UNIT-1

TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Technical communication is a means to document or convey scientific, engineering, or other technical information.[1] Individuals in a variety of contexts and with varied professional credentials engage in technical communication. Some individuals are designated as technical communicators. These individuals use a set of methods to research and document technical processes or products. Technical communicators may put the information they capture into paper documents, web pages, digitally stored text, audio, video, and other media. The Society for Technical Communication defines the field as any form of communication that focuses on technical or specialized topics, communicates specifically by using technology or provides instructions on how to do something.[2][3] More succinctly, the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators defines technical communication as factual communication, usually about products and services.[4] Whatever the definition of technical communication, the overarching goal of the practice is to create easily accessible information for a specific audience.

Technical communication is a professional task performed by specialized employees or consultants. For example, a professional writer may work with a company to produce a user manual. Some companies give considerable technical communication responsibility to other technical professionals—such as programmers, engineers, and scientists. Often, a professional technical writer edits such work to bring it up to modern technical communication standards.

To begin the documentation process, technical communicators identify the audience and their information needs. The technical communicator researches and structures the content into a framework that can guide detailed development. As the body of information comes together, the technical communicator ensures that the intended audience can understand the content and retrieve the information they need. This process, known as the 'Writing Process', has been a central focus of writing theory since the 1970s, and some contemporary textbook authors apply it to technical communication. Technical communication is important to most professions, as a way to contain and organize information and maintain accuracy.

The technical writing process can be divided into five steps:

1. Determine purpose and audience
2. Collect information
3. Organize and outline information
4. Write the first draft
5. Revise and edit

Determining purpose and audience

All technical communication serves a particular purpose—typically to communicate ideas and concepts to an audience, or direct an audience in a particular task. Technical communication professionals use various techniques to understand the audience and, when possible, test content on the target audience. For example, if bank workers don't properly post deposits, a technical communicator would:

- Review existing documentation (or lack thereof)
- Interview bank workers to identify conceptual errors
- Interview subject matter experts to learn the correct procedures
- Author new material that describes the correct procedures
- Test the new material on the bank workers

Similarly, a sales manager who wonders which of two sites is better for a new store might ask a marketing professional to study the sites and write a report with recommendations. The marketing professional hands the report off to a technical communicator (in this case, a technical editor or technical writer), who edits, formats, and sometimes elaborates the document in order to make the marketing professional's expert assessment usable to the sales manager. The process is not one of knowledge transfer, but the accommodation of knowledge across fields of expertise and contexts of use. This is the basic definition of technical communication.

Audience type affects many aspects of communication, from word selection and graphics use to style and organization. Most often, to address a particular audience, a technical communicator must consider what qualities make a text useful (capable of supporting a meaningful task) and usable (capable of being used in service of that task). A non-technical audience might misunderstand or not even read a document that is heavy with jargon—while a technical audience might crave detail critical to their work. Busy audiences often don't have time to read entire documents, so content must be organized for ease of searching—for example by frequent headings, white space, and other cues that guide attention. Other requirements vary according to particular audience's needs.

Technical communication in the government is particular and detailed. Depending on the segment of government (and country), the government component must follow distinct specifications. The US Army, for example, uses the MIL-spec (Military specification). Information changes continuously and technical communications (technical manuals, interactive electronic technical manuals, technical bulletins, etc.) must be updated.

The United States Department of Defense, for example uses many technical manuals, and their creation and maintenance is a core agency responsibility. Though detail-oriented in their requirements, the DoD has deficiencies in technical communication.[6]

Collecting information

Technical communicators must collect all information that each document requires. They may collect information through primary (first-hand) research—or secondary research, using information from existing work by other authors. Technical communicators must acknowledge all sources they use to produce their work. To this end, technical communicators typically distinguish quotations, paraphrases, and summaries when taking notes.

Organizing and outlining information

Before writing the initial draft, the technical communicator organizes ideas in a way that makes the document flow well. Once each idea is organized, the writer organizes the document as a whole—accomplishing this task in various ways:

- Chronological: used for documents that involve a linear process, such as a step-by-step guide that describs how to accomplish something
- Parts of an object: Used for documents that describe the parts of an object, such as a graphic showing the parts of a computer (keyboard, monitor, mouse, etc.)
- Simple to complex (or vice versa): starts with easy ideas and gradually goes into complex ideas
- Specific to general: starts with many ideas, then organizes the ideas into sub-categories
- General to specific: starts with a few categories of ideas, then goes deeper

After organizing the whole document, the writer typically creates a final outline that shows the document structure. Outlines make the writing process easier and save the author time.

Writing the first draft

After the outline is complete, the writer begins the first draft, following the outline's structure. Setting aside blocks of an hour or more, in a place free of distractions, helps the writer maintain a flow. Most writers prefer to wait until the draft is complete before any revising so they don't break their flow. Typically, the writer should start with the easiest section, and write the summary only after the body is drafted.

The ABC (*a*bstract, *b*ody, and *c*onclusion) format can be used when writing a first draft of some document types. The abstract describes the subject, so that the reader knows what the document covers. The body is the majority of the document and covers topics in depth. Lastly, the conclusion section restates the document's main topics. The ABC format can also apply to individual paragraphs—beginning with a topic sentence that states the paragraph's topic, followed by the topic, and finally, a concluding sentence.

Revising and editing

Once the initial draft is laid out, editing and revising can be done to fine-tune the draft into a final copy. Four tasks transform the early draft into its final form, suggested by Pfeiffer and Boogard:[citation needed]

Adjusting and reorganizing content

on topics that need more attention, shorten other sections—and relocate certain paragraphs, sentences, or entire topics.

Editing for style

Good style makes writing more interesting, appealing, and readable. In general, the personal writing style of the writer is not evident in technical writing. Modern technical writing style relies on attributes that contribute to clarity:

- Headings, lists, graphics
- Generous white space
- Short sentences
- Present tense
- Active voice[7] (though some scientific applications still use the passive voice)
- Second and third person as required

Technical writing as a discipline usually requires that a technical writer use a style guide. These guides may relate to a specific project, product, company, or brand. They ensure that technical writing reflects formatting, punctuation, and general stylistic standards that the audience expects. In the United States, many consider the *Chicago Manual of Style* the bible for general technical communication. Other style guides have their adherents, particularly for specific industries—such as the *Microsoft Style Guide* in some information technology settings.

Technical communication is written and oral communication for and about business and industry. Technical communication focuses on products and services—how to manufacture them, market them, manage them, deliver them, and use them. Technical communication is composed primarily in the work environment for supervisors, colleagues, subordinates, vendors, and customers. As either a professional technical communicator, an employee at a company, or a consumer, you can expect to write the following types of correspondence for the following reasons (and many more).

• As a computer information systems (CIS) employee, you work at a 1-800 hotline helpdesk. A call comes from a concerned customer. Your job is to answer that client's questions and follow up with a one-page e-mail documenting the problem and your responses.

• You are a technical communicator, working in engineering, biomedical equipment manufacturing, the automotive industry, computer software development, or a variety of other job areas. Your job is to write user manuals to explain the steps for building a piece of equipment, performing preventative maintenance, or for shipping and handling procedures.

• As a trust officer in a bank, one of your jobs is to make proposals to potential clients. To do so, you must write a 20- to 30-page proposal about your bank's services.

• You are a customer. You ordered an automotive part from a national manufacturer. Unfortunately, the part was shipped to you five days later than promised, it arrived broken, and you were charged more than the agreed-upon price. You need to write a letter of complaint.

• As the manager of a medical records reporting department, one of your major responsibilities is ensuring that your staff's training is up to date. After all, insurance rules and regulations keep changing. To document your department's compliance, you must write a monthly progress report to upper-level management.

• You are a webmaster. Your job is creating a corporate Web site, complete with online help screens. The Web site gives clients information about your locations, pricing, products and services, mission statement, and job openings. The dropdown help screens provide easy-to-access answers for both customer and employee questions.

• As an entrepreneur, you are opening your own computer-maintenance service (or services for HVAC repair, deck rebuilding, home construction, lawn care, or automotive maintenance). To market your company, you will need to write fliers, brochures, or sales letters.

• You have just graduated from college (or, you have just been laid off). It's time to get a job. You need to write a resume and a letter of application to show

THE IMPORTANCE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

The National Commission on Writing concluded that "in today's workplace writing is a 'threshold skill' for hiring and promotion among salaried . . . employees. Survey results indicate that writing is a ticket to professional opportunity, while poorly written job applications are a figurative kiss of death" ("Writing: A Ticket to Work" 2007, 3). Technical communication is a significant factor in your work experience for several reasons. Business Technical communication is not a frill or an occasional endeavor. It is a major component of the work environment. Through technical correspondence, employees

• Maintain good customer–client relations (follow-up letters).

• Ensure that work is accomplished on time (directive memos or e-mail).

• Provide documentation that work has been completed (progress reports).

• Generate income (sales letters, brochures, and fliers).

• Keep machinery working (user manuals)

. • Ensure that correct equipment is purchased (technical descriptions).

• Participate in teleconferences or videoconferences (oral communication).

• Get a job (resumes).

• Define terminology (online help screens).

• Inform the world about a company's products and services (Internet Web sites and blogs).

Technical writing is any written form of writing or drafting technical communication used in a variety of technical and occupational fields, such as computer hardware and software,engineering, chemistry, aeronautics, robotics, finance, consumer electronics, and biotechnology. It encompasses the largest sub-field within technical communication.[1]

The Society for Technical Communication defines technical communication as any form of communication that exhibits one or more of the following characteristics: "(1) communicating about technical or specialized topics, such as computer applications, medical procedures, or environmental regulations; (2) communicating through technology, such as web pages, help files, or social media sites; or (3) providing instructions about how to do something, regardless of the task's technical nature".[2]

Overview

Further information: Technical writer

Technical writing is performed by a technical writer and is the process of writing and sharing information in a professional setting.[3] A technical writer's main task is to convey information to another person or party in the most clear and effective manner possible.[3] The information that technical writers convey is often complex, and it is one of their main tasks to analyze the information and present it in a format that is easy to read and understand.[4] A good technical writer needs strong writing and communication skills and must be proficient with computers, as technical writers do not just convey information through text. They use a wide range of programs like Adobe Photoshop to create and edit images, diagramming programs like Microsoft Visioto create visual aids, and document processors like MadCap Flare to design and format documents.[5]

While commonly associated with online help and user manuals, technical writing covers a wide range of genres and technologies. Press releases, memos, business proposals, product descriptions and specifications, white papers, Résumés, and job applications are but a few examples of documents that are considered forms of technical writing.[6]

History

While technical writing has only been recognized as a profession since World War II,[7] its roots can be traced to classical antiquity.[8] Critics cite the works of writers like Aristotle as the earliest forms of technical writing.[9] Geoffrey Chaucer's work, Treatise on the Astrolabe, is an early example of a technical document and is considered to be the first technical document published in English.[10]

With the invention of the mechanical printing press, the onset of the Renaissance and the rise of the Age of Reason, the need to document findings became a necessity, and inventors and scientists like Isaac Newton and Leonardo Di Vinci prepared documents that chronicled their inventions and findings.[11] While never called technical documents during their period of publication, these documents played a crucial role in developing modern forms of technical communication and writing.[7]

The field of technical communication grew during the Industrial Revolution.[12] As more and more complex machines were invented and used, the need for instructing people how to use these devices became vital.[13] However, unlike the past, where skills were handed down through oral traditions, no one besides the inventors knew how to use these new devices. Writing thus became the fastest and most effective way to disseminate information, and writers who could document these devices were desired.[14]

During the 20th century, the need for technical writing skyrocketed, and the profession finally became officially recognized. The events of World War I and World War II led to advances in medicine, military hardware, computer technology, and aerospace technologies.[15] This rapid growth, coupled with the urgency of war, created an immediate need for well-designed and written documents that chronicled the use of these technologies. Technical writing was in high demand during this time, and became an official job title during World War II.[11]

Following World War II, technological advances led to an increase in consumer goods and standards of living.[16] During the post-war boom, public services like libraries and universities, as well transport systems like buses and highways saw massive amounts of growth, and the need for writers to chronicle these processes increased.[17] It was also during this period that computers started being used in large businesses and universities. Notably, in 1949, Joseph D. Chapline authored the first computational technical document, an instruction manual for theBINAC computer.[18]

The discovery of the transistor in 1947 allowed computers to be produced more cheaply than ever before.[19] These cheaper prices meant that computers could now be purchased by individuals and small businesses.[20] And as a result of the computer's growing prominence, the need for writers who could explain and document these devices grew.[19] The profession of technical writing saw further expansion during the 70s and 80s as consumer electronics found their way into the homes of more and more people.[20]

In recent years, the prominence of computers in society has led to many advances in the field of digital communications, leading to many changes in the tools technical writers use.[19]Hypertext, word processors, graphics editing programs, and page layout software have made the creation of technical documents faster and easier than ever before, and technical writers of today must be proficient in these programs.[21]

Techniques

Good technical writing is concise, focused, easy to understand, and free of errors.[22] Technical writers focus on making their documents as clear as possible, avoiding overly technical phrases and stylistic choices like passive voice and nominalizations.[23] Because technical documents are used in real-world situations, it should always be explicitly clear what the subject matter of a technical document is and what should be done with the presented information. It would be disastrous if, for example, a technical writer's instructions on how to use a high-powered X-ray machine were difficult to decipher.

Technical writing requires a writer to extensively examine his or her audience.[24] A technical writer needs to be aware of his or her audience's existing knowledge about the material he or she is discussing because the knowledge base of the writer's audience will determine the content and focus of a document.[24] For example, an evaluation report discussing a scientific study's findings that is written to a group of highly skilled scientists will be very differently constructed than one intended for the general public. Technical writers do not have to be subject-matter experts (SMEs) themselves and generally collaborate with SMEs to complete tasks that require more knowledge about a subject than they possess.[25]

Document design and layout are also very important components of technical writing.[26] Technical writers spend much time ensuring their documents are laid out in a fashion that makes readability easy, because a poorly designed document hampers a reader's comprehension. Technical document design stresses proper usage of document design choices like bullet points, font-size, and bold text.[27] Images, diagrams, and videos are also commonly employed by technical writers because these media can often convey complex information, like a company's annual earnings or a product's design features, far more efficiently than text.[28]

Technical documents

Technical writing covers many genres and writing styles depending on the information and audience.[24] Technical documents are not solely produced by technical writers. Almost anyone who works in a professional setting produces technical documents of some variety. Some examples of technical writing include:

1. **Instructions and procedures** are documents that help either developers or end users operate or configure a device or program.[29] Examples of instructional documents includeuser manuals and troubleshooting guides for computer programs, household products, medical equipment, and automobiles.
2. **Proposals.** Most projects begin with a proposal—a document that describes the purpose of a project, the tasks that will be performed in the project, the methods used to complete the project, and finally the cost of the project.[30] Proposals cover a wide range of subjects. For example, a technical writer may author a proposal that outlines how much it will cost to install a new computer system, and a teacher may write a proposal that outlines how a new biology class will be structured.
3. **Emails, letters, and memoranda** are some of the most frequently written documents in a business.[31] Letters and emails can be constructed with a variety of goals—some are aimed at simply communicating information while others are designed to persuade the recipient to accomplish a certain task. While letters are usually written to people outside of a company, memoranda (memos) are documents written to other employees within the business.[32]
4. **Press releases.** When a company wants to publicly reveal a new product or service, they will have a technical writer author a press release, a document that describes the product's functions and value to the public.[33]
5. **Specifications** are design outlines that describe the structure, parts, packaging, and delivery of an object or process in enough detail that another party can reconstruct it.[34] For example, a technical writer might diagram and write the specifications for a smartphone or bicycle so that a manufacturer can produce the object.
6. **Descriptions** are shorter explanations of procedures and processes that help readers understand how something works.[35] For example, a technical writer might author a document that shows the effects of greenhouse gases or demonstrates how the braking system on a bike functions.
7. **Résumés and job applications** are another example of technical documents.[36] They are documents that are used in a professional setting to inform readers of the author's credentials.
8. **Technical reports** are written to provide readers with information, instructions, and analysis on tasks.[37] Reports come in many forms. For example, a technical writer might evaluate a building that is for sale and produce a trip report that highlights his or her findings and whether or not he or she believes the building should be purchased. Another writer who works for a non-profit company may publish an evaluation report that shows the findings of the company's research into air pollution.
9. **White papers** are documents that are written for experts in a field and typically describe a solution to a technological or business challenge or problem.[38] Examples of white papers include a piece that details how to make a business stand out in the market or a piece explaining how to prevent cyber-attacks on businesses.
10. **Web sites.** The advent of hypertext has changed the way documents are read, organized, and accessed. Technical writers of today are often responsible for authoring pages on websites like "About Us" pages or product pages and are expected to be proficient in web development tools.[39]

GENERAL :-
1) Contains a general message
2) Informal in style and approach
3) No set pattern
4) Mostly oral
5) Not always for a specific audience
6) No use of technical terms or graphics

TECHNICAL :-
1) Contains a technical message
2) Mostly formal in style and approach
3) Follows a set pattern
4) Both oral and written
5) Always for a specific audience
6) Frequently involves jargons, graphics etc.

Unit 2

Business Communication

What is Business Communication?

Strong Business Communication skills are critical to the success of any organization despite its size, geographical location, and its mission. Business communication is intertwined with the internal culture and external image of any organization. It therefore determines what is communicated, by whom, and at what level in the organization. Ultimately, good business communication practices assist the organization in achieving its objectives by informing, persuading and building good will within both the internal environment and, the external environment.

If organizations are to survive and prosper in the rapidly changing global environment, they must continually change the way communication processes are structured and delivered. This global environment forces us to think about communication issues against the backdrop of culture, technology and competition, which continually raise legal and ethical concerns.

Meaning of Communication:

The word "Communicate" comes from the Latin verb "Communicare" that means to impart, to participate, to share or to make common. By virtue of its Latin origin it is also the source of the English word "Common".

Thus, communication is defined as the process of conveying or transmitting a message from one person to another through a proper channel.

Elements of Communication:-

For communication to exit there must be at least four basic elements:

- A Sender/Encoder

- A Receiver/Decoder

- Message

- Channel and Medium

Encoder/Sender:

- Encodes Message

- Chooses Appropriate Channel

- Chooses Appropriate Medium

- Solicits Feedback

- Attempts to Minimize Noise

Decoder/Receiver:

- Decodes Message

- Practices Active Listening

- Provides Feedback

P.S. For communication to be more effective there should be Common Background and Purpose, Interest, Cooperation between Sender and Receiver.

Medium VS. Channel:

These two terms are often confused in business communication.

Understanding the distinction is essential to understand business communication. Consider the following examples:-

Channel air

Medium

airplane

Channel

water

Medium

boat

The Choice of the Channel and by extension the Medium should therefore be determined by the following:

1- Purpose of communication

2- Ability of Encoder to effectively use the medium

3- Effectives of the medium to deliver the message.

Other Elements:-

Response:

When the sender transmits the message, he expects a response. The response may be immediate or deferred, favorable or unfavorable.

Feedback:

Feedback is essential to the communication process. It tells the sender of the message that the message has been received and understood and the purpose fulfilled, whether it is to persuade or inform or for good will reasons.

Feedback both reassures the sender and indicates that the receiver is involved in active listening. Feedback should always be solicited by the sender, and in the best case built into the process of communication.

General Guidelines for Effective Communication:-

1- Clarity of Purpose: this requires careful planning. Lack of planning becomes the first major barrier in communication. Communication does not take place. We have to make all possible efforts to understand the why's and how's, the when and where, and above all the "what" of our message. As George Berneard Shaw says, "The

major mistake in communication is to believe that it happens."

2- Shared Activity: Lets not forget that effective communication is the responsibility of all persons in the organization. At any level –

managerial or no managerial. They are all working towards a common goal. It means that all of them have a share, directly or indirectly, in 5

many different ways, in the process of communication. Whether

communication is effective can be judged on the basis of the intended results.

3- Common Set of Symbols: The encoding and decoding of the message should be done with symbols that are familiar to the sender and the receiver. It is an immutable condition of communication that the code or set of symbols be mutually understood/intelligible.

4- Focus on the Need of the Receiver: Whenever we communicate we must keep in mind the needs of the receivers of the

message/information. It should be our endeavor to see that whatever we communicate should be of value to the receiver, both in the short run and in the distant future. Our awareness of the needs of the receiver will make him more receptive.

5- Active Listening: Active or "participative" listening is as important as any other element in the process of communication. It shows, again, that communication is a joint responsibility of both the sender and the receiver.

6- Controlling Emotions: Emotions play an important role in

interpersonal relationships between superiors, subordinates and colleagues in an organization. It should be, therefore, an important aim of communication to create an environment in which people are motivated to work toward the desired goals of the enterprise by which they achieve their personal goal.

7- Politeness: This leads us to the tonal aspect of communication. There is a saying, "The tone makes the music". In the same way, the tone of voice, the choice of language and the congruency or logical

connection between what is said and how it is said influence the reactions of the receiver.

8- Eliminate Noise: Every possible effort must be made to eliminate the element of noise that distorts communication at the transmission stage. It becomes especially important in the wake of modern

technological advancement. Anything going wrong with the equipment or any disturbance in the transmission line is bound to defeat the very purpose of communication.

9- Clarity Assumptions: No effective communication can be based on assumptions. The sender of the message must clarify his assumptions and then go ahead with proper encoding of the message.

10-

Avoiding connotations and ambiguities: Semantic problems can

be solved by using simple language and avoiding connotations. Care must be taken to see that the receiver of the message does not have to go beyond the text of the message. It is also necessary to avoid all ambiguity, which means to avoid using words with double meaning.

11-

Socio- Psychological Aspect: As communication is a two-way

process involving both the sender and the receiver, both should make conscious efforts to understand each other's cultural and social-psychological background. As a golden rule for effective

communication one must remember, "First understand, then be

understood." An effective communicator is an informed

communicator.

12-

Completeness: One must also endeavor to send a complete

message, furnishing all necessary facts and figures. Incomplete communication annoys the receiver as a result of which proper

feedback will not come. The message should be so organized that the receiver is not left in doubt about any aspect of the message.

13-

Conciseness: Completeness does not mean inclusion of

unnecessary details or diversions. An effective communication is concise and crisp. The sender should be clear headed and properly focused in his vision.

Essentials of Effective Correspondence:

Introduction:

Letters are the most important means of written communication, the most numerous and the most personal. They are also very important for any organization or individual for the purpose of giving or seeking information.

Modern technological developments have not diminished their importance.

As an executive goes up the ladder of his career he has to spend more and more of his time in handling correspondence. Needles to say that the success or failure of an organization depends to a large extent on its correspondence.

It is, therefore, obligatory for an executive to learn the art of writing effective letters. Let us have a look at the salient features of an effective letter.

1- Simplicity: it must be kept in mind that the writer of a letter is a person communicating with another person. It is, therefore, the polite, personal touch that proves to be more effective than the stiff, detached style generally associated with business correspondence. To highlight this point some typical expressions used in business correspondence are given below along with reasons for objection and suggested

2- Clarity of Goal: Both in thought and expression we have to be clear in our correspondence. Every letter is a reflection of the writer's mind.

He should be therefore clear about what information he is seeking or wishing to give. All facts and figures must be stated in the simplest possible language. It means that there is no scope for ambiguity and flowery language in business letters.

3- Public Relation Aspect: Besides aiming at the immediate goal, business correspondence is also deeply concerned with the image of the company in the eyes of the public. People form images about companies from many sources, and correspondence is a major factor 10

among them. All effective correspondence has the broad objective of enhancing the company's public relations.

4- You-attitude: The most effective business letters are those that show the writer's interest in the receiver. It means that the writer has to view things from the reader's point of view so as to get a favorable response from him. Communication experts, therefore, advise us to shift our focus from "I" and "We" to "You" and "Your". A

Comparison of the following examples show the difference in attitudes.

We-attitude You-attitude

We have received your letter of June Thank you for your letter of June15

15

We have shipped the two dozen steel Your two dozen steel racks should racks you ordered

reach you soon/with this letter.

I have five year’s experience as a Five year’s practical experience as a sales executive

sales executive will enable me to

push up your sales.

5- Courtesy: When we adopt the “you-attitude” for mutual benefit it is natural that our tone becomes courteous. It involves writing directly to our reader, avoiding the outdated cold style and also excluding elements of anger and preaching that very often spoil communication.

6- Persuasion: Persuasion is the main function of business

communication. It is most evident in effective business letters. The basic purpose of an effective letter is to influence, or to sell an idea to the reader(s).

7- Sincerity: Sincerity means that our readers must believe what we say.

They must be convinced that we are genuinely in mutual profit-

sharing and well-being. Words of exaggeration like ‘extraordinary’,

‘sensational’, and ‘revolutionary’, ‘greatest’, ‘amazing’ etc. must be avoided in letters.

8- Positive Language: A wise communicator tries, as far as possible, to use positive language. Use of positive language becomes all the more important in a business letter, the primary aim of which is to build up the best of human relations and to earn business. Positive words stir up positive feelings. That is why it is advisable to avoid using negative words like ‘failure’, ‘refuse’, ‘sorry’, ‘no’, ‘do not’,

‘mistake’, ‘loss’, damage’,etc. It should be our effort to find positive substitutes for them.

9- Coherence: Effective letters present information in logical order by careful use of linking devices, use of pronouns that are reference words, and repetition of key words. Linking devices like ‘besides’,

‘therefore’, ‘likewise’, ‘however’ etc. and the pronouns like ‘this’, ‘that’, ‘these’ give a logical progression to the thought content of the writer. Repetition of key words gives the content of the letter a forceful thrust. A skilful writer knows which words to repeat.

10-

Care for Culture: In international correspondence we have to be specially careful in choice of words so as not to offend the receiver who may be having a very different cultural background. We should avoid use of culturally derived words, slang, colloquialisms and as far as possible, even idioms and phrases. To write a letter in simple, general service list words that are universally understood and

acceptable.

11-

Tactful Approach: An effective letter is a tactfully planned

letter. A business letter is not always a simple, straightforward statement of a situation or giving out of some information. There may be a problem. There may be not a good news to convey. The writer has to decide how best to approach the problem or to convey the bad news.

The Lay-Out of a Business Letter

Introduction:

A business letter is supposed to have a lay-out that impresses. Its physical appearance, that includes the quality of the paper, the arrangement of the typed/printed, the way it is folded and kept in the envelop, the envelop itself with the addressee’s name and address, stamping – everything

communicates and passes through the receiver’s mental filter. As has been said, a letter’s appearance is a part of its message.

Before we discuss each of the points / parts of a business letter let us have a look at the two most commonly followed lay-out conventions.

The first-indented form follows the old, established British conventions of writing letters and paragraph construction. Each paragraph can be easily identified because there is some space left in the beginning. This is also the way most of us are taught to write paragraphs in the earliest stages of our learning.

The second – block form – is of recent origin, primarily because of the American practice of paragraph writing. Now, of course, it is being followed all over the world. No doubt it looks more presentable, and is easier to handle.

Formats for Typing

Block Style

Date

Name of Recipient

Title/Department

Company

Street Address

City, State, and Zip Code

RE

Dear Name:

Subject:

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

Sincerely,

(Handwritten Signature)

Writer’s Name

Title

dm

(typist’s initials—If the writer is also the typist, you may omit this notation.) Enclosure

cc Dr. Rashid Al-Mansori

PS:

Formats for Typing

Indented Style

Date

Name of Recipient

Title/Department

Company

Street Address

City, State, and Zip Code

RE

Dear Name:

Subject:

____

____

____

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____

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____

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____

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____

____

Sincerely,

(Handwritten Signature)

Writer’s Name

Title

DDB/cm

Enc

cc Dr. Mahmoud Hasan

P.S.

1- Heading: The heading, also called “letterhead”, contains the name of the firm/company and its address. It is usually given at the top centre or the top right side of the paper. It is also usual to give the telephone, fax and telegraphic address.

2- Date: Place the date at least two spaces below the letterhead. The line may be flush left or right, or centered below the letterhead.

Do not abbreviate the month or use *nd*, *st*, or *th* with the day numbers, like May 5th, 1998. Also, do not use a month's number, like 6/23/89.

Both date orders listed below are appropriate;

December 10, l997

10 December l997

3- Inside Address: It contains the name and address of the organization or the individual to whom the organization is being sent. It should be complete. This is always on the left margin.

a- Addressing individuals;

i-

Mr. is used for addressing a man

ii-

Miss is used for an unmarried woman

iii-

Mrs. is for a married woman

iv-

Ms is used for a woman whose marital status is not known.

Most woman now prefer the use of Ms

v-

Messrs is a plural for Mr. and is used while addressing a

partnership.

When addressing couples, give both appropriate titles:

Dr. and Mrs. Jehad Hosni

Mr. Jehad Hosin and Dr. Rania Osman

Dr. Jehad and Rania Osman

Dr. Margaret Wright and Mr. Steven Jones

Mr. and Mrs. Ali Al-Ajmi

Ms. Ghada Al-Ahmad

Mr. Talal Al - Saadi

4- Reference: “Reference lines” assist with filing or routing

correspondence. A reference line can refer to your files and/or your reader’s files. Place your reference line first.

Our reference: Project #234

Your reference: Invoice #3444

RE Order #4558

5- Attention line: Use an “attention line” whenever you want to direct your letter to a specific person or department within a company.

Place the attention line two lines below the inside address. Use a colon after *Attention*

6- **Salutation**: Always try to greet your reader by name rather than by title. If you don’t have a name, you may use one of the following.

Dear Committee Member:

Dear Meeting Planner:

Dear Colleagues:

To All Sales Reps:

To Whom It May Concern:

Dear Madam or Sir:

Dear Purchasing Agent:

If your letter is addressed to a company, the proper salutation is: Gentlemen or Ladies:

Ladies or Gentlemen:

If your letter is addressed to an organization of only women or only men, use:

Dear Sirs:

Dear Mesdames:

Use a person’s full name instead of the Mr. or Ms. or Mrs.

Dear Kim Krause:

Dear K. Krause:

Use a colon after formal salutations, and a comma after informal ones.

Dear Mr. Jones:

Dear Jim,

7- Subject: In *external* correspondence, "subject lines" tell a clerk how to file and route a document. When a clerk reads, "*Subject: Project*

#2469-993KLS", she knows where to file it or to whom to send it.

In *internal* communications, "subject lines" not only should help clerks, but also inform the reader as to the content or subject of the letter. The more information you give in the "subject line", the better.

Subject: Management Development

Subject: Management Development Classes

Subject: Request for Approval on Management Development

Classes

Subject: Request for Approval on the August 10th

Management Development Seminar

Instead of *Subject*:, you may use *Re* or *RE*.

Place a subject line two lines below the salutation because it is part of the body of the letter. Either use all capitals or underline the complete subject line.

SUBJECT:

EXHIBITOR BOOTH SPACE STILL

AVAILABLE

Subject: Exhibitor Booth Space Still Available

8- Body: the body of the letter carries its message or content. It is generally divided into three or four paragraphs, each having its own function. The first or opening paragraph links up the correspondence and establishes rapport with the reader. The second paragraph may be called the main paragraph that contains the subject proper. If need be, the point made in the second or main paragraph is elaborated or further developed upon in the third paragraph. The fourth or final paragraph brings the letter to a goodwill ending, leaving the door open for further business.

9- Formal Close:

The closing should match the tone of the letter. Listed below are closings that range from the very formal to the informal.

Very Formal

Respectfully yours,

Yours respectfully,

Formal

Very truly yours,

Yours very truly,

Yours truly,

Less Formal

Sincerely yours,

Yours sincerely,

Sincerely,

Cordially yours,

Yours cordially,

Cordially,

Informal

Regards,

With kindest regards,

With my best regards,

My best,

Give my best to Ibtisam,

Fondly,

Thanks,

See you next week!

10-

Signature: Always sign your letters in ink and by hand.

Do not sign a title such as *Mr.* , *Ms.* , *Mrs.* , *Dr.* , or *Rev.* Your title or other designation is typed beneath your signature.

11-

Enclosure: The “enclosure notation” goes flush left two

lines below the signature block or the typist’s initials, if they’re included. Identify each and every enclosure that is being sent so that the reader will know if something is missing from the

packet.

Enc.

Enclosures: 3

Enclosures: Hite contract

Check for $458

Enclosures:

1. Draft of absentee policy

2. Invoice #459990

12-

Postscript: Postscripts serve two purposes: 1) to

reemphasize a key point 2) to be informal and personal. The

postscript may be handwritten or typed:

P.S. Just return the enclosed card to see if you aren't pleased with the service you receive!

PS. Give my regards to the others who had a part in making the

program such a success.

13-

Carbon Copy Notation or "CC": Use *cc,* meaning carbon

copy, even though you may use photocopy or other

reproductions. This notation goes at the very end of your letter and flush left.

If you do not want your reader to know that you are sending a copy to another person, omit *cc* and instead, type *bcc,* blind carbon copy, only on your copy of the letter.

Below are the ways to present this feature.

cc: Morad Marzouqi

Copy to : Morad Marzouqi

Copies to: Morad Marzouqi

Saed

Shaar

Ali

Hajjar

Second-Page Headings

When the letter continues to the second page, be careful where you divide it.

Carry forward at least two lines of typing on the second page. Also avoid beginning the second page with a single, short line. Do not break the last word on the first page with a hyphen.

At the beginning of the second and succeeding pages, type identifying lines that include the name of the addressee, the date, and the page number: Atlas Telecommunications, Inc.

Page 2

June 10, l9—

Ibrhaim Chraidi

Page 2

June 10, l9—

Ibrhaim Chraidi,

-2-

June 10, l9—

Sales Letters

Introduction:

With the mass production of a variety of consumer goods, there is a race for capturing the market. A number of means have been devised by business houses to boost their sales. There are three ways of doing so: 1- mass media advertisement 2- personal contacts – 3 – sales letter.

Sales letters or offers are the most important written form of business communication. Their primary aim is publicity or to reach out a large number of people interested in a particular product/service and turn them into buyers. They are a work of imagination, taking many forms. The effectiveness of such letters depend on the writer's ability to use language suited to his purpose that is above all to influence the recipient – his thinking, his taste, and his behavior. This is the aim of persuasion. Sales letters are, therefore, persuasive or indirect approach letters.

A good sales letter is essentially like a successful advertisement; it catches the attention of the reader, excites his interest and curiosity and induces him to buy the goods or services offered. If you analyze the structure of some of the effective advertisements you will find the following steps are taken to construct them:

- catching the reader's attention

- arousing his desire to buy

- convincing him that your product or service is the best in the market and that he needs it immediately

- motivating him to act quickly.

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The purpose of any sales letter, as of every advertisement, is to convert the reader into a customer.

Characteristics of Sales Letters:

a- Lengthy Discourse: in the first place, almost all sales letters are long letters in contrast with the other business letters which are supposed to be short and precise. In fact, all sales letters are a kind of advertisement of the product/service offered. They have, therefore, to build up a case for its purchase. The writer has to marshal all sorts of arguments in favor of the product/service.

b- Focus on a Particular Class: a sales letter is essentially meant for a particular class of consumers. No product or service can be of interest to all kinds of consumers. There are products specially designed for children, for women, for school children, for body-builders, for myopic and so on. A sales letter/offer for any of these items will be sent to the buyers/prospective of that item.

c- Specialized Information: an effective sales letter is backed by specialized knowledge or at least sufficient information above the product offered and the needs of the consumer. In order to convince the consumer, the letter must give convincing arguments in favor of the product, facts and figures comparing the product with its rivals in the market, the changing needs and expectations of consumers and so on.

d- Arresting Opening:- an effective sales letter has an arresting or attention getting opening. It starts with a catchy subject-line, an exclamatory slogan, a 46

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rhetorical question or in whatever way the writer chooses to capture the audience. A few sample beginnings are given below:

- "Here is a good news for you!"

- "Haven't you ever thought about it?"

- "Could you ever imagine…."

- "We have done it!"

- "Oh no! Never again!"

- "If you want to become…"

- "Would you be interested in…."

e- Emotional VS Rational Appeals: it is needless to say that a sales letter makes a strong appeal to the consumer/receiver of the letter. Appeal in this context means the strategy or strategies used to present a product or services favorable to the readers. We can broadly divide these strategies or appeals into two categories – emotional and rational. Emotional appeal is directed to our senses viz., taste smell, feeling, hearing, and seeing. These appeals include strategies to arouse love, pride, and enjoyment etc. Rational appeals are directed towards reason and include persuasive strategies aimed at saving, making money, doing a job more efficiently and so on. Some products and services are suitable for emotional selling like, for example, that of perfume, travel, and exotic food. On the other hand, products such as industrial equipments are suitable for rational appeals.

f- Highly Conversational Style: an effective sales letter is generally written in a highly conversational style. It is supposed to replace the salesman in the sense that the writer enters into a heart to heart dialogue with the reader. It has a touch of intimacy and genuine interest in the reader's needs. That is why sales letters are often full of questions and answers or suggested answers.

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g- You-attitude: in no area of communication is the "You-attitude" more evident than in the sales letter. The writer has to put the reader in the centre of his concern and say all that he thinks the reader is interested in. the importance of 'You-attitude" has already been discussed. Here it is sufficient to say that the writer of a sales letter must make good use of the pronoun

"you" and the implied "you" like a salesman. For example:

- “ The new fabric has a touch as light as a feather”

The letter should say:

“You’ll like its feather-soft touch”

-“We make super fine hosiery in three colors”

The letter had better say

“You may choose from three striking colors”

h-Urging Action: the ultimate aim of a sales letter is to make the reader act, and act with a sense of urgency. The appeal of the letter is so powerful that the reader is convinced of a- the quality of the product, b- the genuineness of the seller’s interest in him, c- wisdom of availing himself of the attractive offer and d- the value of his time and money. That is why an effective sales letter offers discount for a limited time. Not only that. Certain other incentives like a gift for purchases worth a certain amount or a free membership, etc are offered. In order to ensure prompt action, most sales letters carry reply envelopes or cards with them. The reader needs not even pay for postage.

i- Postscript: very often sales letters also carry a postscript. The P.S. can be used effectively in a number of ways – to emphasize certain important point, to invite attention to enclosures, or to urge the reader to act fast. A few examples are given below:

- P.S. Hurry! The sale closes on Oct 10.

- P.S. In case you don’t find the book interesting you can have your money back

- P.S. We welcome queries.

j- Promise of Continued Contact: as a sales letter aims at capturing a customer it also holds out the promise to keep in touch with him and serve him in the best possible way. Just making an offer is not enough. The business has to be kept going very cordially through a chain of letters, queries and answers, after – sales service and maintaining relations. Thus, an effective sales letter is a definite step towards turning business relationships into personal relations.

k- Highlighting Important/Exciting Parts of the message: another significant feature of a sales letter is that it highlights in bright colors or underlines or carries in bold print all important or exciting parts of the message. It makes the letter at once appealing to the eye and interesting to read.

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Example1:

Dear Sir,

With summer approaching, you must be thinking of how to keep your office and your colleagues continue to work efficiently. To meet your needs, we have produced room coolers of different capacities. The detailed specifications are given in the enclosed pamphlet. We shall give a guarantee for five years against all manufacturing defects and repair, or replace any part that may cause trouble, at our cost.

At the end of the pamphlet you will find a card. Please fill it in and mail it and we will send our technician to survey your office, assess your requirements, and advise you about the location of coolers so that your entire office may be maintained at the proper temperature throughout summer.

If you place the order before 30April, we shall give you a special discount of 6.5 per cent. Our man will transport the coolers to your office and install them wherever you want. And this extra service is absolutely free.

We trust you would like to avail yourself of this special offer.

Yours Sincerely,

____

Example 2:

Safari Travel Agency

Abu Dhabi,

Airport Road,

Tel: 02- 6554433

Fax: 02-6554434

P.O.Box: 86565

April 18, 2005 Ref: 05/4/35

Mr. Ahmad Ali, General Manager

Al Noor Company,

Abu Dhabi,

Tel: 02-6445634

Fax: 02-6345435

P.O.Box:7546

Dear Mr. Ahmad Kasem,

Why should you stay here…?

Are you bored and exhausted? Do you feel that you are under job stress? Are you preparing for your honeymoon? Or you wish you could have a new one?

So, why don't you make it true and join our dream package to one of the most incredible counties of Asia.

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Thailand is one of the few countries in Southeast Asia where you won't mind getting lost. You'll always find something to catch your interest. There you'll find fabulous architecture, beautiful beaches and islands where you can spend the day luxuriating in the sun, inexpensive shopping, fantastic food which indicates the traditional spicy Thai cuisine, ancient ruins, stunning temples, and visit amazing small towns and villages where you can get a sense of traditional Thai life, interact with local people, who are mix of Thai, Chinese, and Malays.

The balance between comfort and excitement is near perfect. Thailand is a place that can excite the mind, excite the senses and take care of most everyday needs.

And to make your trip more enjoyable, you will have the chance of seeing one of the last remaining floating markets in Thailand, where merchants row through narrow canals selling goods.

And of course, you can't leave Thailand without having the experience of riding elephants, riding on bamboo rafts that strangely held together just long enough to get you down the river! And going to a full moon party on the beach, that for many people it's considered as the most memorable romantic evening they ever had...

Moreover, as your comfort and convenient is our aim, the agency reserves accommodations and meals at a five star hotels where choices are provided to best suit your liking and budget.

Book your package now for additional 10% discount on your hotel stay and also take advantage of our special offer of one additional night.

The package is for 5 nights / 6 days.

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Cost: 2500 Dhs per individual.

Breakfast, taxes is included Transportation from the airport to the hotel and vice versa is included.

Issue of visa is excluded.

Day 1 :

Arrival to Bangkok airport & transfer to the hotel.

Day 2 :

Tour in Bangkok - capital

Day 3 :

Tour in Chang Island

Day 4 :

Tour in Chiang Mai city

Day 5 :

Tour in Samui Island

Day 6 :

Check out and transfer to the airport for final

departure.

Hope you will find in this package your satisfaction and willingness.

Looking forward to hear from you soon.

p.s. offer valid from 18 April 2005 to 30 April 2005

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs. Reham Kasem

Executive Secretary

Memoranda

Introduction:

A memorandum (known as ‘memo’ in short form) is by definition, “ a written statement that you prepare specially for a person or committee in order to give them information about a particular matter”. In an organization it takes the form of “a short official note that you write to a person or to several people, especially people who you work with.” It has been derived from the Latin word ‘memorare’ changed to ‘memorandus’ (notable), and means literally ‘to mention’ or ‘tell’.

To achieve its purpose a memo is written in easy-to-understand language. Its style is like that of reports: objective, matter-of-fact, and lucid. No attempt is made to make an emotional appeal to the reader or to create a psychological impact on him. Plain and direct statements of facts are all that is required.

A memo plays a very useful role in an organization. It ensures quick and smooth flow of information in all directions. It also enables officers to maintain good business relationships. A memo will come to your aid when you wish to avoid coming into personal contact with certain colleague.

Another useful function of a memo is to establish accountability. Since it is a record of facts and decisions, you can return to it in future if there is a need to find out who went wrong and at what stage.

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The Memo Format:

A memo format is a form of written communication, but it is not a letter. Its format, therefore, is also different from that of a letter. Most companies have their own printed memoranda sheets with the main company heading and also the heading of the department or section and often one or two colored sheets attached which can be torn off as copies for filing.

The following essential items of information must be given in a memo: (i) the designation of the receiver, (ii) the designation of the sender, (iii) date, and (v) subject.

CVs and Job Applications

Introduction:

The Successful Application Letter

Your CV should be accompanied by a letter of application, and these two items form a package. The letter has a number of purposes:

- It allows you to sell yourself by pointing out key features of your CV.

- It gives you the opportunity to include material that is not in the CV, especially personal qualities that you listed when making your preparations.

- It shows a prospective employer that you know how to write a letter. While this may be of decreasing importance in an electronic age, many employers still value it highly, both as a skill in its own right and as a test of your ability to communicate clearly and effectively.

What should go in it?

The letter of application should follow the general guidelines for all business letters. It should have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

The introduction: In the introduction you should detail the job you are applying for, and, if relevant, the circumstances that have led to this (for example an advertisement, or the recommendation of an agency).

The body: The body of the letter provides you with an opportunity to present yourself to the employer. You should make use of the list of personal qualities you made whilst preparing, and should re-emphasize the skills you have which make you particularly suitable for the job. You can also highlight periods of 75

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employment or other experience that are particularly relevant. It is important not to write too much, however. Two, or at most three, short punchy paragraphs are much more effective than two sides of rambling prose.

The conclusion: The conclusion should round the letter off, leaving the reader with a positive image. It should sum up briefly the selling points made in the body of the letter, mention any items (including the CV) you are enclosing, and express willingness to provide any further information that the reader may want.

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Example:

Ahmad Hussein Ahmad

Old Mazda, Tourist Club, Abu Dhabi

TEL: - 00971 2 6778988

29 August 1997

Ms. Rania Hamad

Editorial Manager

Otaiba Book Ltd

Dear Ms Rania,

Assistant Editor/Desk Editor

I wish to apply for the above post, advertised in *Gulf News.* .

Currently I am working in a new small publishing company, *Notions*, that specializes in highly designed, high-quality non-fiction books. Since I started here I have been the only full-time employee working on all editorial aspects of the books. Answering directly to the Publishing Director and the Editorial Director, I have a very wide range of responsibilities including: editing on screen in Quark and Microsoft Word, liaising with the designers and freelance editors, checking manuscripts at the film stage, managing the stationery budget, as well as signing off books,.

I have been at Notions for over a year, and I have learnt a great deal, but there is no longer the scope to use all my knowledge and experience. I am seeking a position that offers responsibility for the full range of publishing and editorial 77

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skills, as well as the opportunity to meet and work with a range of people. I like to think that I bring enthusiasm and adaptability to my work.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this letter and my enclosed curriculum vitae. The telephone number I have given is my home one and all calls are answered.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Ahmad Hussein

The Successful CV

A successful CV is the product of careful thought and planning. The employer is looking for an applicant who has the right experience, skills, and personal qualities for the job. The person appointed is likely to be the one who not only possesses all these but also presents them in the most attractive way. The only way in which you can achieve this is by thinking very carefully about yourself and what you have done in the past and believe you could do in the future, given the right opportunity.

Preparation

Begin by thinking about these three areas:

- experience
- skills
- personal qualities

There are various ways in which you can do this. What follows is only one possibility. Whichever approach you choose, however, make sure that you make detailed notes of your ideas – even if you think they may not be relevant. Also, keep all your lists and sheets of notes 'open'; go back to them from time to time and make sure that you haven't missed anything out. This preparation stage is essentially one of brainstorming. Selection and ordering come later.

Experience: Many people find it easier to start with this, because it is the most concrete. Begin by thinking of your life as divided into a number of stages. What these are depends on you – the divisions between the stages may be marked by changes of job, moves from one place to another, or by key events in your life –

marrying, having children, buying a house, and so on. Your notes on your experience should certainly include:

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- education
- any professional training
- periods of employment – include part-time jobs and those which didn't last very long, as well as 'proper' jobs
- other extended periods in which your life focused on a particular activity (for example, periods of foreign travel)
- any voluntary work you have done

Skills: Your notes on your experience should provide you with useful prompts when it comes to listing your skills. Look at each of the different stages of your life and ask yourself:

 Which skills did I use here that I already had?

 Which skills did I improve on or consolidate?

 What new skills did I learn?

Make sure that you include not only skills related to your trade or profession, but also personal skills, for example:

organizing events

training staff

interviewing giving

advice

chairing meetings

making presentations

supervising trouble-shooting

meeting the public

Don't be too concerned at this stage about whether the skills you list are relevant.

That can come later. For now write them all down.

When you have finished, look back through the list and consider whether each item is one separate skill, or, in fact, a bundle of skills that should be separated 80

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out. For example, you may have written ‘communicating’, when it may be preferable to list ‘simplifying technical subject matter and communicating it to non-specialist workers’.

Personal qualities: This is the area that many people find most difficult; they are unhappy talking about themselves and their qualities because they feel it is big-headed or ‘pushy’. They may also find it quite difficult to step back and look at themselves objectively. On the other hand, if you don’t tell a potential employer about your personal qualities, who will?

It is sometimes difficult to begin such a list, so here are some qualities to start you off. Write down any which you think apply to you, and then add others of your own. For each one you choose, make sure that you can think of incidents in your own life and work experience that bear them out.

accurate independent

worker

adaptable lively

astute logical

can work under pressure

loyal

careful methodical

committed meticulous

competent orderly

co-operative organized

courteous positive

decisive practical

dedicated receptive

energetic relaxed

extrovert reliable

flexible self-confident

friendly self-motivated

get on well with other people

sensitive

good communicator

thorough

good sense of humor

thoughtful

good time-keeper

vigilant

hardworking

work well with others

imaginative

Constructing

You should by now have three sets of rough notes. (It doesn't matter how rough they are, provided they are as detailed as possible.) The next stage is to decide how you want to order your CV. This can be done in one of two ways:

 chronologically

 functionally

Chronological: A chronological CV presents your education and work experience either in the order in which they happened, or in reverse order, with your most recent experience first. Since recent experience is probably of most interest to an employer, this latter method is now widely used. The advantages of a chronological CV are that it emphasizes the companies or organizations you have worked for (and the periods of time involved) and your continuity of employment.

The disadvantage is that if your career has had ups and downs, especially if it includes periods of unemployment, these show up very clearly. The employer who is looking for a steady and reliable employee will probably favour this approach.

.

Mary J. Morris

‘The Larches’

Spottonham Road

Larswick

Lincs

SP12 5MS

Tel: 01854 658194

Experience

1994-present

Education and Publications Officer, Boston Museum. Responsible for organizing annual programme of school visits, lectures, and holiday courses. In charge of liaison with primary and secondary schools. Preparing and publishing a range of leaflets and 'mini-guides' to the Museum's collection. Managing an annual budget of £10,000.

1989-1994

Head of Humanities, Larswick Middle School. Responsible for department of four teaching history, geography, religious education. Preparing and administering departmental policy documents. Member of School's Senior Management Team.

Pastoral care tutor to 35 pupils. Responsible for school magazine.

1985-1989

Teacher of History at St Wulfstan's High School, Scunthorpe. Teaching pupils across full ability and age range (11-18). Preparing classes for GCE 'O' level and GCSE examinations, and GCE 'A' levels and university entrance.

House tutor.

Qualifications and training

Postgraduate Certificate in Education, University of Hull

BA Honours 2nd class, History and Economics, York University

'A' level English, History, French

O' level English language, English literature, Maths, French, History, Geography, Biology

Interests

Mountain walking

Foreign travel

Voluntary social work with local women's refuge

Referees

Dr P. J. Cleary, Mrs S. P. Greenwick,

Director, 34 High Street,

Boston Museum, Brentham,

Boston, Surrey,

Lincs, GU23 9BV

BO1 2RF

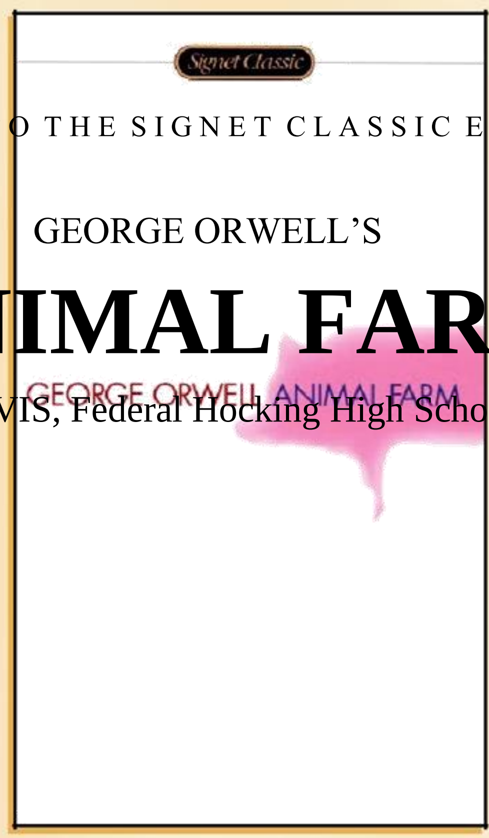
Signet Classic

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO THE SIGNET CLASSIC EDITION OF
Unit 4

GEORGE ORWELL'S

ANIMAL FARM

By HAZEL K. DAVIS, Federal Hocking High School, Stewart, OH



Animal Farm is an excellent selection for junior and senior high students to study. Although on one level the novel is an allegory of the 1917 Russian Revolution, the story is just as applicable to the latest rebellion against dictators around the world. Young people should be able to recognize similarities between the animal leaders and politicians today. The novel also demonstrates how language can be used to control minds. Since teenagers are the target not only of the educational system itself but also of advertising, the music industry, etc., they should be interested in exploring how language can control thought and behavior.

Animal Farm is short and contains few words that will hamper the reader's understanding. The incidents in the novel allow for much interactive learning, providing opportunities for students to dramatize certain portions, to expand on speeches, and to work out alternative endings.

The novel can be taught collaboratively with the history department as an allegory of the Russian Revolution, allowing students to draw parallels between actual events and people and the imaginary ones created by Orwell. The novel can also be taught as a beast fable following the study of shorter fables by Aesop and James Thurber. Examining the work as a satirical comment on the corrupting influence of power, students should be able to trace the corruption of the pigs and perhaps relate their findings to individuals in our own government who have succumbed to the lure of power at any cost and by any means.

Teenagers are especially influenced by peer pressure. In exploring the skillful use of peer pressure (along with the threat of death later in the book) used by the pigs to keep the other animals in line, the students can analyze their own lives and discover how peer pressure controls their actions.

This teacher's guide contains a brief synopsis of each chapter, followed by teaching suggestions for use before, during, and after reading the novel. Activities, discussion questions, and topics for writing assignments are also included, most of which can be adapted easily for either slower or more advanced students.

CHAPTER I

Twelve-year-old Major, Manor Farm's prize-winning boar, calls a meeting of all of the animals to talk about the difficulty of their lives under man's rule. He reveals his dream and prophesies a future rebellion of animals against man, teaching the animals a song called "Beasts of England."

CHAPTER II

Major dies, but the other animals, led by two young boars named Snowball and Napoleon, keep the idea of a future rebellion against man alive. On Midsummer's Eve, Mr. Jones becomes too drunk to feed or care for the animals, and the hired hands forget them as well. The animals break into the grain bins. When Mr. Jones and the hired hands appear, the animals attack and drive them off the farm. The animals are now in control of Manor Farm. They change its name to Animal Farm and establish their own rules for behavior which are painted on the wall of the barn.

The farm animals, supervised by the pigs, harvest the crops with better results than ever before. Sundays are established as days of rest, for meetings, and for singing “Beasts of England.” Having already taught themselves to read and write, the pigs attempt to teach these skills to other animals. Committees such as the Clean Tails League for the cows are set up, but none are successful. Since most of the animals cannot learn to read or to memorize the seven commandments, the commandments are reduced to one simple maxim: “Four legs good, two legs bad.” Napoleon takes nine puppies for private instruction, and the pigs are now the only ones allowed to eat the apples and drink the milk produced on the farm. The pigs force the other animals to accept this by reminding them of the threat of Mr. Jones’s return.

CHAPTER IV

The song "Beasts of England" is now being hummed and sung over half of the county, although no other farms have joined the Rebellion. Armed with a shotgun, Mr. Jones and several men from town attempt to recapture the farm, but Snowball leads the animals in successfully defending it. Medals for bravery are awarded to Snowball, Boxer, and the one sheep killed in the battle. Mr. Jones's gun is set up at the foot of the flagpole, and it will be fired on the anniversaries of the Rebellion and the newly renamed Battle of the Cowshed.

CHAPTER V

Mollie, the horse, is seen consorting with humans who have petted her and given her sugar and ribbons. When Clover the drafthorse confronts her, Mollie abandons Animal Farm and the Rebellion. Meanwhile, Snowball wants the animals to build a windmill that will provide electricity, heat and running water in each stall, but Napoleon disagrees with the idea and urinates on Snowball's diagrams. When Snowball tries to present his idea to the animals at their weekly meeting, Napoleon reveals the nine dogs he has trained as guard/attack dogs, and the dogs drive Snowball from the farm. When some animals protest, the sheep drown them out by bleating, "Four legs good, two legs bad," and the dogs growl menacingly. Napoleon soon tells the animals they are going to build the windmill and that it has always been his idea. With the aid of three growling dogs, Squealer convinces the animals to believe this.

CHAPTER VI

Although they are working a sixty-hour week including Sunday Afternoons, the animals are happy during the next year. They believe they are working for themselves, despite being threatened with half rations if they do not work on Sunday. Because of construction on the windmill, some crops are not planted on time, and the harvest is not nearly as good as last year's. The animals devise a way to break up the stone they need for the windmill. Boxer gets up earlier to work harder. The need for seeds and other supplies causes the pigs to begin trading with other farms, first selling a load of hay, but warning the hens that their eggs may have to be sold as well. Mr. Whymper, a solicitor living in Willingdon, serves as intermediary. Squealer assures that animals no resolution had ever been made forbidding trade with humans.

The pigs move into the farmhouse and begin sleeping in the beds. The fourth commandment now says, "No animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets." With the dogs' aid and the threat of Jones's return, Squealer convinces the animals that the rule had always referred to sheets. When the half-built windmill blows down during a storm, Napoleon accuses Snowball of destroying it and orders the animals to begin rebuilding it.

CHAPTER VII

Always cold and usually hungry, the animals labor to rebuild the windmill over the long, hard winter. Napoleon rarely leaves the farmhouse. Squealer makes all his announcements and informs the hens they must produce eggs to sell so that grain can be bought for the animals to eat. The rebellious hens, led by three pullets, go on strike, laying their eggs from the rafters to smash on the floor. Napoleon starves them into submission, and nine hens die before the rebellion is over.

Anything that goes wrong on the farm is blamed on Snowball. Squealer again counts on the growling dogs and Boxer's belief that whatever Napoleon says is right to persuade the animals that Snowball had always been in league with Jones and was a traitor at the Battle of the Cowshed. He warns them that there may be other animal traitors in their ranks. A few days later Napoleon calls a meeting in which the dogs attack the four pigs who had earlier protested Snowball's guilt. Under pressure they confess to spying for Snowball, and the dogs quickly tear out their throats. The hen ringleaders of the strike confess, as do several other animals, and all are promptly killed.

When the shocked animals gather together for comfort and sing "Beasts of England," Squealer silences them and states that the song has been abolished; it is unnecessary now that the Rebellion has been achieved. When some attempt to protest, the sheep's bleats drown them out until discussion time has passed.

CHAPTER VIII

When some of the animals think to check the commandments, they find that the sixth now reads, "No animal shall kill any other animal without cause." They accept the deaths as perfectly reasonable in light of the rule. Though the animals are working harder than ever, they wonder if they are any better off than they were under Mr. Jones, yet Squealer quotes figures that seemingly support his statements that production has increased. Now when Napoleon appears, he is attended by the dogs and a black cockerel who marches in front and crows before Napoleon speaks. Napoleon has his own apartment, eats from the best china, has two dogs to wait on him, and orders that the gun be fired on his birthday.

The windmill is finally finished. Napoleon sells a stack of lumber to Frederick and insists on being paid in five-pound notes. After the lumber is carted away the pigs discover the money is counterfeit. Frederick and his men then attack Animal Farm. Armed with rifles, the men force the animals to flee. Only Benjamin realizes they are going to blow up the windmill. When it is destroyed the animals throw caution to the wind and attack Frederick's men, who kill several of the animals and wound the others. After the animals chase the men off the farm, Napoleon orders that Jones's rifle be fired in a victory celebration. The injured Boxer questions the victory, but Squealer assures him they have won back their farm and will rebuild the windmill. In celebration the animals are given extra food.

The pigs discover a case of whiskey and get very drunk. The next day a hungover Squealer announces that Napoleon is dying. When Napoleon recovers, he sends for books on brewing and distilling, and orders the field originally designated as the grazing plot for retired animals to be plowed up and planted with barley. The fifth commandment now reads "No animals shall drink alcohol to excess."

CHAPTER IX

Although Boxer was injured in the battle, he still works as hard as ever on rebuilding the windmill. The animals are colder and hungrier than last winter, but Squealer again recites statistics to assure them that even with a "readjustment" of rations, they are still much better off than when Jones ran the farm. Since most of the animals cannot remember what life under Jones was like, they believe him.

Thirty-one baby pigs now wear green ribbons on their tails on Sundays and are taught by Napoleon, who has plans to build a school house. The pigs, fatter than ever, have learned to brew beer and receive a daily ration of it. Once a week the animals participate in a Spontaneous Demonstration to celebrate the struggles and triumphs of Animal Farm, which helps them forget their hunger and misery.

The farm is declared a Republic and Napoleon (the only candidate) is elected President. Moses, the raven, returns with his tales of Sugarcandy Mountain and is allowed to stay. Hard-working Boxer finally collapses. He believes he and Benjamin now will be allowed to retire; however, the wagon that comes to take him to the hospital actually belongs to the horse slaughterer. When Benjamin convinces the others of Boxer's danger, it is too late: Boxer is too feeble to break out of the wagon on his own.

Several days later Squealer announces that Boxer has died in the hospital and has been buried in town. He reassures then animals he was there right at the end and that Boxer died saying, "Napoleon is always right." He explains away the wagon and assures the animals a memorial banquet will be held for Boxer. On the day of the celebration, a case of whiskey is delivered to the pigs, who have somehow found money to pay for it.

CHAPTER X

Over the years most of the animals who took part in the Rebellion have died, leaving only Clover, Benjamin, Moses, and several of the pigs. None of the animals have ever been allowed to retire. Many animals have been born who have little knowledge of the Rebellion, and those bought by the Farm have never heard of it at all. The farm flourishes. The windmill is used to grind corn, and another is being built. The animals have been told they don't need the hot and cold water and electric lights they thought they would have once the windmill was built. Napoleon tells them "the truest happiness... lay in working hard and living frugally." There are many more pigs and dogs, and even though they do not produce food, their appetites are hearty. The overworked animals often suffer from hunger and cold; however, they never lose sight of the truth that they are members of Animal Farm, the only farm owned and run by animals. They still hope and believe in Major's Republic of the Animals when all of England will be free of mankind.

Squealer takes the sheep away and teachers them a new slogan. To the horror of the other animals, the pigs begin to walk on two legs, and the sheep drown out their protests with their newly learned slogan, "Four legs good, two legs better."

There is only one commandment now: "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others."

The pigs dress in the Jones's clothing, and nearby farmers come for a tour of the farm. The farmers comment favorably on the fact that the animals work longer hours and are fed less than their own animals. Napoleon announces that he is abolishing several practices at the farm such as the use of the "Comrade," Sunday marches, and the horn and hoof symbols on the flag. The farm will resume its original name-The Manor Farm. As the animals peep in the farmhouse windows, to their amazement they can no longer tell who are the pigs and who are the humans.

Some time should be spent helping students understand the terms satire, allegory, irony, and fable. Reading a few of Aesop's, La Fontaine's, and especially Thurber's fables will be time well spent. *Animal Farm* has attributes of the fable, but there is no stated moral at the end. The animals learn nothing from their experience and are still unaware of their real situation. By the end of the novel, students may suggest some possible morals, but none should be offered at this time.

Since Orwell's subtitle is "A Fairy Story," a discussion of the fairy story itself is in order. It would be more valuable to let the students themselves decide the elements of the fairy tale rather than to provide them. Given a few titles such as "Cinderella" or "Sleeping Beauty," they should be able to supply characteristics such as magic, a villain, a damsel-in-distress, a handsome hero, and a happy ending. At this point, reading C.M. Woodhouse's Introduction to the novel is recommended. Special emphasis should be made of pages viii to the top of page xii to make sure students understand how Woodhouse fits *Animal Farm* to the definition of the fairy tale. After the novel has been read, students can debate the comparison Woodhouse makes between the development and dropping of the atomic bomb and the writing and publishing of *Animal Farm.*

Students should now be ready to begin reading the novel itself. At least two weeks (and preferably three) should be allowed for the study of the novel. The following reading assignments should be made:

Reading Assignment 1 - Chapters I and II
Reading Assignment 2 - Chapters III and IV
Reading Assignment 3 - Chapter V
Reading Assignment 4 - Chapters VI and VII
Reading Assignment 5 - Chapters VIII and IX
Reading Assignment 6 - Chapter X

Before reading Chapter I, ask students to think about the qualities of a good leader. List these attributes on the board and ask students to write them in a notebook reserves for notes on this novel. Not only should students jot down interesting incidents from the novel as they read, but they should also answer assigned questions in their notebooks.

Next ask students to think about reasons why a government might be overthrown. Current world events may be brought up, including the rebellions in South Africa, Poland, Panama, or other historical revolts. What made these people dissatisfied with their leaders and their living conditions? Write the students' ideas on the board and ask them to write these ideas in their notebooks.

Students should make notes on why the animals rebelled against Mr. Jones and mankind in general. Differences in the lists about actual revolts and those from the novel can be quite revealing. Students will see that there is not much difference in what real people or fictional animals want.

The following are other questions and topics students can answer or explore in their notebooks as they read. You will want to take time at the end of each reading assignment to allow students to discuss their answers to these questions. This will clear up any misunderstandings before the student goes on to the next assignment.

CHAPTER I

1. What is significant about how the animals arrange themselves as they gather to hear Major? What might this arrangement say about future meetings or events? (The pigs and dogs sit in the front row. The other animals arrange themselves behind the pigs and dogs. In the future the pigs will be in charge, and the dogs will guard the pigs.)

2. According to Major, what is the cause of all the animals' problems? (Man is the only real enemy. Man is the only animal who produces nothing but consumes what animals produce. Get rid of man and all of the animals' problems will be solved.)
3. What motto does Major give the animals? (He urges them to remember whatever goes on two legs is an enemy. Whatever goes on four legs or has wings is a friend. He also urges them to refrain from coming to resemble man and lists man's vices.)
4. What are the commandments Major gives the animals? Can you think of ways each of them could be considered a vice?
    a. No animal is ever to live in a house. (Caring more about possessions)
    b. No animal is ever to sleep in a bed. (Becoming lazy-spending too much time in bed sleeping instead of working-luxury)
    c. No animal is ever to wear clothes. (Pride in appearance)
    d. No animal is ever to drink alcohol. (Drinking to excess-forgetting duties)
    e. No animal is ever to smoke tobacco. (Ruining health, expensive habit)
    f. No animal is ever to touch money. (Money corrupts)
    g. No animal is ever to engage in trade. (Profit making)
    h. No animal is ever to tyrannize his own kind. (Slavery)
    i. No animal must ever kill any other animal. (Murder)
    j. All animals are equal. (Competition is self-serving)
5. Ask a student (or perhaps two or three students) to orally present Major's speech. This speech is meant to stir the animals to the point that they will actually rebel against man. Presenting the speech in various oratorical styles such as that of Jesse Jackson, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ronald Reagan, George Bush, or other noted politicians would be enlightening and fun if entered into with enthusiasm.
6. Examine the song "Beasts of England" as poetry. What imagery is present? What is the message? Why do the animals like it so much that they memorize it on the spot? To what emotions and needs does it appeal? (The song paints a vivid picture of the day when animals are at last free of man and all the symbols of slavery such as whips and spurs are gone. It appeals to their dreams of a more prosperous future, an abundance of food and the absence of cruelty, and the need for hope to keep an individual from giving up.)

    When students reach Chapter VII, have them compare this song with the one that replaces it.
7. Analyze various rallying hymns/songs and compare them to the song "Beasts of England." Consider questions to those in the item above.

CHAPTER II

1. After Major's death what happens to the idea of rebelling against man? (Led by the pigs, especially Napoleon and Snowball, the animals meet secretly for three months and learn the new system of thought called Animalism. Boxer and Clover, the two horses, help to convince the other animals.)
2. Why don't the pigs like the pet raven Moses' stories about Sugarcandy Mountain? (If the animals believe a fantastic world of ease and plenty awaits them when they die, they will not be as eager to rebel against the life they currently live.)
3. What causes the animals to finally rebel against Mr. Jones and his four farmhands? (Due to Mr. Jones's drinking problem and dishonest farmhands, the farm has fallen on hard times. The animals have been underfed for some time. When Mr. Jones gets drunk and neither he nor his men feed the animals on Saturday or Sunday (Midsummer's Day), the animals break into the feed storage shed. They attack the men when they come with whips to drive the animals away from the food.)
4. When the humans have been chased from the farm, what do the animals do? (The bits, nose rings, dog chains, knives, etc. are thrown down the well; the harness, whips and ribbons are thrown on the rubbish fire; and the animals eat double rations and sing "Beasts of England" seven times before they go to sleep.)

5. What do the animals do about the farmhouse? (They all file through the house looking at all the luxuries. Some hams are taken out and buried, and a barrel of beer is destroyed. The animals agree that the farmhouse is to be preserved as a museum and that no animal may ever live there.)

   This would be a good place to point out the similarities between this scene and that of the people exploring the Marcos's property in the Philippines, or the stories of the wealth of Ceausescu in Rumania. if this novel is being taught in conjunction with a history class, the reaction of the common people of Russia to the ostentatious wealth of the royal Russian Family should be addressed here.

6. How does the behavior of the pigs foreshadow their eventual leadership positions? (The pigs have secretly taught themselves to read and write during the past three months. They rename the farm and reduce the principles of Animalism to seven commandments, which Snowball writes on the barn wall. The pigs milk the cows, who are about to burst. When Napoleon sends the rest of the animals off, led by Snowball, to harvest the hay, he stays behind and drinks the milk. No one notices, but the pigs are already proving the contrary to what they preach, all animals are not equal.)

CHAPTER III AND IV

Before reading the next assignment, have the students write on the following topic in their notebooks: From what you know so far about the pigs and the other animals on the farm, speculate on what the future will be like for the animals. As you continue reading, compare your predictions to what actually happens in the novel.

You may want to allow students to work either in pairs or alone to answer the following questions in their notebooks.

1. What further examples of the difference between the pigs and the other animals occur in these two chapters? (The pigs only direct and supervise; they do no actual work. No one but the pigs puts forth any resolutions at the meetings. Napoleon and Snowball disagree over everything. The harness-room is set aside as the pigs' headquarters. Snowball busies himself forming committees to solve real and imagined problems. The pigs try to teach the other animals how to read and write, with unsatisfactory results. The apples are se aside for the pigs' use only.)
2. What are Napoleon's ideas about education? (He thinks education is more important for the young than for those already grown up. He takes away Jessie and Bluebell's puppies to educate them.)
3. How is Squealer able to convince the other animals to accept whatever Napoleon decides? (Squealer uses outright lies, "Scientific proof" (false, of course), and appeals to the animals' sympathy. He always ends with the threat that Jones will return if the pigs are not obeyed.)
4. Describe the Battle of the Cowshed.
5. What was Snowball's part in this battle? (Because Snowball has studied Julius Caesar's military strategies, he is able to plan a successful defense of the farm. He leads the animals in the attack and is wounded slightly.)
6. Where is Napoleon during the battle? (No mention is made of him or his activities, which leads one to believe he played a very minor role in the battle.)
7. What is the significance of the gun's placement at the foot of the flagpole? (The gun symbolizes the successful fight against the humans. It will be fired ceremonially twice a year to celebrate the Battle of the Cowshed and on Midsummer's Day, The anniversary of the Rebellion.)

CHAPTER V

Suggest that students make a list of all the changes that occur in this chapter. From this list they will find vivid evidence of the pigs' increasing power.

1. Why does Mollie run away from the farm? (Mollie likes being admired, admiring herself, wearing pretty ribbons, eating sugar, and being stroked by humans. She does not like the work on the farm or the hardships she faces there.)
2. What changes have been made in the weekly meetings over the last year? (The pigs now decide all questions of farm policy. Snowball and Napoleon still disagree over almost everything. Although Snowball is more skillful at making speeches cable of swaying the animals, the sheep interrupt him more and more with their chants of "Four legs good, two legs bad.."

3. Explain the windmill controversy from Snowball's point of view. (Snowball wants the animals to build a windmill so they will have electrical power to make life easier for all of them-light and heat in the stalls and labor-saving devices such as electrical milking machines. The animals would only have to work three days a week when it was finished.)

4. Explain the windmill controversy from Napoleon's point of view. (He thinks the major problem on the farm is increasing food production. He thinks the whole windmill thing is nonsense, or so he says, and urinates on Snowball's plans.)

5. What changes does Napoleon make after his dogs chase Snowball off the farm? (There will be no more Sunday Meetings. All decisions about the farm will be made by a committee of pigs presided over by Napoleon. The animals will now meet on Sundays to salute the flag, sing "Beasts of England," and receive their orders for the week.)

6. Why don't the other animals protest Napoleon's decisions? (None of them are really smart enough to bring up any arguments. The sheep begin their bleating, and the dogs growl before anyone can think of a protest. Squealer later explains the decisions. He begins to shed doubts on Snowball's bravery at the Battle of the Cowshed and again threatens them with the return of Jones if they don't agree with Napoleon.)

7. Note how the animals now arrange themselves when they enter the barn to receive their orders as compared to the description in Chapter I. (Napoleon, Squealer, and Minimus, the poet, sit on a raised platform, The nine dogs sit in a semicircle around the three, and the other pigs sit behind them. The rest of the animals stand facing the pigs.)

8. What is the importance of the dogs accompanying Squealer when he comes to talk to the animals? (Napoleon wants to make sure there is no protest or rebellion against his orders. In addition to Squealer's natural ability to convince, he has three vicious dogs to back him up. Naturally, no one protests.)

CHAPTERS VI AND VII

Before going on to the next reading assignment, ask students to imagine how Snowball might have run things if he had gotten rid of Napoleon. Would things have been any different? Are there indications that Snowball's ideas for running the farm would have proved more beneficial to the animals? Or would things have turned out the same? Because Orwell is writing about the corrupting force of power, things might have remained the same. After some discussion, ask students to assume one side or the other of the issue (That Snowball would have been a better leader, or that he would not have been) and write a persuasive composition using details from the first five chapters to support their positions. These compositions could serve as a basis for a formal debate or a panel discussion.

1. How much work are the animals now doing? (The animals still believe they are working for themselves. Although they already work a sixty-hour week during spring and summer, Napoleon informs them they can volunteer for Sunday afternoon work as well. However, any animal not volunteering will have his rations cut in half.)

2. Why does Napoleon decide to engage in trade with neighboring farms? (Because certain items such as paraffin oil and dog biscuits are in short supply, Napoleon decides to sell a stack of hay and part of the wheat crop. Later they may have to sell some of the hens' eggs.)

3. How do the animals react? (They are troubled and think they remember a resolution against trade with humans. Four young pigs try to protest but are silenced by the dogs' growls and the sheep's bleating of the slogan, "Four legs good, two legs bad." Squealer later explains the decision and asks if they have seen such a resolution written down, but no such record is found.)

4. How is the windmill destroyed? Why does Napoleon blame Snowball? (A violent November storm blows it down. Instead of admitting that the windmill's walls were not thick enough to support it against a strong wind, Napoleon blames Snowball for blowing it up. Since Snowball had drawn up the plans, the blame for its failure is partly his.)

5. Why does Napoleon insist the windmill must be rebuilt immediately? (Napoleon probably had many reasons, including preventing the animals from becoming too discouraged to begin building if they wait until spring. By keeping the animals busy building a windmill that will supposedly ease all their lives, the animals will forget how miserably cold and hungry they are during the hard winter.)

6. Why does Napoleon order that the hens' eggs be sold? (The animals are nearly starving and there is almost no food left. The hens must give up their eggs for sale so that meal and grain can be purchase for the good of all.)

7. How does Napoleon react when the hens' rebel against his orders? (He orders the hens' food rations cut off. If any other animals give any food to the chickens, they are to be killed. The dogs enforce his orders. Nine hens die of starvation before then hens give up their five-day protest.)

8. Why does Napoleon revive the threat of the farm being sabotaged by Snowball? (Snowball is the perfect scapegoat, the one who can be blamed when something goes wrong. It is not the pigs' fault when a storage-shed key is lost, or the cows' fault when they don't give much milk-it is Snowball's fault. They need an outside enemy to hate, someone they can accuse in place of wrong-doers. Snowball is discredited totally through the use of lies and false accusations. The other animals want to disagree but can't and finally give in and agree with Boxer that if Napoleon says it is so, it is, because "Napoleon is always right.")

9. Explain why the animals confessed to being traitors. Or is there any explanation? (The four pigs who are taken first are the same four who had disagreed previously with Napoleon's decisions. They probably are guilty of not wholeheartedly supporting Napoleon's policies. Certainly, they do not expect to be killed for it. There is a resolution against animals killing one another. However death is the punishment. Next, the three hens who had led the egg rebellion confess, as do many others, to crimes against the state. All the dissidents are killed on the spot. Probably most of them did not support one or more of Napoleon's policies, so in that sense they were guilty. They undoubtedly expected forgiveness rather than death. However, death might be seen as a release for these poor animals at this point. No doubt a certain amount of mass hysteria would have contributed to the large number of confessions.)

10. Why does Napoleon order the animals to stop singing "Beasts of England?" (The Rebellion is over, and the pigs are in control of the farm. Even though the rest of the animals seem too dull-witted to realize that the pigs are just as bad as Mr. Jones, one might finally realize that one Rebellion was not enough and lead another rebellion, this time against the pigs. The bleating of the sheep keeps any of the animals from protesting. One of the last traces of the society envisioned by Major is now gone, replaced by a patriotic song about Napoleon, leader of Animal Farm.)

    Students will probably want to talk about Chapter VII and may need more of an explanation of the murders of the animals. Even though the resolution against animals killing animals has not been broken before, there have been threats of death to wrong-doers. Nine of the hens were starved to death-not murdered, but close enough. Point out how the animals react to the murders and how they gain some comfort by gathering together and singing "Beasts of England." What will comfort them now that the song has been banned?

CHAPTERS VIII AND IX

1. What purpose is served by the production figures Squealer reads to the animals? (The pigs fool the other animals by manipulating facts and figures to prove they are producing more and are much better off than they have ever been before. Nobody can dispute facts! Not even today.)

   ACTIVITY: Students may create a bulletin board display by collecting advertisements from newspapers and magazines that use figures to support their pitch. Some Joe Isuzu ads that parody truth in advertising would help make the point.

2. How is Napoleon becoming more and more like a typical dictator? (He is rarely seen in public, is always surrounded by his guard dogs, has an entourage that attends him whenever he goes out, has his own apartment in the house, has a taster for his food, and eats alone off fine china. The gun is also fired on his birthday. He had added many titles to his name, including "Terror of Mankind.")

3. Compare/contrast the poem "Comrade Napoleon" to "Beast of England." (Either make a copy of both poems for students (side by side preferably) or write the first stanza of each on board. Then work through they rhyme scheme, etc. "Beasts of England" is made up of four-line stanzas (quatrains) with an A, B, C, B rhyme scheme. It is trochaic tetrameter (four stressed, unstressed feet per line). The word beasts is repeated frequently, and the whole song concerns the freeing of all beasts from man's tyranny. The new song, "Comrade Napoleon," is made up of three seven-line stanzas (septets) with an A, A, B, C, C, C, B rhyme scheme. The lines, however, do not have any set meter. No two lines are the same. it is an ironic parody of Napoleon's real behavior, a subject unlikely to greatly inspire the animals.)

4. Describe the sale of the stack of lumber. How does Napoleon outwit himself? (The lumber is to be sold first to Mr. Pilkington and then to Mr. Frederick. Napoleon plays the men against each other until he gets the price he wants. He insists on being paid in banknotes, which turn out to be forgeries. When Frederick attacks the farm, Pilkington refuses to help Napoleon.)

5. What makes the battle against Frederick's men different from the Battle of the Cowshed? (There is no strategic defense planned for the farm. The men are better prepared and have more weapons, and the leaderless animals quickly hide.)

6. Why do the men blow up the windmill? (No doubt the humans see it as a symbol of the pigs' ability to run the farm. By destroying the product of the animals' considerable labor, the men probably think they will give up and Mr. Jones will regain his farm.)

7. The animals celebrate a victory, but at what cost? (The windmill is destroyed; Boxer has a split hoof, bleeding knees, and buckshot in his hind leg; several animals have been killed; and all of the animals, except Squealer who hid, are injured.)

8. Describe the whisky incident. Why would Orwell make this scene somewhat humorous? (The idea of pigs drinking whiskey, getting drunk, singing, and doing silly things-such as Napoleon wearing a bowler hat and running around the yard-is humorous. Some of the students may know how painful a hangover is and will sympathize with the pigs who think they are dying. The first reaction of the pigs is to banish all alcohol under threat of death to anyone who drinks it. Given a chance to recover, however, the pigs (like many humans) decide it isn't so bad after all. They learn how to make beer and take the land that was to be used by the retired animals to plant barley.)

9. Why are the animals so easily fooled, even when they find Squealer with a ladder and white paint beside the barn at night? (Most of the animals cannot read and make no connection between this incident and the commandments written on the wall. They are very naive, except for Benjamin, who refuses to say anything. Then too, the dogs hustle Squealer away before anyone can ask him anything. Later, when Muriel reads the commandments, she finds she had forgotten that one of them really said, "No animal shall drink alcohol to excess.")

10. What is happening to Boxer? (Boxer is working himself to death. he is not recovering from his injuries as quickly as he should because he practices his own motto, "I will work harder.")

11. What are living conditions like for all of the animals except the pigs and dogs? (The animals are working harder than ever and are given less food. Rations are cut repeatedly, a "readjustment" according to Squealer, who uses more facts and figures to prove how well off the animals really are. And the animals believe it!)

12. Why does Napoleon allow Moses to return and to tell his stories about Sugarcandy Mountain? (The animals' physical condition is so miserable that they need the hope of a better life after death. With this promise, they will put up with more privation since they will eventually be rewarded. Students might see a parallel between Sugarcandy Mountain and heaven. People generally need to look forward to something.)

    ACTIVITY: Students can write about what they look forward to, telling how those things will make their lives better or more enjoyable. Students often dream of the day they will get married, or get a job, or leave home, or reach 21, or win the lottery.

13. What happens to Boxer? How do the animals accept it? (Boxer finally injures himself dragging stone for the windmill and is taken away to the knacker to be made into glue, dogfood, fertilizer, etc. Squealer tells the animals that Boxer died in the hospital and repeats Boxer's final words, the two maxims by which Boxer lived and died. The animals want to believe what they are told, but only Benjamin understands what really happened. He had tried to stop them from taking Boxer but was unable to do so. The money the pigs get for the dead Boxer is spend on whiskey.)

14. Of what kind of person does Benjamin remind you? Give some examples. What is your opinion of such people? What makes people behave this way? (Students may wonder why Benjamin has waited so long to speak up about what is happening. He is an interesting character-cynical, knowing, but determined not to become involved. He alone knows what the pigs are doing. Perhaps if he had been aggressive sooner, he might have been able to save Boxer. He is like many people who know something is wrong but ignore it since it does not involve them-until it is too late.)

CHAPTER X

1. What changes have the years brought to the farm? (Most of the animals who were alive during the Rebellion are dead. The farm is now prosperous. Other animals have been bought to replace the dead ones. The windmill has been finished, but instead of generating electricity to help all the animals, it is used for milling corn to make money for the pigs. Napoleon tells the animals that the truest happiness "lay in working hard and living frugally." And they do that.)

2. How does Orwell make fun of bureaucracy? (The pigs now spend hours typing up reports, minutes, and memos, which are then burned in the furnace. The pigs and dogs accomplish nothing productive by all this paperwork, but their appetites are always good.)

3. How do the animals no feel about their social order, their farm? (The animals, even the new ones, are proud to be a part of the only farm in England run by animals. They still believe there will be a time when man will be defeated and only animals will tread English soil. They are very pleased that at least on this farm no beings walk upon two legs.)
4. What drastic actions do the pigs use to shatter the animals' complacency? (The pigs begin to walk upright on two legs, Napoleon carries a whip, the pigs begin to wear the Jones's clothing, a telephone is installed, and they subscribe to newspapers. The sheep have been taught a new motto, "Four legs good, two legs better.)
5. All seven commandments are erased. What is the new commandment and how has it been true from the beginning? (The new commandment reads: "ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS." This commandment has been true from the beginning when Napoleon drank the milk, when the pigs had already taught themselves to read and write, and when the pigs merely supervised while the other animals worked. Now the pigs have openly stated what has always been true.)
6. At the conference with neighboring farmers, what new changes does Napoleon point out? (The farm is cooperatively owned by all the pigs. The animals will no longer call each other "Comrade." There will be no more marches by Major's skull. The flag is now a field of green with the horn and hoof removed. And the of the farm has been changed back to The Manor Farm. All traces of the Rebellion have been erased.)
7. What happens to the pigs' appearance? (As the animals watch, the pigs begin to resemble the humans. There are no longer any differences between them. The animals can finally see their true situation, but it is too late to do anything about it.)

The richest exploration of the novel comes after it has been read. While some of the following activities may be required of all students, individual involvement with the novel will be enhanced if students are given a choice from among the suggested activities of ones that they propose. Also, students should be encouraged to pursue activities that invite more personal involvement, such as the dramatic and arts/crafts options.

DISCUSSION AND/OR WRITTEN QUESTIONS

1. Compare/contrast students' written expectation of what would happen after Chapter II with what actually happened. These comparison/contrasts can be made either orally or in a written assignment.
2. After doing research on the Russian Revolution, point out similarities between real events and people and those in the novel. As a variation, do the same with any subsequent rebellion around the world since 1917.
3. Explain how Animal Farm can been seen as a fable even though it does not have a moral stated at the end. Provide a moral of your own and explain it in terms of the novel.
4. Remember Orwell's subtitle is "A Fairy Story." Explain how the novel fits this subtitle, citing supporting details.
5. Give examples of peer pressure as used in the novel, paying close attention to Boxer and the sheep.
6. Speculate on why Orwell made the reader sympathize with all the animals except the pigs, the most intelligent beasts and the closest to humans of any of the animals.
7. Look at the list of good leadership qualities made at the beginning of the novel. How do the pigs fit this list? Were there any attributes that the pigs lacked? Did they have some that were not on the list? Write a paper explaining how the pigs do and/or do not qualify as good leaders. Use specific examples.
8. Discuss the importance of education as it evolves during the course of the novel. At the same time, address the distinctions that may be made between education and indoctrination.
9. Clover saw many changes on the farm after the first mention of the Rebellion at the meeting with Major. How does her character change? What/who is she meant to represent? What is she thinking as she sees her husband carted off to his death? Put yourself in her mind and write an explanation of major events from her point of view.
10. Write a continuation of the novel beginning at the point the novel ends. Could a new revolutionary leader appear? Might Benjamin decide to take a more active role? When and how might the society fail?

11. Explore Mr. Whymper's possible motives for helping the pigs. Consider how he benefits, what problems he faces with both the pigs and the humans, and whether or not he will continue to benefit from working with the pigs.
12. Trace the defamation of Snowball's character from the planning of the windmill to the end of the book. Give specific examples.
13. Explain why an "enemy" or scapegoat is necessary for the animals. Why does the "enemy" have to change? If there were no "enemy," what would that mean for any society, including that of Animal Farm?
14. Why did Woodhouse in his introduction to *Animal Farm* compare the writing of this novel to the development of the atomic bomb?
15. Watch the movie version of *Animal Farm.* How effective are the cartoon characters? How does the movie version differ from the book? What would account for the differences?
16. Read *Lord of the Flies* and compare/contrast the characters, situations, governments that evolve, and the endings of both novels.
17. Look at the names of the characters. Why did Orwell use the names he did? How do the names fit the characters?

    Examples: Mr. Jones could represent any man. Jones is a common a name as Smith. If he were named Mr. Edgewater, it would individualize him too much. All we know about Jones is that he drinks too much and sometimes is cruel to his animals. Napoleon is a regal name, one fit for an emperor, a tyrant.

    Snowball is white and represents a thing that melts in the sun or breaks up when it hits a solid object, such as Napoleon. Certainly the name shows no leadership.

    Squealer does just that. He spies for Napoleon and tells on the other animals.

    Moses, the crow, like Moses in the Bible, is there to lead the animals to the promised land of Sugarcandy Mountain.

    Boxer has great stamina, will power, and strength, and does whatever he is told. He is not too intelligent, but he is loyal. Many human boxers could fit this description.

DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES

1. Select major events from the book and present each as part of a series of televised news reports, possibly on videotape.
2. Present dramatizations of selected scenes for the class. The meeting scenes provide opportunities for dramatic conflict as well as involving many characters. A set based on the novel could be developed.
3. Convert the novel into a puppet show. Make simple puppets, such as stick puppets, finger puppets, or paperbag puppets, and present the novel or selected scenes.
4. Give a reader's theater presentation of selected scenes.
5. Write a dialogue between Snowball and Napoleon as it might have happened over the need for a windmill. Try to be consistent with the characters as they are presented in the book. Then perform this exchange for the class.

ARTS/CRAFTS ACTIVITIES

1. Draw a series of pictures of characters presenting situations and ideas form the book.
2. Make a scale model of Animal Farm, paying close attention to details given in the book in order to create a realistic model.
3. Convert the events of the novel into a ballad or song. Write the lyrics and music or adapt words to a melody by someone else. It might even be a song the muppet Miss Piggy would sing.
4. Design and make your own T-shirt with an illustration about the novel. Create a design using color-fast marking pens.
5. Design a wardrobe for the cast of characters in the novel.

6. Make a diorama or shadow box depicting the setting, characters, or the theme from the novel. Shoe boxes are ideal for this project.
7. Develop time line charts comparing the history of various totalitarian societies to the Animal Farm.

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Unit 5 soft skills

Introduction

Presenting to adults is very different than presenting to children. Time is a precious commodity for working adults. They generally want to do things efficiently and quickly - the path of least resistance.

This includes learning about software where the learning presentation must be clear, concise, organized and to the point in order to make the maximum use of time. Adults also want to know how something will benefit them personally, especially in relation to their job.

The soft skill guidelines within this job aid have been developed from business literature and are specifically designed for adults.

The section on Creating effective presentations is designed to be generic with tips and suggestions that can be applied to a variety of presentation situations. This portion of the job aid includes developing presentations and visual aid design.

For the section on Communication process, this job aid will touch on issues such as interpersonal skills, barriers to communication, giving and receiving feedback and, most importantly, rehearsal and practice.

The final portion of this job aid includes a presentation Activity, Trainer Notes, and a section on Resources.

Creating effective presentations

Presentation purpose and objectives

Determining the purpose and objectives of your presentation will help you to focus on the kind of presentation you want to develop.

What are the objectives of your presentation?

8. Why are you giving this presentation?
9. What do you want to accomplish?
10. What does the audience expect?
11. What do you what the audience to understand?
12. What do you want the audience to remember?

Types of presentations

The type of presentation that you develop is based on the content of your material, the target audience, and your objectives. Different types of presentations can include training or teaching a skill or topic and sharing information.

Training or teaching a skill or topic

This form of presentation is designed to train or teach a new ability, skill and or trade.

Presentation strategy

- Introduce the skill or topic you will be teaching/training.
- Establish the importance of what will be taught.
- Explain the skill or topic through examples, elaboration, and/or exercises.
- Conclude or review the information presented.
- Suggest ways that your audience can obtain further information to learn more.

Sharing information

This type of presentation is used to narrow an information gap between you and your audience.

Presentation strategy

- Introduce the information you are going to share with your audience.
- Explain how it relates to other information.
- Establish why it is important to share this information.
- Suggest where this information could possibly lead.

Presentation issues

No matter what strategy you use, there are some issues you should address to make sure you are supplying your audience with the information they need.

- If there are certain aspects of your topic you will not cover, but could be viewed by your audience as important, you might want to address these things briefly and explain why you are not covering them.
- Determine if you will have to establish the history of your topic in order to clarify things for your audience.
- Decide if you will need to establish how the information you are presenting will benefit your audience.
- If there is an order to what you are discussing, make sure you establish that in the beginning; it will make everything clearer for your audience.
- Always make sure you have proof to support what you are talking about. This will establish your credibility as a speaker.

The audience

Knowing your audience is critical when designing your presentation.

- How much does the audience already know about your topic? This will determine how much information you will have to give the audience at the beginning of your presentation.
- Is your audience willing to accept new ideas?
- To how many people will you be speaking? With a small group it might be possible to have a more thorough analysis of your topic. However, a large group often requires a presentation to be more general.

Remember the basic objectives of your presentation must meet the needs and objectives of your audience.

Speech/Presentation development

- Do not assume the audience knows what you mean; always define words or phrases for purpose of clarity. How detailed your definitions are will depend on your audience.
- Consider limitations imposed by time. Many subjects cannot be explained or fully developed in the available speaking time. Under these conditions speeches/presentations must be narrowed and focused.
- Pay attention to the amount of time allotted to each portion of the speech in order to ensure that more weight is given to the more important aspects of your presentation.

Tip

Studying other presentations can give you ideas for your own.

Speech/Presentation writing

It is important to say more about less by focusing a speech instead of trying to cover too much. Covering too much will make a speech too sketchy to be effective. It is better to focus your presentation on certain aspects of your topic. Your objective is to organize your ideas and materials into a cohesive presentation, which will make a positive impression on your audience.

Speech writing strategy

- Develop an outline. Outlining your speech will give you a better idea on coordinating a series of points, which have elements in common. Each section of your outline should have only one idea or statement.
- Sequence your presentation outline. This will help give you a structure on which to build.

Tips

Review the main ideas to make sure you are in line with the objectives and purpose of your presentation.

Do not give an audience too much information, which will result in them remembering less.

A speech is generally composed of 3 parts:
- Introduction
- Body or main part
- Conclusion.

The purpose of an introduction is to:
- Introduce yourself (why are you qualified to speak on this subject and who you are)
- Inform your audience what your speech/presentation is about
- Gain the audience's attention
- And give the audience some background information on your subject.

Make the organization of your speech clear to your audience from the beginning by providing an overview of the presentation format. This format can entail presenting the main points you will be discussing via an outline. A presentation outline will keep things in order, put things in a time frame, and help the audience to recall information.

Body or main part

The body of your speech is the elaboration of the main topic areas presented in your introduction.

Conclusion

The conclusion refers back to the introduction and is your opportunity to review what you have told your audience.
- Wrap up the main points you have presented.
- Answer any questions your audience may have.

Dealing with anxiety

When it comes to speaking in public we all want to be confident and favourably received by an audience. However, for most of us, the first reaction we have to speaking in public is fear. This fear is the normal anxiety we feel when we are in a situation where performance is important and the outcome is uncertain.

Give yourself enough time to plan your presentation. Do not procrastinate.

On the day of your presentation, check your room and equipment, think positively, and visualize a successful presentation.

Strategies for reducing stress and controlling speech anxiety

- Accept that it is normal to feel anxious.
- Make sure you are organized in your thoughts by concentrating on what and how you are going to say things.
- Be prepared by having well-organized notes.
- Take the time to rehearse and practice, this will help you feel more comfortable with your presentation material. Rushing will only make you more anxious.

Handouts

Handouts generally refer to the reproduction of images and/or information in the form of printed materials.

The purpose of handouts is to…

- Reinforce important information.
- Summarize information within the presentation.
- Supply support material and data.

Presentation environment

The environment where you present can have a dramatic effect on your presentation. Obviously the best solution is to choose the type of room in which you want to present. However, often when we present in a room environment that is chosen for us, we have to make do. The solution is to make the best of what is available to you.

Room check

When ever possible, check the room where you will be presenting well in advance and arrive early enough to set up the room environment the way you want.

Audience seating

Be aware of where you will be standing in relation to the audience. The objective is to make sure that your audience will have the best view of you and your visual aids.

Noise

It is important to determine if there are any noises or distractions that will negatively effect your presentation.

11. An intercom system. Can it be turned down or off so there will be no interruptions during your presentation?
12. Noisy equipment, (i.e. phones, machines, printers, etc...). Can the noisy equipment be moved or turned off so they will not create a distraction?

Lighting

If you are using visual aids, you will need to know what the lighting environment is like. The ideal situation is to have lights on a dimmer or the ability to shut off certain lights. For example, you may want some lights on, so the audience can take notes. However, often we find ourselves in a room where the lighting choice is either on or off. If you cannot change the lighting, it is important to determine if your visuals (overheads) can still be seen.

Technology check

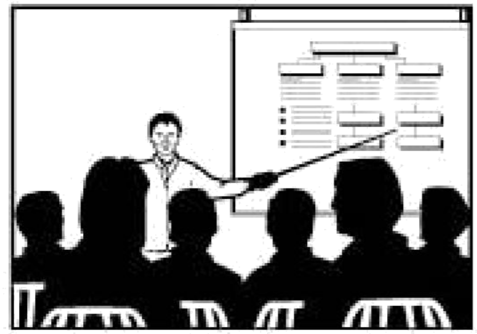
If your presentation requires the use of technology (computers, software) always check to see if it is working properly well before your presentation. Checking things out beforehand is better than checking things out when you are in front of an audience.

Time considerations

It is essential to be aware of the available speaking time allocated for your presentation. The time factor will determine how much detail and information your presentation can entail.

Always consider your audience's time. For adults their time is usually limited.

Images for projection and display



Include:

18. Film and video
19. Slides 35mm
20. Overhead transparencies or acetates
21. Flip charts
22. Computers

For this job aid we will only discuss presenting using computers.

Testing legibility of projected materials

6. Make a sample visual using the kind of lettering and or images that you will use in your presentation.
7. Project this sample visual on a screen, stand in the back of a room or at a similar distance as in the room you will be speaking in.
8. Determine if the visual can be seen and read without strain.

Computers

Using computers can enable presenters to use multimedia and graphics to get their message across.

Some considerations when presenting with computers
If you are demonstrating with a computer, the size of your audience will have a profound effect on how you can present.

Presenting to a small group
With a small group it may be possible to present software using only a monitor. Your main consideration is that all members of your audience can see the screen. Be aware that lights can reflect off a screen making it difficult to see the image; always check for this.

Presenting to a large group
Demonstrating a computer application to a large group requires an image, which is much larger than a monitor screen. To do this, you will need to be able to project the computer image onto a larger screen.

Creating visual aids (overheads)

The purpose of a visual aid (overhead) is to supply impact and enhance what you are saying.

Determining what visuals to use is effected by...

The content of your presentation

6. Will a visual add to your presentation and enhance what you are saying?
7. Will a visual make the purpose and objectives of your presentation easier to understand?
8. Will a visual make what your are saying easier for the audience to follow?
9. Will a visual convey to your audience what you want them to learn?

Resources

8. The equipment you have access to.
9. The facilities that are available to you.
10. How much time you have to put together your visuals.

Other considerations

- Can the point and or concept you are trying to make be put into a visual form?
- Will a visual fit into your presentation and complement the other visuals?

Visual aid design considerations

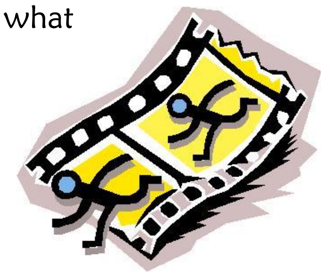
Visuals should only include words, images, graphs, and charts that directly relate to what you are talking about.

- Overall design of a visual should not be crowded. Too much visual or verbal information will result in your audience losing interest.
- Visual aids should be clear and simple without unnecessary details. Complicated visuals with too much information can be confusing for an audience.
- It is essential that every bit of information on the visual aid is large enough for all of the audience to see (i.e., make all details large, put lines in bold, and use contrasting colours).
- Only use simple lettering, unambiguous terms and symbols that the audience can easily understand.

- Keep in mind that you want your visuals to focus the audience's attention where and when you want it.
- It is not necessary to have a visual for everything you say. Having too many visuals can result in information overload for your audience.

Using images

The objective of visual aids is to be visual. Using visuals with only text can become boring so when ever possible use images (i.e., pictures, charts, and graphs) to illustrate what you mean. Images are more interesting than text and can be remembered by an audience long after your presentation is finished.



Be conscious of good design Make sure the elements within a visual complement and work together to bring your message across. This applies to text as well as images.

Use emphasis to draw attention to important aspects of a visual through arrows, colour, font size, and or object/image size.

Arrangement

It is important that the arrangement of the images and/or text is designed in such a way that it will effectively grab the audience's attention.

Arranging things in geometric shapes (i.e. oval, rectangle triangle) or letters of the alphabet can be used as an underlying pattern to display images on a visual. These are common shapes and will help make your images look organized within the visual.

Colour

Colour can accent essential information for the audience by creating a mood or emotional response towards your material.

- Consistency with colour can help make things more clear, for example, the same background colour can be used for each section of your presentation (i.e. blue for statistical information and green for research).
- Letter colouring should contrast with the background. This helps with legibility and draws attention to written words.

Too many colours can make an image confusing to look at.

Text on visuals

No matter what visual aid you decide to create, if you are going to use text, there are a number of things that need to be thought about and planned. Some considerations when using text...

Limit the amount of text

- Having too much text on a visual will make it difficult to read.
- If you want verbal information on a visual, it is generally best to use a maximum of 36 words with 6 lines and only 6 words per line.
- Text should be brief in order to get your main points across and help your audience to remember the information. This also applies to text with images (i.e. pictures, charts, or graphs). However, a projected visual with only one or a few words is too brief and is a waste of time.

Format and organize text

- It is best to put text in point form. Keeping your points brief will make it easier for your audience to read the information. A speaker can always elaborate on the text information that is presented on the screen.
- If you are listing things on your visual, using numbers can make the information better organized and easier to follow.
- Headings on each visual can help organize the material and give the audience something to associate with your points.

Typeface

Do not use lettering that is too detailed to read easily. It is pointless to use something that may be beautiful to look at, but difficult to read. Instead try to use simple lettering styles.

Font size

Do not use a font size that is too small. It is pointless to have text that your audience cannot read. It is best to experiment will different font sizes to determine which is easier for the audience to read.

Presenting with visual aids

- Rehearse your presentation with the visual aids you are going to use. Running your presentation through from beginning to end will give you an idea on how long your presentation is and give you the opportunity to make any necessary changes. Whenever possible, rehearse in the room you are going to speak using the same technology.
- When presenting make sure your entire audience can see the visual aid.
- When speaking always face your audience not the visuals.
- If possible, once you have finished with a visual, remove it to maintain the audience's attention on what you are saying.
- Do not present a visual aid before you are ready to talk about it. Seeing a visual before it is discussed can be distracting to an audience.

[redacted] only there to aid and enhance your speech. A visual aid does not [redacted] be self-explanatory. You, as the speaker, can always verbally add information increasing the value of the visual as a means to communicate. The objective is to have something that will help you to get your point across.

Presenting technology

- When presenting technology, either software or hardware, always use an outline that presents the material in a logical sequence.
- The presentation should, whenever possible, build on your audience's knowledge of the topic.
- It is also recommended to have an activity, which will help the audience to understand how the technology can be used.

The communication process

Interpersonal skills

Interpersonal skills reflect our ability or inability to interact and communicate with others in constructive ways. How effective our interpersonal skills are will determine the success of our social and work interactions.

In face to face situations, the basis of interpersonal communication is the ability to:

- listen
- assist each other
- interact congenially with other people.

It has been found that ideas and topics are facilitated more readily when discussions are as concise and specific as possible. This can be achieved through 'checking understanding' or what is also described as 'active listening' whereby when someone has finished what he or she is saying the individual listening then condenses the information and reiterates the important points back to the speaker. Achieving this necessitates being able to focus on what is being said by mentally reformatting the speaker's words in order to understand the specific points of the discussion.

Non-verbal communication

In face-to-face situations there is generally a great deal of communication taking place through non-verbal language (e.g., body language, tone of voice, facial expressions) even though the dominant mode of communication is speaking. This non-verbal communication is taken for granted in face-to-face conversations, but communicating is more than speaking and listening. It is these non-verbal elements of communication that can provide a great deal of information and can be an important means of learning.

Tip

Nonverbal cues can differ dramatically from culture to culture. An erican hand gesture meaning "A-OK" would be viewed as obscene in some South American countries. Be careful.

Barriers to Communication

Information overload

Information overload is a frequent problem with technology because of the ease that this medium enables information to be generated. This situation occurs when too much information (data) is provided than what is actually needed.

Dealing with information overload

Focus on providing specific information. This requires editing down data, making it concise and well organized. It is always best to determine what the receiver of the information needs to know. If the information people are receiving is considered needless, they will tune out.

Language

There are a wide number of sources of noise or interference that can enter into the communication process. This can especially occur when people don't know each other very well and do not understand the sources of error. For example, in a seminar environment, it is even more common since interactions involve people who do not know each other; communication is also complicated by the complex and often conflictive cultural differences. The following suggests a number of potential sources of noise:

Choice of words or language

What the presenter uses to transmit a message will influence the quality of communication. Because language is a symbolic representation of a phenomenon, room for interpretation and distortion of the meaning exists. Meaning has to be given to words, and many factors affect how an individual will attribute meaning to particular words. It is important to note that no two people will attribute the exact same meaning to the same words.

Perceptual biases

People attend to stimuli in the environment in very different ways. We each have shortcuts that we use to organize data. Invariably, these shortcuts introduce some biases into communication. Some of these shortcuts include stereotyping, projection, and self-fulfilling prophecies. Stereotyping is one of the most common. This is when we assume that the other person has certain characteristics based on the group to which they belong without validating that they in fact have these characteristics.

Interpersonal relationships
How we perceive communication is affected by the past experience with the individual. Perception is also affected by the organizational relationship two people have. For example, communication from a superior may be perceived differently than that from a subordinate or peer.

Cultural differences
Effective communication requires deciphering the basic values, motives, aspirations, and assumptions that operate across geographical lines. Given some dramatic differences across cultures, approaching areas such as time, space, and privacy in cross-cultural situations has the potential to increase the opportunity for miscommunication.

Giving and receiving feedback

When working with others, many of us are reluctant to accept feedback, which we may perceive as negative. However, before deciding to accept or discard feedback, it is important to inquire as to why the feedback is being given before making a decision.

- Focus on behaviour not the person. It is important that we refer to what a person does rather than to what we think he is. Thus, we might say that a person "talked more than anyone else in this meeting" rather than that he is a "loud-mouth."

- Take into account the needs of both the receiver and giver of feedback. It should be given to help, not to hurt. We too often give feedback because it makes us feel better or gives us a psychological advantage.

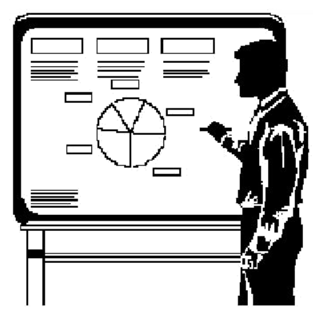
Dealing with feedback issues
Being able to give and receive feedback is essential for effective communication. How feedback dialogue is understood and accepted will depend on how it is given.

- Instead of responding to problems with 'that's wrong' or 'fix it' individuals should express specifically what the difficulty is and describe how to deal with it.

- It is also advisable for individuals to speak in a 'passive voice' by saying things such as 'perhaps this could be expanded' and 'might it be possible to'. Using what is called a passive voice removes putting blame on another individual and instead focuses on the work itself.

- If negative feedback must be given, try whenever possible to do it person (or if not in person over the phone). Giving what might be perceived, as negative feedback is not an easy situation with which to deal. Therefore, to ensure something will not be taken personally, it is essential to always try to focus and stress that the feedback being given is only to create improvement for the project.

- Try not to take each other for granted by finding reasons to appreciate contributions instead of chastising each other for problems. The more individuals value what they are doing the more likely they will be willing to deal with feedback difficulties.



Rehearse and practice

You must rehearse and practice before you deliver your presentation. Rehearsal can tell you if you have mannerisms which are distracting and practicing will help you to feel comfortable with your material.

Perform your presentation in rehearsal as you would before a group.

Tip

ticing in front of a mirror, a friend or associate, audiotape or videotape yourself presenting can give you vital feedback on your performance.

Voice

Elements of a speech can effect the importance of ideas through force, rate, and pitch of the voice. The flexibility of the speaker's vocal delivery can add to the presentation setting. The frequent use of 'um' or 'you know' when you speak can be annoying to an audience and distract them from what you are saying.

Speaking in a monotone voice

Speaking in the same tone of voice without varying the pitch or level of speaking can be boring for an audience. The need for variety and flexibility in speaking is vital and will add interest to what you are saying.

Speaking too fast or too slow

Generally when we are nervous we speak quickly. If you are aware of how you are speaking, it will help you to control this. Your speaking pace should reflect the ideas being expressed. The objective is to speak at a comfortable pace for you. Remember: It is important to pause. Pausing allows time for presented ideas to be comprehended by an audience. If you speak without pausing the audience is never given a rest.

Speaking too loudly or too softly

It is important to be aware of our speaking volume. It is OK before you begin your speech to ask the audience if they can all hear you.

Body gestures

It is important to remember that we communicate with our bodies as well as with our voice. Try not to engage in gestures that will distract an audience, such as:

- Wringing your hands (because of nervousness).
- Keeping your hands in your pockets.
- Nervous pacing.
- Not moving at all.
- Leaning on a podium for the entire presentation.
- Constantly gesturing with a pen and or pencil.
- The habit of shuffling your papers or clicking a pen.
- Keeping your arms crossed (can indicate defensiveness).
- Inappropriate laughter (can show anxiety).

Tips

Always face your audience standing up straight, but relaxed. Be conscious of your posture.

Be aware of your body gestures that may draw attention away from the ideas being presented.

Eye contact

It is important to make eye contact with your audience. Maintaining eye contact with your audience involves the audience in the presentation.

Communication via technology

Netiquette issues

Netiquette is a form of on-line etiquette that users of on-line computer communication are expected to conduct themselves. For positive communication environment to occur, it is essential that people maintain awareness on how they are communicating on-line. This means paying more attention to the way things are said, especially when feedback is being given.

- One breach of netiquette occurs when people begin arguing, accusing, and insulting each other on-line. Referred to as flaming some situations can unfortunately get quite nasty. Flaming can often start with a simple misunderstanding in communication that gets blown out of proportion or when an individual deliberately insights a problem that results in conflict.
- Another netiquette issue that is important to be aware of is the use of upper and lower case text. Generally upper case text is viewed as shouting as if someone is angry or annoyed.

Communication issues on-line

It is essential for individuals to always be aware that they are communicating with people not computers. Communicating through technology is more complex than face-to-face situations requiring more attention to social interactions. Social problems often occur because many people when using electronic communications will expect it to be the same as if they were communicating face to face.

- One problem found with text-based computer-mediated communication is that participants seemed less aware of how their interactions can affect others on-line. This is described as a 'decreased awareness of audience'. This makes it important for individuals to always be aware of how they are communicating and interacting with others on-line.
- In other situations learners (users) will believe that the message they sent is perfectly clear and it will result in an expected response. However, difficulties arise when users of electronic communication make incorrect assumptions about what they believe is being said. This can occur irregardless if the user is experienced or inexperienced with e-mail or other forms of computer-medicated-communication.

A toastmasters presentation!

Participants are asked to reflect on the major points with which they have been presented and to think how they would more likely apply those principles in a presentation of their own.

Explain rules of the activity:

Participants put in practice what they have just learned. They are asked to think of a topic they would like to present to the rest of their colleagues.

Following this, a volunteer (ideally) will stand in front of the group and he/she is given 5 min. to deliver a short presentation/speech of his/her choice.

Once time is up, the audience will judge the quality of the presentation/speech based on what they learned about effective presentations. It is important to note that the group should pay attention to the quality of feedback they will be giving so it is useful to the receiver.

Trainer Notes

When presenting technology, it is essential that you have taken the time to thoroughly explore the software.

Presentation checklists

Here are a number of checklists to help you organize your presentation.

Presentation development checklist

☐ Develop and define the purpose of your presentation.

☐ Develop and define the objectives of your presentation.

☐ Determine who your audience is and what their needs are.

☐ Develop main points or ideas of your speech.

☐ If necessary, develop and plan for handouts.

☐ If necessary, develop and plan visual aids.

☐ Elaborate main points of your speech.

☐ Develop an introduction.

☐ Develop the conclusion.

Environment checklist

Check the room where you will be presenting.

- ☐ Will you be speaking over any noises in the area you cannot control?
- ☐ Where will the audience be sitting? Is the seating arrangement appropriate for your presentation? If possible, arrange the seating so that your audience will have the best advantage to see and hear your presentation.
- ☐ What is the room lighting like? If you are using media, you will need to know where the light switches are. If you need the lights dimmed you may want some lights on, so the audience can take notes. If the lights must remain on, will your visuals still be able to be seen?
- ☐ If your presentation requires the use of technology, check to see if it is working properly.
- ☐ If you have handouts, will it be easy for your audience to access them with as little disruption as possible?

Presentation preparation checklist

- ☐ Practice your presentation via stand-up rehearsals with your visual aids.
- ☐ Think of possible questions your audience might ask.
- ☐ Make sure your date, time and location to present is confirmed.
- ☐ Make sure you have enough handouts.
- ☐ Be prepared and think through your presentation noting what you will need and what could go wrong. Develop ideas on what you will do if something goes wrong. Rehearsal is important in order to work out any problems before you present. Whenever possible rehearse in the room in which you are going to speak.

During the presentation remember

- ☐ Make voice and eye contact with your audience.
- ☐ Pay attention to your body gestures.
- ☐ When using visuals always explain and refer to them. Talk the audience through the visual aid pausing to let them absorb the information.
- ☐ Make sure you are not standing between the audience and the screen.
- ☐ Always face the audience when speaking. Turning away makes it difficult to hear you.
- ☐ Once you have finished with a visual, remove it. Leaving it on while you are talking about something else will distract your audience.

Resources

1. Interpersonal Communication Skills: Learn To Be A Better Communicator -and Watch Life Get A Lot Easier
   Author: Debra Smith Price: $21.95 Sold at
   Chapters Club Price: $19.76 Audio
   Format | ISBN 1559774886
   Published in January 1996 by Monarch Books Of Canada

   Comments about the book: Creating a "feedback loop" that promotes cooperation, it teaches listeners how to solve problems without blaming, it presents ways to clear up mistaken assumptions, how to listen in a way that relaxes people, how to use small talk to come across as warm and genuine, and much more.

2. Inter-Act: Using Interpersonal Communication Skills
   Author: Verderber Price: $6.95 Published by ITP Nelson

3. http://www.tantara.ab.ca/job_aids.htm
   On this site, you'll find lots of info and tips on developing presentations skills. For example; constructive feedback, developing your skills; developing communication skills: Listening Skills and many other interesting topics.

4. http://www.ntu.edu/notes/busmanchannel/notes/ETEC0000_pm.pdf
   Even though this is for a technical presentation, it contains interesting information and tips about basic presentation skills and group management.

5. People Skills
   Author: Robert Bolton Price: $10.40 US
   How to assert yourself. Listen to others and resolve conflicts.

   You will find several reviews on the Web site:
   http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/067162248X/o/qid=989807875/sr=2-2/102-8146707-9212901

6. The Communication Skills Book
   Author: Patrick Fanning (Contributor), Matthew, McKay, Martha Davis (Contributor)
   List Price: $15.95 Amazon's Price: $12.76 U.S

   http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1572240229/o/qid=989807875/sr=2-3/102-8146707-9212901

Unit 3

Formal Reports and Proposals

The distinctions between formal and informal reports are often blurred. Nevertheless, a formal report is usually written to someone in another company or organization. Occasionally it is written for a senior manager in the same company, or for someone with whom the writer has little regular contact. Usually it is longer than an informal report and requires more extensive research. Unless you are a consultant, you are unlikely to be asked to write a formal report often. When you are, there may be a lot riding on it— including your reputation.

The purpose of this chapter is to show you how to write a formal report and how to put together the kind of proposal that often precedes it. As Figure 9-1 shows, many of the elements of formal reports are the same as those for informal ones.You need to pay the same attention to headings, lists, and illustrations, for example. Although much of the advice in the previous chapter could be duplicated in this one, the emphasis here will be on those areas where there's a difference.

Figure 9-1 Contrasting Features of Informal and Formal Reports

	Informal	**Formal**
Reader	often internal	often external or distant within organization
Length	• usually short • several sections	• usually long (3 pages or more) • sections and subsections
Tone	• personal • contractions	• more impersonal • no contractions
Summary	integrated	on separate page
Introduction	no heading	can have one or more headings
Title	appears as subject line in memo heading	appears on separate title page
Transmittal page	optional	covering letter or memo

Contents page	none	useful if report is over 5 pages

The Four R's of Planning

As emphasized earlier, the first step in planning any piece of correspondence is to think about the reason for writing and about the receiver. For a long, formal report you need to add two more R's to your planning sheet: restrictions and research.

Assessing the Reason for Writing and the Receiver

As discussed in Chapter 2, formal reports are usually less personal than informal ones. They omit the contractions of personal conversation and tend to name fewer individuals. Traditionally, formal reports have tried to give a sense of objectivity by omitting the personal *I*. As a result, passages were often convoluted and difficult to read. While *I*-free reports are still the practice in some circles, business writers are increasingly using *I* in formal reports to produce clearer and more forceful writing. (In informal reports, personal pronouns are not only tolerated but recommended.) However, avoid "I think" or "in my opinion" phrases when you can complete the thought without them:

X `I found that the fittings were defective.`

√ `The fittings were defective.`

X `In my view, the market value will rise in the spring.`

√ `Market value will probably rise in the spring.`

If you are part of a group, you can also refer to *we*, since the collective weight of a group seems more objective than that of an individual. In any case, use *I* rather than referring to yourself impersonally as *the writer* or *the author*.

Determining Restrictions

What are the limitations on the resources that will be available to help you with the report?

1. **Financial** What will be your budget? What expenses will be involved and is the budget adequate to cover them?

13. **Personnel** Will you have the services of a good typist or illustrator? Will outside help be required?

14. **Time** What is your deadline? Create a realistic time line on a graph with the various stages of the report plotted on it at specific dates—so many days or weeks for research, organizing, writing, editing, and final production.The larger the task, the more important these self-imposed dates become. In

allocating time, you may be wise to leave a margin of error for delays, whether from bureaucratic mix-ups or postal problems.

Deciding on Research

Before beginning your research, explore the subject itself to avoid taking too narrow a path and overlooking important alternatives. Good questions are an effective stimulus for seeing different perspectives on an issue. Here are some ways to start:

- **Brainstorming** By yourself or with a colleague, blitz the subject. Jot down all the questions you can think of that relate to the topic, in whatever order they occur. Don't be negative or rule anything out at this point.
- **Tree Diagram** Assume that the subject is the trunk and add as many large and small branches as you can to represent the different aspects of the subject. Again, think of the branches as questions.Tree diagramming can be useful by itself or as a second stage of random brainstorming.

- **Journalist's Approach** In researching a story, journalists consider the W's of reporting:Who? What? When? Where? Why? For your research planning, try asking the same five questions and add another: How? Use the basic questions to formulate other subquestions.
- **The 3C Approach** A more thorough way to explore a topic is to ask questions about three areas:

- *Components* How can the subject be divided? How many different ways are there to partition it?
- *Change* What are the changed or changing elements of the subject? What are the causes or effects of certain actions? What trends are there?
- *Context* What is the larger issue or field into which this subject fits? How have others dealt with the problems associated with the subject?

Once you have stretched your mind exploring the possibilities of a subject, move in the other direction. Think of limiting the subject and working out the precise focus of your study. Weigh the time and expense of the research against its importance to the report. Remember that it's better to do a limited topic well than a broad one superficially.

Finding Information

- **Use librarians.** For some of your research you may have to turn to government documents or academic studies. Librarians can be a great help in finding information or showing the fastest way to get it.
- **Do a computer search.** Most libraries now have access to extensive databases that allow you to source needed information quickly by computer. For example, a computer search can show you where to find all the articles, books, and reviews on a topic. It can itemize a certain kind of transaction or economic activity over a given period of time. CD-ROM indexes enable you to search by author, by title, or by keyword, sometimes giving brief summaries or even the full text of each article.When you enter the keywords that describe the limits of your topic (for example, free trade, auto parts, Canada), the computer search will list the material relating to that combination of terms. Although much of the same reference material is available in books, your library may not have all of them, or they may not be as up to date as the computerized material. Besides, it's a much slower process to search through books.

  A librarian can guide you to the most relevant database for your topic.
- **Access information online.** E-mail and the Internet provide access to newsgroups, discussion lists, and forums that focus on specific subjects. Possibly the most powerful research tool of all, however, is the World Wide Web. Using search engines such as AltaVista or Excite or a directory such as Yahoo, you can look for online articles on any subject.Today writing and research is commonly published on a Web site, providing a rich source of information, particularly on current subjects.

- **Look for inside sources.** If you are doing a report on a particular company or organization, don't overlook the most accessible source of information—internal records and the employees themselves. Many an unsuspecting report writer has spent days searching for facts readily available in internal files. If the topic is one of continuing concern to the company, chances are that someone has looked at it, or an aspect of it, before. Some of the facts from an earlier investigation may be out of date, but it's likely that other information is timely and relevant.

  Even when an earlier report doesn't exist, it is still sensible to find out if other people have worked on the topic. They are usually glad to discuss the issues. A short telephone inquiry or memo may save you valuable research time or give you helpful suggestions for your exploration. Reinventing the wheel does nobody any good.
- **Check the reliability of information.** Establish whether any of the second-hand facts you get from your research will need verifying. Remember that a source with a special interest may exaggerate or gloss over certain information, often unconsciously. Even statistical data should undergo scrutiny. Any observer of election polls and campaigns knows that while statistics may not lie, they can certainly distort. If you have to get fresh data through a questionnaire or survey, make sure the results are as reliable and valid as possible. If you are not familiar with proper sampling techniques and have no knowledge of statistical reliability, consult someone who is competent in those areas. The cost of obtaining outside help may be less than the cost of losing your credibility through faulty data.

Managing Information

- **Use file cards.** In doing lengthy research, many people find that file cards are an efficient way to record and keep track of details. Use a separate card for each different item of information you gather—whether the item is an opinion or an important statistic. You can then shuffle the cards according to the order you have chosen for the findings. Drafting the findings section of a report is much easier if the sequence of information is already in front of you.

If you are gathering information from a published source, remember to include the bibliographical information on the card (author, title, publisher, place of publication, and page number) so that you don't have to spend time chasing down the reference later.

- **Create an outline.** Some writers find that they work best by banging out a first draft as quickly as possible without worrying about details. Others work best when they have a detailed plan in front of them. It doesn't matter what method you choose, as long as at some point you carefully arrange the material so that each little bit is in the best place. Although with a short informal report you may not feel the need for an outline, with lengthy formal reports an outline is almost a prerequisite for avoiding muddles.

  The outline can be in point form or in full sentences. Numbering each section will help you keep in mind the relative value of each. Whichever numbering system you use for your outline, you can repeat it in the body of the report and in the table of contents.

Organizing Formal Reports

Although many variations are possible, a typical report structure looks like Figure 9-4. Since you will begin your writing process with the main section, let's begin by looking at various methods of structuring the body of your report.

Figure 9-4 Structure of a Formal Report

Front Section	Title Page
	Letter of Transmittal
	Table of Contents
Main Section	Summary
	Introduction
	Discussion of Findings
	Conclusions and Recommendations
Back Section	References
	Appendix

Main Section

Although the sections will vary according to the subject, the basic principles of organizing are the same as for informal reports.

For readers who will be interested or pleased, use the direct approach. Here is the most common model:

Summary

↓

Introduction

↓

Recommendations and/or Conclusions

↓

Discussion of Findings

A less common variation of this direct approach is useful when there is a lengthy list of recommendations:

Summary

↓

Introduction

↓

Summary of Recommendations

↓

Discussion of Findings

↓

Details of Recommendations

When readers will be displeased or skeptical, the indirect approach will lead them gradually toward the conclusions or recommendations:

Summary

↓

Introduction

↓

Discussion of Findings

↓

Conclusions and/or Recommendations

The indirect approach is sometimes used in government and consulting circles, even when the readers are interested. The trend is toward the direct approach, however, especially for busy readers.

The preceding suggestions are not an ironclad prescription for every report. You may want to change or add some sections. You may also have to adapt the following advice about what to put in each section. Let ease of understanding be the guide.

Summary

A summary for a formal report—often called an executive summary—is really a condensation of the most important points. Unlike the introductory summary that begins most short informal reports, the summary for a formal report is put on a separate page with a heading. It's not an introduction to the report, but a synopsis—the report condensed. It's a convenience for the reader and may be the only part that senior management reads, but the report can make sense without it. For this reason, it's best to write the summary after you have completed the body of the report.

The summary doesn't have to give equal weight to all sections of the report. It often has only a brief account of the background or methodology, and may even omit them if they are unimportant. By contrast, it usually pays most attention to the conclusions or recommendations. On rare occasions, if the list of recommendations is lengthy, the title may be simply "Summary of Recommendations."

Generally in a summary it's best to follow the order of the report.That is, if the report takes the direct approach, so should the summary. Similarly, if the report has an indirect order, the summary should be indirect.

In the interest of brevity:

- use lists where possible;
- omit examples, unless the example is a key finding;
- stick to the facts, avoiding unneeded references to the report itself. For example, instead of saying, "The Findings section reveals . . ." simply put a heading, "Findings," and list the facts.

Since there is a subtle psychological barrier to turning a page, especially for a reader who is extremely busy, try to keep the summary to a single sheet. If this seems an impossible task for a complicated or lengthy report, remember Winston Churchill's instruction to the First Lord of the Admiralty in the midst of the Second World War: "Pray state this day, on one side of a sheet of paper, how the Royal Navy is being adapted to meet the conditions of modern warfare" (Ogilvy, 1983, p. 35). Is your task more difficult than this one?

Introduction

This section may have a heading other than "Introduction," depending on the focus, and may have several subsections. It can include several or all of these topics:

2 **Purpose** As in an informal report, a one-sentence explanation may be enough.

2 **Background** Many report writers make the mistake of giving too much background. Include only the information needed to put the report in perspective. If explaining the reasons for the report, a total history is rarely needed. Focus on those conditions that have influenced the purpose and design of the report. If you do have to include a lot of material, you should probably have a separate section on background.

- **Scope** Here you define the topic precisely and reveal any assumptions you have made affecting the direction or boundaries of your investigation. If there are constraints or difficulties that limit the study in some way, say what they are. By doing so, you will help forestall criticisms that you didn't cover the area properly.
- **Method** If your findings are based on a questionnaire or survey of some sort, outline the steps you took. Reports with a heavy scientific emphasis often include an explanation of the technical processes used in the investigation.The process of information-gathering is especially relevant when the data is "soft"—that is, open to dispute. Again, if the explanation is lengthy, consider putting it as a separate section.

Discussion of Findings

This is the largest section in most formal reports, and discusses the details of your investigation, the facts on which you have based your conclusions or recommendations. It should be subdivided, with numbered and descriptive subheadings. (It may be possible to give the section itself a more specific heading than "Discussion" or "Findings.")

In choosing the best arrangement for findings, remember that the most effective order is the one that most easily leads the reader to the conclusions or recommendations. As with informal reports, you can arrange findings by category or topic, by geographic or chronological order, or by order of importance.

How many subsections should a report have? It's a matter of judgment. Don't have so many that the section is more like a long shopping list than a discussion. On the other hand, don't have so few that there's a thicket of information in each one.

Conclusions and/or Recommendations

While some reports have both conclusions and recommendations, many have one or the other. Conclusions are the inferences you have made from your findings; recommendations are suggestions about what actions to take. A long, research-based report generally gives conclusions; a problem-solving report, recommendations. Here are some tips for both types:

- If there are several recommendations or conclusions, separate them in a list or in subsections.
- Normally, put the most important recommendation (or conclusion) first. If you face a skeptical or hostile reader, however, you might make an exception, and put the most controversial recommendation last, even if it is the major one.

- Number the recommendations or conclusions, making them easier to refer to. Numbers will also reinforce the fact that there are more than one. Otherwise, in later discussions the reader may focus on the most important or controversial point and forget that there are others.
- Be as specific as possible about how each recommendation should be carried out and who should be responsible. Some reports have an implementation subsection for each recommendation. Others have a specific action plan at the end of the report, outlining all the steps that should be taken.
- If implementation details are not feasible, consider including a recommendation to set up an implementation committee or task force. If your recommendations do include the details of implementation, suggest a follow-up mechanism so that managers or departments will get feedback on the results.

With the main section of the report in place, you are now ready to add the pages for the front and back sections.

Front Section

Title Page

Centre the information and arrange it so that it extends downward over most of the length of the page. Include:

- the title of the report, in bold type or in capital letters
- the name and title of the intended reader
- the name of the writer and the writer's title (or the name of the firm, if the report is by an outside consultant)
- the date

Letter of Transmittal

A letter of transmittal is a covering letter, given in letter or memo form, depending on whether it is going to someone outside or inside the writer's organization. It provides the extra personal touch that formal reports generally lack. A covering letter is usually brief and follows this pattern:

- an opening statement, "transmitting" the report to the reader and stating its title or purpose (for example, "Here is the report you requested on . . .")
- a brief outline of the major conclusions or recommendations

- a statement of thanks for any special help received from other employees
- a goodwill close that looks forward to future discussion or opportunities to help

Of course, a letter of transmittal can contain more or less than this model. Occasionally, a fairly extensive summary of the report in the covering letter will substitute for a summary at the beginning of the report. Sometimes, if the writer is an outside consultant hired for the job, the letter of transmittal expresses appreciation for the opportunity of working on the task. Whatever it says, however, the letter should have a personal, conversational tone, as the example in the sample report in Figure 9-5 illustrates.

Table of Contents

This is useful if the report is over five pages. It follows the letter of transmittal and has no page number. It may be labelled "Table of Contents" or simply "Contents." List the sections of the report in a column on the left, using the same system of numbering used in the body of the report. If the report has subsections, list these as well. (Subsection headings may be indented a few spaces from the section headings.) In a column at the right of the page, list the appropriate page numbers. If the report itself contains a number of tables or figures, list them with an appropriate label—for example, "List of Tables."

CHECKPOINT

Word processing programs have a feature that will automatically create your table of con-tents once the report is keyed in—including page numbers that automatically update if changes are made to the report.

Back Section

References

If you have referred in your report to any facts or figures that are not general knowledge or part of the organization's internal operation, you should give the source in a reference. (A reference is unnecessary where the internal source is obvious, such as company sales figures or financial statements.)

The two most common methods of documentation are:

- the American Psychological Association (APA) style
- the Modern Language Association of America (MLA) style

The APA Method The tendency in recent years has been to adopt the APA method for references in business documents. For a detailed illustration of the APA style you should refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (1994). However, here are some of the most commonly used elements of this method of documentation:

1. Citations

   Parenthetical citations are used in the body of the report, giving only the author's last name and the date of publication, for example (Soames, 1995). If you are referring to a page or section of the source material, your citation should include this information, for example (Henderson, 1993, p. 49) or (Shelley, 1992, chap. 3). In a case where no author is named, give an abbreviated form of the title, for example (*Study Results*, 1993).

2. Reference List

   Complete information about the text citations appears in a list of references attached at the end of the report.The references are listed alphabetically by the author's last name. Some examples of common items in a reference list are:

   - Book

     Elliott, D.W. (1994). *The effects of free trade on Canadian business.* Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada.

   - Journal article

     Patrick, N. L. (1990).The role of ergonomics in contemporary business practice. *Business Psychology, 82*, 675–83.

3. Online Sources

   Since this is a rapidly changing field, your best bet is to visit the APA Web site at **www.apa.org/journals/webref.html**. As in the case of non-electronic sources, electronic reference formats consist of in-text citations that lead the reader to a reference list at the end of the report.

   Citations: Text citations are in parentheses and give the author's last name and the date.Web sites typically have no page numbers.You don't need to include Internet sources such as newsgroups, e-mail, and discussion lists in the reference list, but you should give an in-text citation for such material. Here are some examples of citations for common Internet sources:

   - **E-mail** (M.J. Rhiner, personal communication, October 24, 1996)
   - **Newsgroup** (Ellen Jones, newsgroup posting, March 17, 1997)
   - **Discussion list** (Paul Prentiss, discussion list posting, April 7, 1997)

Reference List: The following examples are taken from the APA Web site on electronic reference formats. They show electronic sources as they would appear in the reference list, ordered alphabetically by the author's last name (or title if no author is given):

Electronic reference formats recommended by the American Psychological Association. (2000, August 22). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Retrieved August 29, 2000, from the World Wide Web: http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html

Jacobson, J.W., Mulick, J. A., & Schwartz, A. A. (1995). A history of facilitated communication: Science, pseudoscience, and antiscience: Science working group on facilitated communication. *American Psychologist, 50*, 750–765. Retrieved January 25, 1996, from the World Wide Web: http://www.apa.org/journals/jacobson.html

(You will notice that Web sites listed in *Impact* do not follow APA style. For aesthetic reasons, the preferred style of the publisher, Pearson Education Canada, is to leave out the "http://" protocol.)

CHECKPOINT

Word processing programs have a "hanging indent" feature that leaves the first line of a bibliography entry at the left margin and indents subsequent lines.

The MLA Method For a detailed illustration of the MLA style, refer to the 5th edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (1999). Here are a few guidelines for some of the most commonly used elements of this method of documentation:

- Citations

  Parenthetical citations are given in the body of the report, giving only the author's last name and the page number, for example (Wilson 25). In a case where no author is named, give an abbreviated form of the title, for example (*Study Results* 43). If there is more than one author, use the first author's last name and *et al.*, for example (*Smith et al.* 120).

- Works Cited

  Complete information about the text citations appears in a list of works cited on a separate page at the end of the report. The references are listed alphabetically by the author's last name. Some examples of common items in a list of works cited are:

Book

Elliott, D.W. *The Effects of Free Trade on Canadian Business.* Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1994.

Journal article

Patrick, N. L. "The Role of Ergonomics in Contemporary Business Practice." *Business Psychology* 82 (1993): 675–83.

- Online Sources

To make sure that you have the most current information about the MLA style, visit the Web site at **www.mla.org**. As in the case of print sources, you should put citations in the report that direct the reader to your Works Cited list.

Citations: In parenthetical references in the text, works on the World Wide Web are cited just like printed works. However, since Web documents are often without page numbers you will typically have a citation consisting only of the author's last name or abbreviated article name in brackets.

Works Cited: The following are examples of how some of the most common online sources of information would appear in your Works Cited list. Note that two dates are given for each source: the first is the date when the site was published or updated; the second is the date when you accessed the site.

Web site

MLA on the Web. 25 Nov. 1997. Modern Language Association of America. 25 Mar. 1998 <http://www.mla.org>.

Article in a Reference Database

"Fresco." *Britannica Online.* Vers. 97.1.1 Mar. 1997. Encyclopaedia Britannica. 29 Mar. 1997

<http://www.eb.com:180>.

Journal Article

"IASC Study of Business Reporting on the Internet." *Management Accounting Quarterly* 78:1 (Jan. 2000). 13 Nov. 2000 <http:www.managementaccounting.com>.

Appendix

This optional section appears at the end of a report and includes highly specialized or inessential information that may still be of interest to the reader. Tables, technical information, and other complicated or detailed supporting evidence are often put in appendices so that the reader can quickly cover essential information in the report itself. If you do use an appendix, be sure to list it in the table of contents. If you use more than one, list them as Appendix A, Appendix B, and so on.

Finishing Touches

After putting a lot of time and effort into a formal report, make sure that its appearance complements the content. The advice in Chapter 8 on visual impact in an informal report also applies to a formal one. Here are two added suggestions:

1. Consider using coloured paper. If you are producing a long report, different colours of paper will help to separate the different sections visually. A conservative organization, however, may prefer uniform white paper (along with a uniform dark blue or grey suit on the writer). In this case, at least consider using a colour to highlight the summary page.
2. Provide an attractive cover that will give your report a distinctive appearance and make it immediately identifiable. If the report is long, have it bound. You will have the confidence of knowing that the report looks well put together and will stay together if it is circulated.

Figure 9-5 Example of a Formal Report

PEMBERTON'S CORPORATE PUBLICATIONS

Prepared for
Leonore Fielding
Vice-President of Operations
Pemberton Manufacturing

Prepared by
Thomas Morgasen
Senior Research Consultant
Curtis Consulting Group

December 5, 2000

CURTIS CONSULTING GROUP

200 Avenue Road Halifax Nova Scotia E4L 1B3

December 5, 2000

Ms. Leonore Fielding
Vice-President of Operations
Pemberton Manufacturing
Paris ON K4N 2T3

Dear Ms. Fielding

The attached report, which you requested on September 1, represents our findings regarding the corporate publications at Pemberton Manufacturing.

Our report includes an assessment of current publications at Pemberton as well as an analysis of the current and future communication needs of your company.

The communications action plan outlined in our report reflects the results of our research both within the company and in the national and international marketplace. We are especially grateful to the Pemberton staff, in particular the members of the communications group, for their input.

I look forward to discussing our recommendations with you and will be happy to meet with you and your staff regarding our report and its exciting implications for Pemberton.

Sincerely

Thomas Morgasen

Thomas Morgasen
Senior Research Consultant

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recent changes at Pemberton and a new strategy for customer service have led to this review of the current corporate publications. In a time of change, effective publications will help Pemberton employees to understand and support the changes. They will also enhance the company's marketing effort and its image.

As a result of our assessment, which included discussions with employee groups and major customers, we recommend five changes to the publica-tions program:

1. Institute an electronic newsletter to be e-mailed to employees monthly. It will provide brief, timely information to employees and make feedback between management and employees easier to obtain.
2. Refocus the present print newsletter, *Newsline*, to emphasize dis-cussion of policy issues. Rename it and reduce the number of issues to two a year from the current four.
3. Double the issues of the corporate magazine, *Salute*, to two a year, with the marketing department becoming more involved in plan-ning and getting feedback from customers.
4. Enliven the annual report by increasing the use of visuals, upgrad-ing the binding and cover design, and including comments from employees and customers.
5. Publish a version of the annual report on the Pemberton Web site to increase access to the global marketplace.

The communications group can begin to implement these recommenda-tions immediately, if approved, for an estimated added cost in 2002 of $56,000 over the 2001 budget of $158,000.

PEMBERTON PUBLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In its first year under new ownership and management, Pemberton Manufacturing has undergone major changes, including adopting a new strategy for customer service. As part of Pemberton's company-wide review, this report presents our assessment of corporate publications and recommends steps to increase effectiveness in this period of change.

Our assessment included:

- Extensive discussions with the communications group
- Meetings with senior managers in all departments
- Ten focus groups, each with 15 to 20 employees. Individuals in the groups were selected to represent the various functions and levels at Pemberton. We chose to use focus groups rather than conduct a survey of all employees, since in the preceding month employees had completed a human resources questionnaire and would likely not have welcomed a second one so soon.
- Ten interviews with Pemberton's major customers

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PUBLICATIONS

Currently the communications group produces three publications:

1. ***Newsline.*** Pemberton's internal newsletter, published quarterly, covers a whole spectrum of topics, from employee news to industry matters. Our focus group discussions revealed that most employ-ees read it and find it easy to understand. However, they find the news value is limited. Since it is published every third month, most news items have reached them through the grapevine before they read them in *Newsline*.

   Our experience with other companies suggests that this type of publication is most useful for discussion of policies, issues, and ideas for which the "news" element is not as important. It is also suited for complex items, such as changes in employee pension plan options. The ability of the communications group to write in simple, clear language is of great benefit in this type of publication.

The publishing cost for *Newsline* is currently $19,000 per issue.

2. ***Salute.*** Published annually, this glossy, colour magazine for indus-try customers reviews new products and discusses industry issues. It has a high approval rating and serves a useful marketing as well as general public relations purpose. Customers say that the range of this publication gives Pemberton an edge over competitors. It is expensive—$35,000 to produce and deliver one issue of 3,000 copies—but readers want more than one issue a year.

3. ***Pemberton Annual Report:*** Produced in two colours, the report per-forms a financial information function for investors. It also doubles as the Pemberton corporate brochure for people wanting general information about the company.

   However, the impersonal focus, lack of visuals, and tabular presen-tation of data are conservative and leave a somewhat dated impression. The publication does not reflect Pemberton's new emphasis on customer service—on people serving people.

   The annual report is relatively inexpensive to produce—$47,000 for 6,000 copies.

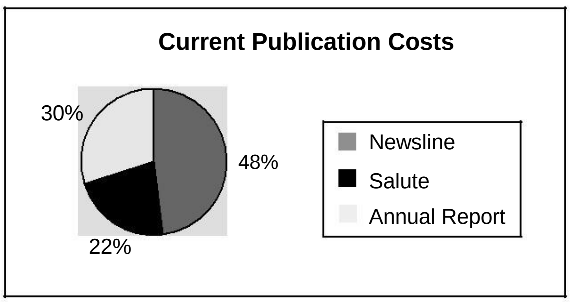

Figure 1

COMMUNICATION NEEDS FOR A CHANGING COMPANY

Internal Communications

Changes at Pemberton have created an increased need for timely internal communication. The focus groups with employees indicated that at all levels they want to be informed about new policies and planned changes. Without this communication, much productive time will be wasted on speculation and rumour.

As well, employees at all levels need to understand how the new customer service strategy translates into action. If they are to support it actively, they will need to know that management is responsive to their concerns and ideas. Although much internal communication with employees can and should take place informally through meetings and one-on-one dis-cussions with others, written communications can also help. As the recent Infosystems study suggests, strong internal communications have a major impact on employee morale and productivity levels (Edson, 1999).

External Publications

Salute

External corporate publications can reinforce customer and investor perceptions of Pemberton's attention to customer service. Prior to 1998, the

Effect of *Salute* on Company Sales

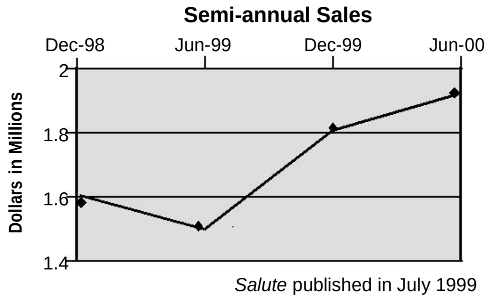

Figure 2

Annual Report was the single document distributed externally by Pemberton Manufacturing. In July 1998, management published the first edition of a new public relations magazine, *Salute*. The effect on sales was dramatic: an increase of 20% in the first six months after publication.

The role of *Salute* in enhancing the profile of Pemberton products in the marketplace is clear; with the company's new marketing effort the maga-zine will assume a leadership role in developing new international markets.

Annual Report

Pemberton is acquiring a dominant position in the international market-place, with the result that the company's annual report must be adapted to suit a new readership. The traditional format requires some updating to keep pace with current marketing trends; in addition, an online format will be a major asset in reaching a global market. Online reporting has resulted in increases of between 15% and 20% in international sales (McLean, 1998; Stewart, 1999), an opportunity which Pemberton can capitalize on in the next six months.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Create an electronic newsletter.** New information technologies are making it easier to send information quickly to many people and to have interactive communication. A monthly electronic newslet-ter would take advantage of Pemberton's highly computerized workplace, where all employees have access to company e-mail.

   An electronic newsletter is useful for brief, timely items, not for lengthy multi-page discussions, which are harder to read online. It can also foster a two-way flow of communication with manage-ment. For example, it can ask for quick feedback on plans or respond to employee questions.

   Forty hours of staff time per month should be budgeted for the production of a monthly electronic newsletter, with an approximate annual cost of $15,000.

2. **Refocus *Newsline***. With the new online newsletter, the print newsletter would not have to be produced as often. Two issues a year would likely meet the need for the kind of in-depth discussion of policies and issues that the print version is best suited to.

   The present cost of *Newsline* is $19,000 per issue or $76,000 per year. We anticipate an increase of approximately 10% in print-ing costs which would be offset by the savings realized by printing only two copies a year. This would result in a reduction of costs by approximately $34,000 annually.

3. **Double the number of issues of *Salute*.** Concern for customer prefer-ences as well as for costs suggests an initial experiment of two issues a year instead of one, with a re-evaluation of reader response after one year. Two issues would increase the present annual cost by $35,000.

   Since this publication provides an opportunity to market new prod-ucts as well as enhance the company's image, the marketing department should be more involved in planning each issue as well as in getting regular feedback from customers.

4. **Reformat the annual report.** Three additions would help to produce a more dynamic, people-focused report, reflective of Pemberton's customer-service strategy:

   - increased use of visuals, including photographs of plant operations
   - interviews with Pemberton employees and customers to illustrate the company's new customer service orientation
   - upgrades of binding and cover design for a more professional look

   These changes would increase the cost of the report by approxi-mately $20,000.

5. **Publish annual report on the Web.** Pemberton's rapidly increasing global market requires the rapid transmission of information and suggests the need for an online report. The company Web site at www.pemberton.com is reporting in excess of 1,500 hits per

month, and publishing the annual report on the site is an obvious strategy for building global communications.

Pemberton's information technology staff have the expertise and the technology to do this; the estimated figure for staff time is approximately $20,000.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the estimated cost of implementing this communications action plan is $56,000 for the next year.

Publication	Current Cost:	(-)	+	Projected Cost
Newsline: e-mail edition			$15,000	$ 15,000
Newsline: print edition	$ 76,000	($34,000)		$ 42,000
Salute	$ 35,000		$35,000	$ 70,000
Annual Report: print edition	$ 47,000		$20,000	$ 67,000
Annual Report: online			$20,000	$ 20,000
Totals	**$158,000**	**($34,000)**	**$90,000**	**$214,000**

Figure 3

We have discussed our findings and recommendations with the communi-cations group, who think they could make the changes within six months. Given the expertise of current staff and the state-of-the-art technology at Pemberton, the recommended changes would be unusually inexpensive to implement.

In addition, there would be no disruption to Pemberton's current organiza-tional plan. The communications department could implement these changes with current staff experiencing only minor changes in their cur-rent job descriptions. There would be no layoffs and no new hires would be required. The stability at Pemberton would continue unimpeded and there would be no negative impact to employees or customers.

If management approves the proposed changes, Pemberton would realize almost immediate gains in productivity and sales at minimal cost.

REFERENCES

Edson, Mark (1999). Internal communications as an HR Tool. *Corporate Concerns*, *65*, 1190-5.

McLean, Eric (1998). Online business reporting for the millennium. *Business Trends*, *49*, 129–143. Retrieved November 11, 2000, from the World Wide Web: http://www.businfo.org.html

Stewart, David H. (1999). Electronic reporting and global trends. *Corporate World, 73*, 248–279.

Formally Presenting a Report

Sometimes report writers are asked to make a formal presentation to those who will be assessing the ideas expressed in the report. If you are in this position, remember that the presentation can never be a complete rerun of all that is in the report. Since speaking takes much longer than reading, the audience would be asleep before you were halfway through the material. Rather, think of your talk as another chance to emphasize the areas of most importance and to get some feedback. Alongside the advice on oral presentations in Chapter 10, here are some guidelines for this particular task.

- Determine whether the audience will already have read the report or whether they will receive a copy after the presentation. If they have already read it, do a little sleuthing and try to determine their reaction in advance. You can then aim to address any objections or uncertainties, and to shore up perceived weak areas.

  If the audience has not read the report, use the presentation to reinforce its key points.The talk will have more impact if it does not mechanically summarize the report, but instead selectively emphasizes the most important or controversial areas. Usually the conclusions or recommendations should be the focus.

- Be wary of giving out a copy of the report just before or during your talk. The audience receiving such a handout will likely have their eyes on the text rather than on you and may miss much of what you are saying.

- Make sure you use the opportunity for questions and discussion. If, for example, you have been allotted 40 minutes for the presentation, plan to leave 20 minutes for a spontaneous exchange.That way, lingering doubts in the audience will likely surface and you can respond. By forgetting to leave enough time for audience reaction, you run the risk of an objector raising an issue with others afterward, an issue that you could have addressed.

- Visuals, such as overhead transparencies, can be useful to summarize points or to give visual clarity to data scattered throughout the report. Remember to test in advance any technology you use, including a check on focus or sound, so that you do not waste valuable time fumbling during the presentation.

CHECKPOINT

Presentation graphics programs make it relatively easy to prepare slides and overheads to augment your report. These visuals tend to keep an audience's attention and help to clarify data and illustrate a process or system.

- If you will be pressed for time, it's better to ask the audience to hold their comments and questions until after you have finished. If the meeting is casual and you have lots of time, you might welcome queries as soon as they occur to the listener.Take care, however, not to let the questions run away with the presentation. If you sense the discussion is getting out of hand, ask that further discussion wait until you have finished.
- Since it's always an advantage to have the last word, make sure you bring a question-and-answer session to a close with some conclusion that reinforces your main argument or key points.

Formal Proposals

Proposals may be informal or formal. They vary from a one-page memo for a boss to a massive document for a government department. This section will show how to prepare a formal proposal, since it is usually more extensive than an informal one. If needed, the guidelines can easily be adapted for less formal circumstances.

Planning a Proposal

While proposals can be solicited or unsolicited, most are written in response to a formal or informal request. A formal "Request for Proposals" document outlines the specifications or requirements for the job.When a proposal is unsolicited, the task is more difficult, since the reader will have to be convinced there is a need to act. In either case, however, begin planning by considering:

- the reason for writing
- the reader's needs, concerns, and potential benefits
- the competition

Think of the reason for writing not in your terms ("I want to get the job for the money"), but in the reader's terms: the proposal is a way of solving a problem for the reader or giving a benefit such as improved safety, increased productivity, or decreased accidents in the parking lot. Even if you don't mention the word *problem* in the proposal—and sometimes it's more tactful not to if the reader hasn't indicated one—thinking of the subject as a problem will help you to focus your efforts on how best to approach it.

If you can choose your reader, make sure that he or she is the person who will make the decision. Then try to determine the most important criterion for making it. You may have to do some scouting to establish the reader's particular biases, attitudes, or special interests.

Order for a Proposal

Use the direct approach. Begin with a clear overview of what you propose. If cost is an important consideration, the reader will want to know the bottom line right away. The intended completion date of your work may also be significant here.

Follow with a discussion of the details. Determine what the reader needs to know to make a decision and then divide the discussion into several sections with appropriate headings. Here are the usual divisions:

1. **Method** First outline the method in non-specialist terms. Then give a fuller account, in which you are as specific as possible about the various aspects of the proposal and the way you would proceed. Include any technical information that specialists in the reader's organization might want to know. If the proposal is a response to a formal request, check that you have addressed all the specifications.
2. **Time frame** If time is important, be sure to mention the projected dates of completion for each stage. For a complicated project, it's helpful to provide a timeline or flow chart on which you plot time periods for the various activities. Figure 9-6 includes an example.
3. **Costs** In a short proposal, the cost breakdown can be included in the discussion of method. For a long one, it may be simpler to have a separate section. Before putting down specific numbers, find out whether your total cost figure is an estimate of expenses or a competitive bid you will have to stick to. Then be as detailed as you can in listing costs without endangering yourself. Admit to any areas where you cannot yet give a fixed cost. Realism is safer than optimism.

   It may be practical, especially in a proposal for an outside organization, to break down costs according to the various stages in a project. This method is often easiest for the contractor to follow and budget for and will allow you some flexibility in allocating resources. By contrast, if you list the cost of

Figure 9-6 **Example of a Proposal**

The Irving Group

4953 Main Street West Hamilton ON T4N 2T3

PROPOSAL FOR FIFESHIRE AND PARTNERS

Objective

Through design, furnishing, and decoration of your new offices, to create for Fifeshire & Partners an environment in harmony with the values and business aims of the firm.

How Irving Design will Proceed

Keeping to your budget of $350,000, we will take the following steps:

1. Discuss with your decorating committee the firm's work patterns and needs, the committee's style and colour preferences, and the image the firm wants to project.
2. Create alternative designs that meet your specifications and needs. These will include working drawings with sample materials and photographs.
3. After consultation with the committee, create final plans. If committee members wish, they can be taken to furniture stores to view or test the furniture.
4. Implement the designs, arranging for and overseeing the installa-tion of all furnishings, including light fixtures, and the carpeting, painting, or wallcovering of all office areas.

Cost

You will not be charged for our time, but only for the retail price of any purchases or services. Our payment is the difference between the whole-sale or designer-discount price charged to us and the regular retail price.

FIFESHIRE AND PARTNERS **2**

Time Frame

If the construction of your offices proceeds as planned and we can begin this month, we think that you can be enjoying finished offices by the new year. Since the time between furniture order and furniture delivery is often about two months, the sooner the planning begins, the better.

A breakdown of the time frame for completing the various stages of the project follows.

Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
Planning →	Ordering →	Lighting →	Painting/ Papering/ Carpets →	Furniture/ Accessories

Our Qualifications for this Project

The Irving Group is experienced in office design and decorating. Our work has often been featured in national design and decorating magazines.

Mary Hunter, Senior Designer, was a prize winner in the Interior Design Program at Ryerson Polytechnical University. She recently carried out design and decorating work for several prestigious professional firms in the city, including

- Lawlor, Bluestein, Foster
- D.H. Deacon and Partners
- Mills Thompson & Smith

She understands the business environment lawyers prefer.

Why You Will Benefit from Our Work

- We will work from your needs, adapting tested design principles to create a unique environment that best suits Fifeshire & Partners.
- You will have undivided attention. Mary Hunter works on one project at a time. We pay attention to details.
- We are efficient. Since we do not charge for time, we all benefit from the speedy completion of work.

each participant or function in the total proposal, you may face questioning and quibbling by the contractor.

4. **Qualifications** This section can focus on your qualifications and experience or on the credentials of the organization you represent. The heading should reflect the emphasis. If the credentials of those who will do the job are a primary issue, you could summarize the important points and then attach résumés at the end. You should also consider providing references, including addresses and telephone numbers.

   Remember that previous work experience by you or your organization can be an important factor in the decision to accept your proposal.

5. **Benefits** This section highlights for the reader the benefits of acting on the proposal. If the benefits are intangible, they may not be immediately apparent to the reader. You should specify as precisely as possible the payoffs, both short-term and long-term.

Presenting a Proposal Orally

Usually, a presentation is the second stage of selling a proposal and follows the acceptance of a written report. Often it serves as a mechanism for choosing a winner from a short list of proposers previously selected after a review of written proposals. On large proposals, you may be presenting as part of a team.

The guidelines for presenting a proposal are much the same as the earlier guidelines for presenting a report. The difference is that in many cases you must sell yourself as well as your ideas, especially if you are an outside consultant.

It's important to be alert to the reactions of the audience, and especially the key decision-makers, if you know who they are. Use eye contact to spot any early signs of misunderstanding or disagreement. Be prepared to modify your presentation if that will help to avoid opposition or strengthen your case.

As well, consider in advance those areas in your proposal where you can be flexible and those where you cannot. You do not want to look like a straw in the wind, yielding to any pressure. However, if you can show your willingness to adapt details without sacrificing the basic plan of your proposal, you will appear responsive to customer or client needs. Such responsiveness, along with an underlying conviction about the benefits of your proposal, will help signal that you are an easy person to work with.

Internet Issues

Researching Online

The Internet is a powerful research tool, and with it comes a whole new area of Internet liability. Remember to keep the following guidelines in mind when you are preparing your report:

1. **Acknowledge your sources.** It is tempting to think that material on the Internet is public property, but that is not the case. As in the case of paper reports, be diligent in documenting your sources. Methods for citing online sources are outlined in this chapter of *Impact*, and a number of Web sites on this subject are listed at the end of the chapter.
2. **Verify the credibility of your sources.** Anyone can publish on the Web, so be sure to check the credentials of your source. Unless it is a personal Web page, the company, organization or publication hosting the site will be clearly stated.
3. **Ensure that your sources are current.** Web pages should be maintained on a regular basis to keep the site contents up to date. Check the date stamp on the site to make sure that it has been updated recently.

Writing for the Web

Corporate globalization has resulted in a major shift in business reporting. Although paper reports are still commonplace, they are often supplemented and even replaced by electronic reports. Since electronic text takes longer to read, writing for electronic media makes its own set of demands on the writer. If you are publishing your report on the Web you will want to keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. **Use a direct style.** Presenting the most important information first will get your readers' attention and encourage them to scroll down or follow your links for additional information.
2. **Write scannable text.** Since electronic text is more taxing for the reader, use bullets, lists, headings, and highlighting to make the text less dense and more readable.
3. **Make the report easy to navigate.** Readers get impatient if they can't find their way around the site quickly. Make sure that your links work and that every page has an exit.