparation phase before the negotiation begins
  - The actual negotiating process — the interaction that leads to final agreement about an outcome
  - The implementation of the agreement



4. Negotiation implies that both parties accept that the agreement between them is needed (required or desirable) before any decision is to be implemented.
5. The process of discussion is towards that desired agreement. Hence, it requires careful preparing and handling.

**Preparation** Like all effective communication/discussion, negotiations have to be planned. Tim Hindle in his book *Negotiating Skills* says —

“Bear in mind that it is almost impossible for a negotiator to do too much preparation.”

However, the negotiator has to be prepared before the actual process of negotiation starts in two respects —

- Assessing the relative strength of the two parties
- The setting of negotiating objectives. At this stage, the negotiator should try to answer the following two questions —
  - What are the real issues?
  - Which parties should be involved?

The first of these two questions would make you feel confident and fully prepared on two things —

- That you know the subject matter well and are not likely to feel surprised or shaken by the other party introducing unexpected facts or figures.
- That you are clear about what you want to achieve through discussion

**Be realistic about objectives** Prepare your objectives realistically. Suppose you fail to persuade the other person to accept your ideal solution, then you should be prepared to come down in your expectations. But in such a situation of lowering your expectation, if the ideal is not achievable, you should be very clear and firm about the lowest outcome acceptable to you.

In the preparation stage, you should also plan out the best way of arguing your case, considering particularly the other person’s likely viewpoint and objectives. Assess the strength of each party’s bargaining position.

*Negotiation implies that both parties accept that the agreement between them is needed (required or desirable) before any decision is to be implemented.*

To be well prepared before the actual negotiating process begins, consider the following —

- Be sure that you know enough about the subject matter to be discussed
- Decide your objectives and bottom value
- Plan how best to argue your case.

**The negotiating phase** Most effective negotiations follow a set sequence —

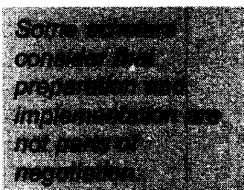
- The parties begin by defining the issues. They argue about the scope of negotiation.
- Each side then puts forward what it is seeking or first the party that makes a claim presents its case, and thereafter, the other party gives an initial response—thus both the parties define their initial positions.
- After that comes a more open phase in which the initial positions are tested through argument.
- The parties then move to a possible solution that could be the argument's outcome.
- Firm proposals in more specific terms are then made, discussed and often modified before both the parties accept them.
- Finally, an agreement is spelt out and concluded.

**Implementation** Some scholars consider that preparation and implementation are not parts of negotiation. They constitute two basic phases of actual process of negotiation – one before initiating the negotiation process and the other after concluding discussions.

- The purpose of negotiation is to achieve an agreement; the purpose of an agreement should be to implement that agreed decision/outcome.
- If due attention is not paid to the implementation part of a negotiation, then negotiations fail.

Three steps to prevent failure of implementation —

- In all formal negotiations, confirm in writing all that has been agreed upon.
- As far as possible, mention in the agreement an implementation programme. That is to say, mention who is supposed to do



what by when. This matter, if left undefined, may become the subject of disagreement later on.

- Ensure every concerned person, not only those involved in the discussions, is clearly told about the agreement, its implications, and the action which will follow.

## NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES

Some of the elements listed earlier as part of negotiating process are strategic. They are here discussed as strategies to be used at different stages.

### Initial Strategies

- Plan the whole discussion according to the psychological needs and use appropriate strategies to maximise the advantage for gaining information about the views and objectives of their party.
- Set a tone for the whole discussion that focuses attention on the need to reach an agreed conclusion by joint problem solving.
- Sell “sunny-side up”. Think how the other person will see your proposal. Try to identify and “sell” to the other person the benefits that would go to them if they accept your case.
- Alter your position (within your planned limits) if needed to achieve this approach.
- Avoid compulsive talking. Allow the other persons to say what they wish to; develop a dialogue with the other person.

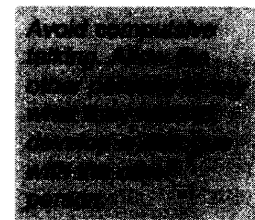
You can start the discussion as given below —

“The general point of our discussion is ..., which I think has come up because of... But before I go into its details, it would be helpful if you first outline your view.”

### During the Discussion

- Do not state the whole case in the beginning; develop your case as the discussion proceeds.

If you put forth your whole case at the beginning, you leave no chance to change your position in the light of the other person’s arguments.



The strategy should be to allow the discussion to move towards agreement. For securing this purpose you have to psychologically encourage cooperation throughout the discussion.

- Be a silent listener of other speaker's argument. Notice the tone, not just the words. The tone will tell you how they feel—confident or nervous, irritated or cool.
- Do not interrupt. Interruptions annoy, instead of encouraging cooperation.
- Put searching questions to verify the correctness of factual information offered by the other party, such as dates, figures, and so on or of their logic.

If you doubt the correctness of the information given by them, do not directly challenge them by telling them, "You are wrong." Instead, you may put further questions, such as —

- "Could you explain the connection between that point and what you said earlier about X?"
- "I have not understood the logic of that: Could you put it in a different way?"

#### **Avoid confrontational tone**

- The strategy should be to allow the discussion to move towards agreement. For securing this purpose you have to psychologically encourage cooperation throughout the discussion.
- Use impersonal terminology to point out corrections, rather than making personal criticism.

**Use adjournments** During the discussion a short break of 10-minutes can be useful for two purposes.

- To get a chance to consider new points or proposals before going to decide on final commitments.
- To change the mood of the discussion if it has become too emotionally charged.

**Use concessions and compromise** At times, it may be impossible to move further without making some concessions. Strategy is concerned partly with timing, and partly with the way possible concessions are introduced into the discussion.

When we realise that attitudes are hardening and again and again the same points are being repeated, the discussion could be changed to an exploratory phase.

**Use conditional compromise** You can say, "Since we now know each other's views, it might be helpful if I could know what

Use conditional compromise

your response would be to my suggestion that I could accept to this extent what you have suggested."

- "Would you do 'x' if I accepted to do 'y'?"
- "Would you be able to agree to 'x' if I am able to postpone taking action on 'y'?"

Emphasise the other person's benefit from your compromise suggestion.

- The other person should not be allowed to feel that he is losing by accepting your offer of concession or compromise.
- Praise the other party for a good suggestion that you are going to accept as a condition for changing your position.

**As a strategy —**

- Do not allow the discussion to go on too long without bringing in concessions/compromises necessary for reaching agreement.
- Introduce concessions/compromises on a non-commitment basis.
- See that concessions suggested from your side seem to belong to moves by the other person.

### **R**eaching an Agreement

- After a long and difficult discussion, 'final' should be taken as 'final'. No further concessions or compromises should be allowed.
- Be tactful and persuasive so as to ensure that the final outcome, which is of advantage to you, is seen by the other person as a benefit to his party.
- The key strategy in any negotiation is "persuasive."
- Emphasise the other party's benefits
- Approach the other party's cooperation and brilliant suggestions.

### **S**ummarising

- Suggest "I think it would be helpful if we could summarise all that we have discussed and reached this agreement."
- "Better that we note it down so that no point is later missed by anyone."

*Be tactful and persuasive so as to ensure that the final outcome, which is of advantage to you, is seen by the other person as a benefit to his party.*

It is a good strategy to use written summaries at the end of the discussion. This would not leave scope for disagreement later about what has or has not been discussed and agreed.

### **In Case of a Deadlock**

Reaching a mutually satisfactory end is the basic objective of any negotiation. Suppose, there is no final agreement reached after a prolonged discussion, the strategy should be to —

- Point out that no further concessions can be made as they would be of no benefit to either of the parties.
- Explain and emphasise the consequences that would flow from a deadlock, such as the matter will have to be referred to higher-ups, or eventually to external arbitration.
- Use the ethical aspect of agreement, such as upholding the organisation's values, the greatest good of the largest number of people, and so on.
- Even in the situation of, a deadlock remain positive and hopeful of reaching a mutually agreed solution/or agreement ultimately.

### **EXERCISE**

A is eating in a restaurant and B is a waiter.

A. Waiter!

B. Yes, Sir?

A. Look. I've been sitting here for ten minutes and you still haven't even given me the menu.

B. I can't help that. We're very busy. You'll have to wait.

A. I'm damned if I'll wait any longer. Bring me the menu immediately.

B. I'm sorry. I've got those people over there to serve first.

A. Right. I'm going and I won't come in your blasted restaurant again.

B. Good. We can manage very well without customers like you.

Your task —

A and B do not seem to get on too well! What goes wrong?



Role-play the dialogue making the waiter much more patient and conciliatory (likely to win goodwill).

### EXERCISE

A and B are two friends. They are trying to decide whether to go to the cinema or to watch a cricket match.

- A. You are coming to watch the cricket match with me, aren't you?
- B. No. I really don't want to. There's a very good film on at the Ritz. Come to that instead.
- A. No. I don't think a film would be as interesting as the cricket match. Surely, you'd rather come to the match?
- B. No. I don't like cricket much. Don't you prefer the cinema to cricket?
- A. I suppose so but this is a crucial match for our team. You like cricket too, don't you?
- B. Yes, I do, but the film is on only today. I think you should come with me to the cinema and go to the rest of the match tomorrow. O.K.?
- A. No. I'm not coming to the film.
- B. You are, you know.
- A. I am not.
- B. Oh! yes, you are. It's raining.
- A. Oh dear. So it is. You win but if it's fine tomorrow you'll come to the match, won't you?
- B. Yes. Of course.

Your task —

List the examples of agreement, disagreement and concession.

## EXERCISE

- A young man, A, is trying to persuade his brother, B, to lend him his scooter.
- A. I was just wondering if you were using your scooter this afternoon.  
 B. Why?  
 A. Well. I promised Ravi I'd pop over and see him before he went to Delhi.  
 B. How about going by bus?  
 A. It's more expensive than using a scooter and it takes longer.  
 B. Oh, Yes! It's more expensive than using my scooter, my petrol, my insurance, my road tax — much more expensive. Why not go by train? Oh yes! Too expensive!  
 A. If you're not using it, you could lend it to me. Why not let me? I'll put some petrol in for you.  
 B. I can't see any reason, why not. Don't forget the petrol.  
 A. Thanks.

Your task —

How does A induce his brother B to lend him the scooter? He makes suggestions and proposals. List them and the counter inducements of B.

## EXERCISE

- A and B, old school friends, have just met again after ten years.
- A. Ravi! It is Ravi Garg, isn't it? Vijay Shah. Remember me?  
 B. Good Heavens! Vijay! After all this time. Let me see; it must be eight or nine years.  
 A. More like ten. You're looking well.  
 B. So are you. What are you doing these days?  
 A. I'm in charge of the Accident Unit at the hospital.  
 B. Fine. Is your wife still working?  
 A. Yes. She's senior Health Visitor now. What about you and Sudha?  
 B. We've got a café in Tilak Nagar. Keeps us busy in the season with all the visitors. Look, why don't you and Meera come and have dinner with us one evening; on the house, of course? Here's our card. Come any time.  
 A. Marvellous, Ravi. We really will look forward to that.  
 B. Great. It's been terrific seeing you again. Must dash to the bank before it closes. See you very soon.  
 A. Right. I'll give you a ring sometime next week.

Your task —

Lot of positive emotion is expressed here. How? What topics are introduced through which the emotion is expressed? Can you rewrite the dialogue to make B a little less positive in his reactions? Assume that he is quite pleased to meet A again but not as thrilled as he clearly is in the dialogue.

### Summary

- This chapter offers you the entire strategy of initiating, discussing, and concluding the process of bargaining.
- It explains the process of negotiation with the help of examples of formal and informal situations which require skilful discussion to reach agreement.
- The chapter discusses personal and impersonal factors which influence the outcome of negotiation.

### Review Questions

1. Is negotiation basically meant for resolving conflicts? Or, does it have any other purpose in our personal life?
2. Discuss the subjective factors that tend to influence the outcome of negotiation.
3. Analyse different stages of negotiation process.
4. Comment on the role of third party in the case of negotiation dead lock.
5. What is a win-win situation?
6. Is it not wise to accept what you get, instead of rejecting it in the hope of what you may get? Give your own reasons for the choice in the light of what you have learnt in this chapter.

# Chapter 10

## *Presentation Skills*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Know what a presentation is and how it differs from a lecture or a written report.
- Appreciate how presentation skills help management.
- Learn how to design a presentation, using content from a written report or proposal.
- Select the use of proper visual aids
- Understand the chief principles of delivering an effective presentation.
- Know how to handle questions and give answers.
- Improve your existing presentation skills.

---

*In sports, you don't play a game with just one part of you, for example, your arm in tennis or hands in basketball. You play the game with your whole physical being. The same is true in presenting.*

**-Anne Miller**

---

## INTRODUCTION

---

Today it is necessary for you as a student, researcher, and a person seeking a job or a manager to know how to develop and make a presentation on a specific subject to a select audience. At the time of your admission to a post-graduate programme in management or IT, or to defend your research findings before your examiners or to get shortlisted for final selection for a job or advocate a proposal you have made, you may be required to make a presentation.

Your ability to deliver the presentation effectively helps you in two ways. Firstly, it helps in communicating your information clearly and vividly. Secondly, it creates a very good impression about you as a speaker, scholar or manager. Your impact as a presenter is immediate. Your confidence, fluency, and readiness of mind in conducting discussions and debate stand out as attributes of your personality.

## WHAT IS A PRESENTATION?

---

A presentation is a live mode of sharing information with a select audience. It is a form of oral communication in which a person shares factual information with a particular audience.

To get a clear idea of presentation as a distinct communicative activity — different from lecture or training — we can define presentation as an oral activity using visual electronic aids (such as LCD projectors) to discuss new ideas and information with a specific audience in an impressive and convincing manner.

### **H**ow does a Presentation Differ From a Lecture?

A presentation is not a lecture. Classroom lectures have well-defined educational objectives. The outcome and excellence of a good lecture is measured in terms of its interactive and participative character. Students are encouraged to raise questions and are continuously asked to answer questions put by the teacher. The Socratic mode of teaching/lecturing through the question-and-answer method is considered highly effective. Thus, a classroom lecture is ideally a two-way communication process. But presentations are one-way, initially. The audience sits through listening, watching, and taking notes.

Another significant distinguishing feature of presentation is that



the presenter acts as an advocate of the information shared with the audience. The focus is on persuading the listeners to buy the ideas that are shared. A teacher, on the other hand, is basically interested in imparting information as correctly as possible. The focus is on a clear understanding of the ideas by the students.

### **F**ormat

A presentation has a well-defined format. As a normal practice, the audience sits through the delivery without interrupting the presenter. It is only when the presenter completes his/her part of presentation that the audience is invited to ask questions or seek clarifications.

### **E**ssential Characteristics

A good presentation has the following characteristics —

- A clear structure with an introduction, discussion, and end.
- Facts and figures are visually presented in tables, graphs, and charts.
- Different colours are used to make the presentation of the content attractive.
- The presenter shows an understanding of the audience's needs and level of understanding, while discussing his ideas.
- Humour and anecdotes are often employed to create a good relationship with the audience.
- Questions are given serious attention and are regarded as an essential part of presentation.

## **ELEMENTS OF A PRESENTATION**

Presentations have three major elements —

- Presenter
- Audience
- Specific content with a definite objective to be achieved

A trained presenter approaches a presentation with an awareness of all its elements and a fully planned strategy. He/she knows that just standing up and speaking to an audience for a given time to show how much he/she knows on the topic will not be delivering a presentation. A presentation is a particular mode of

communicating with a group of people and of conveying a message. It involves prior-preparation and planning.

As a presenter, you should think and plan the following before delivering the presentation —

- Identify your purpose — achieve
- Analyse your audience
- Identify the need
- Collate your information
- Design your communication
- Time your presentation
- Decide on the visual aids to be used
- Study the location

The presenter as a “self” plays a key role in making the presentation a successful communication act.

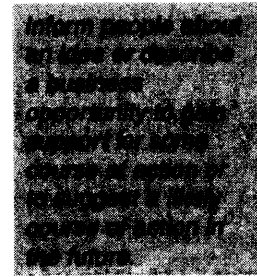
**Purpose** Ask yourself, “Why am I giving this presentation?”

You may be giving the presentation to —

- Sell something or to persuade people to follow a course of action which they may not like to do.
- Inform people about an idea or describe a business opportunity to gain support for some course of action or to suggest a likely course of action in the future.
- Gather people’s views on new plans or products or proposals to introduce changes.
- Put across a problem to seek a solution or to minimize people’s reaction to it.
- Just create awareness by sharing information, without requiring any action or response.
- Motivate, educate, or impart training to promote a more productive work culture.

Having identified your objective, outline it in a single sentence.

For example, as Dean, BITS Distance Learning Programme, you have to put across a proposal to the Board of governors to expand your Institute’s Distance Learning Programme by creating off-campus centres in some Gulf countries such as Dubai or Muscat. You are required to make a presentation before the Board members on your



proposal. You know exactly why you are giving the presentation. Write out your purpose in a single sentence so as to be able to structure the sequence of ideas.

*“To convince the Board members of the viability and desirability of creating overseas (off-campus) Learning Centres, in Gulf Countries, in view of the growing demand for BITS courses abroad.”*

This precise formulation of the objective will help you organise your ideas in a logical order to convince the board.

### **A**analyse Your Audience

Before you make a presentation, know the group you are going to address. Get an idea of the number, nature, needs, level of knowledge, and likely attitude of those people who are going to receive your message. These audience factors will determine the language of delivery and selection of inputs. Understanding the audience's needs will help you focus your presentation on those issues that would be of interest to your listeners. And knowing about the likely attitude of your audience in advance would make you feel confident and not nervous, when you begin. All persons in a group will not have a similar attitude and as individuals they are bound to respond to you differently.

But most importantly, never consider your audience to be a hostile group. They may be opposed to your ideas/message, but they are not your enemies. Always look for some smiling faces among the listeners. They will make you feel at ease. Make eye contact with them. But do not look away from others. Finally, remember the purpose for which you are addressing your audience. And try your best to meet that purpose.

Also, keep in mind that different persons attending your presentation may be looking for different information related to your topic, according to their own interests or needs. Therefore, define the focus and scope of your presentation at the very outset.

**Guidelines for analysing your audience** As a presenter, find answers for the following questions —

- Who is your audience?
- Why are they attending your presentation?
- What is their background and level of knowledge, in relation to your subject of presentation?





- How many persons will there be?
- What is their likely attitude towards the subject and you?
- What is the outcome of your presentation?

The last question is the most important question that needs to be clearly understood and answered. The answer to it will clarify and exactly define your purpose. It will help you write down your expectations from the audience. For instance, in the presentation on creating overseas BITS DLP centres in the Gulf, state in a single sentence your objective, that is —

“After listening to the presentation, the Board members will agree to approve, in principle, of initiating overseas DLP centres and setting up a committee to work out the feasibility of opening of two centres, one each in Dubai and Muscat.”

You can use this visualisation of the audience’s response, as if the presentation has already happened. The positive expectations will give you added confidence.

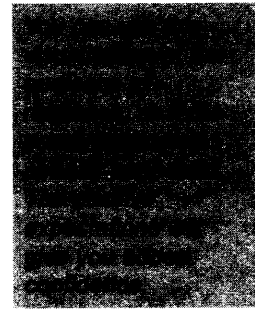
**Identifying the audience’s needs** Before you start collecting material for your presentation know what your audience’s needs. You may have too many ideas and too much information on your topic. Try to determine what information the audience needs to support your proposal or understand the purpose of your presentation. So, it is necessary to first take into consideration the audience’s needs in relation to your specific purpose, and the action you expect the audience to take at the end of the presentation.

The needs of your audience will vary from category to category. For example, if you are making a presentation before your fellow students, or your professors, or local business people, or your friends who know nothing on the topic, your content will change according to their level of information. In some cases, you expect that your audience already has a high level of information, while in other cases, there will be little information known.

Therefore, you should consider the audience’s need. Tell them what they need to know. Do not talk about all that you know.

### **C**ollate Your Information

By now you have done two essential things to give shape to your presentation. You are aware of your purpose and the audience’s needs. Their needs will guide you to gather and systematically arrange the information you want to present.





Structure and design your delivery. So as to present your message so effectively that the audience will ultimately accept your ideas. Let the purpose and the audience's needs guide your exposition and delivery.

## DESIGNING YOUR PRESENTATION

A significant aspect is to know how to start your presentation. What to say first? It does not refer to how you greet your audience. It means, with what point you should begin your delivery. The normal order of any exposition is to first list the main ideas and then elaborate your points. This is the pattern that all reports follow. This sequence would form the order of your presentation and timing of each part too:

- |                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| • Introduction          | 3 minutes  |
| • Main Body             | 15 minutes |
| • Conclusion            | 2 minutes  |
| • Questions and Answers | 10 minutes |

### Logical Ordering of Your Presentation

Let us design the structure of your presentation in such a way that it is logical, clear and complete in 30 minutes.

An example,

#### Introduction

**3 Minutes**

Your introduction indicates the main idea of your presentation. It does only that, without giving details of what is to follow. This helps the audience to know the subject and focus of your presentation.

For instance —

“We propose that BITS should open Distance Learning Centres in two Gulf countries, Dubai and Oman.”

Next elaborate why you are proposing overseas BITS centres.

Speak about how popular BITS educational programmes are nationally and internationally. Indicate the demand for BITS courses in Gulf.

- BITS DLP is a mode of extending its teaching-learning facilities to off-campus distant places.
- The quality and high standards of teaching maintained by

the Distant Centres through faculty, and use of printed texts and audio-video computer aided materials

- DLP is not a correspondence course.

### **Main Body**

**15 minutes**

The main part of your presentation is to be devoted to informing the audience about the advantages of the proposal to BITS and concerned countries in the Gulf. This part would include findings of your survey and analysis of your data to convince your audience.

Divide this section of the presentation into sub sections. As a general rule, do not have more than 3 sub-sections under the main point.

#### **Benefits to BITS**

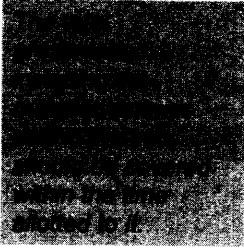
- Helps faculty develop new teaching strategies and attitude to create BITS academic rigour and excellence in a different climate of economic affluence and limited opportunities for higher education, specially in technology, science, and management.
- Support to BITS programmes in general from state departments, business companies, groups, and consultants in the concerned country.
- Added opportunities for summer training and placements
- Financial benefits
- Foreign exchange earnings

#### **Benefits to DLP associated countries**

- Creates great opportunities for Arab and NRI (Indian) students to do engineering, science, or management courses of international level.
- Helps Gulf countries use research capabilities of BITS faculty and postgraduate students to promote their technical know-how in areas of construction, plant management, human relations development.
- Allows the use of BITS faculty as experts and resource persons for their country's on-going projects
- Enables developing countries learn new ways of social and intellectual growth through interaction and contact with India.

#### **Viability**

How will BITS centres work abroad?



### The MOU signed between BITS and respective countries

It has been decided that the BITS centre will be recognized as a centre for higher learning and education duly approved by the concerned Sultanates of Oman and Dubai.

- All physical facilities such as land, building, furniture, laboratories, and library, are to be provided by the host country free of rent and cost initially for five years. Subsequently, rent and cost will be fixed through mutual agreement.
- **Faculty Provision** The entire teaching and administration will be provided by BITS, Pilani (India).
- **Syllabus and Exams** The same courses and evaluation system as in BITS (India) will be used abroad.
- **Admissions system and fees** Admissions will be made on the basis of merit determined through normalisation of marks of applicants (mostly NRIs).
- **Feasibility** Will it work?

#### Conclusion

2 minutes

- Yes, BITS, experience of running 3 DLP centres in India has built confidence and expertise, negating distance as a factor for excellence in education.
- Faculty's commitment
- Readiness to take advantage of the great opportunity
- Faith in the promised support from Gulf States.

#### Questions and answers

10 minutes

This is an important opportunity for audience interaction. Encourage questions. Answer each question seriously and with honesty. Do not try to bluff. If you do not know, be frank.

Prepare a logical sequence of your presentation. This will make the flow of argument clear. It will also help keep to the main argument, as you deliver the presentation to your audience, in the form of face-to-face communication. While speaking to the audience, do not drift. Follow the sequence already worked out. And, if you want to make your presentation effective, keep it simple.

### Time Your Presentation

The total presentation, including the question-answer part at the end, should be covered within the time allotted to it. In actual practice, while speaking, many of us tend to ignore the fact that audience's interest and attention are conditioned by the time-factor.

A well delivered and effective presentation is one that has a smart beginning and logically arrives at a conclusion, on the dot.

### **T**echnique to Integrate Sub-Sections into One Single Whole

Generally, a presentation is delivered in an analytical manner— Introduction -> Main Content -> Conclusion/Recommendations.

To integrate these parts into a continuous whole, use the technique of making proper transitions from one section to another and one stage to another. First summarise what has been said in the section/ stage just covered. For example, you can summarise the main part by saying, "So, you have seen how BITS overseas centres are feasible and viable."

You can move to the end part by indicating what you want your audience to do.

To end your presentation, do the following —

- Repeat your main idea
- Restate your most important points with supportive information
- Thank the audience and stop.

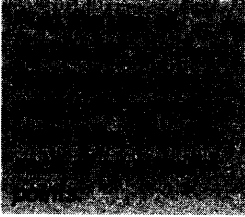
#### **Decide visual aids to be used**

A presentation of statistical data, figures, diagrams, and so on is made vivid by the use of visual aids. Through visual display of ideas, we make our audience see what they hear. We help the listeners receive our message effortlessly. We also keep them fully absorbed in the presentation. The visual projection of the message also enables the speaker keep to the structure of the presentation.

#### **When to use visual aids**

Visual aids should be used to —

- Present numerical and statistical data.
- Present topics related to art, design, or any subject which involves display of material.
- Present new data or plan of which the audience is not aware. The new information will be better understood when seen. For instance, a complex business plan can be orally presented. But it will be better understood if supported visually as well.
- Present comparative statements of facts and figures, specially graphic and diagrammatic forms. Visual presentation of



comparisons always helps comprehension. Suppose you want to compare two structures, the point of comparison can be better appreciated when shown rather than described.

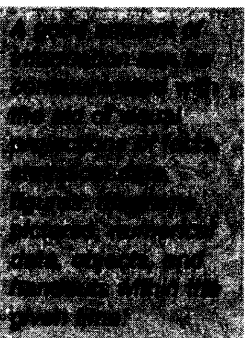
- Present new interpretations of old data. If you have discovered or enunciated something new as a fresh interpretation of an existing phenomenon, showing it makes the information look concrete. By projecting the old information side-by-side with the new indicate how you have gone beyond it.

#### **Advantages of visual aids —**

- We respond easily to what we see. A good amount of information can be communicated with the aid of visual projections of facts, statistical data, figures, diagrams, pictures, numerical data, objects, and handouts within the given time.
- Visual image of message heard is an attention getter. It promotes interest and arrests attention of the audience.
- Visual presentation saves time spent in discussing various ideas.
- It increases the effectiveness of communicating information by an analytical presentation of main points and sub-points in a visible form.

#### **How to use visual aids?**

- Do not use too many visuals. That will lessen their impact.
- Plan the use of visuals by determining your main points. And, make one visual for each of your main points.
- Prepare the visuals in bold, clear letters that can be seen even by the person sitting at the other end of the room.
- Do not fill a slide with too many words. As far as possible, write single words or short phrases to summarise concepts.
- Use different colours to distinguish different points.
- Use the technique of revealing only one point at a time. You can do so by progressively exposing the hidden portion of the slide.
- Number the sequence of your slides and rehearse the presentation with them, to ensure that the slides change in accordance with what you speak. Your speaking and slide projection must be correctly related to each other.



- Explain the purpose and content of the slide when you show it. Keep it displayed for sufficient time to allow the audience to read it and if required, note it down.

*The most often used visual aid in presentation is an overhead projector (OHP).*

#### Different kinds of visual aids

- Board — Black/white
- Flip charts
- Overhead projectors
- Power point software

**Board** The board can be black or white. A board is a primary aid used in classrooms. The use of a Board helps listeners attend with concentration. You should use it for noting important words and concepts, or for doing calculations.

The board should be skillfully used. It is better to divide the board into parts for noting down points and doing calculations and drawing figures. You should write in bold and clear letters. Words should be written in white chalk on a black board in such a way that they are visible at a distance too. Rubbing the board is like changing the slide or transparency. On a white board, use dark marker to make your writing clear and visible. Do not leave the board written over, when you end your talk/lecture.

**Flip chart** A flip chart is a large pad of paper on a stand used as a visual aid for presenting information to a small group of 15 to 20 persons. It is used for many purposes. Advantages of using flip charts are in terms of their being readily generated and added during the talk. They can be prepared in advance for presenting well-drawn diagrams, bar charts and all kinds of graphs. You can faintly sketch outlines of a diagram in the presence of your audience. You can also use them for prompting you by writing faintly in pencil points which will be visible only to you, not to your listeners. Flip charts are of great use for creating and presenting audience's feedback, suggestions, comments, or any other kind of observation, at the end of the talk. Flip charts, which can be written over in water soluble ink, are of perpetual use.

**Overhead projectors** The most often used visual aid in presentation is an overhead projector (OHP). By using it, the presenter is able to speak while looking at the audience and have a prepared transparency projected on the screen. The image projected is bright, large, and colourful. It holds the audience's attention.

An OHP can be used for typed or hand-written matter. The best impact is made when the content is neatly and clearly typed.

**How to prepare your transparencies:**

- Make your transparencies clear and visible.
- Try to prepare the best possible transparencies whether they are hand written or typed.
- Put only one main point on one transparency.
- Do not crowd the visual with too much information packed in a single transparency.
- Write not more than eight lines of the message on one transparency. And use only six words in each line. Thus, you can have maximum of 48 words neatly written/typed on a transparency.
- Use a variety of bullets to mark sub-points or sub-sections.
- Place information at the centre.

**Points for using OHP:**

- Check that the projector's switches are working.
- See if the projector lens and projection surface are clean.
- Adjust the focus for obtaining the brightest and the largest image on the screen by adjusting the position of the projector.
- Place transparency on the projection surface properly.
- Switch off the machine (projector) between the visuals.
- Keep the fan inside the projector machine on, when you are showing the visuals.
- Locate the switches on the OHP using it.
- The projection screen should be clean. If the projection is made on the white board or wall, see that there is nothing written or marked on the board/wall.
- You may use a pointer to emphasise a certain point. You can point to the transparency by using a pen or pencil.
- Unfold the points one by one. You may hide the rest of the matter with the tracing paper which is usually there with each new transparency.
- And finally, remember that the visuals are your aids to communicate with your audience. So, look at the audience for the maximum time. Avoid turning again and again towards the OHP projection. Only ensure that your speech relates to the slides.



## PowerPoint projection

The OHP as a tool for making impressive professional or academic presentations has been taken over by the computer-based powerpoint presentation. This is projected with the help of multimedia projector.

Usually an enlarged computer screen displays the well laid out information to a large audience. Pictures, photographs are all displayed as part of the presentation with cinematic effect. The entire presentation is fed into a floppy disk or computed directly in a laptop. The LCD projector is switched on. The presenter or someone else operates the laptop by just pressing a soft button or sliding the mouse to move the presentation slides in the pre-set order. The whole operation is automatic and simple. The visual impact is impressive and absorbing.

*A presentation is essentially an oral face-to-face communication.*

### Place of presentation

Before presenting, check the size, ventilation, and seating arrangement of the room for the audience. You may not yourself set the place of your presentation, still before starting, ensure your audience's comfort. You should suitably place your screen according to the number of persons and the size of the room. Keep enough space between yourself and the screen to indicate the points on the screen with a pointer (rod). Stand as close to the audience as possible.

### How should you deliver the presentation?

- **Do not read** A presentation is essentially an oral face-to-face communication. It is basically in the form of a well-structured discussion with an objective of making the audience understand the concept. To discuss your ideas, you should not read them out. Neither from the screen, nor from anything written out by you. It is a common mistake to just repeat by reading out what the audience has before them projected on the screen. What you should do is to explain what is there on the screen. You can draw the audience's attention to the points projected, numbers, and figures shown on the screen. But the purpose should be to explain them and not just read them out.

At times, you can turn to the projected statistical data, picture, or diagram and explain the whole thing for the audience's benefit. Or, you can look up some point jotted down on a small piece of paper clutched in your hand. But, at no time

*Treat questions as an important and necessary part of your presentation.*

should you start reading out your information. Remember that a presentation is something to be spoken, not read.

- **Use “you attitude” to ensure audience involvement** Tell the audience how your information is going to bring value to them. How do they stand to gain from the presentation? Why should they listen to you? Answer that question to be able to make your presentation relevant to the needs and interest of your listeners. All such considerations act as motivation raisers. They ensure the audience’s involvement in your delivery of the presentation.
- **Give the outline of the content** In the beginning itself, tell the audience the outline of the content of your presentation. This will help them know the contents of the presentation. They will also be able to know the direction of your argument.
- **Tell them what next** Your listeners may not remember links and transitions you move through in your argument/presentation. You alone know when you move from one stage or step to another step. You should, therefore, help your audience know that you are introducing a new point so that they follow your sequence.

Transitions must, therefore, be well indicated. You can do so by using connectives and inferences. For example, phrases such as “Now we can consider” or “So we can see that...”

### **Handling questions and debate**

Treat questions as an important and necessary part of your presentation. You should consider every question as an opportunity to further explain your point. You can go back to your slides to repeat what you had said. You can also add new evidence or examples to support your point. If your presentation is followed by a series of questions, it shows that the presentation was able to involve the audience. Relate each question to your theme and base your arguments in view of your presentation.

### **Questions help you to —**

- **Further clarify what you have already said.**
- **Add new information** Some presenters deliberately leave out some details which they propose to tell when they are asked for. The discussion session allows them to give that information or further add to what they have spoken.

*If your presentation is followed by a series of questions, it shows that the presentation was able to involve the audience.*

- **Show your knowledge** Your ability to answer questions makes you fully informed on your subject. Self confidence increases and you feel successful as a presenter.
- **Prove relevance of your presentation** A genuine question gives you an opportunity to feel that what you have spoken has been relevant to the interest of the audience. It offers you also a chance to add further information to clarify or strengthen your statement.

### Kinds of questions

Questions can be asked for different reasons. In the audience, there may be persons who may be your rival or competitors or jealous of your success of presentation. There may be also some who sincerely wish to know more or really want to clarify something. These factors determine the nature of questions put to you at the end of your presentation. You should not be classified by any one of them. The questions can be classified as follows —

- **Genuine:** A question may be asked to get more information. Or it may seek clarification of the information given by you. This sort of question is not meant to embarrass you but intends that you elaborate or explain what you know, and have already told.
- **Question for question's sake** There are some questions which do not seek any answer. They are raised for either showing off the knowledge of the questioner, or for exposing gaps in the presenter's knowledge and information. Such questions can be classified as —
  - Attention-grabbing question — to steal the lime-light.
  - Uncompromising question — no answer can satisfy the questioner.
  - Tangential question — a question which has no bearing on the subject discussed. A question posed to oppose your viewpoint.
  - Challenging question — a question that challenges your knowledge and raises doubts about the validity of your information.

These are the human motives which may prompt the audience to put questions to the presenter. In all situations the presenter should exhibit a sense of honesty in answering questions. Admit you do not know the answer. Nobody can possibly be expected to

*A genuine question gives you an opportunity to feel that what you have spoken has been relevant to the interest of the audience.*

*A presentation is a live performance, your non-verbal communication skills while speaking will influence the audience.*

know everything. But everybody is expected to be honest enough to tell what he/she knows.

#### **To change a written report into a presentation**

A presentation is like an extempore speech which is spoken, and not read from the prepared text. A presentation is not reading a report, which is written in a formal language, having long explanations and sometimes several examples. Such details can be presented to the reader, but can not be delivered to an audience that understands things in a different way. In accordance with the spoken form, a presentation has the following characteristics —

- Is delivered in everyday language
- Covers selected information
- Gives main examples

#### **Language of the presentation**

Presentation uses simple form of English. Its language should —

- Be clear
- Be free of jargon
- Use simple sentences
- Avoid complex and passive words and phrases
- Use active form of words
- Be concise
- Be close to the rhythm and syntax of spoken words

#### **Body Language**

Since a presentation is a live performance, your non-verbal communication skills while speaking will influence the audience. You have already studied the power of non-verbal body movements, gestures, and facial expressions in positively or negatively modifying the meaning of the message to a great extent. Here, attention is drawn to the following aspects of your non-verbal behaviour —

- Appearance
- Maintaining Good/Positive Posture
- Eye Contact
- Gesture – use positive gestures and hand movements to reinforce your argument

- Do not stand fixed like a statue. Move with ease and freedom between your screen and your position before the audience. You can signal moving to a new point by changing your own posture or place of standing
- Smile and look relaxed while answering questions

*Rehearse by recording your speech and listening to it for recognising your own voice and manner of delivery.*

### Rehearsal

To give a good presentation, you should rehearse your full performance to be able to:

- Coordinate speech and visual projections
- Know if the information has been properly edited
- Check if the duration is as allowed and specified
- Minimise your stage fright

### How to rehearse —

Rehearse before an auditor.

- You should rehearse before a listener, preferably an auditor who can evaluate your material in terms of its technical accuracy
- The auditor should be able to provide objective criticism
- The auditor should be willing to spare time to critically listen to your presentation
- Use the microphone while rehearsing
- Use the visual aids to coordinate delivery and visual projection
- Observe the time limit
- Use eye contact. Lift your eyes from your notes. Face the audience and make eye contact with the audience for as long as possible
- Practice voice modulation, proper intonation, correct pronunciation of the words and proper variation in volume
- Rehearse by recording your speech and listening to it for recognising your own voice and manner of delivery. You can change or improve your performance by analysing your recorded performance. A video recording of your presentation rehearsal would be most useful to help you improve your body language

### Some guidelines for an effective presentation

Broadly speaking, do all those things which involve the audience and encourage their participation.

Avoid doing things which would reduce audience involvement.

*Visualise the successful end of your presentation. Prepare well. Perform well. The presentation is bound to end well.*

Accordingly, don't do the following.

- Speak too low in a feeble voice that cannot be heard
- Shout which makes you sound angry and jarring

**To arouse and sustain audience interest, do the following positive things:**

- Maintain eye contact with the whole group throughout your delivery
- Be simple and clear
- Put interesting questions to the audience
- Invite volunteers to role-play
- Stand close to the audience in a way that you are fully visible to them
- Make the presentation sound well researched and enthusiastically presented

#### **Two final tips for effective presentation**

1. Stage fright — Treat stage fright to be a natural experience of all presenters. Use it as a positive source of nervous energy essential for performing well.
2. Visualise the successful end of your presentation. Prepare well. Perform well. The presentation is bound to end well.

### **Summary**

- In this chapter, we concentrated on imparting presentation skills to enable you to make effective presentations. These skills can be further developed by paying attention to preparation, delivery techniques, and the art of handling audience's response.
- The presentation is a form of oral communication. Its success depends on the presenter's preparation, his clarity of purpose, understanding of audience needs; his ability to structure the information, choose proper visual aids, and perform by involving the audience's interest and responding to their questions with ease and forthright honesty.
- A good presenter uses his skills of non-verbal communication to reinforce his spoken message.
- Finally, the chapter emphasises the need to develop self-confidence by practising and rehearsing the delivery of presentation before a chosen auditor/critic.

## Review Questions

1. Suppose you have just made a presentation. There is a coffee break. Persons are standing around discussing about it. You are able to overhear what they are talking. What would you like to hear them say about you and your presentation?
2. What according to you is a presentation? List some characteristics of a presentation which distinguish it from a written report.
3. It is the audience which acts as the main factor in determining what your presentation contains and what it does not.

Now, choose a topic for a presentation and briefly indicate how you would change the content of your presentation to suit the following different audiences.

- (i) Fellow students in your subject of study
  - (ii) Persons who have no knowledge of the subject
  - (iii) Professors and experts in your department
4. Often it is difficult to know where to begin. When you are preparing a presentation what do you think is the first thing you should consider? Why?
  5. Why is time-limit important in the case of a presentation? Why do you try to plan it? List at least two reasons for each answer.
  6. How do you indicate to your audience what is coming next?  
Choose a topic and help your audience know what they would expect to know by summarising your content outline for your audience.
  7. Identify the main content of a presentation on a topic of your choice and break it up into different sections of delivery.
  8. List the visual aids which would be most effective in your presentation?  
Mention some advantages of the aids chosen by you.
  9. Mention the characteristics of an effective presentation language.
  10. List the characteristics of your audience you would like to consider, before giving your presentation.

# Chapter

# 11

## *Summer Project Report*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Compare a summer project report with a technical or business report.
- Learn the structure and essential elements of a summer project report.
- Apply the skills of report writing to write your summer project reports.

---

*A project report is often a manager's or engineer's only tangible product. It presents his investigation, his testing, and experimentation. If his efforts are to count in the judgment of his superiors, he must describe clearly what he has done. And often his written report is the only contact with the management.*

**-A U.S. Corporations manual for project reports**

---



## INTRODUCTION

Nearly all universities and management institutes, require their postgraduate management and engineering students to do an industry-related project during their summer term, as part of their curriculum. Institutes of management and technology generally provide manuals which give guidelines, procedures, and rules for the summer projects. But there are institutions where students do not enjoy the benefit of guidelines issued by the respective university/college. It is precisely for such students that a model format of a summer project report is given here.

There can be necessary variations made in the project report format, according to the requirements laid down by the industry and institutions concerned. But the overall design, form, and style would remain unchanged.

## HOW DOES A SUMMER PROJECT REPORT DIFFER FROM BUSINESS/TECHNICAL REPORTS?

- Business/technical report writing usually forms part of a course in communication/technical writing.
- A summer project report is an academic requirement. It is a compulsory requirement for the award of post graduate diploma/degree in management/engineering/IT at nearly all post-graduate institutes of management/engineering.
- It is written on a project completed in an industry/business company under the joint supervision of an industry expert and faculty of the concerned institute.
- It is submitted for evaluation under the guidance of the project supervisor (from the industry) and the faculty (from the concerned institution).
- The summer project report is written at the end of summer term during which a live project is done and successfully completed. But the report is preceded by a summer project proposal based on the background study of the topic/subject assigned by the organisation. This proposal is to be submitted by all students, duly approved by the organisation and faculty guides, within two weeks of their joining the organisation.

*The summer project report is written at the end of summer term during which a live project is done and successfully completed.*

The findings of the project report are often valuable to the organisation as they are a result of the combined efforts of academic research and industrial guidance.

- A summer project report records the findings and results of an actual project done within a given time.

The findings of the project report are often valuable to the organisation as they are a result of the combined efforts of academic research and industrial guidance.

- A good summer project report earns for the student credit in terms of "Grade" (Excellent) and also the possibility of placement in the same company/organisation or elsewhere.
- As a student you have been writing business/technical reports on projects or data given to you. Besides, you have written your reports by assuming you are a manager or a project engineer. Your report often lacks the actual experience of having worked on a live project in a real work environment. The lack of actual experience tends to make your report more descriptive than analytical. The work experience behind the summer project report is reflected from the analytical presentation of the organisational environment, systems operations, and data processing methods.
- Both summer project and business/technical reports have a standard format and structure that consists nearly of the same parts—Introduction, Discussion, Conclusion.
- However, the summer project report, like a research dissertation carries a certificate of approval for its submission and evaluation.
- A business/technical report, if written as a manager/engineer is submitted directly to the sponsoring authority, who assigned the task for submitting a report to help the management take decision or seek solution of a problem.
- For a more detailed understanding of the essential features of a summer project report, you are offered a model of guidelines\* issued by an eminent and internationally acclaimed institute of India.

## GUIDELINES FOR WRITING SUMMER PROJECT REPORT

*Guidelines, procedures, and rules for PGPM summer project*—this manual gives guidelines, procedures, and rules for writing the PGPM summer project report.

\*Source: Management Development Institute, Gurgaon, *Guidelines for PGPM Summer Project 2000*.

## Objective

A summer project report enables students to organise and report the experience gained during the summer project. The report should be a substantive contribution to knowledge through integration of the review of literature and methodology developed for the understanding and resolution of management problem, and the empirical work done therein. The summer project report should demonstrate competence in using or developing a research model, hypotheses, collecting and interpreting data, reaching conclusions and drawing implications for managerial practices. It should also highlight the impact of actions in one area on the others in the organisation. The recommendations made in the summer project report should be in quantitative (costs and benefits) as well as qualitative terms, as far as possible. It is important to note that the summer project report represents a concrete output and would, therefore, have a demonstrable potential, enabling individuals to pursue further work on the problem.

## Topic for Summer Project Report

Once you have found a workable idea, subject it to careful scrutiny, to determine whether it meets the following criteria —

- It should be manageable in size, scope, keeping in view the time and organisational resources required for preparing a report.
- It must have the potential to make a significant contribution to management theory and practice.
- It must also be built on the foundation of a minimum working knowledge of the company's business proposition and practices. This will help screen the ideas which are relevant to that organisation and also provide you with an idea of how the business functions and what the possibilities are, in the business arena.
- It should allow scope for in-depth exploration of the topic.

The summer project report is to be carried out in the sponsoring organisation.

## Summer Project Report Faculty Guides

For supervising and guiding the summer project, you would be consulting two guides — one from your faculty and the other from

*The summer project report should demonstrate competence in using or developing a research model, hypotheses, collecting and interpreting data, reaching conclusions and drawing implications for managerial practices.*

*Before forwarding the summer project report to the GP Office, project guides must ensure the quality of the report and compliance with the guidelines.*

the sponsoring organisation. You have to develop the project from the proposal stage onwards to the final report writing in regular consultation with the faculty. You should initially discuss the nature of the project, as far as possible, before leaving for placement.

### **R**ole of the Summer Project Guides

The role of the summer project guide is as follows —

- Developing and vetting the summer project report proposal with the student.
- Attending the proposal presentation to be made by the student.
- Supervising and guiding the student and providing periodic feedback based on his/her progress.
- Giving written feedback on the draft of the report submitted by the student.
- Before forwarding the summer project report to the GP Office, project guides must ensure the quality of the report and compliance with the guidelines.

## **SUMMER PROJECT PROPOSAL**

The purpose of the summer project proposal is to allow the student to place the proposed study within a coherent, organized framework, which is also standardized. The proposal should be based on the topic/scope of work assigned by the organisation. Project proposal will enhance the student's understanding, grasp and clarity of the subject matter, the context of the managerial problem and the research problem. This is necessary for the direction and procedure of the study to be brought within the required scope, coverage, and rigour, and also for enhancing the quality of the research effort, with the inputs of the expert panel to identify and suggest rectification of possible problems in the proposal.

*The purpose of the summer project proposal is to allow the student to place the proposed study within a coherent, organized framework, which is also standardized.*

### **G**uidelines

The proposal should contain a brief background of the company, its business and environment, and then a survey of literature and context description of the subject. It should clearly state the research objective(s), relate these to the subject and problems in this context, develop a model or state the hypothesis/hypotheses, provide clear

definitions, describe, and justify the proposed research methodology and highlight the potential contribution of the proposed work to theory, practice and research in the relevant area of management. Summer project proposal should be prepared in the manner given below.

1. Format for cover page of summer project proposal (Appendix 1)
2. Table of Contents
3. Introduction — This should begin with a brief description of the company, its business and major environmental factors. This is necessary to record the business environment and functioning and to help the student integrate the learning over the past year, and apply it in the managerial context. Then, the managerial or sectoral problem and the background to the problem, its genesis, consequents, current practices, and so on should be described in detail. Next, it should describe the rationale for the study and the benefits of doing this study, in terms of knowledge, skill, practices, systems, business advantages. The next part is to delimit the scope of the project, and to specify the area of action taken under the project. It should continue with a subsection titled "The Problem Statement". This should help the student clarify the objectives of the project, and how it must be conducted. It should then end by examining the literature and the conclusions drawn from a survey of literature, in a subsection titled "Literature Survey".
4. The Research Problem — This is a specific set of statements which describe the research problem, and go on to develop the hypotheses. They also describe the nature and area of possible outputs from the research if it is exploratory/qualitative in nature. This should refine the general problem statement above into a specific form, so that the problem statement may be tested, answered with a specific study. The expected results from such a research study should also be described, and as far as possible, these should be in terms of the specific hypotheses developed. If possible, the operationalized hypotheses should also be defined at this stage itself, to have the advantage of panel inputs regarding the core of the study.
5. The Research Design — This will contain five subsections, namely,

*The primary purpose of a project report is to demonstrate the student's capability to make effective use of research methods*

Clarity, conciseness, and orderliness of writing and presentation are required.

- (a) The general methodology or procedure of study adopted – whether the case method or based on secondary or accounting/financial data, sales or production data, or survey-based, and so on
  - (b) The sample and sampling frame or data source specifications and plan to acquire the data
  - (c) The data collection procedure
  - (d) The data analysis, qualitative analysis techniques and the form of the outputs of analysis
  - (e) How the expected output may then be arrived at by following this methodology
6. Time Frame – The time frame for the completion of the summer project, stagewise and eventwise, with details if possible, giving the expected day, and dates of completion of each stage
  7. References (See Appendix 12)

### **N**orms for the Summer Project

The primary purpose of the summer project report is to demonstrate the student's capability to make effective use of research methods appropriate to the problem and to develop and handle evidence satisfactorily. The summer project report should, therefore, contain a section on –

- (a) the research procedure(s) employed,
- (b) the extent, nature, reliability and suitability of evidence gathered and
- (c) the conclusions drawn and the recommendations, to demonstrate skills in analysis and interpretation of research results.

Clarity, conciseness, and orderliness of writing and presentation are required. It is necessary to include sufficient evidence to support the reasoning and conclusions. It should clearly demonstrate the basis of the conclusions and recommendations, thereby exhibiting the analytical skill of the student, in this area. The length of the summer project report will vary with the topic and evidence required.

Further, the learning of the student regarding in-depth knowledge of the field should be brought out by the section on literature review and model or framework used for the summer project study.

## Components

The summer project report should appear in the following order:

Page i	:	Cover (Appendix 2)
Page ii	:	Title page (Appendix 3)
Page iii	:	Certificate of approval (Appendix 4)
Page iv	:	Approval of organisational and faculty guides (Appendix 5)
Page v-vi	:	Abstract (Appendix 6)
Page vii	:	Acknowledgements
Page viii	:	Table of contents (Appendix 7)
Page ix	:	List of figures (Appendix 8)
Page x	:	List of tables (Appendix 9)
Page xi	:	List of appendices (Appendix 10)
Page xii	:	Abbreviations (Appendix 11)
Page 1	:	Chapter I
:	:	
Page ...	:	Last Chapter
Page ...	:	References (Appendix 12)
Page ...	:	Appendices

**Cover and title page** The cover and title page must conform to the sample shown in Appendix 2 & 3.

Certificate of approval and approval of organizational and faculty guides—These are the two statements authenticating the work done and are put right in the beginning of the report.

**Abstract** Each summer project report must include an abstract of a maximum of two pages in single space (about 800–1000 words). It should state clearly and concisely the topic, scope, method, and conclusions. The emphasis should be on the conclusions and recommendations. The word limit should be strictly adhered to.

**Acknowledgements** Students are advised to acknowledge help and support from faculty members, library, computer centre, outside experts, their sponsoring organisations, and so on.

**Table of contents** Every summer project report must contain a table of contents which provides a view of the organisation of the report material.

*Students should do a comprehensive library search on the project topic. This will help in knowing the work done in the past and also the current work/research in the particular area.*

**Lists of figures, tables, appendices, and abbreviations** If the summer project report contains tables, figures and abbreviations used, they should be listed immediately following the table of contents on separate pages.

**Chapter I: Introduction** As in the proposal, this should begin with a very brief summary of the company and its business, and then the complete details of the managerial problem and the background to the problem, its genesis, consequences of the problem on the business, and current practices. It should start from a broad overview and then move to the specific focus of the study. This should include the specific business or functional problem being faced by the organisation.

Next, it should describe the rationale for the study and the benefits of the project in terms of knowledge, skill, practices, and systems and how it will help the organisation. The next part is to delimit the scope of the project, and to specify the area of enquiry under the project.

It should continue with a subsection titled "Problem Formulation". This should describe the specific business problem faced and the related issues involved in greater detail than above. The variables involved would then clarify the focus of the project, what is going to be studied, why it needs to be studied. This would clarify the objectives targeted in the summer project.

It should then end by reviewing the literature in this regard and the conclusions drawn from a survey of literature, in a subsection titled "Literature Survey". Students should do a comprehensive library search on the project topic. This will help in knowing the work done in the past and also the current work/research in the particular area. For this purpose, students may refer to earlier PGPM summer projects, books, journals, reports, magazines, newspaper cuttings, and so on. The survey should cover all the issues raised in the earlier sections of the introduction and should help in creating a theoretical framework or set of assumptions, which will define the research area under study, in specific terms. This will help frame the problem, in terms, of variables under study and in focusing the research problem. The theoretical framework or the model developed for this purpose will allow for proper operationalisation of the research problem. Assumptions made in the study must be clearly justified and the grounds or evidence used for the development of the hypotheses,

*Assumptions made in the study must be clearly justified and the grounds or evidence used for the development of the hypotheses,*



(i.e., the variables involved, their relationships, and so on), must be given in detail in this section.

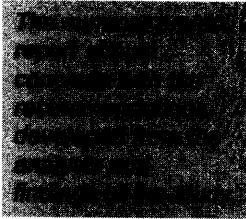
**Chapter II: Research Design** On the basis of the literature review and the discussions with the guides, the final research problem will be described here. The section will draw on the model or framework developed earlier, and should describe the development of the hypotheses or the argument for a qualitative exploratory study on that basis. It will build a set of constructive arguments for the research problem. It will further describe how the problem was operationalised for measurement and analysis and will end with a statement of the operationalised hypotheses. In case it is an exploratory /qualitative/case study, it must then state pointwise the variables under study, nature, and area of possible outputs from the research.

The expected results from such a research study should also be described in terms of the specific hypotheses developed. It must be explained how such results would be of use in the managerial context and the business.

The research design will contain five subsections, namely,

- The general methodology adopted for study, whether case method, or based on secondary or accounting/financial data, or survey based, and the procedure followed in the study.
- The sample or data source specifications and sampling frame or plan to acquire the data. Sources of data must be mentioned at the appropriate places in the summer project. The detailed sampling plan and the procedure adopted for sampling should be described here.
- The data collection procedure. The summer project report must involve data collection in a systematic manner. It should not be a mere collection of opinions based on personal experience. The tool used for data collection, if any, or the method adopted for the same should be described in detail in this section. This should also contain the procedure for administering the tool or conducting the interview, as the case may be.
- The data analysis carried out, the quantitative or qualitative analysis techniques and the form of the outputs of analysis, should all be described in detail here. The software or package used for computation should also be mentioned.

*Sources of data must be mentioned at the appropriate places in the summer project. The detailed sampling plan and the procedure adopted for sampling should be described here.*



- How the expected output may then be arrived at by following this methodology. This section should describe in detail the way in which the results obtained may be interpreted, and how this may help in the given context.

**Chapter III: Results and Conclusions** — This section should include all the tabulated and text descriptions of the results obtained in the study. It should be noted that all the tables and figures should be properly titled and numbered, and listed in the table of contents.

Next, the conclusions and inferences that are drawn from the analysis of the results (in support of the hypotheses or in the case of exploratory study, the variables identified, and or involved), should be stated clearly and specifically. These, should bear on the hypotheses, and should be an answer to the research problem. Thus, they should be linked to the initial research problem, and the conclusions should then be directly related to the various issues regarding the problem under study.

**Last Chapter: Recommendations** — The summer project report should conclude with the recommendations developed from the analysis and findings of the study. This is a critical section and should highlight your specific contributions keeping in view the purpose of the summer project. It should demonstrate learning and use of skill and knowledge in actual problem solving. The last part of this chapter will describe the limitations of the study and suggest directions for further study in this area.

**References** — References should be complete in all respect as shown in Appendix 12.

**Cross Referencing** — All references (books, journals, magazines, newspapers, reports, proceedings.) listed in the summer project report should be cross referenced in the text at appropriate places for example.

“The needs and skills required to manage today’s businesses in a global environment are far different than they were just a decade ago. Clearly, we need a new way of looking at manufacturing, for the way we have considered it in the past is no longer sufficient. With the rapid changes in IT and manufacturing technology, firms are, therefore, getting increasingly interested in managing the strategy-technology connection to develop new ways of achieving competitive advantage (Porter, 1985). Firms are attempting to link manufacturing strategy with business strategy (Skinner, 1985;

Wheelright, 1981), to examine the strategic impact of rapidly changing manufacturing and information technology (Jelinek and Goldhar, 1983; Kantrow, 1980), and to find new ways of viewing manufacturing as a competitive weapon (Hayes and Wheelright, 1984; Jelinek and Goldhar, 1984; Skinner, 1985). Information technology is a key ingredient in this emerging trend of getting competitive advantage through manufacturing.

**Appendices** — Additional information, like questionnaire, list of dealers, details of product portfolio, organization chart, manufacturing prices and data sheets, are put as appendices at the end of the report.

## **SUMMER PROJECT PRESENTATION**

---

Once the faculty and organisational guides approve the final draft of the summer project report, the student has to give a formal presentation on a specified date and time.

Ten copies of the abstract must be kept ready and brought along at the time of the submission/presentation for ready reference of the audience.

# Chapter 12

## *CVs, Group Discussions and Personal Interviews*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Prepare yourself for getting a job.
- Write your CV and job application letters.
- Learn the art of attending interviews.
- Be an effective participant in group discussions.

---

*What lies behind us and what lies before us  
are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.*

**-Oliver Wendell Holmes**

---