

speak to Mr Sudesh Chaturvedi, GM, HR, please?" When speaking with the Personal Secretary of the desired person, you should repeat the same form of introduction and polite request. Tell her (Secretary) your purpose also. She will be able to connect you to the desired person (her boss), only after checking whether her boss is free to talk to you at that moment or you could call again after some time. Remember to be patient and pleasant while dealing with the secretary who is an important link between you (as a caller) and her boss (the person you would like to contact).

**Speaking with the desired person** If the receiver does not know you, you should first introduce yourself, "Good Morning Mr Chaturvedi, I am Pallavi Mehta, Marketing Manager, of Ferns' n Petals. I want to know the details about your company's order for floral decoration.... ." As a caller, you should use the opportunity of your conversation with the receiver to make him (receiver) feel that the information you want could be acquired only from him and that it is required immediately. In other words, you should involve the receiver in a dialogue, instead of questions which can be answered just by saying 'yes' or 'no'. Suppose you say, "Can I have the details of ....." The receiver can respond by saying, "No, not now," and may hang up. Hence, you should use your conversational skills to establish a good relationship with the other person so that the call ends on a positive note.

### **If the Call is Cut off**

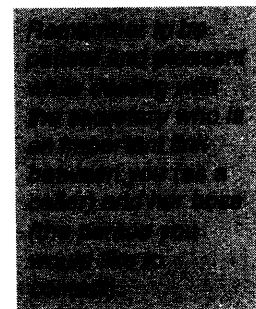
Many times, the telephone line suddenly gets disconnected. In such situations, courtesy demands that the person who originally initiated the call should redial immediately and say, "Sorry, the call got disconnected."

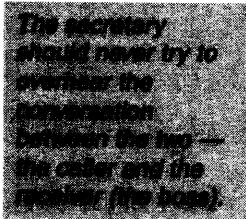
In case, the receiver has to suspend your call for attending to some other more important call, it is the duty of the receiver to resume the call and use some pleasant explanation to see that you do not feel slighted.

### **Common Telephone Courtesies**

Make your business calls polite by using words, such as 'Please' and 'Thank you', when you make a request or get something done or completed.

- Always use interrogative form for making a request. "Could





I .....” or “May I .....”. Use of direct categorical statement amounts to order. “I want to talk to .....” is not a polite request. Instead “May I talk to ....” is a more polite form of request.

Even, the statement, “I request you to connect me to so and so number/ or person” is not quite appropriate for requesting an unknown person to do something for you even if it is his/her duty. Instead, say, “May I request you to .....”.

### **T**elephone Etiquette to be Observed as a Secretary

In business, telephone calls are mostly received and passed on to the boss by the personal secretary. You have to be courteous with her/him. In return, she/he has to not only be courteous but tactful too.

Sometimes, the secretary has to act very fast to find out whether the boss is free to talk to you or not available, before responding to you. So, she/he first would tell you, “Please, just hold on.” Meanwhile she/he knows what the boss wants. If the boss is present, but does not want to speak to you for some reason, the secretary will choose any one of the following polite things to say to you — “Sorry, he is busy in a meeting. May I have your number and he will call you later?”

“He is busy with a foreign delegation. May I ask him to call you back as soon as he is free?”

These statements may not necessarily be true. However, they are intended to keep you satisfied even when the call is not successful. The secretary should never try to overhear the conversation between the two — the caller and the receiver (the boss). After putting through the call to the boss, she should go off the line.

### **T**elephone Precaution

As a caller you do not know whether the person receiving your call is alone. Therefore, the first rule of telephone conversation is that confidential matters should never be discussed over the phone. They can be overheard/tapped in transmission.

However, if you have to discuss something personal or something you won’t like others to know, you should check with the person you are calling in a polite manner. For example, you

may say, "Can we talk about the tender for the Golden Highway project?" or just ask, "Are you free? Can we talk about the tender?"

This would save you from causing any embarrassment to receiver, or risk of leakage.

Communication over the phone requires the use of non-verbal skills, such as pleasant tone, sweet voice, proper intonation, and clear articulation of words. We should be able to convey larger part of the message through our way of speaking rather than the meaning of words alone. Telephone etiquette involves good manners to create good business relations between two persons.

## BUSINESS DINING

Business meals can be with colleagues or clients. Colleagues meet before or after the office hours. They also have formal occasions to be together at lunch or dinner parties. Sometimes, they meet at social functions and festivals, religious ceremonies, weddings, or birthday parties. At such occasions, we should follow the cultural norms which set the unwritten protocol (rules) of behaviour as members of a company, group, or organisation. They are not rules of discipline. They define the norms and forms of appropriate behaviour as executives or the educated and cultured members of a group. It is common practice to negotiate business at, lunch or dinner. We should keep in mind that such business occasions are, in fact, business activities; act, therefore, with a sense of responsibility. Do not consider it merely as an occasion for free drinking and smoking.

These business occasions of meals with colleagues, clients, or consultants have their own protocol (code of behaviour) and they must be followed for cracking business deals. You can observe the following established norms regarding business meals.

### **A**s a Host

As a host, invite the guest personally, may be over telephone. However, confirm the date, time, and place in writing. If the venue is new for the guest, help him/her by giving directions to the venue. Apprise the invitee of your guest list. In the letter you should mention this fact and give their names and positions. For instance, "My colleague, Abhishek who is looking after management trainees will also be with us". It is a good practice to confirm once again the

Communication over the phone requires the use of non-verbal skills, such as pleasant tone, sweet voice, proper intonation, and clear articulation of words.

*Business talk is conducted in an informal manner. After some initial pleasantries, the host opens the subject of the meeting in a general form to provide a context for the specific matter to be discussed.*

scheduled meeting a day prior to the event. As a host, you should reach the hotel or restaurant a little ahead of the given time and personally check the seating arrangements made by the hotel/restaurant manager. Receive the guest personally outside the dining hall. Move in together to the table. It is courteous to ask the guest to order his/her choice of dishes/food and soft drinks. And it is only proper that you, as host, make the payment of the bill. Similarly, you should arrange to pay for the taxi to take back the guest to his/her place of work or stay.

Business talk is conducted in an informal manner. After some initial pleasantries, the host opens the subject of the meeting in a general form to provide a context for the specific matter to be discussed. The meeting is held in a free and relaxed manner. If necessary, some points or conclusions are sometimes noted down.

Business meals provide opportunities for easy give-and-take negotiations. They democratise business by bringing two complementary parties, such as employers and prospective employees, companies and clients, interviewer and interviewee, as equals at a social occasion.

### **F**ood Preferences

As a guest you should stick to your own dietary preferences. If you do not or cannot, as laid down by caste, creed, or religion or personal choice, take something, you should feel free to refuse. If you are served, say beef or pork and you do not eat it, say so politely.

The same must be your attitude to drinks. If you are a teetotaler, decline the offer to drink politely. Do not be eloquent on the harms of drinking. Just say, "Thanks, I would like to have some lime cordial or fresh lime soda (or whatever be your choice)."

Although, it is considered best to avoid drinking at business dinners, and, if however, you, accept the drink, avoid drinking too much. You can excuse yourself by saying "I have an early morning flight", or "I have to drive back", or "In fact, I never drink".

If you receive your dinner plate with too much food, do not worry. Just eat whatever you want and indicate that you have finished by placing your knife and fork together in either "the four O' Clock" or "Six O' Clock" position on your plate.

## **T**able Manners

Business dinners are formal occasions in the manner of using forks, knives, and spoons is an indicator of your culture. But Indians, prefer to eat food with their hands. The only cutlery used by them could be a spoon. Eating with the hand is just fine. But, if you are using knife and fork, then you should know how to use them for different things. Some general rules of correct use of cutlery are given here.

## **C**utlery Set for a Formal European Style Serving

Placed from left to right away from you:

- A blunt butter knife placed on bread and butter plate
- Dessert spoon together with dessert fork
- Water glass, red-wine glass, white-wine glass
- Coffee cup and saucer

Placed from right to left near you

- Cocktail fork
- Soup spoon
- Tea spoon
- Dinner knife
- Dinner plate
- Dinner fork
- Salad fork
- Dinner napkin

*Eating with the hand  
is just fine.*

## **H**ow to Use Knife and Fork

The rule for using a knife and a fork is quite simple — the knife cuts the food, the fork places it into the mouth.

The knife is only for cutting food into small pieces be it vegetables, meat, or any other food. It should never be placed into the mouth. The knife is always held in the right hand.

The fork is first held in the left hand with knife in the right hand, to cut food into small pieces. Then the knife is kept on the plate and in its place the fork is held in the right hand to place the food in the mouth. When not in use, both knife and fork rest on a side plate, never on the table.

*The best rule for anyone to follow is to eat the way you are accustomed to.*

Sometimes, in the European style of eating, people hold the knife in the right hand to cut food into small pieces and fork in the left to eat. Butter knife is a blunt edged knife used to cut small portion of butter from a common dish, which is then kept on a side plate.

The basic difference between Asian and European styles of eating is that in Asia, specially India and Pakistan, people often pick up a large piece of food and directly bite from it. This is never done by an American or a European. The food is cut into small pieces. Generally westerners eat with their mouths closed. Whereas most Asians bite morsels and chew them. Their mouths remain partially open. These differences in styles of eating are only cultural. They are based on convenience and habits.

The best rule for anyone to follow is to eat the way you are accustomed to. Use whatever cutlery you have been regularly using, with elegance at formal business meals. If you are comfortable eating with hands, use your hand. If you need a spoon, ask for it.

### **H**ow to Get your Server's Attention

Usually, waiters are watchful. A little signal from you catches their attention immediately. However, if you find that you have to call the waiter, the best way is try and establish eye contact and if necessary turn a little towards him/her. And still if you feel you have to draw his/her attention, the best thing to do is to say, "Excuse me!" This is bound to work.

### **B**elching

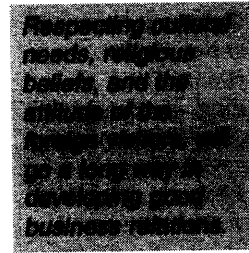
Belching after a good meal shows you have eaten well. But in a formal group, it should be done in a subdued manner. As for farting, or passing gas, avoid and suppress it if you can. Or else excuse yourself and go out for a while.

### **I**nteract Courteously with Foreign Clients

Respect foreign client's religious belief and cultural needs

In business, foreign visitors should not be allowed to feel like a strangers in other countries. We generally believe that when we visit abroad we should behave according to the business norms and etiquette of the place. Accordingly, we assume that foreign business visitors would observe our business norms such as trade practices,

working hours, office culture, and so on. But, there may be some aspects of social and religious beliefs of our foreign visitors which we should try to respect in our business environment. As a host, it is our primary duty to make our guest feel fully comfortable in every way. Respecting cultural needs, religious beliefs, and the attitude of the foreign visitors, will go a long way in developing good business relations.



## FOREIGN LANGUAGE

1. Nothing pleases foreigners more than speaking to them in their own language. English is today a global link language. Yet Arabs, Japanese, Germans, French, and Russians prefer to conduct business in their own language. A foreign visitor may not know English as well as we do. Therefore, use an interpreter, if necessary, for important business occasions.
2. Prepare documents in both languages, English and the foreign visitor's language.
3. Try to learn and use some words of greetings in the visitor's language.

## BUSINESS MANNERS OF PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

To be successful in business transactions we should know the chief differences in business manners of people of different countries. When we are in a foreign country, or are hosts to a foreigner in our country, bear in mind the following business etiquette (norms) —

Business meetings and personal style of Americans —

- Shaking hands during introductions is normal for men, but not so common among women.
- Business cards are exchanged only when there is a need to do so. For instance, to meet later.
- Punctuality is most important as a form of courtesy and business manners.
- Americans prefer breakfast meetings to develop close business relations. They also have meetings over lunch.
- Americans prefer to call you by your first name. It is a

*Dutch businessmen speak English fluently. Most of them are polyglots (speaking or writing several languages). They can, therefore, do business in several languages.*

common business practice. So, you should not feel that he/she is taking undue personal liberty by using your first name.

- Giving gifts as a memento is a personal act to be done only after considering the rules of the respective laws with regard to the value of the gift given. Therefore, to avoid causing embarrassment, it is better to entertain an American lavishly.

**British** British businessmen share most of their culture and business manners with other Europeans. They are formal in meetings and personal style.

**French** French businessmen usually choose to speak in French with businessmen from other countries. They are very cordial, and greet you both while meeting and parting by shaking hands. Businessman and businesswoman embrace and kiss each other on meeting and parting. Business is a serious and formal occasion for them.

**Germans** German business meetings are highly formal and scheduled much in advance. Punctuality is of utmost importance among business norms and etiquette. Germans take pains in making themselves intelligible in English too, if required. People are addressed by their surnames. To show respect to senior businessmen they are sometimes called as "Herr Doktor". Similarly, businesswomen are always addressed as "Frau" (a married or widowed German speaking woman, often used as a title).

**Italian and Spanish** Both Italians and Spanish take business occasions as part of social life. They are less formal than other Europeans. They are not fussy about punctuality at meetings. Personal welfare and family matters may precede the business discussion. During the business meeting, there can be an excited exchange of words which leaves no trace on anyone's feelings as soon as the meeting is over. They freely accept hospitality and gifts without linking them with their business deals.

**Dutch** Dutch businessmen speak English fluently. Most of them are polyglots (speaking or writing several languages). They can, therefore, do business in several languages. They are relaxed in their approach to business meetings and personal relations.

As a host, it is your duty to see that guests from different countries are made to feel comfortable in a foreign environment. Their personal needs of smoking or drinking must be fulfilled and need special attention by you as a host.



### Japanese

- Japanese businessmen generally greet the US or UK businessmen by shaking hands, and not with a bow. You should also do the same.
- You should offer and accept the business card with both hands.
- The Japanese always like to maintain a personal space. Hence, never back slap or hold their elbow while chatting.
- Address the Japanese visitor by using Mr/Ms before the name, never by the first name.
- Do not embarrass a Japanese businessmen by insisting on a point to the extent that he has to say no to your point/offer. In Japan, saying 'no' is considered impolite.
- Japanese consider giving gifts as an important part of the business. A gift has to be in keeping with the status of the person. Gifts in pairs are considered lucky like pen and pencil set, cufflinks. But not in fours — the word for death.
- Do not send red greeting cards to Japanese business acquaintances. Red cards in Japan are funeral notices.

**Arabs** Arab businessmen are known for their warm-hearted meeting and parting. They stick to their traditional way of greeting both as hosts and visitors by saying "salaamalayakum" (Peace be upon you), accompanied by a firm handshake. To show greater warmth and closeness an Arab visitor/host may embrace you while placing the right hand on the heart and the other hand on your right shoulder and kiss you on both cheeks. Do not reciprocate his act, unless you are also an Arab.

Arab business people never seem to be under pressure of time. They do not mind if you are late for the meeting.

Meetings for business are preceded by social pleasantries. Enquires about welfare of an individual or about health of members of their families are never made on this occasion. And with businessmen from foreign countries discussion on religious and political matters are strictly avoided.

Business meetings are conducted in a leisurely style. Therefore, the business session may get extended much beyond your expectation. But you should remain patient. Arabs extend lavish hospitality as hosts. As visitors, they expect similar hospitality in other countries.

*Individuals represent companies. The norms for interpersonal behaviour apply also to company-to-company behaviour.*

To an Arab businessman, giving gifts is a part of hospitality. Therefore at dinners, small gifts are offered as a token of good relationship. As tokens of gratitude for favours received, expensive gifts are presented, which are received with great pleasure as part of business culture. It is not looked upon as bribe. It is an accepted form of thanks giving. But never give handkerchiefs as gift, as they symbolise tears and parting. Arabs, like most Asians, eat their meals with their right hand. Do not serve alcohol.

**Indians** As Indian business goes global, businessmen in India are realising the need to prepare themselves for the duties of international hosts and also to groom themselves as global visitors by a judicious mix of modernity and tradition.

Indian business culture is eclectic. Shaking hands at a meeting or parting is a common practice. Indians have always been known for their hospitality. Visitors are always treated with utmost attention and respect.

Business meetings are punctual, well planned, and formally conducted and protocol of seniority is observed. In matters of business discussion, juniors always give precedence to their seniors. And many times juniors wait for a signal from their senior to contribute to the discussion.

Business cards are exchanged while parting generally to indicate further contacts.

Presentation of small gifts at the end of the meeting as memento is considered a goodwill gesture. Very important persons are received, at the threshold of the business-meeting venue, by senior persons and are usually presented with bouquets. They are also normally accompanied back to their vehicles and duly seen off.

## **BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS ETIQUETTE**

Individuals represent companies. The norms for interpersonal behaviour apply also to company-to-company behaviour. Each individual is the company's image builder. The individual should know how to conduct himself/ or herself as a representative of the company.

Good business behaviour includes the following —

### **B**e Loyal to Your Organisation

- Do not criticise your organisation before your colleagues from other companies.
- Defend your colleague's action without offending the complainant. Promise corrective action on your colleague's/ company's behalf.
- Always speak well of your company. You are a part of your company's activities.
- Feel proud of your organisation's achievements. Keep yourself fully informed of the new developments and better prospects for the company. No company can be free from problems and setbacks. But highlight the positive gains and not the losses.

*Feel proud of your organisation's achievements. Keep yourself fully informed of the new developments and better prospects for the company.*

### **C**onfidential Matters

- Keep confidential material in as few hands as possible. It can be used against the interest of your company.
- Secure records and use code names if the information involves protecting the concerned persons.
- Help others develop trust in you. Confidentiality is a mutual act of trust. Do not leak other's secrets to protect your own secrets from getting leaked.

## **MANAGING CUSTOMER CARE**

A company's business sense and good manners are best seen in how employees deal with their buyers or suppliers. To maintain your customers and clients observe the following —

- Handle the poorest of customers well. You cannot afford to ignore the rich customer who is always the proverbial 'king'. But your company's reputation is built on how you treat your ordinary customers and clients.
- Be prompt in your service/supply to the customer.
- Observe the following for gaining competitive advantage —
  - Number of complaints received and responded to.
  - Number of clients revisiting your company.
  - Number of step-ins every day.

*Good manners breed good understanding and mutual respect necessary for good business relations.*

- Commitment of your suppliers to help you in situations of emergency.

When you take a decision that will affect the interests of many people, look for mutual benefits for both parties, and all stakeholders.

### **R**espect Hierarchies

Treat all colleagues with respect. And recognise the fact that just as you have your position in your company, others as well have positions above you. Similarly, while dealing with persons from other companies, inform them of your position through your business card, also know in a similar way the host's position in his/her company. And extend due respect to the person you are visiting.

Good manners breed good understanding and mutual respect necessary for good business relations.

Finally, if the purpose of business communication is the fulfillment of a certain business objective, knowledge of business etiquette for expressing and manipulating individual personality is of paramount importance.

## Case Study

### Arvind Pandey Caught in Business Web

Arvind Pandey is a project manager at Al Saba Construction Company in Muscat. It is a flourishing company with several construction projects in Muscat and abroad. It is known for completing projects on time and with high quantity construction. The company's Chairman is a rich and highly educated Omani. A German engineer is Arvind's Vice-President for urban and foreign construction projects.

Three months ago, Al Saba had submitted a tender for a major construction project in Kuwait. Its quotation was for \$ 25 million. In Kuwait the project was sponsored and announced by a US-based construction company called Fuma. According to Al Saba, their bid of \$ 25 million was modest but had included a high margin of profit.

On 25 April, Arvind was asked to go to Kuwait to find out from the Fuma project manager the status of their construction proposal. Arvind was delighted to know that Fuma had decided to give his company (Al Saba) the construction project work. The project meant a lot for Al Saba as they had already put in a lot of effort and money in planning the proposed construction in Kuwait.

But before Arvind could thank the Fuma project manager, he was told that their bid should be raised to \$ 28 million. Arvind was surprised. He tried to convince the Fuma project manager that his (Arvind) company

had the best reputation for doing construction work in a cost effective way. However, he could always raise the bid by \$ 3 million. But he wanted to know why he was required to do so.

The Fuma manager's reply was, "That's the way we do our business in this part of the world. \$ 1 million will go to our Managing Director in the US, I shall get \$ 1 million, you, Mr Pandey, will get \$ 1 million in a specified account in Swiss Bank."

Arvind asked, "But why me?"

"So that you never talk about it to any one." The Fuma Project Manager said.

Arvind promised never to leak it out to any one else. And he tried to bargain to raise the bid by \$ 2 million. For, Arvind was familiar with the practice of "pay-offs" involved in doing business in the Middle East. But he was never personally involved in any such thing. He thought it was against his loyalty to his company and his personal ethics.

Arvind promised the Fuma project manager that the bid would be raised to \$ 28 million and fresh papers would be put in. He did not want to lose the job.

He came back to Muscat and kept trying to figure out how he should place the whole thing before his German Vice President. He obviously was at a loss.

### Questions to Answer

1. Analyse the reasons for Arvind Pandey's dilemma.
2. Does Arvind Pandey really face a dilemma?
3. In your view what should Arvind Pandey do? Should he disclose it to his German Vice President?

### Summary

- Successful businessmen should understand the unwritten rules of business etiquette. Every company has its own rules of appropriate business behaviour. This chapter discusses general rules for introducing self and others, handling telephone calls, attending business dinners as a host or a guest. The chapter further suggests guidelines for courteous interaction with businessmen from different countries. To be successful in business, one should imbibe the norms and rules of one's work place.

### Review Questions

1. At a business lunch your host keeps you waiting for 50 minutes at the reception and you are getting very late for your next meeting. Do you —
  - (a) Suggest rearranging the meeting for another day;
  - (b) Try to delay your next appointment;
  - (c) Excuse yourself from the present lunch?
2. While introducing yourself to an American host and trying to shake hands you notice he is feeling embarrassed because he cannot move his right arm, it is an artificial arm. Do you —
  - (a) Apologise and say 'sorry';
  - (b) Greet by shaking his left hand;
  - (c) Give up the idea of shaking hands?
3. Why should the host always be at the venue of business dinner ten minutes before the meeting?

4. Discuss the attitude of the following businessmen to the practice of giving gifts as mementos —
  - (a) Indians
  - (b) Japanese
  - (c) Germans
  - (d) Americans
5. Why are business etiquette rules called unwritten rules?
6. What key points of cultural differences should you keep in mind while dealing with foreign businessmen?
7. Why are good manners necessary for good business?
8. Show how individual manners reflect a company's culture and etiquette.

# Chapter 14

## *Written Analysis of Cases*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Know nature and types of case studies.
- Understand the process of case analysis.
- Identify major problems/ or questions involved in the case study.
- Consider alternative solutions/answers to the questions raised.
- Choose the best solution/answer.
- Write findings of analysis of the case — statement of the problem, the logical framework, and consideration of the alternative solutions/answers and final decision.

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*A single well designed case study can provide a major challenge to a theory and provide a source of new hypotheses and constructs simultaneously.*

**-Donald R Cooper and Pamela S Schindler**

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## WHAT IS A CASE?

A case is a written account of real or simulated managerial problems, dilemmas, and situations calling for solutions. Analysis of cases is an exercise in critical understanding of concepts and causes of problems and events.

### Types of Case

Broadly speaking, a case can be —

1. Theoretical
2. Factual

1. **Theoretical Cases** Case studies which are meant for reading and clarifying theoretical concepts of a discipline, such as management, involving the study of marketing, human relations, communication, and so on are academic case studies. They are used as examples to concretise the abstract concepts of a discipline. The interplay of ideas is presented in the form of action, interaction, and conflict among persons involved in a life-like situation, described by the case. The case study (Devox (India) Limited) in Chapter-1 of this book is an example of a theoretical case. It uses the principles of oral, non-verbal and written communication to demonstrate the dynamics of effective communication.

2. **Factual Cases** Case studies which describe and illustrate an organisation's experience and efforts to overcome different problems and situations are real cases. These cases are based on facts. They present the critical management issues with full details of facts and figures. Their analysis requires a systematic approach to identification of the main problem, alternative solutions, and finally the best solution. Such factual case studies project corporate problems belonging to any functional area of management, such as marketing, production, or human relations. But the technique of analysing different cases would not be different. Analysis of factual cases will follow the same technique of identification and evaluation of alternatives for documenting the strategic process of decision-making.

A significant aspect of a factual case study is that it presents

*Analysis of factual cases will follow the same technique of identification and evaluation of alternatives for documenting the strategic process of decision-making.*

a problem/event in its entirety, resulting from several reasons. In life, nothing happens in isolation. Interlinked events offer a kind of intersection between causes. The case study requires the application of analytical reasoning to the main problem and its best solution. The case of the Fifth Floor given earlier (at the end of the chapter on Organisational Communication) illustrates a problem of managerial protocol.

### HOW TO DO A CASE ANALYSIS

Before we go to the actual process of case analysis, it is necessary to understand a few things about a case and its analysis.

1. A good case study is based on critical management issues faced by organisations. It does not focus on personal dilemmas.
2. The subject matter of a case can be used for different purposes. A case can illustrate the principles of effective communication, and it can be used also to demonstrate techniques of sales and marketing. For example, see the case of Devox as the case of a less expensive customer.
3. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions raised by a case study. Your answers/solutions to the problem should be logically correct. Whatever you finally recommend as your decision should be in keeping with the logical framework that you establish at the outset of analysing the case.

### PROCESS OF ANALYSING A CASE

Firstly, the case analysis requires you to understand the case and its context. It involves comprehensive study of all those factors at the organisational level, which may be responsible for affecting the working conditions and performance level. The first thing is, therefore, to know the goals, objectives, and the structure of the organisation.

*In life, nothing happens in isolation. Interlinked events offer a kind of intersection between causes.*

#### **F**irst Step — Study the Case

First you study the case thoroughly. Start with quickly reading the important points of the case. Understand the general drift and then re-read the whole material slowly taking note of important issues, facts, and ideas.

## Second Step — Identify the Problem

After what you have known about the case, the most important thing is your ability to identify the main problem and discover relationships between the problem and the factors responsible for it.

Your critical insight should help you distinguish between the problem and the symptoms of the problem. For example, frequent strikes in a company can be viewed as a problem, as it causes dislocation in so many ways. But, if you are studying strikes, they are symptoms of something being wrong in the organisation, its work-culture, system of promotions and rewards, and its goals and objectives. Hence, you should identify the real problem, as distinguished from its symptoms.

*In linking facts in casual relationships, if you have made any assumptions, you must state them clearly.*

## Third Step — Define the Problem

Formulate the problem in precise words.

## Fourth Step — Identify Causes of the Problem

State relevant facts and establish logical links between them. Here, you should remember that facts are not opinions. Collect facts as your basic data obtained through investigation and study of work-environment and other industry-related factors affecting the case – the problem of situation to be resolved.

**Statement of assumptions, if any** In linking facts in casual relationships, if you have made any assumptions, you must state them clearly. These assumptions form a part of your hypothesis that would need to be tested as correct.

## Fifth Step — Develop Alternatives

Suggest alternative answers/ solutions to the problem or questions raised in the case.

## Sixth Step — Evaluate Alternatives

Evaluate each solution in terms of its relevance to the objective and the decision to be taken. Compare the results and decide on the best course of action recommended by you.

### **S**eventh Step — Develop Plan of Action

Work out a plan of implementation.

### **W**riting a Case Analysis — The Structure

The writing of a case analysis follows a sequence of steps. Like a project report or an investigative report, it presents the process, findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the analysis in an organised form, under distinct headings and sub-headings.

#### Main parts of the written analysis

1. **Title of the case** Reflects the objective/central problem.
2. **Statement of the problem** States the objective of the case study and what is to be achieved through the proposed solution.
3. **The case** A very brief narration of the entire situation/problem to provide a context for the various issues to be investigated.
4. **Scope of the analysis** Define clearly the limits of your analytical study of the case. Tell what aspects of the case are being analysed in your study.
5. **Alternative solutions and their evaluation** Each suggested answer/solution should be fully considered in relation to the company's objectives and goals. How does this action affect all those who are stakeholders? Evaluate each answer in terms of merits and demerits.

#### **Create sub-sections for each solution separately**

Answer/Solution 1	:	Merits
		Demerits/Limitations
Answer/Solution 2	:	Merits
		Demerits/Limitations

6. **The best solution** Mention the recommended solution. Justify your answer with all those principles of management or concerned area relevant to the case under consideration that direct you to select that solution. At this stage, the logical framework you had developed to interpret the case will help you justify your decision to recommend a particular solution/answer.
7. **Conclusion** In industry-based case studies, an action plan to overcome the problem/situation is worked out for implementation. The recommended action is fully analysed in terms of its viability, feasibility cost, and benefit to the company. Any other inherent limitation or weakness in implementing the plan should be clearly discussed and indicated as a point for caution and further consideration.

**8. Executive summary** Mention the following —

- The problem
- The possible solutions
- The best solution
- Recommended plan of action
- Benefits to the company

The executive summary is for helping the decision makers know the problem and its solution without going through the entire case analysis. It is placed at the beginning of the written analysis.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR A CASE ANALYSIS**

**1. Thorough knowledge of the concerned subject** Let us go back to the analysis of the case, “Devon (India) Limited: The case of a Less Expensive Customer”, titled “Profile of an Effective Communicator” (Chapter 1).

The analysis has been purposively placed at the beginning of the book. Can you now see the purpose of doing so? Because, the analysis introduces you to all the essential principles and characteristics of effective oral, non-verbal and written communication. Almost like a summary of the book.

The first requirement for being able to write analysis of a theoretical case is thorough knowledge of the subject. Since the Devon case is considered as a communication case, its analysis needs application of concepts of effective communication. If we take the same case as an illustrative situation in consumer behaviour, its analysis will require a thorough knowledge of consumer behaviour concepts.

**2. Ability to be analytical** For attempting case analysis, you have to go deeper into the situation described in the case. You have to be searching and seeking answers for questions, such as —

- What does this signify or mean?
- Why is this important or significant?
- Why does it happen?
- How can we relate different things to one another?
- Can we explain the whole thing in terms of our assumptions and observations?

*The first requirement for being able to write analysis of a theoretical case is thorough knowledge of the subject.*

*You should be able to finally view the whole problem from a certain perspective.*

To analyse means to break a thing into its constituent parts. It involves more than describing a thing. We take ideas apart so that we can discuss components of ideas separately. Then, we make connections among components of ideas, discovering relationships, and interactions with which we tie them together. And finally examine the validity of logic we use to establish relationships between ideas and their components.

3. **Ability to do critical thinking** The ability to think critically is to go beyond the obvious and look for the truth underlying the conflicts, and statements that meet our eyes. It is an attitude of mind to question and accept things only after examining the basis of our belief in them.
4. **Ability to evaluate** Ability to evaluate is a part of critical thinking. When we exercise judgement to establish the correctness or incorrectness of our view of things, we are being evaluative. To evaluate, you have to give reasons for your judgement. For example, it is not enough to say that he/she is the most effective communicator. You have to tell why and how he/she is the best communicator. For example, you can not just say that Rahul is the most successful communicator. You have to analyse the qualities of Mr Rahul, Mr Sharma, Mr Oberoi, Mr Khare and Mrs Oberoi as communicators. And then, decide that Rahul as a communicator corresponds to your concept of an effective communicator.
5. **Ability to infer** From the given analysis of the Devox case, you should have noticed that the analysis is centrally related not to the problem of Mr Oberoi's purpose to return the pair of shoes, but with the way his skills to convince, persuade are outdone by Rahul's communicative competence.

You should be able to finally view the whole problem from a certain perspective. Here, the analysis takes the position that effective communication is an act of total personality of the communicator.

Again, as an example of written analysis of a factual case, we may consider "Closing the Fifth Floor" (at the end of Chapter 3). This case was given to nearly 300 groups of executives at several executive development programmes. The candidates were given enough lead time to understand the case thoroughly and answer the following questions.

1. Analyse the reasons for the spreading of rumours of the lay off of the observation ward staff.
2. Was it correct to include Lily Joe in the initial discussion meetings?
3. Ideally how should the situation have been handled?

### **ANSWERS TO QUESTION 1 INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING COMMON POINTS**

- Slow decision making by management and poor coordination.
- Management was not pro-active – did not anticipate confusion and protests.
- Too many members and too many meetings regarding lay-offs.
- Inability of management to take staff into confidence from the very beginning.
- Lack of proper planning and inept execution of retrenchment.
- Communication gap and increasing anxiety of concerned staff.
- Fear of the fifth floor staff.
- Inclusion of Lily in the initial meetings.

It was generally believed that management was behind the rumours.

Here are some examples of the answers to question 1

#### **Example 1**

Prima facie it seems that inclusion of Lily in the meetings was the primary reason for spreading of the rumours. However, it cannot be said with certainty that other members in the meeting would not have spread the news, since the decision would affect quite a number of employees of the Fifth Floor (hospital). The very fact that members were sworn to secrecy would be enough reason to fan the flames.

#### **Example 2**

- (a) Rumours were spread for generating fear, agitation among employees so that they do something illegal or untoward which

*Rumours were spread for generating fear, agitation among employees*

would help the management to justify its closure of the fifth floor.

- (b) Hospital has a policy of 'reassignment', but the talk of lay-off must have been leaked.
- (c) The crux is that the management did not involve the staff in the decision process and the staff was also resistant to changes. Lily Joe, though 'included', was not involved in the meetings. This must have hurt her ego and she must have leaked the information.

### Example 3

The reasons for the spreading of rumours of the lay-off of 'observation ward' employees are —

- a. Series of meetings involving too many people led to spreading of rumours.
- b. Differences among management (seniors) regarding the process and procedure of the decision. The last minute objection put up by the CMO and CAO. Both demanded specific numbers and significant changes in the announcement letter drafted by the group before they would allow the plan to move forward.
- c. Negative news spreads very fast by the grapevine.
- d. Lily Joe's lack of acceptance of the decision.
- e. Delayed execution of plans led to spreading of rumours.

### Comment

The grapevine shows that the management has missed the opportunity of sharing with the people information that is of interest to them. It poses a challenge to the effectiveness of management in respect of its HRM system.

Normally, the management views the grapevine negatively. For it tends to act against their practice of confidentiality, secrecy, and guarded sharing of information with employees. However, many a time management itself wants to take advantage of rumours to know the likely reactions of the concerned employees by a proposed change or scheme.

In this case, the communication gap happens because the 'decision' was taken at the "top" and the implementation was desired from the "bottom".

**Answers to question no. 2** Was it correct to include Lily Joe in the initial discussion meetings?

*Normally, the management views the grapevine negatively. For it tends to act against their practice of confidentiality, secrecy, and guarded sharing of information with employees.*



One view was that it was right to include Lily Joe in the initial meetings because the management was taking a decision on the staff of the fifth floor, so to have an effective decision involvement of those whom the decision affected was crucial. Lily Joe being their in-charge, was involved in the decision process.

According to this view, calling Lily to attend the meeting is a perfect example of participative management where employees are called to put forward their views too. It helps the management to have a holistic view of the situation.

Contrary to this view, some thought it was incorrect to include Lily in the lay off meetings, even at the initial stage. She was a party directly affected by the lay-off plan. She wanted neither to move nor removed. She did not contribute to the discussion. She, in fact, turned out to be herself a problem.

**The answers to question 2 reflect two opposite views —**

1. "No". Lily should not have been invited. She was in herself, the case. Her behaviour during the meetings and no contribution to the discussion support this approach.
2. "Yes". Protocol demanded that Lily should be involved in the meetings and discussions. A message to her that her opinion was still valuable would have been a way out. After the first meeting itself, she should have been told about the need of her presence and subsequently the need to drop her, because of her behaviour.

**Comment**

A case study does not illustrate the dilemmas of an individual. It presents problems an organisation happens to face because of failure of system.

**Answers to question no. 3—Ideally, how should the situation have been handled?**

Answers to this question analyse the handling of the situation as follows —

The closing of a single unit, "observation ward" is easy but simplistic and misdirected. The Executive Director should have first of all prepared a plan of action to reduce staff across the hospital, instead of abolishing the fifth floor unit. And having decided on the number of employees to be dropped, after "reassignments" at hospital level, general options should have been asked for from all the employees of the hospital and not of "observation ward" employees only.

The ED should have kept in mind the hospital had a policy of “reassignment” rather than “lay off”, and thus had a commitment to place the fifth floor staff in other positions throughout the hospital for which they were qualified. Just as fifth floor patients were going to be reassigned to other units, the staff of the fifth floor should have been reassigned too. And new recruitment should have stopped for sometime. Action plan should involve the following steps —

- (a) ED should appoint a committee, comprising only Director of Personnel, Director of PR, Head of Nursing, and the Labour Relations Consultant to initially discuss the retrenchment plan.
- (b) This committee should have developed a report on “reassignment” and “layoff” of the fifth floor staff.
- (c) Then, the plan of action should have been placed before the CMO and CAO for their approval.
- (d) Only after approval, the plan should have been shared with the nursing Heads formally in a meeting.
- (e) The Dy Head of Nursing and Incharge of Personnel would finally meet the staff of the fifth floor; announce the plan of “reassignment” and “lay off” in the general body meeting; and, thereafter, brief the press.

### **C**omment

When the hospital management had decided that, since her floor was being closed entirely, Lily Joe, the nurse manager’s services would no longer be needed, the management should not have included her in the planning process, for any reason whatsoever.

The two examples of written analysis of cases, given above, are only suggestive, not prescriptive. Your written analysis of cases should be a well organised piece of analytical and evaluative writing that reflects your thinking on the information and ideas you are presenting in a critical way.

## Case Study

### Company Accepting a Contract

A computer company was negotiating a very large order with a large size corporation. They had a very good track record with this client.

In this corporation, five different departments had pooled their requirements and budgets. A committee was formed which had representation from all the departments. The corporation wanted the equipment on a long lease and not outright purchase. Further, they wanted all the hardware and software from one supplier. This meant that there should be bought-out items from many suppliers since no one supplier could meet all the requirements of supply from its range of products.

The corporation provided an exhaustive list of very difficult terms and conditions and pressurised the vendors to accept. The computer company who was finally awarded the contract had agreed to overall terms that were fine as far as their own products were concerned but had also accepted the same terms for the bought-out items. In this case, the bought-out items were to be imported through a letter of credit. The percentage of the bought-out items versus their own manufacture was also very high. One of the terms accepted was that the "system" would be accepted over a period of 10 days after all the hardware had been linked up and

software loaded.

The computer company started facing trouble immediately on supply. There were over 100 computers over a distance connected with one another with software on it. For the acceptance tests, it had been agreed that the computer company would demonstrate as a pre-requisite the features they had claimed during technical discussions.

Now, as you are aware, if a Hero Honda motorcycle claims 80 km to a litre of petrol, it is under ideal test conditions and if a motorcycle from the showroom were to be tried for this test before being accepted, it would never pass the test. In the corporation's case, due to internal politics, the corporation persons from one department – who insisted on going exactly by the contract – did not sign acceptance since the "system" could not meet the ideal test conditions.

Further, in a classic case of, "for want of a horse-shoe, payment for the horse was held up", the computer company tried to get the system accepted and payment released. The system was so large that at any point of time over a period of 10 days something small or the other always gave problems. But, the corporation took the stand that as far as they were concerned the contract clearly mentioned that the "system" had to be tested as a whole and not module by module.

### Questions to Answer

1. Comment on the terms and conditions placed by the corporation.
2. What factors influenced the computer company's decision to accept the contract?
3. Was it a win-win agreement? Discuss.

### Summary

- This chapter tells you about the nature of theoretical and factual types of case studies. It discusses the ways of developing a case analysis. It suggests that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions raised by a case. Your answer or solution should be logical and convincing on the basis of facts presented by you.
- The chapter describes and illustrates the various steps involved in developing written analysis of cases.

### Review Questions

1. What are the academic benefits of a case study?
2. What abilities are involved in analysing a case?
3. Discuss the process of developing a written case analysis.
4. What according to you is the most important characteristic of a good case study?
5. Do you agree that a case can be used for very different purposes? Give some examples of case studies you should have studied. Support your answer.
6. How far do you think a case study is a problem-solving project, seeking a correct solution?
7. "Written analysis of case is an analytical and evaluative piece of writing". Discuss.

# Language

## CHAPTER 15

### Language Skills for Effective Communication



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*Language is a city to the building of which  
every human being brought a stone*

**-Ralph Waldo Emerson**

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# Chapter 15

## *Language Skills for Effective Communication*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

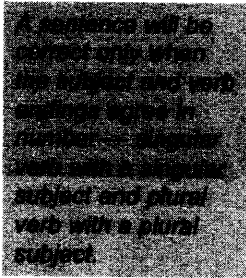
- Understand the basics of correct English.
- Know when you go wrong.
- Learn peculiarities of English usage.
- Write English correctly.

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*Linguistic study no longer lays down rules for correct grammar, but studies the rules that are actually adhered to by particular cultural groups. The aim is not to give laws for human utterance, but to understand the utterances that actually occur.*

**-Graham Hough**

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## INTRODUCTION

To write correctly you do not have to be a grammar specialist. You need to learn only some basic rules of grammar.

This chapter on grammar covers the following units —

1. Concord — Verb–Subject Agreement
2. Forms of Verb —
  - (a) Simple and Progressive forms of the Present, Past, and Perfect Tense
  - (b) Tenses in conditional sentences
3. Idiomatic use of prepositions and conjunctions
4. Structural use of infinitive, gerund, and participle
5. Common errors in English relating to Adjective and Adverb
6. Punctuation and Capitalisation

## VERB AND ITS SUBJECT

### Rule of Concord or Agreement

In a sentence the verb must *agree in number and person* with its subject. A sentence will be correct only when the subject and verb endings agree in number — singular verb with a singular subject and plural verb with a plural subject.

#### (a) Singular and Plural Subjects

The subject of a sentence is either singular or plural. The number of the subject determines the number of the verb (verb's endings).

The ending of a verb is singular when it ends with 's', and plural when it has no 's' at the end.

For example 'comes' is a singular verb and 'come' is a plural verb.

#### (i) Singular

Singular nouns, pronouns, and nouns that cannot be counted (such as happiness, news, time, life, love) need singular verbs with 's'.

Ram plays.

She dances.

Time flies.



**(ii) Plural**

Plural nouns and pronouns take plural verbs without 's'.

They play.

Girls dance.

You eat.

**Hint:** Remember that a sentence cannot have two 's' endings, one with the verb and the other with the subject. Further, plural nouns have 's' at the end, and they take plural verbs which end without 's'.

Singular nouns are without 's' and they take singular verbs, which end with 's'

Bells ring.

The girl runs.

Note that the following phrases are not part of the subject. Therefore, they should not be considered when you determine the number of the subject.

along with

accompanied by

except

including

no less than

together with

with

*Everyone in my class, including our teacher, has donated blood.*

(Subject)

(Verb)

**(b) Compound Subjects**

Two singular subjects joined by 'and' require a plural verb.

The boy and the girl are ....

The story and music are...

Note that when the words joined by 'and' really stand together as a single unit and mean one single thing, they take a singular verb.

The horse and carriage has come.

**(c) Either/or Subjects**

When the subjects are joined by *either...or*, *neither...nor*, or *not only...but also*, the verb agrees in number with the nearest subject.

Either he or his sisters are expected.

Neither the mother nor the children know it.

Not only the players but also the captain deserves praise.

If one of the subjects is plural, the verb should be plural. Hence, the plural subject may be placed closest to the verb to make the verb plural.

Either he or his friends have done it.

If both the subjects are singular, the verb will be singular.

Neither he nor his brother is coming.

**(d) Phrase and clauses as subjects**

When a phrase or a whole clause is the subject, a singular verb should be used.

Forgiving faults is not easy.

To seek happiness is most natural

What he wants to know is why he is punished.

In case, the verb is a form of *be* and the noun placed after it is plural, the verb will be plural.

*What he gave* were letters

(Here, what he gave = letters)

**(e) Collective Nouns as Subjects**

When we use a collective noun (such as committee, class, team, group, family) to mean a single unit or a group as a whole, the verb is singular.

Our class has won the match.

But, sometimes the collective noun refers to members acting individually. In that case, use a plural verb.

The committee are divided in their opinion.

Note that even the (possessive) pronoun used is plural (their), not singular (its). 'Its' opinion will be wrong.

- (f) **Plural words that have an -s plural ending (such as news, measles, economics, mathematics, lives) are considered a single unit and need a singular verb.**

The news says \_\_\_\_\_

Physics is \_\_\_\_\_

Measles is \_\_\_\_\_

- (g) **Words with -s endings as plural subjects**

The following words refer to one thing only, but they take a plural verb.

Eyeglasses are \_\_\_\_\_

Clippers trim \_\_\_\_\_

Plants are \_\_\_\_\_

Jeans are \_\_\_\_\_

Riches have wings \_\_\_\_\_

Shears cut \_\_\_\_\_

Thanks are due to \_\_\_\_\_

Tweezers pull \_\_\_\_\_

Scissors cut \_\_\_\_\_

- (h) **Amounts as subjects**

When the subject mentions an amount, the verb is singular.

More than 100 km is a high speed.

Six bushels is \_\_\_\_\_

Four hundred rupees is \_\_\_\_\_

- (i) **Company names, Titles, and Terms as subjects**

Name of companies, titles of books, and words used as terms take singular verbs.

Hindustan Motors is changing its model.

*The New Realities* is the latest book by Drucker.

**(j) Indefinite words as subjects**

*Each, every, any* used as subjects or placed before the subject, in the singular sense, require a singular verb.

Each has his own idea.

Each essay is marked by her.

But, note that *none, some, most, or all* used as subject take a singular or plural verb according to their meaning.

For example, consider the following use of 'all' and 'some'.

All is not lost when the field is lost

All my pens are imported.

Some of the lesson is not clear.

(The subject word *some* is used in this case in the sense of a part of the lesson. It is therefore a single unit and needs a singular verb)

Some of the guests are yet to come.

(Some here means many guests and is therefore used in the plural sense. It takes a plural verb.)

**(k) One of ....who, which, or that used as subjects**

When the phrase *one of the those who* (or *which* or *that*) is used, we should see whether the word *who, which, or that* refers to the whole group or only to the one. Only then we can know whether the verb is plural or singular.

Manisha is one of those students who *have* the text book.

(Here, Manisha is only a part of more students, and *who* refers to *those students*, and therefore is plural and it takes a plural verb *have*).

But in the sentence given below the word *who* refers to Manisha as the only one student by herself, and not as a part of a larger group of students.

Manisha is the only one of the students who is present today.

**(l) Who, Which, and That used as subjects.**

The verb used with *who, which, that* agrees in number with the number of the (antecedent) previous word to which they refer.

She is the girl who sings well.

They are the people who suffer most.

(m) *It, there is, there are* placed at the subject position (as the head words)

*It* used as a subject always needs a singular verb, without considering the number of what follows the verb.

It was the songs that made the movie so popular.

But the use of, *there is* or *there are* depends on the number of the complement placed after the verb.

There <sup>is</sup> an excellent book on this topic in our college library.

There <sup>are</sup> several books on this topic in our library.

**Choose the correct verb (given in brackets)**

- (i) Ten pieces of loaf (is, are) too much for two of us.
- (ii) There (was, were) a whole pile of files before him.
- (iii) Each of the students (was, were) awarded.
- (iv) The quantity of the books presented (vary, varies)
- (v) The most popular of the Indian epics (is, are) Ramayana.
- (vi) The cause for the delay and trouble (was, were) known to all.
- (vii) The President, along with his bodyguards, (is, are) coming.
- (viii) Politics (is, are) a subject for scoundrels.
- (ix) It (is, are) they who wanted to go.
- (x) He is one of the managers who (is, are) attending the training programme.

## Forms of Verb

### (a) Definition

A verb is a word or group of words which expresses action, or presents a state in which a thing or person is, or joins the subject with the rest of the sentence.

We cannot write or speak a complete sentence without at least one verb in it. Verbs do the following things —

- (i) *Verbs express action.*

I *read* poetry sometimes

She *plays* basketball daily

- (ii) *Some verbs (known as linking verbs) show the relation of the subject with the rest of the sentence and complete the sense of the sentence.*

They *feel* happy

The child *is* hungry

- (iii) *Verbs point out time.*

You *are* reading this book (present)

He *went* away (past)

I *shall* come tomorrow (future)

- (iv) *Verbs indicate number of the subject*

Our English teacher *loves* her students. (singular, the doer of action is only one)

They always *shout* in the class (plural, the doers are many)

- (v) *Verbs show the person of the subject*

I *like* to sing (first person)

We *study* together (first person, plural)

You *like* to sing (second person)

He/she *likes* to sing (third person he, she, they, it)

### (b) Verb Tense

Verb tense is the form of the verb that tells us the time of action. The time expressed is past, present, or future.

There are four kinds of tenses for present, past, and future as given below —

Simple or indicative

Progressive or continuous — be + -ing form of the verb

Perfect — have/has, had, shall the -ed form of the verb

Perfect continuous — have/had + been + -ing form of the verb

**Table 15.1** Verb Table

	<b>Present</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Future</b>
Simple	I run	I ran	I shall run
Progressive	I am running	I was running	I shall be running
Perfect	I have run	I had run	I shall have run
Perfect Progressive	I have been running	I had been running	I shall have been running

## PRESENT TENSE

### (i) Simple or Indicative Present

It describes things (situations or actions) which are present now and are habitually true. At times, the simple present tense can express future time if there is some other word in the sentence that clearly marks a future time.

Here comes the train. (happening just now)

He goes out on tour every month. (habitually true)

The earth goes round the sun. (always true)

The square of two is four. (always true)

Tomorrow, he goes abroad. (future)

### (ii) Present Progressive (Continuous)

- (a) To mention a particular action which is taking place at the time of speaking and is in progress, something not finished still.

I am writing a letter. (an activity in progress)

The train is running late.

He is sleeping.

- (b) If it is a situation (temporary only) and not an activity, we use the progressive tense.

He is sitting in the last row.

Form: The present continuous form of the verb has two parts — is (or) are + -ing form of the verb.

She is dancing.

We are playing.

The progressive form is not used to express what we see, hear, smell, feel, or taste (our sense perceptions) on a specific occasion, or our sense experience that is in progress. Sometimes the simple present tense is used.

I see a bus coming.

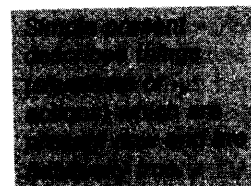
I smell something burning.

I hear a man crying.

Note that this can be written also with the help of *can*.

I can see a bus coming.

I can hear a man crying.



If the progressive form is used to express the act of perceiving, it indicates something that is continuous over a much longer period.

I am seeing much better since my operation.

The use of progressive form of the present tense is usual, not the simple form, in the passive voice, when it refers to the future.

The case is being discussed at the next board meeting. (not the case is discussed or The case is to be discussed...)

When the interrogative form is used, the progressive form is to be used.

When are you going to meet them? (not, when do you go to meet them?)

### (iii) Present Perfect

The present perfect tense describes an action that began in the past and continues upto the present.

I have taught this class for three months.

I have used ball pen since I was in school.

**Form** — has (or) have + third form (past participle) of the verb.

They have gone.

He has finished the letter.

I have written a letter.

### (iv) Present Perfect Progressive (Continuous)

This tense describes action that began in the past, continues in the present, and may continue into the future (as it has not yet finished).

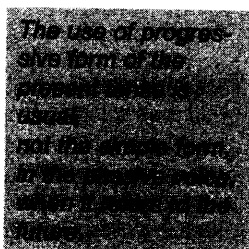
I have been writing the letter for an hour.

We have been living here since 1997.

**Form** — have or has + been + ing form of the verb

He has been reading.

She has been dancing.



## PAST TENSE

### (i) Simple Past

The simple past is used to describe actions or conditions of the past.



We attended the summer training last year. (completed action)

It was cold yesterday. (completed condition)

Earlier, people believed that the sun moved around the earth.

The train arrived before time.

I studied for two hours.

### (ii) Past Continuous (Progressive)

The past continuous describes an action that took place in the past over a period of time.

We were driving back when heavy rains came.

When we arrived, they were sleeping.

**Form** — was or were + ing form of the verb

She was dancing.

He was eating.

### (iii) Past Perfect

This tense is used for an action or event completed before another event in the past.

When we reached, the train *had already left* the station.

**Form** — had + ed form of the verb (past participle)

### (iv) Past Perfect Continuous

It indicates a continuing condition in the past.

My brother had been planning to come until he fell ill.

## FUTURE TENSE

### (i) Simple Future

This tense expresses actions or events of future.

I shall complete this letter tomorrow.

**Form** — shall or will + base form of the verb

I shall meet him.

They will come.

### (ii) Future Continuous

It refers to future action that will go on for some time.

I shall be expecting your reply.

**Form** — shall or will + be + ing form of the verb

He will be playing.

**(iii) Future Perfect**

It indicates actions that will be completed by or before a mentioned time in the future.

By Monday, the teacher will have covered this last chapter.

**(iv) Future Perfect Progressive**

Future perfect continuous is used to express actions or conditions going to take place until a particular time in the future.

By December, we shall have been doing this course for a year.

**Form** — will or shall + have + been + ing form of the verb

**TENSES WITH SINCE**

When *since* denotes time, it means from some specified *point* of time in the past up to and including the present moment. It connects a past action or situation with the present moment. Therefore, it is required that —

- (i) It should normally be preceded by the perfect tense of the verb.  
We have not seen any movie since last March. (not did not see....)  
We have stayed in this house since 1996. (not we stay here....)
- (ii) If the activity or process described has been going on since the specified time, and is still going on, the perfect continuous tense is used.  
I have been studying since four o'clock this morning. (not I am studying)
- (iii) When the specified point of time in the past is expressed by an adverbial clause of time beginning with *since*, the verb of this clause must be in the *past tense*.

He has not met me since we *left* Delhi. (not have left)

We have lived with our uncle since our father died. (not has died)

Since he changed house, he has been happier (not has changed)

**Hint** – In the use of *since*, the verb in the main clause is of the perfect tense, and the word *since* is followed either by a past tense word or phrase showing past time like *since the partition*, *since 1947*, *since last week* or by a clause with the verb in the past tense.

*When since denotes time, it means from some specified point of time in the past up to and including the present moment.*

Two exceptions to this general practice are —

- (i) When the main clause mentions or asks a question regarding the duration between a certain point of time in the past and the moment of speaking, the present tense, and not the perfect tense, is used in this (main) clause.

It is twenty days since I met him. (not has been)

How long is it since you had been there? (not has it been)

- (ii) When the point of time from which we consider the action or event in the past is the beginning of a situation that has continued throughout and still is present, then the perfect tense is used in the 'since' clause instead of the past.

They have never been to that place since I have been away.

Since I have been away means that I am still away; since I was away would mean that I am no longer away (I am back).

*The future tense or any other word/phrase indicating future time is used in the main clause, but in an adverbial clause dependent on the main clause, the simple present tense is normally used.*

## THE FUTURE TENSE IN ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

- (i) The future tense or any other word/phrase indicating future time is used in the main clause, but in an adverbial clause dependent on the main clause, the simple present tense is normally used.

I shall meet you when I come to Delhi. (not when I shall come...)

We go on a tour as soon as the schools close. (not will close)

I shall not come if it rains.

You will miss the train unless you move faster.

I propose to have a new car when the prices come down.

**Note** — In the reported speech, the verb shall/will of the main clause changes into should/would and the present tense of the subordinate clause changes into the corresponding past tense.

He said he would wait until I came back.

My father told them that they should carry his umbrella in case it rained.

- (ii) The helping verb 'will' may be used in the subordinate clause, but not in the sense of future time, but a present, meaning 'if you are willing'.

He will sing if you join him.

- (iii) Again, it is possible to use future tense in the adverbial clause as shown below —

You may come tomorrow, when I shall have more time to be with you.

Go to the main market where you will find a book shop.

In these sentences, the second clause is not a subordinate clause; it is really coordinate to the main clause.

- (iv) Sometimes, in the adverbial clause you can use the present continuous form of the verb, if the condition or activity is in progress when you are referring it.

I shall stay in if it is raining.

Do not go to college if you are not feeling better.

Inform us if you are going to have guests.

## TENSE IN SENTENCES OF CONDITION

The tense of the verb has to be according to the nature (kind) of condition. There are three kinds of conditions:

- (i) Probable condition (may or may not happen)
- (ii) Improbable condition (might have happened, but has not)
- (iii) Impossible condition (not possible to happen, just a supposed condition)

### (i) Probable condition

A condition which is uncertain. It may or may not be fulfilled. An open condition.

If it rains, I shall not go out (may rain, it may not, we do not know.) For such a condition, in the case of present, we use the present tense in both the main clause and the conditional clause.

If water *boils*, it *turns* into *steam*. If I *study* for long, it *makes* me tired.

If it is only six o'clock, we have lot of time to pack things.

If the condition refers to the future, the present tense is used in the conditional clause and the future tense in the main clause.

If I *am* free, I *shall* go to meet her.

If I *find* a good book, I *shall* get it for you.

**Note** — In case some instruction or order is expressed in the

The tense of the verb has to be according to the nature (kind) of condition. There are three kinds of conditions.

main clause, we use the imperative word in place of the future tense.

If you see him, ask him to call me.

In the case of past events or actions, both the clauses (main clause and conditional clause) have the past tense.

If the director received any report about a student, he investigated it personally.

But if it is some particular event or situation, which was future when considered from a specific point of time in the past, then the past tense is used in the conditional clause, and the future in the past tense in the other clause.

If I had some free time, I would spend it in doing some social service.

**(ii) Improbable condition (a condition rejected)**

A condition which might have been fulfilled, but is not so. To express this kind of condition one uses the past subjunctive (conditional mood) in the conditional clause if the verb is of *to be* form, and the past simple (indicative) if it is any other verb. The future in the past tense is used in the main clause.

If she were alive, we would reunite.

If his marks were not so poor, he would be promoted.

If we had money, we should go shopping.

(The above sentences mean — She is not alive, his marks are poor, and that we have no money).

If the sentence refers to the past, then we have to write as follows —

If she had been alive we could have reunited.

If we had had money, we should have gone for shopping.

**(iii) Impossible (purely imaginary, hypothetical) condition which could not be possibly true (If I were you) or which is mentioned for the sake of giving a reason**

If I were a king, I would rule by love, not by power or fear.

If I had all the wealth of the world, I would still not be happy.

If the sentence refers to the past time, *were* changes to *had been* and *would* or *should* becomes *would have* or *should have*.

I would have fought against this injustice, if I had been you.

What would you have done if you had been caught taking a bribe?

### Pattern Practice

The following paragraph is in the present tense. Change it to the past tense by underlining the verbs and giving their past tense forms. The first sentence is already done for you.

1. Observing *was* an initial purpose for many kinds of writing.
2. We observe in order to discover and learn; once we have taught ourselves by close observation, we can explain our subject to others or even persuade them to take a course of action.
3. In every field of study, careful observation triggers the discovery and learning process.
4. In the sciences, researchers design experiments and then carefully observe their data.
5. In business, people record sales figures and observe buying trends.
6. In the humanities, writers carefully read books, watch dramas, listen to speeches, examine works of art and chronicle human behaviour.

**In the following paragraph, select the correct verbs from those given in brackets. Remember that the time shown by the verb is in keeping with the meaning of the sentences.**

The next important element in the writing situation (are, is, will) the intended audience on some occasions, your essay (will define, defines, is defining) how your readers (are, will) likely to respond. If you (will, have, are) writing an autobiographical essay, for example, readers (will, may, are) meet you on your own terms. On other occasions, however, you (will, must, have) accommodate your audience by knowing who they (is, are, have, will be) and what they (will, are, have) expecting. You (do, will, are) not want to bore your readers if you (will hope, have hope, hope) that they (will accept, accept) your proposal.

**Complete the following sentences with the correct tense of the verb given at the end.**

- (i) They .....nothing to drink or eat since seven o'clock this morning. (have)
- (ii) She.....not.....to our place since last Diwali. (come)
- (iii) Ever since she.....that fall she.....with a stick. (have, move)

- (iv) Since my child.....to that school she.....rapid progress.  
(go, make)
- (v) I.....three jobs since I.....work three years ago. (have, start)
- (vi) You will not pass unless you.....harder. (work)
- (vii) Do not write to her until you.....from me. (hear)
- (viii) We had better carry some things with us to eat, in case the shops.....closed. (be)
- (ix) If you.....him, he.....your attention to two dangers that threaten the wild life of the world. (ask, draw)
- (x) If we.....killing species after species of animals, we .....left with nothing of life on earth. (go on, will be)

Fill up the blanks in the following sentences with a verb to make them conditional sentences as indicated in the brackets at the end of each sentence.

- (i) If he.....Bombay, he will meet his brother. (probable/ open condition)
- (ii) If she.....into my house my dog will bite her. (probable/ open condition)
- (iii) If I.....my grandmother I should recognise her. (improbable/rejected condition)
- (iv) If the child.....into a pond he would be drowned.
- (v) If I.....one minute earlier, I should have caught the bus.
- (vi) If I.....eighteen, I would join Armed Forces. (impossible/ imaginary condition)
- (vii) If I.....you, I should have helped her. (impossible condition)
- (viii) If I .....you I'd nurture all those plants (improbable)
- (ix) If I.....of your exact arrival schedule I should have met you at the airport.
- (x) If she had fallen into the river she.....drowned. (Imaginary/impossible condition.)

## **USE OF PREPOSITIONS AND CONJUNCTIONS**

In English the use of preposition is by convention. There is no rule to explain why a certain verb, or adjective, or noun is to be followed by only a particular preposition in a particular sense. Even

the British have trouble sometimes choosing idiomatic prepositions that follow certain words. Therefore, consult a dictionary for the correct use of prepositions, whenever in doubt.

Study the following examples of idiomatic use of preposition —

<b>Wrong</b>	<b>Right</b>
accused for	accused of
afraid from	afraid of
apologise about	apologise for
boast for	boast about
capable	capable of
comply to	comply with
excepting for	except for
in search for	in search of
independent from	independent of
outlook of life	outlook on life
similar with	similar to

*In English the use of preposition is by convention.*

Foreign learners of English must learn the large number of two-part verbs, with their different meanings, such as —

add up	:	add
break down	:	analyse
bring on	:	cause
bring to	:	revive
burn down	:	destroy by burning
burn up	:	consume by fire
call off	:	cancel, order away
call up	:	telephone
carry on	:	continue
carry out	:	fulfil, complete
come back	:	return
come over	:	visit
come to	:	regain
cross out	:	eliminate
cut down	:	reduce in quantity
cut off	:	interrupt, sever



cut out	:	eliminate, delete
cut up	:	cut into small pieces
get by	:	succeed with minimum effort
get out of	:	escape, evade
get through	:	finish
give out	:	distribute
give up	:	surrender
go over	:	review
keep on	:	continue
look for	:	seek
look into	:	investigate
look like	:	resemble
look out for	:	beware of
look up	:	search for
look over	:	examine
pass out	:	distribute, faint
pick out	:	choose
put off	:	postpone
put on	:	dress
put out	:	extinguish
run across	:	discover by chance
run into	:	meet by chance
run out of	:	exhaust one's supply
run over	:	hit by a car
show off	:	display
show up	:	appear
take down	:	record in writing
take off	:	remove, undress
take up	:	introduce, discuss
talk over	:	discuss
try out	:	test
turn in	:	deliver, hand over

turn off	:	put out of operation
turn on	:	put into operation
use up	:	consume

### IDIOMATIC USE OF PREPOSITIONS

Note the use of correct prepositions in some common expressions in English given below.

Accuse : He was accused of cheating. (not for)

Afraid : I am afraid of rats. (not from)

**Note** No preposition is used when afraid is followed by an infinitive. She was afraid to watch the horror movie.

Angry : The teacher was very angry *with* her students (not at or against)

He was angry *at* what I said

Angry *with* a person, angry *at* some thing

Approve : We do not approve *of* her remarks.

Arrive : We always arrive *at* office in time (not arrive to office) but before the word 'home' no preposition is used.

I arrive home at nine o'clock daily. (not at home)

But if *home* is used as a possessive noun, like 'my sister's home' it is preceded by the preposition *at*.

It was late night when we arrived at our sister's home.

Boast : A learned person should not boast *of* his knowledge. (not *for*)

But use of *about* is also correct.

Careful : My father is very careful *of* his health. (not *for*)

But when *careful* is followed by an infinitive, no preposition is used.

He was careful not to fall ill.

Careless : He was careless *of* the consequences.

Cure : The medicine will cure you *of* cold and cough. (not from)

Die : Die *of* a disease but die *from* doing something.

She died of cancer.