Effective written communication

Written communication is a crucial skill to have in the modern information age. Most jobs require you to communicate in writing through email, formal letters, notes, text messages or online messaging. Written communication skills allow you to give direction effectively. In this article, we list ways to communicate clearly using written communication.

Introduction

Effective writing allows the reader to thoroughly understand everything you are saying. This is not always easy to do. Here are a few tips that will help you:

i. Know your goal and state it clearly

Do you want the reader to do something for you, or are you merely passing along information? Do you want a response from the reader, or do you want him to take action? Effective written communication has a clear purpose, and that purpose is communicated to the reader. Explain in clear terms what you want the reader to do.

ii. Use the correct tone for your purpose

Tone can help your writing be more effective. Certain forms of communication, like memorandums and proposals, need a formal tone. Writing to someone you know well would need a more informal tone. The kind of tone depends on the audience and purpose of the writing.

iii. Keep Language simple

Do not overuse clichés, jargon, and expressions or try to impress with big words. This can make the reader work harder, and you want to make it easy to understand what you're saying.

iv. Stay on topic and keep it concise

Effective written communication stays on topic. Avoid information that is not relevant. Clarity is key. Less is more when it comes to length. Keep sentences and paragraphs short and concise, since long, complicated sentences will slow the reader down. Leave out words that do not contribute to the main focus of the communication.

V. Use Active Voice

Using an active voice will strengthen your writing. It’s easier to understand sentences that are written in the active voice. An active example is "I caught the ball," and a passive example is "The ball was caught by me." Active voice will engage the reader and keep his or her attention.

vi. Have someone proofread your writing

Good grammar and punctuation are very important. It is a good idea to have someone else proofread your writing before you send it. If you cannot do that, then try reading it out loud.

What is effective written communication?

Written communication is any written message that two or more people exchange. Written communication is typically more formal but less efficient than oral communication. Examples of written communication include:

- Emails
- Text messages
- Blog posts
- Business letters
- Reports
- Proposals
- Contracts
- Job descriptions
- Employee manuals
- Memos

- Bulletins
- Instant messages
- Postcards
- Faxes
- Advertisements
- Brochures
- News releases

Most businesses require and depend on written communication to function and share information.

Qualities of effective written communication

All effective forms of written communication have these qualities:

- Comprehensive: Includes all the relevant details
- Accurate: All details are correct
- Appropriate: Has the right tone and level of formality
- Composition: Has correct spelling and grammar
- Clear: Is understandable

The importance of written communication in business

- Companies use written communication in nearly everything they do. Here are several reasons this form of communication is important for business:
- **Economical and efficient**
- Written communication is cost-effective. A letter, for instance, costs less to make than a long-distance phone call but can communicate the same thing. Letters are also accommodating. Professionals can write letters at their convenience, and recipients can read them. Alternatively, you might receive an important phone call any time of day, including times when you are busy.
- Written communication is ideal for sending messages that are not urgent. You can send a simple postcard or letter, for example, to thank a client or inform customers about order updates.
- **Accuracy**
- Many business communications are long and complex. Carefully written letters help ensure that even complicated communications are accurate.

Miscommunications are more likely to occur with verbal communications such as phone conversations.

- **Record-keeping**
- Written communication, particularly when signed by one or more parties, is more official than verbal communication. It serves as a permanent record of an agreement, conversation or deal, and you can refer to it in the future.
- **Goodwill and branding**
- The best way to convey communications such as invitations, seasonal greetings, thank-you letters, congratulatory messages and condolences is in writing. Personalized written messages help develop positive and respectful professional relationships. You can also use letters to promote customer relationships, create a positive impression and build goodwill. You might send a professional contact a written letter, for example, for their birthday, when their son or daughter gets married or when they receive a promotion.
- Written business letters make these situations more personal and promote friendship. For this reason, they are indirect business promotion tools.
- Besides communicating information and building goodwill, letters also help create a positive image of the company that sends them. Every letter a company sends is a goodwill ambassador that speaks for the organization's values and quality.

Writing Proposals

Proposal Purposes

A proposal is a special type of professional report with two distinct purposes:

1. to persuade your reader to agree with your recommendations about how to address a problem or issue
2. to get your reader to act on your recommendations

Just as with other persuasive messages, proposals apply the **AIDEA** approach overall, capturing your audience's attention and developing their interest by presenting a problem that needs to be solved or an issue that needs to be addressed. However, proposals are

more detailed than brief persuasive messages. Because most proposed actions require a monetary and/or time cost to the organization, all proposals use a problem-solution approach which includes specific, concrete evidence as reasoning behind the solution. Proposals focus more fully on logical evidence, as opposed to emotional appeals, in order to get your reader to act.

You may encounter many situations for which you need to write proposals: to get a new client, to get a grant or additional funding for a project, to implement a new procedure, to adopt an internal structural change in your organization, to troubleshoot a problem in your organization, to provide a service, to sell a product, and more. A proposal tries to convince its reader that the proposed plan or project is worth doing – that it's worth the time, energy, and expense necessary to see it through; that you represent the best candidate for implementing the idea; and that the recommended action will result in tangible benefits.

Proposal Types

Proposals may be internal or external, solicited or unsolicited.

Internal Proposals

Internal proposals are written by and for someone within the same organization. Since both the writer and reader share the same workplace context, these proposals usually address some way to improve a work-related situation (productivity, efficiency, profit, etc.).

External Proposals

External proposals are sent outside of the writer's organization to a separate entity (often to solicit business, or to respond to another organization's request for proposals). Since these are external documents, they are usually formal in nature and may be introduced by a letter of transmittal.

Solicited Proposals

You may write a solicited proposal if an organization identifies a situation it wants to improve or a problem that it wants to solve. A department or an organization may issue a request for proposals (RFP), asking for proposals on how to address the situation or issue. The requesting department or organization will evaluate proposals and choose the most convincing one, often using a detailed scoring rubric or weighted objectives to determine which proposal best responds to the request and addresses the organization's needs.

Unsolicited Proposals

You may initiate a proposal yourself if you see a problem or an opportunity to make a beneficial change. With unsolicited proposals within an organization, you need to identify your audience very carefully in order to get your ideas to the right audience, either an individual or group with decision-making responsibility, or a supervisor who can support the proposal and move it to a higher decision-making level. Always consider your organization's environment, internal politics, and how your proposal potentially may be received. For unsolicited proposals outside of your organization, make sure that you clearly create a need for your audience to convince that audience to read and respond. Unsolicited external proposals are often the most difficult kind of proposal to get approved.

Format of the Contract Proposals

Contracts are at the heart of every business. Getting a contract right as soon as possible helps save time and money. One way that a contract can be created more quickly is with a good starting point. A contract proposal that is crafted well can help minimize any future

headaches a contract may cause. By ironing out simple details at the beginning, the entire **contract management lifecycle** of creating a contract can improve.

But what exactly is a contract proposal? And how can a contract proposal template be written to ensure that a contract proposal does not have to be written from scratch each time a contract is required?

Contract proposal definition

A contract proposal can be both an offer and a suggestion as to what the details could be surrounding that proposed contract. It could be that you send an entire contract draft, or your contract proposal could simply be your intention to send a draft to develop into a final agreement.

Bearing that in mind, a contract proposal to those it is being sent to **can be seen as a starting point to negotiations**. It is also a fantastic opportunity to start building trust with the other entity for the proposing side. Doing so can help in the immediate negotiations and work surrounding the potential contract and reap the rewards for the future business relationship. So, while a contract proposal may sound like a document with the potential to be dry and only outline a few details, it can be so much more than that.

How to write a contract proposal?

Knowing how to write a contract proposal or how to write a contract proposal sample that is persuasive is a vital tool for any business. **To be persuasive**, you need to be clear and as concise as possible. A contract proposal is a time to sing your praises succinctly - doing so often makes what you are saying far more convincing too.

To do so, think about how you structure your proposal. Make it easy to read by breaking up the text, so your potential client does not have to search too hard for all the essential facts. It will make it far more manageable to understand your proposal as a whole.

Additionally, once you have structured your contract proposal properly, you will find a reasonable basis for a reusable contract proposal template. There is, most likely, a great deal of repeat information that you will want to include in any contract proposal that you send out. Obvious details like names and addresses will not change from proposal to proposal, but inserting past experience and clients will often not be an element you always need to change.

Elements in a Contract Proposal

The above are good pointers for how to write a business contract proposal or a good contract proposal template. But not what. Below are the elements we believe should always be in a contract proposal you send to potential clients.

1. Identify who you are

Firstly, outline who you are and what you do. The details need to be stated quickly and clearly here. Be brief, but do be sure that you do not miss any information that may be an aspect of your firm that makes you more attractive to a potential client.

2. Identify the problem

Outline what the problem is that you want to try to solve for your client. Given that this is a contract proposal, this section should not be long either. Remember, you are only trying to identify what you

would ideally intend to include in a contract. But doing so here can help you reason why you are proposing what your fees are later in the proposal.

Additionally, this is an excellent opportunity to highlight how well you know your potential client. Showing that you have done thorough research and **due diligence** on them is flattering to that firm.

3. Identify the solution

Then, identify how that problem can be solved. Again, this section needs to be brief - particularly if you have gone over in previous correspondence with your potential client how you mean to resolve their issue. It is necessary to include, though, as a rationale for why your fees are what you have proposed. Additionally, and importantly, this is the opportunity to outline why you are the best solution for solving that problem.

4. Identify any remuneration or compensation

Finally, you need to identify what fees you would like to include and confirm in a final contract. Then, go over any important and necessary terms and conditions for that remuneration. And, how the contract can be terminated - on either side.

Business Letter Writing

As straightforward as a business letter may initially seem, it can be a challenge to sit down and write one with the correct format. Since business letters are written by an organization or professional to another organization or individual for professional communication,

it’s important to use an established business letter format to form a good first impression.

Keep reading to know the essential elements of a business letter, how to format it and tips for writing effective business letters. We’ve also provided a free template that can make drafting your letters easy.

When to Use a Business Letter

A business letter is used by an organization or an individual for professional communication with other individuals or companies. Examples of business letters are job offer letters, sales letters, investor interest letters, resignation letters, business circulars, shareholder letters, letters of recommendation, etc.

7 Essential Elements to include in a Business Letter

i. Your Contact Address

If the contact address is already included in the letterhead, skip it. Otherwise, include these in your contact information:

- Full name
- Job title
- Company
- Address
- City, state, ZIP Code
- Phone number
- Email address

ii. Date

This is the date when you are writing the letter. If your contact information is included on the letterhead, your business letter starts with the date.

iii. Recipient Address

The address should include:

- Full name
- Job title
- Company
- Address
- City, state, ZIP Code

iv. Salutation

The salutation that you use depends upon how familiar you are with the recipient.

Use “To whom it may concern” if you’re not sure about who will receive and read your letter.

If you know the recipient formally, use Dear [last name].

If you know the recipient informally, use the salutation Dear [first name].

v. Letter Body

This is the meat of the business letter. Use single line spacing for readability. You can use extra lines between paragraphs, after the salutation and above the closing salutation.

vi. Closing Salutation or Valediction

Again, the closing salutation depends upon how formal or informal your relationship is with the recipient. Some of the most commonly used closing salutations in business include:

- Sincerely
- Cordially

- Best
- Kind regards
- Regards
- All the best

vii. Your Signature

You should always end with a handwritten signature even if the letter is typed and printed using a computer. Handwritten signatures help in establishing a rapport with the recipient even if this is your first communication. Always write your full name and title below the signature.

viii. Optional Things to Include

If you are including any additional documents pertaining to the letter, make a list of those enclosures after your signature and name. If you are sending a sales letter, you may consider including a call to action (CTA) at the bottom of the letter.

How to format Business letter

A business letter must be formatted for clarity and ease of understanding. Here are some points to consider while formatting the letter:

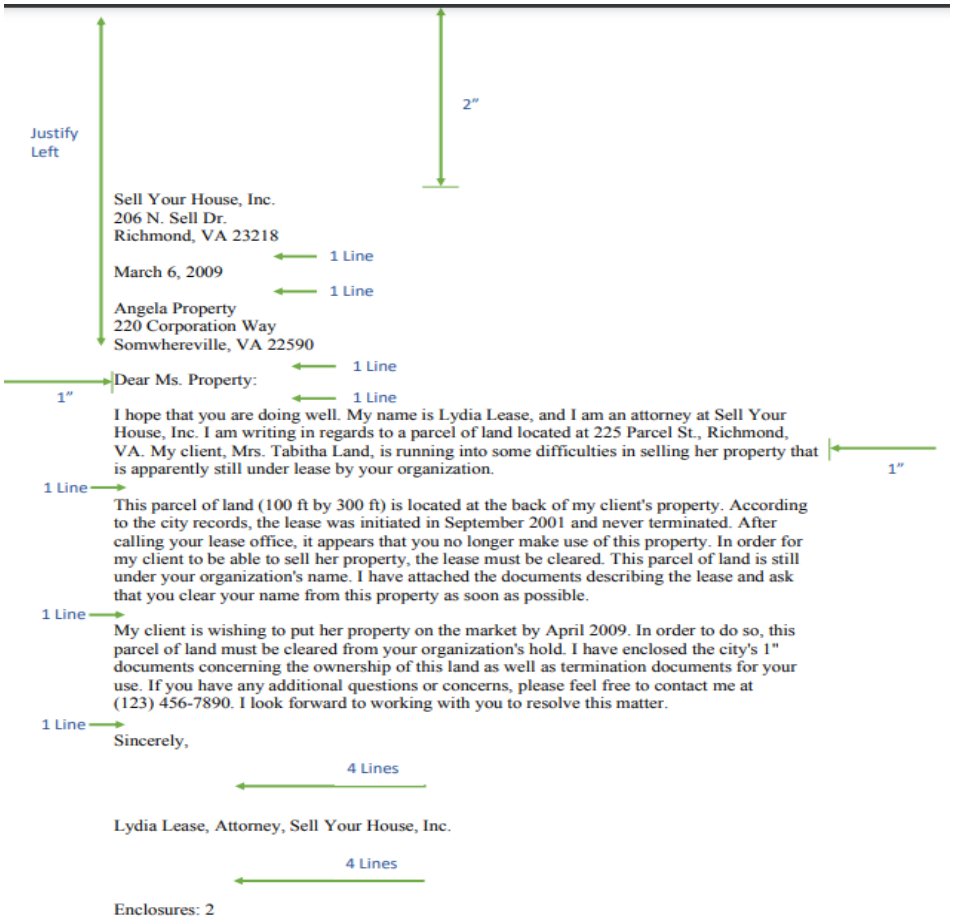
- **Block or indent.** In the block format, all elements of the letter are left-aligned. But, if you want to use an indented format, right-align your address, date, closing salutation and signature. The rest of the elements will be left-aligned.
- **Font.** Use a professional font such as Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman, Helvetica, etc. The size must be from 10 to 12.
- **Margins.** A one-inch margin on all four sides of the page is the standard. You can increase it to one-and-a-quarter inches to differentiate it from other types of letters.

- **Spacing.** Use a single line for the body of the letter. Use extra lines after your address, date, recipient address and salutation. Also, leave an extra line before the closing salutation.

Business Letter Examples

Example 1

Business letter is a formal document and you are accountable for the information you pass in it. So, you must be very intentional about its content and format. We have discussed this in detail in the article. Here are a few examples for your reference.



Example 2

This is a marketing letter example from GCF Global. Note that as CTA, the writer had provided multiple ways (contact number and email ID) to reach out to her. This makes it easier for the reader to respond.

316 Colonial Pkwy
Esterhazy, NM 87101

July 30, 2017

Ms. Ginny Clark
Overwatch Villa
7419 Bubble Net Road
Baleen, WA 98101

Dear Ms. Clark:

Hope you're doing well. I'm Miranda Lawson, Director of Marketing at Mass Airlines, and I wanted to share some marketing ideas with you that could benefit both of our companies.

Whenever our flight crews fly into the Seattle area, they overwhelmingly prefer staying at the Overwatch Villa, but there is often no vacancy. If the Overwatch Villa were to permanently reserve a block of rooms for our crew members, we'd be happy to promote the Overwatch Villa in our in-flight magazine at a significant discount.

To demonstrate what a Mass Airlines and Overwatch Villa partnership could look like, I've enclosed three sample ads created by our graphic design team. These samples should prove that we're eager to highlight the Overwatch Villa for the millions of passengers we serve each year. If you'd like to discuss this in further detail, I can be reached at 575-555-9255, or at mlawson@massairlines.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Miranda Lawson
Director of Marketing, Mass Airlines

Sales Report

A sales report, also known as a sales analysis report, is a document that summarizes a business's sales activities. This report typically includes information on sales volume, leads, new accounts, revenue and costs for a given period. It may also analyse this information along each step of the sales funnel and indicate your sales team's performance (or any gaps therein).

These reports might help your company modify its sales approach and other growth initiatives. They can provide insights into sales

methodology successes, predictions of future sales data, analyses of performance compared to previous periods, and greater understanding of customer motivations.

Key takeaway: A sales report summarizes all your company's sales activity and offers meaningful insight into what your company should do differently.

What are the different types of sales reports?

No two sales reports look exactly the same. Different types of sales reports focus on different sales metrics, needs or strategies. These are some of the report types:

- **Sales forecasts.** These reports predict the number of sales your team will make in a given period. You can use them to anticipate seasonal slowdowns or plan for issues that might affect business.
- **Sales funnel reports.** These reports show how close a lead is to buying your product or service. Sales funnels help you understand how to best nurture leads and, ultimately, convert them into customers. By comparing back-to-back sales funnel reports, you can identify weaknesses in your sales pipeline.
- **Conversion reports.** These reports resemble sales funnel reports in that they assess the progress of leads along the sales funnel, though they look specifically at the conversion of leads to customers, not the status of leads along the funnel. A standard conversion tracking report includes information about contacts, leads generated and qualified, and wins, with period-to-period change rates indicated as well.
- **Opportunity score reports.** Opportunity score reports are based on the Einstein opportunity score. This metric, which artificial intelligence determines, rates leads from one to 99, where a higher score means a higher likelihood of a sales win. These reports are useful for planning how to divide your team's time pursuing leads.

- **Upsell and cross-sell reports.** These reports detail the number and value of items upsold or cross-sold to customers. Your team can review these reports to identify future upselling and cross-selling opportunities or flag certain products and services as especially suited for these sales approaches.
- **Sales call reports.** These sales reports concern calls placed to leads, prospects and customers to encourage purchases. Through these reports, you can gain insights into your reps' performance and your leads' qualities.

Sales reports can be set to various frequencies and tied to key performance indicators (KPIs), helping you to monitor your success over time. These are some common frequencies:

- **Daily sales reports.** A daily sales report can track KPIs such as a rep's number of daily calls and leads generated.
- **Weekly sales reports.** A weekly sales report can track KPIs such as the entire sales team's deals closed or revenue earned.
- **Monthly sales reports.** A monthly sales report can provide a longer-term overview of the metrics tracked in either a daily or weekly sales report.
- **Annual sales reports.** An annual sales report is an especially lengthy, detailed version of a monthly sales report. It may be the most useful for determining a subsequent year's sales quotas. It can also help you address sales management issues, indicate seasonal fluctuations, observe the impacts of marketing campaigns, and identify especially successful sales reps.

What are the key elements of a sales report?

The key elements depend on the type of report. In general, though, sales reports should contain the following figures:

- Relevant KPIs, as determined by the above criteria
- Sales volume
- Net sales (this is a dollar figure, whereas sales volume is simply the number of sales made)

- Gross sales (net sales minus the cost of sales)
- Percent of KPI change compared to the previous reporting period

You'll notice that this list of figures is relatively short, though you may have quite a few KPIs to include in your report. That's because staying concise is key; you don't want to overwhelm the people reading your report right out of the gate.

However, figures alone aren't enough to constitute a sales report. You'll also need to provide a written explanation of what these numbers mean and how they should compel the company to act. We'll discuss this step in the detailed report-writing guide below.

How do you write a sales report?

Follow these steps to create a sales report:

1. Decide how your sales report will look.

A sales report should be more than a document full of numbers and explanations. It should also be eye-catching and easy for someone to read without feeling overwhelmed. To achieve this, you can download a sales report template or use your customer relationship management (CRM) software for easy creation of several report types.

2. Consider your audience.

If you're a high-ranking sales team member presenting a report to your head of sales, you may want to include a lot of KPIs. Executives might want a more succinct summary. Further, a CEO might be interested in different data than a CFO. Your CRM software should be able to help you reformat your sales data for any audience.

3. Include the appropriate information.

Once you know your audience and the depth of reporting expected, you can decide whether to include or exclude certain data sets, such as sales revenue and costs, period-to-period KPI change, progress

toward sales goals, sales by product or service, sales forecasts, and future sales plans.

4. Determine your current and previous periods.

Given the frequency criteria described above, you should determine whether the information you want to convey is best presented in an annual, monthly, weekly or daily view. You should then compare your information for this period to an equivalent prior period. For example, if you're presenting sales information for February 2021, note percentage changes in this period's KPIs as compared to all of January 2021, not just the final week of January.

5. Compile your data.

Once you've established your information needs and data period, it's time to actually compile your data. This step typically means logging in to your CRM software and pulling up data, then either downloading it for use in another program or turning it into reports right from your CRM dashboard. Either way, sales reporting doesn't stop at getting your data in one place.

6. Present your information appropriately.

Sales reports shouldn't just be lists of numbers. You should include plenty of graphs and other helpful images to help your audience make sense of these figures. Of course, you should use the right type of graph. For example, an annual report might call for a line chart to show revenues month over month. Your CRM software might be able to auto-generate these charts, or you can use Excel to assist in graph creation.

7. Double-check your data and information.

After you've compiled your data and created charts and graphs, you should go back to steps one and two: considering your audience and including appropriate information. Sometimes, you won't realize you've put in too much or too little information until after your first draft of a report. Don't be afraid to take out information, recreate

graphs or ask a fellow sales team member for assistance. Remember, everyone needs an editor. It’s important to strike a balance between insight and overabundance well before you walk into your meeting.

8. Explain your data.

This final step is perhaps the most important. Again, presenting data itself is only half the battle; you need to put words to your data for it to mean much to your audience.

For example, if your monthly report shows a sales decline from the previous period for the first time in several months, don’t assume your audience will infer the cause of this decline. Provide an analysis that suggests the decline is due to an expected seasonal slowdown compounded by an economic downturn. You should also open your report with a written summary of data from the previous period.

Your written explanations should at once justify your figures and be justified *by* your figures. They should also outline fixes that your team plans to implement. For example, if a key competitor’s limited-time discounts have reduced your sales, explain how you will pursue the customers lost to that promotion. You can meaningfully present even the most concerning data if you determine an actionable, fixable root cause.

Business Report

A business report is a collection of data and analyses that helps make relevant information easily accessible to a company. There are many different types of business reports, but this guide will show you the basic outline.

Components of a Business Report

- **Title Page**
- **Table of Contents:** Depending on the length of the report, you might want to consider including a table of contents. This will make finding specific information easier for readers.

- **Summary:** This section includes a brief overview of the main points of the report and is usually a few sentences to a paragraph in length. If someone were to read this section, they would have an idea of the main takeaways from each section of the report.
    - **Tip:** Even though this is the first section, consider writing this section after you have finished the report. This will help you determine which points are the most important to address.
- **Introduction:** This section outlines what you will be going over in your report. It includes the main points, chosen report structure, and, most importantly, the objective of your report.
- **Body:** The body is where you discuss the points of your report in detail. This section is divided by headings that inform your reader what information can be found in the following paragraph/s. The structure of this section will vary depending on the type of report, information/data you are relaying to the company, and whether or not a deep analysis is necessary.
    - Examples of headings:
        - Methods
        - Findings
        - Research
        - Analysis
        - Graphs
- **Conclusion:** In the conclusion, be sure to briefly summarize all of the main points in the order they were presented in the report.
- **Recommendations:** This section is where you provide your recommendations or suggestions based on the findings you noted in earlier sections. Indicate the potential benefits for the company to applying your suggestions.
- **References:** Be sure to cite all sources used in the report in this section.
- **Appendices:** In the Appendix, you can add relevant documents, surveys, graphs, etc. that you referenced in the report.

Business Report Format

A business report format is an official document that shows how a business report should be presented. A **business report** is a formal document that entails accurate information, research findings, numerical data, or any relevant data related to the performance of a business or course of the job. It is a set of data that offers historical information about the corporation's manoeuvres, manufacture, and precise insights of departments and forms a basis for forthcoming decision-making processes or accurate insights required to establish business operations.

The purpose of the business report includes:

- It delivers facts concerning events, situations, qualities, development, outcomes of investigations, or clarifications
- It estimates employee advancement, departmental progress, and the company's progress
- A business report is used in making decisions. Reports help the management with all the information required to make crucial decisions
- Reports also act as a managerial tool for organizing, planning, motivating, coordinating, and controlling
- Reports also perform a significant function in professional advancement. For elevation to the rank-and-file position, a good job is enough to help an individual, while intellectual ability is highly recommended for advancement to a high-level spot. These abilities can be demonstrated through an excellent report submitted to the relevant authorities
- The report can be used for investigation purposes. In case of any problem, a committee, study group, or commission investigates to find the cause of the problem and presents findings with the recommendations in a report
- Also, the business report points out causes of problems experienced such as accidents in business or company, high rate of staff turnover, and low margins.
- It suggests measures be taken and followed to overcome business problems

How to Write a Business Report

A standard business report is a sanctioned technology that gives government agencies and business enterprises a reliable and cost-effective method for exchanging business information among organizations in a reporting chain. The following is the format of a business report:

Step 1: Create a plan before writing.

Before commencing the report, identify the purpose of the report. Find out the objective to accomplish with the report and how it can be presented. It should be clear and precise.

Step 2: Check for an in-house format.

If the corporation has a specific format for writing reports, it should be followed. Check the company's handbook or ask the supervisor for

it. Using the company's design will make the report look more professional and easier to follow.

Step 3: Title Page.

The title page may be short. Ensure the title is clear and able to convey the report's purpose. Also, the names of other individuals or participants who worked on the report should be included without forgetting the date it was written.

Step 4: Write a table of content.

Table of content should only be written when the report is extensive and entails sub-sections. If this section is added, ensure to put down how titles are written on the report. The content should be well categorized.

Step 5: Add a summary or abstract.

This section summarizes the real significant facts in the report. It should be so that even if the reader does not read the whole report, this area can provide an overview of what is entailed in the report.

Step 6: Write an introduction.

This section should entail the primary aim of writing the report and a summary clue of the argument. It outlines what is to be noted in the report comprising main points, chosen report structure, and the objective of the report.

Step 7: write the body.

This is the point where the report's issues are discussed in detail. This segment can be divided into subsections such as methodology, findings, research, analysis, and maybe graphs.

Under methodology include the research methods used to create the report, such as qualitative, quantitative, or both. This will enhance the credibility of the report.

In the findings sector, present the outcomes of the research. The findings should convey adequate research that has been performed and be presented in numbered points, with the aid of a table, using headlines, subheads, and categorized segments to make it easy for the

reader to find and understand. One should ensure the graphics used are appropriate for the report if applicable.

Step 8: Conclusion

In the conclusion part, add a compelling conclusion drawn from the reported findings and analysis. Briefly summarize all of the main points in their presented order in the report. The conclusion should be strong and supported by accurate data, unbiased sights, or opinions.

Step 9: Recommendations

This section gives recommendations or suggestions for any action supported by valid documentation. It should be based on the findings and analysis noted in the report. Also, it should contain the potential benefits for the company of applying these suggestions.

Step 10: Add a bibliography or references.

Effective Oral Communication

Oral communication is the most used form of communication done with words. Verbal communication is nothing but words that come out of our mouth to convey a message or idea via sound. The various modes of verbal communication are face-to-face discussions, presentations, intercom, messages delivered on phones, telephonic conversations, radio, transistor, skyping or video chatting, speeches, interviews, etc.

Strong verbal communication skills are important for everyone to master. They are extremely valuable in both your personal and professional life. When speaking clearly, confidently, and with poise, you are much more likely to command the respect of others and build rapport. This is particularly important in business interactions.

Conversation management skills are essential for small business owners and managers who handle much of the burden in such areas as company/customer presentations, employee interviews, giving

speeches, and conducting meetings. For verbal communication to be effective, it should be clear, relevant, tactful in forming phrases and tone, concise, and informative.

Presentations or conversations that have these factors included usually bear good fruits. Unclear, inaccurate, or inconsiderate business communication, on the other hand, can waste valuable time, alienate employees or customers, and damage business reputation.

Nonverbal elements such as posture, gestures, and facial expressions are also important factors in developing good verbal communication skills. Your outward appearance mirrors your inner mood.

Thus good posture suggests poise and confidence; stand neither at rigid attention nor with sloppy casualness draped over the podium, but upright with your weight about equally distributed on each foot. Some movement may be helpful to hold listeners' attention or to increase emphasis, but constant shifting or pacing should be avoided.

Likewise, hand and arm gestures can be used to point, describe, or emphasize, but they should be varied, carefully timed, and adapted to the audience.

Ultimately, good speakers should make frequent eye contact with the audience, let their facial expression show their interest in the ideas they are presenting, dress in a way that is appropriate for the occasion and keep their energy levels high.

Factors of Effective Verbal communication:

1. Think before you speak

By organizing your thoughts in advance, you can eliminate many of the awkward pauses that occur when speaking. It will also help you relay your information more concisely.

While writing down your thoughts is not always possible in impromptu discussions, it is still effective to take a minute to organize your thoughts in your mind before you begin to speak.

2. Speak with confidence

Speaking in a confident manner will help you build trust and command the respect of your audience. There are several factors which can impact your ability to speak confidently, including your command of the subject matter, your word choice, the tone of your voice, your body language, and your ability to make direct eye contact with your audience.

3. Be clear and concise

The most effective way to get your point across is to make it in a clear and concise manner. Avoid using complex, convoluted sentences, and try to state your argument in direct language. Before speaking, ask yourself, "What is the clearest way I can make my point?"

4. Be aware of your non-verbal communication cues

Your body language significantly impacts the way others interpret what you say. Pay attention to the gestures you make, your facial expressions, and your body language to ensure they align with the message you are trying to get across.

5. Be a good listener

Being a good listener is as important as being a good speaker, and it will improve the quality of your verbal interactions. It shows the people you are speaking with that you genuinely care about their ideas, and it helps ensure you understand their needs. This will enable you to build trust and rapport much quicker.

6. Think about the perspective of your audience

Just because you have a strong command of a topic doesn't mean the people you are speaking to have the same knowledge as you.

Try to think about how someone else will understand what you are trying to communicate, particularly if they lack the technical knowledge about a subject that you possess.

7. Vary your vocal tone

Speaking in a monotone voice is a sure-fire way to bore your audience. Instead, use voice inflection to add emphasis to important points, and vary the pitch of your voice to express emotion. This will help keep your audience engaged in your message.

Strong verbal skills will help to encourage essential discussion while playing a major role in bringing people together. Ask questions if you are wondering about a new concept in order to become more knowledgeable about that topic. Explain why you are confused about a certain policy to get the assistance required for a better understanding of that set of guidelines.

Express what you experienced in a certain situation so you can work through what you are feeling. Relaying this information will not only help yourself, but also those who you are speaking with by solving problems, making connections, and avoiding conflicts. Additionally, be prepared to serve as a good listener in return because lacking the ability to give the same level of attention that you expect from somebody else when you are speaking is not fair.

Effective verbal communication is an important skill to understand. Having the courage and ability to convey your thoughts in a respectable way will help enhance mutual understanding, trust, decision-making, and problem-solving between yourself and others, making the act of properly speaking and listening to an imperative influence on how we learn and think for ourselves.

Problems of Effective Oral Communication

1. NOT TRULY LISTENING

When we are communicating with someone, we often are not committing our full attention. We might be looking at our phones, watching television, or even daydreaming about something else.

When we don't actively listen to the person we are speaking to, not only do we run the risk of making the person feel invalidated, but we also miss important nonverbal cues and may not fully understand the person's message. To avoid communication mishaps, it is best to give the speaker 100% of our attention. Effective listening skills include making eye contact, asking clarifying questions, and remaining engaged.

2. ASSUMING YOU KNOW THE MESSAGE BEFORE THE PERSON FINISHES

We've all done it. We're listening to a friend speak, and we already assume we know what is going to be said before they finish their sentence. When we assume we know what the person will say, we miss what is actually being said. Honour the speaker by remaining openly curious and listening intently for the message rather than predicting what will be said.

3. INTERRUPTING THE SPEAKER

We've probably all interrupted another person midsentence once or twice. It can happen accidentally, or we may get so excited about what we want to say and fear we will forget our response if we don't just go ahead and say it. Others may interrupt during arguments as a power move.

Whatever the intention, interrupting can make a person feel invalidated, as if what they have to say is unimportant. Have respect for the other person, and allow them to finish the message entirely before you respond.

4. USING "YOU" STATEMENTS INSTEAD OF "I" STATEMENTS

When we are discussing our feelings with another person, we need to own those feelings rather than place the responsibility on the other person. It can be easy to say, "You did this" or "You didn't do that."

When we use "I" statements, we take ownership of how we feel and are less likely to make the other person feel attacked. Instead of saying, "You didn't call me back…" try saying, "I felt hurt when you didn't return my call."

5. LETTING YOUR EMOTIONS DICTATE YOUR RESPONSE

When we react emotionally, we are likely to say things we don't mean. A good communicator allows emotions to sit for a while and then chooses to carefully respond rather than react.

6. FAILING TO ACCOUNT FOR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION

Cross-cultural communication can be difficult. Words can take on different meanings, and cultural norms surrounding nonverbal communication may vary. When communicating with people from other cultural backgrounds, it's important to account for cultural differences in communication styles. If we don't, we may accidentally offend or miscommunicate with someone.

7. MISINTERPRETING THE MESSAGE

We may misinterpret others more often than we think. To avoid this, it is best to give the person our full attention and paraphrase the message back to the speaker to ensure we have understood correctly.

In today's society, we are more susceptible to misinterpretation, as we rely heavily on technological communication. Without tone of voice and nonverbal cues, it can be easy to misunderstand each other. When using text or email communication, be sure to use appropriate punctuation and ask clarifying questions to ensure you understand the other person.

8. BEING INDIRECT

Being subtle and/or indirect in communication is usually ineffective. We can't expect other people to read our minds. If you

want someone to understand you, try being direct and try not to "beat around the bush" in conversation.

9. ATTACKING CHARACTER RATHER THAN BEHAVIOR

When we are upset with someone, it is easy to say things such as, "You're a jerk" or "You're an idiot." Rather than attack someone's character, an effective communicator should address the actual behavioural issue and leave it at that.

10. AVOIDING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

When faced with the possibility of a difficult conversation, many people choose to avoid or prolong the conversation as long as possible. People usually perceive a conversation as difficult when they are faced with telling someone something that person doesn't want to hear. It might be delivering bad news or bringing up a conflict of interest.

Gateways to more effective communication

Effective Communication is vital to effective management. Therefore, it is necessary to overcome the barriers to communication. Although perfect communication may not be possible. Yet considerable improvements can be made in communication. The following guidelines should be followed to make communication effective.

1. **Sound Organisation Structure**: The Organisation structure should be simple with a few levels of authority. The organisation policy, rules and procedures must be clear and explicit. These should be encouraging the free flow of communication in the organisation. Wherever necessary communication through the proper channel should not be insisted upon. Top management should set an example of effective communication. Interpersonal relationship based on mutual respect and trust should be developed. Status differentials and class distinctions should be reduced. Managers should develop close personal contacts and informal relations among subordinates. Adequate organisational facilities should

be provided for effective communication. Employees may be educated in the importance and methods of effective communication. Standard procedures should be laid down to specify the type of information to be communicated, the people to whom it is to be communicated and the time of its communication.

2. **Clear messages:** The beginning of all communication is some message. The message can be conveyed properly only when it is clearly formulated in the mind of the communicator. The sender must encode the message in the direct and simple language so that the receiver can understand it without difficulty. He should be sensitive to the needs, feelings, and perceptions of the receiver. He should use the appropriate language with which the receiver is quite familiar.
3. **Two-way communication:** Two-way communication requires continuous dialogue between the sender and the receiver. Upward communication should be encouraged. The sender should try to know the reaction or response to the message through person to person contacts and other ways.
4. **Multiple Channels:** Exclusive reliance on the official channels or chain of command creates delays and distraction in the communication. Informal communication channels should be used to support formal channels and to overcome gaps in an informal communication system.
5. **Good listening:** A communicator should be a good listener so that he can collect reaction or response to his message. When the message is heard with attention and interest. The receiver can get a much better understanding of what is being said. For this purpose, all distractions must be removed. The speaker must be patient and cool-headed. He should not stop talking in between the message.
6. **Effective Control:** There should be a continuous programme of evaluating the flow of communication in all directions. This would highlight the problems, identify their cause, and suggest corrective measures to make communication effective. The communication system should provide for some checks and

balances to prevent suppression of points from the message, especially in upward communication.
7. **Modern instruments:** Use of sophisticated instruments or mechanical devices helps to improve speed and accuracy in communication. Computers, Mobile phones etc., permit faster and more accurate transmission and processing of information in the organisation.
8. **Human relation attitude:** Cordial interpersonal relations based on mutual trust and confidence must be developed. This will enable the people to appreciate the viewpoint of each other will make them more respective to new ideas. As a result, the problems of the status quo and differences in perceptions can be overcome.

Principles of information exchange in a company

Improving information management practices is a key focus for many organisations, across both the public and private sectors.

This is driven by a range of factors, including a need to improve the efficiency of business processes, the demands of compliance regulations and the desire to deliver new services.

In many cases, **information management** has meant deploying new technology solutions, such as content or document management systems, ERP solutions or platforms such as Office 365.
These projects have a poor track record of success, and most organisations are still struggling to deliver an integrated information management environment.

Effective information management is not easy. There are many systems to integrate, a huge range of business needs to meet, and complex organisational (and cultural) issues to address.

This article draws together a number of **critical success factors** for information management projects.
From the outset, it must be emphasised that this is not an article about *technology*. Rather, it is about the organisational, cultural and strategic factors that must be considered to improve the management of information within organisations.
The key goal of this article is to help information management projects succeed.

Exploring information management

'Information management' is an umbrella term that encompasses all the systems and processes within an organisation that enable the creation and use of corporate information.

In terms of technology, information management encompasses systems such as:

- document management (DM)
- records management (RM)
- web content management (CM)
- digital asset management (DAM)
- learning management systems (LM)
- intranet platforms
- collaboration
- enterprise search
- and many more…

The wide adoption of platforms such as Office 365 is also bringing a lot of information (in the form of documents or intranet pages) into the light, which highlights how much work is needed to 'bring order' to it all.

Information management is, however, much more than just technology. Equally importantly, it is about the business processes and practices that underpin the creation and use of information.

It is also about the information itself, including the structure of information (‘information architecture’), metadata, content quality, and more.

Information management therefore encompasses:

- people
- process
- technology
- content

Each of these must be addressed if information management projects are to succeed.

Information management challenges

Organisations are confronted with many information management problems and issues. In many ways, the growth of electronic information (rather than information on paper) has only worsened these issues over the last decade or two.

Common information management problems include:

- large number of disparate information management systems
- little integration or coordination between information systems
- range of legacy systems requiring upgrading or replacement
- direct competition between information management systems
- no clear strategic direction for the overall technology environment
- limited and patchy adoption of existing information systems by staff

- poor quality of information, including lack of consistency, duplication, and out-of-date information
- little recognition and support of information management by senior management
- limited resources for deploying, managing or improving information systems
- lack of enterprise-wide definitions for information types and values (no corporate-wide taxonomy)
- large number of diverse business needs and issues to be addressed
- lack of clarity around broader organisational strategies and directions
- difficulties in changing working practices and processes of staff
- internal politics impacting on the ability to coordinate activities enterprise-wide

While this can be an overwhelming list, there are practical ways of delivering solutions that work within these limitations and issues.

Oral Communication skills

Communication refers to the transfer of information or ideas through means such as writing, speaking, body language, and various forms of media. **Oral communication** is a specific form of information exchange relating to the transmission of ideas verbally from one person or group to another. Oral communication can be formal and they are used most often in this manner during business meetings, classroom lectures, or political speeches. They may also occur informally, such as during face-to-face conversations, discussions at business meetings, and telephone conversations.

Certain scenarios are better suited for oral communication, meaning they are more advantageous to use. Oral communication is often more personal and more flexible than written communication, and they can be effective at addressing conflict and problems within an organization. They may be a good choice when an individual wants to boost employee morale, when someone is going to record a podcast, or when a situation needs to be resolved quickly. Oral communication may also be disadvantageous in certain settings, such as when something needs to be documented, because writing is often more detailed and clearer than a verbal transmission of information. A few ways to improve oral communication includes: to prepare, get organized, make use of visual aids, and continuously practice to improve delivery skills before a speech. When addressing an audience, also pay attention to non-verbal messages, eye contact, and body language being sent to engage the audience most effectively.

What are the two types of oral communication?

Oral communication relates to the verbal exchange of information or ideas from one person or group to another. They can be used either formally or informally. Formal oral communication takes place during presentations at business meetings, classroom lectures, political speeches, or speeches at ceremonies. Informal oral communication may take place anywhere within an organization, such as during face-to-face conversations, through telephone conversations, or during regular conversations at business meetings.

What are the advantages of oral communication?

Oral communication is advantageous in many academic and business settings for a few reasons. Primarily, they establish a more personal and relational communication between the sender and receiver, and they are typically less formal than written communication, meaning that they are more approachable by an audience. Oral communication is also flexible, being able to adapt to change quickly and respond to problems more quickly than written communication. Oral communication may be disadvantageous on some occasions, however, such as when an event needs to be documented in detail (written communication would be more effective).

Why is oral communication important?

Oral communication is used in both academic and business settings, because they are important skills for both students and employees to possess. They are first learned in a school setting, and built upon throughout the career of an individual. Oral communication leads to increased productivity in the workplace, higher job satisfaction, improved relationships between peers, and reduced conflict overall. Employers also seek candidates with strong oral communication skills to deliver innovative ideas, and advance the objectives of the organization.

What are examples of oral communication?

Oral communication is the verbal transmission of information and ideas used regularly in many different fields. For example, a student may deliver an oral presentation to their peers, while making use of visual aids to build upon their speaking and presentation skills. In the corporate world, a manager may hold a formal face-to-face meeting with their employees to discuss new objectives, or conduct informal verbal reviews of performance and other information. Speaking is the main component of oral communication, but eye contact and body language also play an important role in delivering an effective verbal exchange of ideas.

Meetings

A meeting can be formal or informal. As regards a formal meeting there is set rules for convening it and conducting it, with a written record of its proceedings. It requires a notice which is a call, an invitation to attend it.

It has an agenda or list of things to deal with, and the outcome is systematically written in the form of minutes. An informal meeting can be without any written notice, for instance a staff union meeting in the lunch room to discuss a picnic.

A meeting has a convener who calls it and a leader or chairperson who directs it.

Types of meeting:

Meetings are broadly of three types:
(i) Informative, where the purpose is to give information to the participants about a new scheme, product, etc.

(ii) Consultative, in which the members are consulted to solve a problem.

(iii) Executive, in which decisions are taken by those empowered to do so.

In practice, most of the meetings serve more purposes than one. Some additional classifications of meetings are – meeting for negotiation purpose, meeting for giving instructions, etc.

Purpose of a meeting:

The purposes of holding meetings are listed here in a skeleton form:

To reach a common decision/agreement

To solve a problem

To understand a situation, exchange ideas and experiences

To inform, explain, present ideas

To give and get feedback on new ideas

To give training

To plan and prepare for action

To resolve differences and misunderstandings

To generate enthusiasm and seek cooperation

To review past performance and evaluate it

To create a feeling of continuity and solidarity in a body's working.

In this mechanical age, union is strength, and united work is done by means of meetings. It is estimated that worldwide, millions of meetings are conducted every day, and their number and usefulness is on the rise.

That is why although many negative remarks are made about the use of meetings; on the whole we find that meeting is a useful device of collective decision-taking and action.

Advantages of Meetings:

(i) Save time:

Since one can meet a number of people at a time interactively, a meeting can save time.

(ii) Addressing groups:

One can divide the audiences according to their background and need, and address them group by group.

(iii) Cope with information explosion:

New technology and new regulations are coming thick and fast. Meetings enable us to cope with this situation.

(iv) Social and emotional support:

Members get personal support from each other when they meet and exchange ideas.

(v) Feeling of being consulted:

Members get the feeling that they have been consulted and this is useful in getting their intelligent and willing cooperation.

(vi) Democratic functioning:

Democracy aims at achieving all people's welfare by all people's involvement. This is possible through meetings.

(vii) Idea development:

Ideas are systematically cross-fertilized, analysed and improved by a group.

(viii) Defusing troublemakers:
By the collectively of constructive forces, troublemakers can be isolated in a meeting and positive action got going. The opponents of a plan get a forum to voice their opposition, which can be overcome before a group of supportive people.

(ix) Bolder decisions:
Collectively we can take more adventurous decisions because of united strength.

(x) Various interest groups represented:
In a meeting many interest groups can be represented and minorities can also be given due attention.

(xi) Preventing mistakes:
A meeting helps to avoid mistakes by a collective and many-angled focus on issues.

Disadvantages:

1. Time-consuming:
Meetings require a number of people to come together at the same time and place. This costs time because other work has to be set aside for the sake of the meeting.

2. Inability to arrive at a decision:
Just as “two heads are better than one,” it is also true that “too many cooks spoil the soup.” Multiplicity of views and personal

stubbornness of members may prevent a meeting from taking a decision which a chief executive may take alone.

3. Lack of seriousness:
Many meetings suffer from the drawback that members come unprepared and feel that the others will do the thinking and talking. They feel they can take a free ride. “Everybody’s job is nobody’s job.”

4. Inexpert chairing:
Just as an airplane is steered by a pilot, a meeting is piloted by the chairperson. His lack of skill and personal failings/biases may fail a meeting.

5. Expensive:
Meetings are expensive to arrange – they require a place, paperwork, prior communication, and travelling by the attendees.

6. Open to disruption:
A meeting is prone to being disrupted by an element that is opposed to its objective. There are times when one passenger’s refusal to adjust himself delays the entire flight. The same for meetings. The spirit of give-and-take may be missing in some participants.

Guide to good oral communication

Good Guidelines for ***Effective Oral Communication*** or principles of effective oral communication there are some certain guidelines or principles that are to be followed in order to make oral

communication most effective. The essential principles of oral communication are discussed below-

Guidelines for Effective Oral Communication

- **Taking Preparation**: A person or speaker must take necessary preparation before delivering his speech before the audience. Before presenting something, he should have proper planning regarding the topic, audience, timing, place etc. A well planned or well-prepared presentation must be able to attract the attention of the audience.
- **Drafting the Speech**: Before delivering the speech, the speaker should make a draft of the speech. It will help him to better organize his speech, to allocate time on different issues and to rectify the message if any error is there. Business Communication
- **Clear Pronunciation**: Clear pronunciation is an important quality of a speaker. The success of oral communication largely depends on it. Clear pronunciation means distinct uttering of words with required pitch and intensity of voice.
- **Brevity**: The message should be brief to make ***oral communication effective***. If the speaker takes long time for delivering his message, the audience may lose attention toward the speech.
- **Precision**: The oral message must be precise enough to communicate with the receiver effectively. Specific words should be used instead of vague or ambiguous words. For example, it is better to say, "I will be available in the office after 10 a.m. in the morning tomorrow" instead of saying "I will available in the office tomorrow early in the morning."
- **Logical Sequence**: In speech, ideas should be organized sequentially so that the receivers or audience may get clear sense of the whole speech. No irrelevant idea should be included in the speech.
- **Natural Voice**: Speech should be delivered at natural tone of the speaker. Unnatural or unusual voice may distort the

meaning of the message. The voice of the speaker should be clear and pleasant also.

- **Using Simple and Suitable Words**: Words convey different meanings to different people in different situations. Oral communication is basically a word-based communication. The speaker should be careful in selecting words. Simple, common and familiar words should be used in speech. Words that bear different meanings should be avoided as much as possible.
- **Using Visual Aids**: Visual aids can make the oral presentation more interesting and livelier. The speaker can use slides, multimedia projector, overhead projector, whiteboard etc. to make the oral presentation vivid and magnificent.
- **Using Body Language**: In oral presentation, the speaker must attract the attention of the audience through positive body language. Eye contact, smile, nods, fingering etc. are important body movements or languages that help to retain the attention of the audience.
- **Control of Emotion**: The speaker must control his emotion to make **oral communication effective**. Over emotion of the speaker may mislead or irritate the listeners and misguide the speaker.
- **Emphasizing on Important Topic**: The speaker should emphasize on important topic so that audience can pay full attention to his oral presentation. It's up to the speaker how he will determine the relative importance of different parts of his speakers.
- **Speaking Slowly**: The speaker should speak slowly so that the audience can understand him easily. If the speaker delivers his speech very rapidly, the audience may fail to understand or follow him instantly.
- **Avoiding Mannerism**: The speaker must avoid mannerism, if he has any. Because it irritates the audience. Making unnecessary sound repeatedly, fidgeting fingers, scratching heads, unnecessary body movement etc. must be avoided at the time of oral presentation.