



Department of Communication Science

CBC1501 **Communication** **in business contexts**

Only study guide for CBC1501

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A WORD OF WELCOME

Welcome to this course on communication skills for accounting students! We hope that the knowledge and techniques that you acquire in this module will continue to inspire and guide you for many years to come.

This course covers all aspects of communication. We start with the basic theory of how we send and receive messages, and then proceed to the specific communication skills of reading, writing, speaking and interacting with people. Most important of all, we do this from the point of view of you, the accounting student.

This course came into being because your professional body, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA), was deeply concerned about the poor communication skills of accounting students. Many accounting students are tested only through multiple-choice questions in their early years of study. Hence, their reading and writing skills are not tested until it is too late to intervene. This module steps in at the earliest stage to help you identify and work on your language and people skills in order to make you the kind of person that other people will like, understand, confide in and be prepared to follow.

The profession is crying out for accountants who can speak persuasively; relate well to others; argue for or against decisions and recommendations; produce concise and elegant written documents; and show the world that accountants are brilliant, fun, charming, articulate people.

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OUTCOMES OF THE MODULE

- **Purpose**

Students credited with this module will be aware that communication forms an integral part of the role of the accounting practitioner in a business context. Students are sensitised to the variables influencing communication situations in the accounting environment and know how to respond appropriately.

As mentioned, this module serves as a response to a recent SAICA initiative that expressed the need for prospective accounting professionals to receive communication training. Successful completion of this module does not qualify students to be communication professionals or perfect English language users, but will provide a basis for further self-development of these competencies by creating an awareness of the need for them.

● **Learning assumptions**

The following levels of learning should be in place to ensure the successful completion of this module:

- Students should have the ability to engage meaningfully with learning materials in an Open Distance Learning (ODL) context, and particularly in the medium of instruction.
- Students should have the ability to communicate what they have learnt comprehensibly through a variety of different types of written media.
- Students should have the ability to take a degree of responsibility for their own progress using guided support.

● **Range statement for the module**

The following scope and context apply to the whole module:

In this module students will be introduced to the authentic communication world of accountants. The study material will be contextualised using examples and case studies from the study guide. Students will, furthermore, be exposed to authentic texts from the accounting environment, and will be guided through the study material by means of a structured learning process.

● **Specific outcomes and assessment criteria**

Specific outcome 1: Students are sensitive to the importance of communication in accounting practice.

Range: *With guidance, students are exposed to a variety of real-world issues that enable them to understand, and create an awareness of, why communication as a phenomenon needs to be conscious of in the accounting profession.*

Assessment criteria:

- Barriers in communication are identified and discounted in accounting communication situations.
- Sensitivity is shown for differences in the frames of reference in accounting environments.

Specific outcome 2: Students can analyse a communication situation in a business context in terms of the target audience, purpose and content.

Range: *With guidance, students will be able to link self-image and listening to interpersonal communication. They will also be able to analyse communication situations and leadership in the context of meetings, problem-solving, conflict resolution and decision-making.*

Assessment criteria:

- Audience analyses are done on the basis of simulated communication situations.
- The purpose of communication is expressed clearly in well-formulated proposals.
- Messages are analysed in relevant texts in terms of the concepts, principles, theories and rules of the relevant discipline.

Specific outcome 3: Students can respond appropriately when considering specific characteristics of the target audience, purpose and content.

Range: *With guidance, students will be able to demonstrate that they can properly plan and execute communication strategies that are appropriate to NQF level 5.*

Assessment criteria:

- Reports are written that demonstrate information-gathering skills and competence in analysis and synthesis.
- Written proposals for public presentations are compiled using relevant subject-related material.
- Reactions to simulated accounting communication scenarios are evaluated following known procedures.

Specific outcome 4: Students can apply language appropriately in their communication activities.

Range: *With guidance, students will be able to apply fundamental English language skills in reading and writing activities within the context of the accounting profession.*

Assessment criteria:

- Analysis of texts demonstrating implied relevant reading and listening skills.
- Use of proper English and unique accounting jargon in written texts.

HOW THIS STUDY GUIDE IS ORGANISED FOR LEARNING

This is a wrap-around study guide. This means that the study guide will help you to work through your prescribed book.

Your prescribed book is:

Du Plessis, D, Dowling, F & Steinberg, S. 2009. *Money talks: communication in business contexts*. Johannesburg: Heinemann.

Each unit of the study guide corresponds to a chapter in your prescribed book, and offers explanation, support, guidance and additional activities.



STUDY UNIT 1

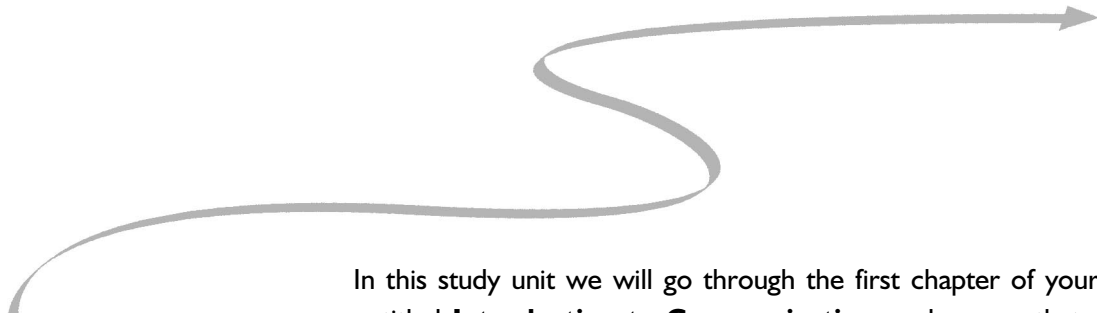
INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 Why should you study communication?
- 2 Why is communication important for accounting students?
- 3 What is communication?
- 4 How does communication work in organisations?

KEY CONCEPTS

Shared frame of reference; model of communication; sender; message; recipient; feedback; channel; noise; verbal and nonverbal communication; encoding; context; culture; organisational communication; intrapersonal communication; dyadic communication; small-group communication; oral presentations; mass communication; public communication; internal communication; external communication; hierarchies; flow of communication; downward communication; upward communication; horizontal communication; virtual teams and networks; communication climate; and ethical communication.



1.1 Introduction

In this study unit we will go through the first chapter of your prescribed book, entitled **Introduction to Communication**, and ensure that you understand its key points. We know that distance education is difficult, so we will take you through the chapter step-by-step. Try to imagine that we are in a classroom situation, working together as a team in a focused manner for a limited time.



1.2 Why study communication?

Think about how you felt the first time that you met someone who really, truly understood you. Think about the people in your life who know you so well they can guess what you are thinking; people who miraculously phone you when you are down or who can send you into fits of laughter with just one look across the

room. True communication brings people together in ways that make life worth living.

But consider, too, how often in your personal relationships you find yourself saying, “You’ve completely misunderstood me” or “You’ve taken it the wrong way” or “I didn’t mean ...”. Miscommunication alienates people from one another and causes untold unhappiness and strife.

Your aim is true communication, not miscommunication. Start now by opening your prescribed book to the beginning of Chapter 1, **Introduction to Communication**, which you will find on page 2. Let your eyes move rapidly down the first few pages so that you take in headings 1.1 and 1.2. What do you notice?

Yes, there are two introductions. The first introduction (1.1) puts forward the case of why you need to study communication at all, since we all communicate all the time, and have done so since infancy. This introduction also explains why accountants in particular need to study communication. Read this first introduction now, and then do the activity that follows in your prescribed book.

As the scenario, **A Perfect Holiday** (page 2), shows, it is not enough to merely communicate. You need to communicate well or you will end up with conflict, disagreement and disorganisation.

1.2.1 Shared frame of reference

Do you find that when you meet a new person, you really enjoy the moment when the two of you discover something in common: you both have two-year-olds, you both love soccer, you were both born in Kroonstad, your parents came from the same village, or you both love the same movie? This shows you are already a good communicator. The moments of connection you regularly try to establish are one of the most important aspects of successful communication, namely a *shared frame of reference*.



- In your prescribed book, find the phrase “shared frame of reference” (in Chapter 1) and underline it. This is the first important communication term in the book.
- Find the definition of “shared frame of reference” and underline that too.
- Spend a minute or two thinking about the term “shared frame of reference” and how it applies to your life.
- For example: Have you ever tried to explain your university studies to someone who has never attended university? Compare that experience to the experience of chatting to a fellow student enrolled for the same modules as you.
- For example: Have you ever tried to explain the rules of a particular sport or hobby to someone with no knowledge of that sport or hobby? Compare that experience to the experience of chatting to a friend who shares your love of that particular sport or hobby.

The purpose of Activity 1 is to illustrate that it is very difficult to communicate when you do not have a shared frame of reference. Communication is easier – and often more pleasurable – when you have a shared frame of reference.

The phrase “shared frame of reference” has a similar meaning to the phrases “common ground” and “mutual understanding”. Write these words in the margin next to “shared frame of reference”. Also jot down any examples that will help you to remember what the term means. For example: “Explain soccer rules” may help you when you are revising.

1.2.2 Why study communication for accounting students?

One day your chosen career will involve translating numbers and balance sheets into words and explanations for clients and colleagues. You will need to speak and listen at meetings and interviews; write reports and memos; and negotiate key decisions. Keep your career in mind as you work through this module. Keep thinking: “I am reading about this now, but one day I will actually be doing it”.

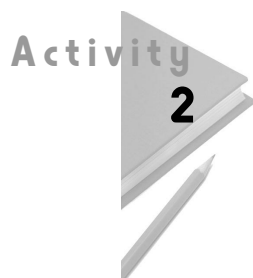
Before moving on to the next section (1.2) of Chapter 1 in your prescribed book, reread the list of communication tasks that accountants regularly perform (you will find these on page 4). Also spend a minute or two thinking about Activities 1.1 and 1.2 in Section 1.1 of your prescribed book. Were you surprised by the range of activities that all fall under the umbrella term “communication”?

1.2.3 Defining communication

Do you need to be able to speak and hear in order to communicate? Do people need to be in the same room or the same country? Do you need a shared language? Do you need language at all? What is communication?

Activity 1.3 in your prescribed book will help to you get a little closer to a definition of communication. Let’s say you gave the example of how you telephoned a student counsellor at the university in order to set up a meeting. What does your example tell us about communication?

- Communication always involves more than one person (in this case, you and the counsellor) even if the two people are not present in the same physical space.
 - Communication has a purpose (you phoned in order to arrange a meeting).
 - Communication requires a medium (you used the telephone).
-
- In your prescribed book read Section 1.2, entitled **Defining Communication**, and do the activities that follow.
 - Underline the two definitions of “communication”. The first definition uses the phrase “one-way process”. The second definition uses the phrase “two-way transmission”.
 - Which of these two definitions do the authors of your prescribed book prefer?



The purpose of this activity was to help you understand the definition of communication provided in your prescribed book. Yes, the authors prefer the second definition because it emphasises the role played by meaning, interaction, response and feedback in communication. Communication is *not* linear, but rather interactive.

Fix this idea in your mind by thinking of some examples. For instance, think about how a good teacher teaches. A good teacher is lively, asks questions, listens and interacts with the class. The learners give feedback and respond to the material. In a successful classroom, communication goes back and forth. The same is true of successful meetings and conversations.

1.3

A model of communication

When we think of communication, we often think of two people or two groups of people sitting down to talk. But, if you are sitting alone listening to the radio, or reading this study guide, or waving to a friend across the street, or texting your brother, you are also involved in an act of communication. Because there are so many different possibilities, we need a model of communication that can help us to understand the communication process.

Activity

3

In your prescribed book, read Section 1.3 and study the model of communication. Identify the **sender**, **message**, **recipient**, **feedback**, **channel** and **noise** in each of the following examples (*note*: you will not necessarily find “noise” in each example):

- A man whispers in a woman’s ear, asking her to marry him. She can’t hear him because his voice is too soft. “What?” she asks.
- A daughter sends her mother an SMS, asking for a lift home. The mother replies with an SMS saying, “On my way”.
- A pregnant woman gets onto a crowded bus. A man vacates his seat and indicates with his hand that she should sit down. She smiles at him as she sits down.
- A motorist sees a political poster on a telephone pole. The poster has the picture of a politician and the words “Vote for me”. The motorist thinks, “I don’t like that politician’s face”.

The purpose of this activity was to fix the terms **sender**, **channel**, **recipient**, **message**, **feedback** and **noise** in your mind. Let’s see how you did:

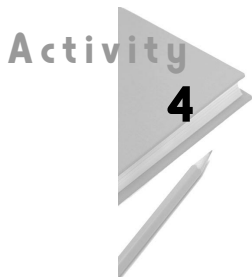
- A man (*sender*) whispers (*channel*) in a woman’s (*recipient*) ear, asking her to marry him (*message*). She can’t hear him because his voice is too soft (*noise*). “What?” she asks (*feedback*).

- A daughter (*sender*) sends her mother (*recipient*) an SMS (*channel*), asking for a lift home (*message*). The mother replies with an SMS saying, “On my way” (*feedback*).
- A pregnant woman (*recipient*) gets onto a crowded bus. A man (*sender*) vacates his seat and indicates with his hand (*channel: hand gesture*) that she should sit down (*message*). She smiles at him (*feedback*) as she sits down.
- A motorist (*recipient*) sees a political poster (*channel*) on a telephone pole. The poster has the picture of a politician (*sender*) and the words “Vote for me” (*message*). The motorist thinks, “I don’t like that politician’s face” (*feedback*).

1.3.1 The sender or communicator

Communication is not simply about passing on information. Life would be very boring if that were true, and we would not get much done. Communication is an active thing: we do something or achieve something by communicating. We complain, instruct, express, inspire, plot, transact, etc. We promise to marry, or we ask for a divorce. We swear to tell the truth, or we lie.

Your prescribed book now goes on to describe each element of communication in more depth. Under subsection 1.3.1, **The Sender or Communicator**, you will find a bulleted list describing a range of different purposes we may have when we communicate.



- Try to provide an example of each communication purpose as listed in your prescribed book. An example of conveying or obtaining information would be the question “When is the exam?”. When you tell someone how to change a tyre, you are instructing your recipient in the correct procedure.
- In your prescribed book, find the words “encode”, “verbal”, “nonverbal”, “language” and “body language”, and underline them. These are important ideas and thus you need to pause until you understand them.

The purpose of this activity was to ensure that you could visualise a variety of communication purposes. The activity also checked your understanding of what you had read about how communication is transmitted. Let’s clarify some of the new terms you have just encountered.

1.3.2 Verbal vs. nonverbal communication

Let’s start with the easier idea of verbal vs. nonverbal communication. If you want to tell a group of children to be quiet, you can either say “Be quiet!” (*verbal communication*) or you can put your finger to your lips to indicate that they must be silent (*nonverbal communication*). Verbal communication uses language; nonverbal communication may use body language. Nonverbal communication could also use numbers, symbols or pictures.

1.3.3 Encoding

Now concentrate on understanding the word “encode”. When you communicate a message, you have to encode it. Let’s say that your message is “I love you”. You could encode it in those words, using the English language. You could also encode it in French, by saying: “Je t’aime”. You could encode it in a look or through a gesture (for example, a kiss). You could draw a picture of a heart on a card.

1.3.4 Channel

Move to the next paragraph in your prescribed book and find the word “channel”. Underline “channel” and its definition. In the margin or in a notebook, write down a few examples of communication channels to remind yourself of how big the range is: radio, television, Skype, hieroglyphics, a wink, a pat on the back, a handshake, a postcard, an email.

1.3.5 The receiver or recipient

Think of a baby lying in its pram. The baby’s mother leans over the pram and greets the baby with a warm tone of voice, a smile and simple words. The baby does not yet understand the words, but gurgles, kicks its little legs with pleasure and maybe even reaches up with its arms asking to be held. Is the baby a recipient; that is, has the baby received a message? Yes!

Find subsection 1.3.4, **The Receiver or Recipient**, in your prescribed book and underline the definition for these terms. Think about the keywords in this definition relating to the receiver. The receiver is active. The receiver – even our baby in its pram – intentionally and consciously decodes the message. The receiver also gives feedback.

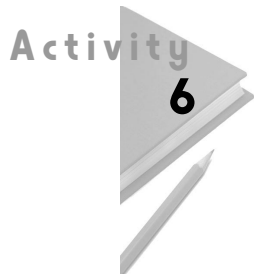


Add some examples to help you remember what the receiver does:

- Think of a boom that comes down at a railway crossing to indicate that a train is about to pass by. Who is the recipient of this message?
- Imagine you are driving to work and you see a banner hanging from a pedestrian bridge overhead saying, “I love you”. Are you still the recipient of the message even though you are alone in your car?

The purpose of this activity was to fix the concept of the receiver or recipient in your mind. At a railway boom, the recipient of the message is the pedestrian or motorist who wishes to cross the railway line. In the banner example, you are still the recipient (even if unintended).

In each of these instances, the recipient responds to the message. You may laugh at the banner, or wonder who it is for. You stop at the railway boom and wait for the train. You react. Your reaction is called feedback.



1.3.6 Feedback

Think of an aeroplane that has just landed. It is being guided into its parking bay on the tarmac by a signalman using hand gestures. Who is the recipient? Yes, it is the pilot of the plane. How would this recipient give feedback? He would follow the signalled instructions, and perhaps also respond verbally through a microphone. In these ways, through his feedback, the pilot lets the signalman know that he has received the message.

Find subsection 1.3.5, **Feedback**, in your prescribed book:

- Use the description of “feedback” to write your own definition. Begin your definition with “Feedback is ...”.
- Add some examples of feedback in order to fix this term in your mind.

Your definition may be something like this: “Feedback is any sign or indication from the recipient that he or she has understood your message”. Did you manage to find examples? If not, here are two suggestions:

- You are in a crowded supermarket. You send your child to find an item in the aisles. Later you spot your child and realise that he or she is lost and cannot find you in the crowd. You lift up your arms and wave frantically. What is your channel? Who is your recipient? What kind of feedback would your recipient give?
- You have a famous client with whom you get on well in a formal way. However, whenever your famous client is in your office, one of your star-struck colleagues insists on coming in, greeting and praising the client. What kind of feedback might occur in a situation like this?

1.3.7 Context and culture

You have met someone you like very much and you would like to introduce this person to your family, including your grandparents. How would this communication change if your new partner came from a different South African culture (race, ethnicity, language or religion)? And what if this person came from another world culture (Japanese, Australian or Indian)? How would the differences affect the level of relaxation, the telling of jokes, the types of food or drink offered, and the ease of conversation?

As you read these discussion questions, you may have thought of a similar or related example from your own experience. You probably know many funny, sad or heart-warming stories about the way communication is affected by context and culture.

Activity 7



In your prescribed book, go to the heading, **Context and Culture** (page 11):

- Find a definition for “context” and underline it.
- Find a definition for “cultural context” and underline it.
- Add some examples of “context” and “cultural context” in order to fix these terms in your mind.

Did you manage to find examples? If not, here are two suggestions:

- You are a single person and you meet another single person at a party held by mutual friends. You are attracted to each other and start communicating. How does this context affect your communication? Compare, for example, how differently you might communicate if you were introduced to this person first at a business meeting.
- If you have access to the Internet, Google the search query, “*Business communication with Japanese/Scandinavians/Russians*”. (Fill in the cultural group of your choice.) Why do you think your search turns up so many hits?

1.3.8 Noise

You are starting to realise that communication is not plain sailing. Recipients do not always get the messages we send. Have you experienced the following, for example:

- Listening to someone speak over a distorted microphone.
- Trying to speak with a very sore throat.
- Listening to the explanation of someone whom you no longer trust.
- Trying to take notes when your lecturer keeps using difficult, unfamiliar terms.
- Not agreeing with your boss, but being too afraid to contradict him/her.
- Hearing the words “fat” or “diet” from someone who has never had a weight problem when all your life people have teased you about your weight.

The above list represents the six barriers to communication as listed in your prescribed book. These barriers are physical, physiological, psychological, semantic, status and perceptual.

Activity 8



In your prescribed book, read subsection 1.3.6 on **Noise**, including all its components (up to page 17).

- Find the definition for “noise” and underline it.
- Identify the barrier to communication in each of the following scenarios:
 - A. A teacher says to a learner who hates books: “We have organised a fantastic visit to the National Library!”.
 - B. At work your department is having problems with the Human Resources (HR) Department. The problems are made worse by the fact that HR is housed in another building.

- C. You ask your 10-year-old daughter why she is looking so lugubrious.
- D. Someone you know to be a love cheat is chatting to you flirtatiously.
- E. Someone is talking to you, but you can't understand him because he is drunk and slurring his words.
- F. You finally meet your idol, but you are completely tongue-tied by feelings of awe.

How did you manage this activity, which was intended to fix the new terms in your mind by applying them to real examples? Check your answers:

- A. Perceptual
- B. Physical
- C. Semantic
- D. Psychological
- E. Physiological
- F. Status

Before you leave this section:

- Make sure you have distinguished between physical and physiological barriers. (Remember that “physiological” relates to the human body.)
- Check that you can spell the words “physiological” and “psychological” correctly. (Cover up your book and try writing them on a piece of paper.)
- Check that you can tell the difference between communication problems that arise because of a perceptual barrier and problems that arise because of cultural context. (Remember that a perceptual barrier relates to your unique experience as an individual, whereas cultural problems arise because of the way you fit into a broader cultural group.)

1.4 Organisational communication

So far you have been considering communication in general. However, the type of communication that most concerns you as an accounting student is *organisational communication*. How do people communicate in a work situation?

When walking through any large office, you will find people working quietly on their own; people pairing up in consultation; people reading and typing; groups of people in conference; and senior people rushing to engagements with folders under their arms. All of these scenarios represent organisational communication.



In your prescribed book, read Section 1.4, entitled **Communication in Organisations**, right up to the end of subsection 1.4.7, **Ethical Challenges in the Workplace**.

- Find the definition of “organisational communication” and underline it.
- Check your understanding of each aspect of organisational communication by labelling each of the following as intrapersonal, dyadic, small-group, digital, mass, public or oral presentation:
 - 1 Jeff is sitting at his desk, worrying about the downward economic trend and how it will affect his company. (..... **communication**)
 - 2 Khosi comes into Jeff’s office and he tells her that he needs to call a staff meeting. (..... **communication**) Khosi sends an email to all staff notifying them of the meeting. (..... **communication**)
 - 3 At the meeting, it is decided by all present that staff need to be trained in new technology that will save money. (..... **communication**)
 - 4 Staff will learn about new technology from an expert flown in from the United Kingdom. He makes use of a PowerPoint presentation. (..... **communication**)
 - 5 Khosi prepares a press release to explain that the company has upgraded its technology. (..... **communication**)
 - 6 News of the upgrade causes the company’s share price to rise, which the CEO proudly announces at an afternoon press conference. (..... **communication**)

Once again, the purpose of this activity was to clarify and fix new terminology in your mind by applying it to real-life examples. Let’s see how well you did. The correct sequence of answers was as follows: intrapersonal, dyadic, digital, small-group, oral presentation, mass, public.

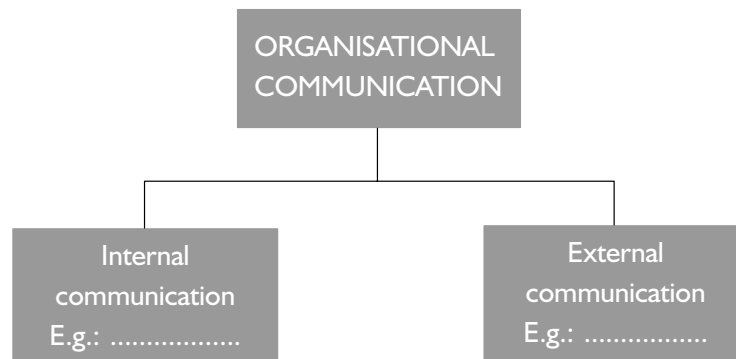
1.4.1 Internal and external communication

Compare the way an organisation communicates with the way your family communicates. When you’re alone together, your family communicates internally. You fight, laugh, tease each other, use pet names, finish one another’s sentences, put your feet up on the sofa, and eat food casually. However, when your family deals with the public, you communicate differently. You adopt a different tone of voice when speaking on the phone to strangers. You may be more polite, or more distant. You also have to explain a lot more because you cannot take things for granted. Use the example of your family to help you understand organisational communication.



The diagram below is based on information in your prescribed book.

- Complete the diagram by adding some examples. You can use examples from your own experience, from the prescribed book, or from the previous activity.



- Many companies have a department called Marketing and a department called Public Relations. Which of the three basic functions of organisational communication (informing, persuading and promoting goodwill) do you think these two departments would perform?

The purpose of this activity was to help you understand the complex information in your prescribed book by placing it into a simple diagram. Internal communication would include examples such as communicating with a colleague, holding a team meeting or sending an internal memo. Examples of external communication would include addressing investors or potential clients, meeting the press or sending out an advert.

The Marketing Department would certainly be primarily involved in persuasive communication, whereas the Public Relations Department would promote goodwill through their communications. Both would use information to do so.

1.4.2 Hierarchies

In your life, you are a member of several hierarchies. You may be top of the pile among your friends, but quite near the bottom at your work. You may be important in your church, but quite low down at the local sports club. Hierarchies are a fact of life.

Go through subsection 1.4.2, entitled **Hierarchies**, in your prescribed book, and find three ways in which hierarchy influences the way an organisation communicates:

- 1
- 2
- 3



The purpose of this activity was to summarise. You should have listed the following:

- 1 Hierarchies affect interpersonal relations (remember that status can be a barrier to communication).
- 2 Hierarchies determine who controls the channels of communication (remember that bosses tend to send memos to their staff and not *vice versa*).
- 3 Hierarchies affect the quality and frequency of communication (for example, your boss decides how frequently meetings are held).

1.4.3 Channels of information

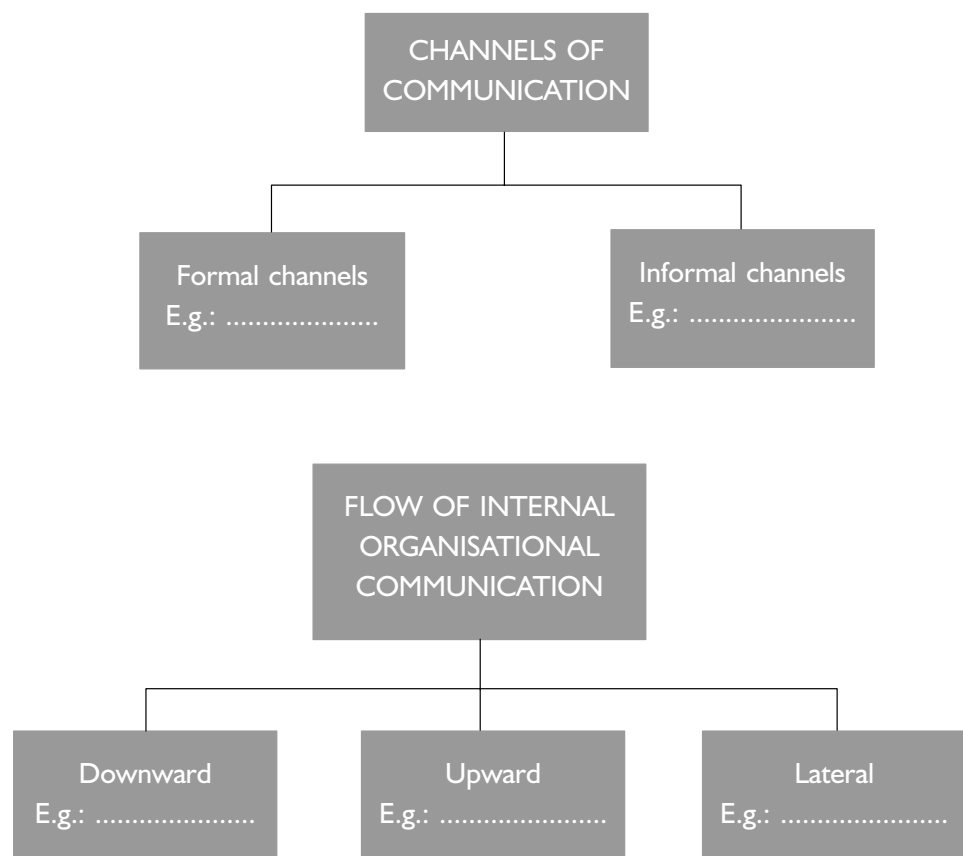
In your family, it is probably normal to send an SMS, shout to another room, or chat on the sofa, as you are used to informal channels. But have you ever communicated formally with your family?

Formal channels of communication are rare in a family, but they do exist. Discussing marriage proposals, giving speeches at funerals, signing legal documents, reading wills, or meeting to resolve conflicts, are all examples of formal channels within the family sphere.

Activity

12

Complete the following two diagrams based on the description of **Channels of Communication** in your prescribed book. You can use examples from your own experience or from the prescribed book.



Once again, the purpose of this activity was to help you summarise and understand what you have been reading. Formal channels of communication include memos, meetings with agendas and minutes, interviews, questionnaires, reports, etc. Informal channels of communication include gossip, rumours, the grapevine and social interaction.

The flow of communication is downward when the boss tells a clerk what to do. The flow is upward when the clerk tells the boss that his/her report is not ready. The flow of communication is lateral when two colleagues working together on a team meet to discuss an issue.

1.4.4 Flow of communication

You have been studying the way information flows within an organisation. Pause here to reflect on your own experience and opinions:

- Which do you personally prefer: getting information in a typed memo, or hearing about it from a colleague over a cup of coffee?
- Should we dismiss office grapevines as mere gossip? Can you tell how the authors of your prescribed book view the grapevine? (*tip*: read the section on **Grapevines** (page 21) in subsection 1.4.4, **Formal and Informal Networks**).
- In your prescribed book, search for information about **downward communication**. Find and underline one disadvantage of this type of communication. Now come up with one advantage of downward communication on your own.
- In your prescribed book, search for information about **upward communication**. Find and underline one advantage and one disadvantage of this type of communication.
- In your prescribed book, search for information about **horizontal or lateral communication**. Find and underline two advantages of this type of communication.



The purpose of this activity was to help you to read in such a way as to identify the main ideas and to understand them. How did you do?

A disadvantage of downward communication is that it is one-sided. There is often too much downward communication and not enough upward communication. An advantage might be that downward communication gives a strong sense of direction or leadership.

An advantage of upward communication is that it keeps management aware of employees' ideas and feelings. A disadvantage is that employees often communicate what they think management would like to hear, instead of what is actually the case.

Advantages of horizontal or lateral communication are that it enables teams in an organisation to co-ordinate their activities in order to achieve the objectives of the organisation, to share information, solve problems, and resolve conflicts.

1.4.5 Virtual teams and networks

If you do Internet banking, email your CV, own a cell phone or surf the Internet, you are already aware of the possibilities of “virtual” relationships. Just as it is possible to socialise with someone you’ve never met – for example, when you initiate Internet dating – so it is possible to do business with colleagues you have never met.

The word used to describe these relationships is *virtual*, because in almost every respect (except for physical touching) these relationships are like the real thing.

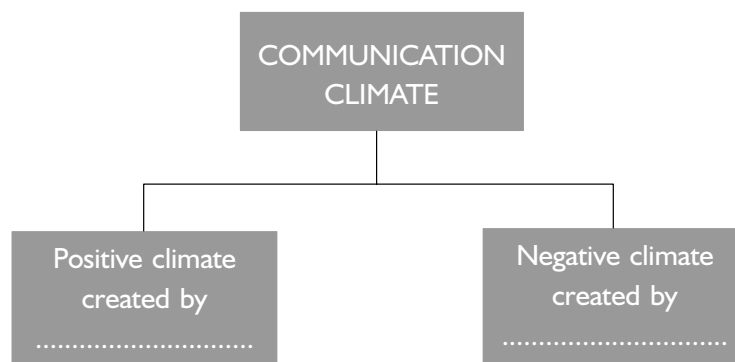
As we move on to discuss the communication climate in an organisation, you might want to think about why more and more businesses are being run by people who do not share a real office or stand chatting around the coffee machine.

1.4.6 Communication climate in the organisation

Have you noticed how some shops, homes, government offices and businesses you enter are cheerful, casual places, while others make you feel uncomfortable? Where does this distinct mood or climate come from?



Study subsection 1.4.6, **Communication Climate in the Organisation**, in your prescribed book, and complete the following diagram:



The purpose of this activity was to help you summarise the subsection on the communication climate in the organisation. A positive climate is created by honest, supportive, tactful and open-minded communication where decision-making and problem-solving are participative rather than blaming or controlling.

A negative climate is caused by an excess of formal, downward messages which make employees feel like little more than personnel numbers.

1.4.7 Ethical communication

You know from your own experience that this marvellous human tool of ours – communication – can be used in unethical ways. We are capable of using communication to lie, defame, defraud, mislead, victimise, bribe, corrupt, manipulate and discriminate.

- In your prescribed book, find five characteristics of ethical communication and underline them.
- Now read the following article extract about South Africa's Fidentia business scandal, and comment on any examples of unethical or questionable communication practice that you can find in it (jot your notes in the margin):

A SMALL VOICE INSIDE FIDENTIA SPEAKS

By Ross Edwards (12 February 2007)

CAPE TOWN – Little more than ten days ago, one of the court-appointed curators of Fidentia Holdings, Dines Gihwala, stood in front of a packed meeting room addressing Fidentia's Cape Town and Johannesburg staff. He promised all staff present (and those listening via a live video-conference link) that their jobs were secure and that his office door would remain open for all concerns and questions.

Yet within just five days Gihwala curtly told the Cape Town canteen manager that both her and her team of seven canteen and cleaning staff were no longer needed. Each one of those people, amongst Fidentia's lowest-paid employees, face an uncertain future and will return as former breadwinners to the extended families who have depended so heavily on them up to this time.

At the centre of the Fidentia curatorship is a sum of somewhere between R400m and R600m as yet unaccounted for, which is part of an original amount invested with Fidentia Asset Management (FAM) through the Living Hands Trust, the administrator of the savings of about 47,000 widows and orphans, the families of deceased mineworkers.

While the jury is out on what exactly has happened to all the money, and while former mineworkers' families are considered amongst South African citizens most deserving of protection, the methods and manners of the new Fidentia curators seem harsh at best.

I am one small voice writing from within the so-called "opulent" (as Bruce Cameron has put it) offices of Fidentia's Canal Walk headquarters. Since Monday last week, I have been asking the curator to sign off two simple documents that would confirm that employee benefits invested in an external staff benefits saving plan are safe. On Friday last week, Gihwala asked if I had nothing better to do all day than sit around and demanded that I leave his office suite. When I explained that I was "sitting around" waiting for his reply to a formal request, he seemed to grow angrier and more indignant. My ego bruised, I left soon after. Needless to say, no replies to my polite queries were offered.

What has emerged over the past ten days is that Gihwala's "open door" remains firmly closed to any request by Fidentia staff for some clarity on their futures. Will they be paid a

February salary? Nobody knows. If retrenched, what about benefits? Nobody knows. If, by Gihwala's own assurances, Fidentia Group's subsidiary companies are operating at "business as usual" status, why have so few people been communicated with?

Source: <http://www.moneyweb.co.za/mw/view/mw/en/page1655?oid=69536&sn=Detail>

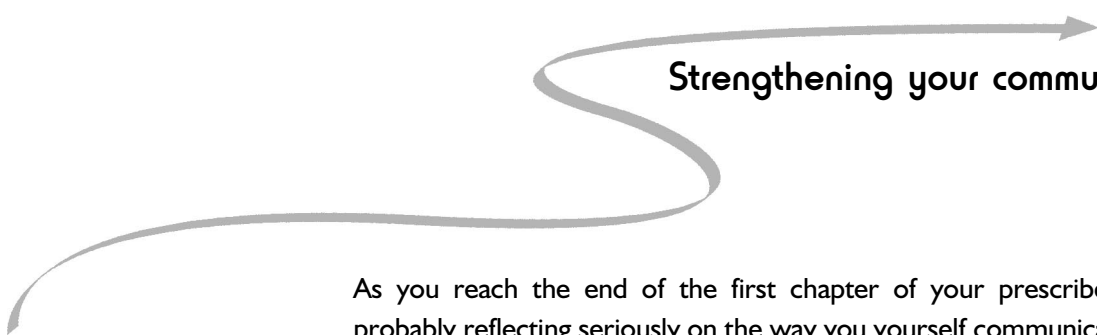
USED WITH THANKS TO MONEYWEB AND ROSS EDWARDS.

The purpose of this activity was to help you to summarise and visualise ethical communication. How did you manage with this task?

The five keys to ethical communication which you should have found are: truthfulness, honesty, sincerity, fairness and responsibility.

Some points you may have raised in respect of the Fidentia article extract are:

- Gihwala made a public announcement that jobs were safe before immediately going on to fire workers.
- No one is telling affected parties (for example, mineworkers' families) where their money is.
- Gihwala allegedly responded rudely to the author's polite queries.
- Gihwala allegedly became angry and indignant.
- The curators refused to communicate with either the staff or the public.



1.5 Strengthening your communication skills

As you reach the end of the first chapter of your prescribed book, you are probably reflecting seriously on the way you yourself communicate. You are aware that you have learnt a great deal about communication, and you would like a simple set of guidelines to take away with you. Let's do that now.

Activity

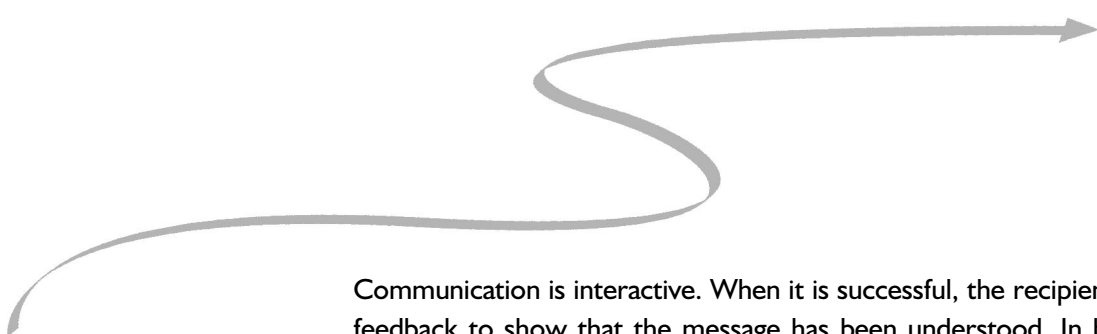


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Read the bulleted list of guidelines for improving your communication skills (page 28 of your prescribed book), and match each bullet to one of the following summary points:

- A. Listen well.
- B. Keep it short and simple.
- C. Be sensitive to nonverbal communication.
- D. Reinforce your message.
- E. Give and receive feedback.
- F. Be aware of your audience or recipient.
- G. Be sensitive to personal and cultural difference.
- H. Limit or eliminate noise.

In the above eight simple ways, you can now start to become a better communicator. Since better communicators are always first in line for promotion, you have already moved your career one step ahead.



1.6 Summary

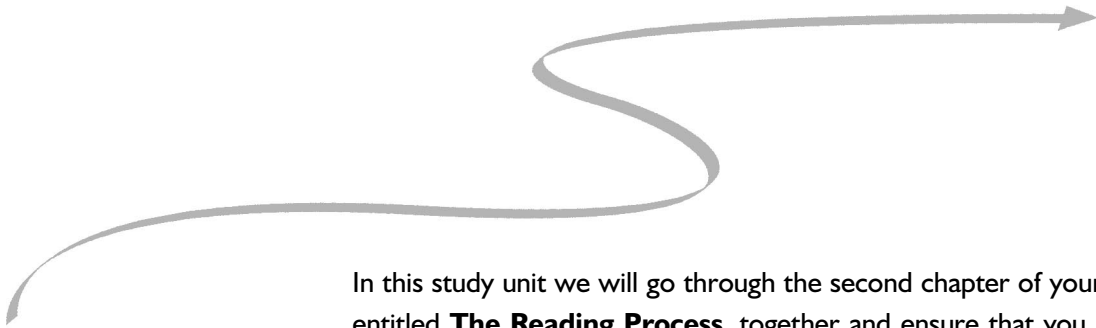
Communication is interactive. When it is successful, the recipient gives the sender feedback to show that the message has been understood. In businesses and organisations, communication is interactive. However, differences in hierarchy, status and ethical norms can cause communication problems. Formal, downward communication is efficient, but it can leave staff feeling alienated and unhappy. These problems can be ironed out with greater transparency and cooperation and a return to the fundamental principle of communication, namely interaction.

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 How fast can you read?
- 2 How many words can you recognise on sight?
- 3 Can you work out the meaning of new words?
- 4 Can you predict what a text will be about?
- 5 How quickly do you pick up the main ideas of a text?
- 6 Do you understand the deeper meaning of what you read?

KEY CONCEPTS

Reading speed; word recognition; sight words; university word list; context; homophones; connotation; implication; sentence types; directive; question; statement; exclamation; linking words; punctuation; commas; dashes; and colons.



2.1 Introduction

In this study unit we will go through the second chapter of your prescribed book, entitled **The Reading Process**, together and ensure that you understand its key points. More importantly, we want you to be able to put this study unit into practice.

Chapter 2 is not a theoretical chapter, but a practical chapter. The way you will be tested on this chapter in assignments and examinations will involve a demonstration of your reading skills. We know that it is always more difficult to learn a practical skill through distance learning. Imagine someone trying to teach you how to drive a car or bake a loaf of bread from a distance! You will need to make a conscious effort to practise your reading, not just as you work through this study unit and the prescribed chapter, but on a daily basis.

The introduction to Chapter 2 tempts you by pointing out that if you improve your reading skills, you are more likely to achieve success and even wealth. You can improve your reading ability by becoming more conscious of your reading.

What does it mean to be “conscious” of what you do when you read? As your prescribed book points out, reading is a physical act in which:

- your eyes move rapidly over the page; and
- every now and then your eyes stop and “fix” on the page.

To be conscious of what you do when you read is to be aware of both your rapid eye movement and the split seconds in which your eyes “fix”. Once you are aware of yourself reading you can:

- try to force your eyes more rapidly over the page; and
- try to take in a big chunk of text when your eyes “fix”.

Try not to be a nervous, hesitant reader who keeps going back to the previous sentence, or who plods through the text word-by-word. If you read too slowly and laboriously, you will get bored and give up sooner.

In Activity 2.1 in your prescribed book you will have tested your reading speed by timing yourself as you went through a series of quotations on the subject of reading. Congratulations if you managed to read all of the quotations in less than 90 seconds!



Start now by opening your prescribed book at the beginning of Chapter 2.

- Read Section 2.1, **Introduction**, in your prescribed book.
 - Read quickly through the quotations in Activity 2.1 again. This time, match each quotation to one of the following summary points. You need only write the appropriate letter next to the quote. One of the summaries applies to more than one quote.
- Reading books gives pleasure and prestige.
 - Reading is a comforting activity.
 - Not to read is a crime.
 - Books are preferable to television.
 - Reading in bed is a great pleasure.
 - It is better to read the original book than to see the movie.
 - Readers become leaders.
 - Books are more important than food and clothes.
 - Start by reading magazines, end up reading books.
 - Reading a lot is the equivalent of a university education.
 - You cannot believe everything you read.
 - You get twice as much pleasure from a book if your husband or wife reads it too.
 - Books and newspapers are both a blessing and a curse.
 - Reading is heaven.
 - Reading is a protection against a hard life.

Speed alone will not make you a successful reader. You also need to read with comprehension. Let’s check your understanding of Activity 1. You should have marked the quotations as follows: D, M, K, E, N, C, K, J, F, H, G, K, I, O, L, B, A.

Spend a minute or two thinking about how you are going to fit reading practice into your everyday life:

- For example, start to notice all the texts around you. Make a point of reading billboards, taxis, adverts, food packaging and community newspapers. Read all the time.
- Make a point of reading a newspaper every day.
- If you do not have a public library card, acquire one immediately. Libraries are free. Keep trying until you find the kind of books you like to read.

2.2

Reading at word level

By increasing the reading you do, you will increase your vocabulary. This is important because university study demands an extensive vocabulary. In fact, if you Google “*university word list*” or “*academic word list*” you will discover lists of words commonly used in prescribed books and reading material at university level.

If you tripped over the same stone in your path every morning, wouldn't you move it out of the way? What the university word lists show is that you are being slowed down by the SAME 200 to 300 words. Make a rule for yourself that the second time you come across an unfamiliar word, you will look it up in a dictionary.

It makes no sense to attempt to memorise academic word lists. Instead, read more so that the words start to become familiar to you and gain meaning from the context in which you read them.

Do not believe that your vocabulary has to stay at its current level. Most people are capable of adding hundreds of new words to their vocabulary every year. By the time you graduate, you should have a vocabulary of 20,000 word families. (To understand what a word family is, think about why the words “create”, “creative”, “creativity”, “recreate”, “creating”, “creates” and “creation” are all related.)

In addition to the methods suggested in your prescribed book for building up your vocabulary, can you think of anything else you could do to increase the number of words you recognise on sight?

Here are a few examples:

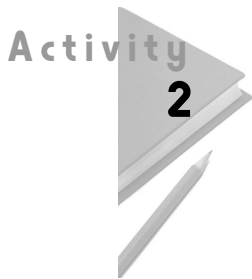
- You could use the many vocabulary puzzles and tests on the Internet – try doing a word puzzle a day instead of playing Solitaire or communicating on Facebook.
- You could do a daily crossword in the newspaper.
- You could pencil in the meanings of new words as you come across them.

2.2.1 Word recognition

Word recognition refers to your ability to identify many words on sight. For example, you recognised and understood every single word in the previous sentence as well as this one.

The joy of word recognition is the way it increases your reading speed. As your prescribed book points out, you only have to read a few letters of a familiar word to recognise it. The letters “obt” rapidly become “obtain” in your mind, just as the letters “mat...”, “simu...”, “struct...” and “inhi...” become “mature”, “simultaneous”, “structure” and “inhibit”.

The words you were tested on in Activity 2.2 of your prescribed book all came from the list of words most commonly used at university level. Let’s test your recognition of more of these words.



- 1 There is an alarming **tr...** among teenagers to text rude messages and nude pictures.
- 2 The development is massive: the total construction **ar...** is 72,900 square metres.
- 3 When you study **Phil...**, you are studying the meaning of life.
- 4 As an accountant, you have to learn how to **interp...** financial statements.
- 5 Although certain uniform accounting practices have been established, especially under the influence of tax regulations, depreciation rates and book-keeping methods are often **arb...**
- 6 Accountants usually read the finance **sec...** of the newspaper first.
- 7 The **cli...** offers family planning advice and immunisation.
- 8 The acceptances are shown on each side of the balance sheet, and **va...** considerably from 1% to 38% against the total amount of deposits.
- 9 There are several misprints on each page of this **te...**
- 10 What was his **mot...** to commit murder?
- 11 Quality controllers **insp...** all products at the factory.
- 12 He **accum...** his wealth over a long period of time.
- 13 The equity method is a method of accounting by which an equity investment is **init...** recorded at cost and subsequently adjusted to reflect the investor’s share.
- 14 It is impossible to **eva...** these results without knowing about the research methods that were used.
- 15 He finally **att...** a position of power in the company.
- 16 The story tells about a crime and **subs...** punishment.
- 17 Positive accounting returns are heavily rewarded, while **neg...** accounting returns are not penalised at all.
- 18 This reliance on transactions is both the greatest strength of traditional accounting, and the source of its **inh...** limitations.

Let's see how you did in this activity, which was designed to test your word recognition. The completed words were as follows: trend, area, Philosophy, interpret, arbitrary, section, clinic, vary, text, motive, inspect, accumulate, initially, evaluate, attained, subsequent, negative, inherent.

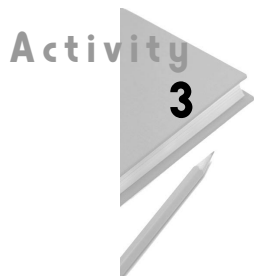
Words that you recognise instantly are called *sight words*. You may remember that when you were learning to read, your teacher held up flash cards with words like “cat” and “mat” on them for you to call out as quickly as you could. Now that you are at university, you need a much more sophisticated sight vocabulary.

2.2.2 Adjusting to words in context

One of the words that will come up time and again in your university career and beyond is *context*. In Chapter 1 of your prescribed book, the definition of *context* is given as follows: “Context refers to the environment, place or conditions in which the communication encounter takes place”. Think of context, then, as similar in meaning to “place”, “situation” or “environment”.

Key points to remember about context:

- In the case of individual words, context refers to the words that come immediately before or after. In this sense, context helps us to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words. For example, if you read the sentence: *The proprietor of the hotel said he had no wish to sell*, you should know instantly that the underlined word means “owner”. If you read the sentence: *From the lugubrious look on my accountant's face, I could tell that the news was bad*, you should be able to tell from the context that the underlined word means “sad” or “mournful”. If you read the sentence: *I was nearly late for the exam, which left me feeling completely discombobulated*, you might be able to guess from the context that the underlined word means “confused” or “discomposed”.
- Context also helps us to identify the specific meaning intended by the author. You know instantly which meaning of “stable” is referred to in sentences such as: *The horse is in its stable*, or *The property market is stable*.
- Context refers to the broader social situation in which communication takes place. For example, if you give a close friend a terrible fright by coming up behind her and touching her, and she responds with a laugh and says, “I’m going to kill you”, you know that she does not mean that she wants you dead.



Start by finding the definition of “context” in Chapter 2 of your prescribed book and underline it.

- Fix the meaning of “context” in your mind by thinking about the way this word is used in newspapers. Why do people so often complain that “My words were quoted out of context”?
- Read the following story and then answer the questions that follow:

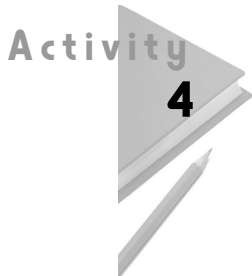
Action film star Jackie Chan caused a huge uproar in April 2009 when he told a business forum that it might not be good for China to become a free society.

“I’m not sure if it’s good to have freedom or not”, Chan was quoted as saying. He added that freedom in his native Hong Kong and Taiwan made those societies “chaotic”. Chan went on to say: “I’m gradually beginning to feel that we Chinese need to be controlled. If we’re not being controlled, we’ll just do what we want”.

Many people who read these comments lashed out at Chan, saying that he did not understand how precious freedom was. Chan’s spokesman responded by saying that Chan had been quoted out of context.

- What is your opinion of this particular example? Are you on Chan’s side, and, if so, why?
- If you have access to the Internet, Google the phrase “quoted out of context”. Why do you think you get so many hits?
- Have you ever been quoted out of context?
- From now on, try to identify newspaper articles that refer to this problem of being “quoted out of context”.

From this activity, and from Chapter 1 of your prescribed book, you realise how important context is to communication. Our words gain their meaning from the context provided by the surrounding words and the general environment or situation in which we utter them. Let’s see how aware you are of context as you read.



Use context to help you define the meaning of the underlined words:

- If your website transmits private information like credit card or social security numbers, an SSL certificate is a must.
- The fund’s managers will then disperse these funds to black-owned companies.
- The chairperson must convene a meeting of the board.
- How credible are the National Treasury’s revenue projections?
- Inadequate employee benefit schemes expose employees to risk.

How well did you do? The underlined words had the following meanings: sends, distribute, arrange, believable, and put into a vulnerable position. Even though you may not know all these words by sight, context should have helped you to work out what they mean.

2.2.3 Distinguishing between homophones

We learn to speak before we learn to read and write. We hear “enuff”, rather than “enough”, but our primary education usually sorts that problem out. However, the way we hear words continues to affect and influence us years later, as subsection 2.2.3 of your prescribed book, entitled **Distinguishing between Homophones**, points out.

Find the definition of “homophone” in your prescribed book and underline it before we continue.

Homophones are primarily a problem in your writing rather than in your reading. However, the reason why students often confuse the pairs affect/effect and its/it's does, in fact, relate to a reading problem. You should be reading in a way that supports and enhances your knowledge of spelling and grammar. If you glide over the differences between “no” and “know” or “flower” and “flour”, then you are not reading as effectively as you should be.

Activity 5

Let's take the example of “**its**”. In only **one** of the following instances, an apostrophe needs to be inserted to show that the phrase “it is” has been contracted. Identify the **single** error:

- Total South Africa was the first petroleum company in Africa to introduce Euro 4 trucks into its fleet.
- A Chinese official has confirmed the belief that the country has been quietly building up its gold reserves.
- An efficient transport system is an essential requirement for the healthy working of an urban economy, and for the wellbeing of its citizens.
- Armed with R5,6bn in the kitty, the conglomerate is continuing with its quest to conquer developing markets in Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Brazil and India.
- Even though the 2007 model has a slightly sportier look to its predecessors, I know that its the sort of car a mature man would choose.

How did you do? Congratulations if you managed to spot that *I know that it's the sort of car a mature man would choose* was the only instance where an apostrophe was required. All the other instances used “its” in its possessive form, when it takes no apostrophe (think of “its” in the same way you think of “his” and “hers”).

Activity 6

Now test yourself again. In the following activity, you need to find the **one** instance where the word should be “effect” rather than “affect”:

- How does stress affect health?
- Yes, the economic depression looming in the US will affect us all.
- Unfortunately the reality is that laws and amendments which strive to create a simpler tax environment have the opposite affect.
- It can cause delayed ripening which can affect the export of the fruit.
- The new Acts will dramatically affect the way financial institutions and advisors do business.

Congratulations if you spotted that the only instance where the word “effect” was required was: *Unfortunately the reality is that laws and amendments which strive to create a simpler tax environment have the opposite effect*. Remember that “effect” is the noun, whereas “affect” is the verb. If you are confused about what this means, go back over the bulleted examples above and note how “affect” is often accompanied by “can” and “may”. This is a sure sign of a verb or action word.

2.2.4 Connotation and implication

Subsection 2.2.4 of your prescribed book, entitled **Connotation and Implication**, takes you to a deeper level of reading. This type of reading will become more important to you as your career advances and you need to “read between the lines”.

In your prescribed book, find and underline a definition for “connotation”. Also find and underline a definition for “denotation”.

Try to fix the difference between connotation and denotation in your mind by thinking about two examples:

- A student complained that she did not like it when her grandmother described her as looking “fresh”. This was puzzling to her lecturer, who knew that the word “fresh”, when applied to a person, has the denotation “healthy”. The student explained that to her grandmother, “healthy” meant “plump”. The student did not like this connotation of the word “fresh”. She knew that her grandmother was implying that she was fat.
- The word “sexy” has become quite overused. Its original dictionary meaning (denotation) was “arousing desire”, but it has acquired connotations of “new” and “trendy”.

You are probably much better at identifying connotation than you think. In each of the following pairs, quickly underline the word with the more positive connotation:

Inquisitive – Nosy
Miserly – Thrifty
Vain – Proud
Vintage – Old
Relaxed – Lazy
Cowardly – Prudent

Do you recognise this conversation?

A: “You’re very voluptuous.”

B: “Do you mean I’m fat?”

Take note of these types of conversation from now on because they will help you to understand connotation and implication. When people do not exactly state what they mean, you have to work out what they are implying. If you hear or read a statement such as “*This company is facing tough times ahead*”, you need to be alert to its possible implications. Is the speaker referring to possible retrenchments, a share price drop, or a takeover?

Activity 7

What are the implications of the following text?

“In many developing countries, people are moving from rural areas to mega-cities, where they continue to practice subsistence agriculture”, Kitron says. “Whenever you have large concentrations of people, domestic animals, and poor sanitation and water supply, you have many opportunities for disease transmission.”

Source: www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/04/090429162152.htm

Choose the correct answer:

- A. There is not enough housing for the poor.
- B. Subsistence agriculture will soon be replaced by modern methods.
- C. Global conditions are ripe for the spread of epidemics.

In answering this question, you needed to remember that an implication is something that is not stated directly in a text. Instead, the details in the text point in the direction of a certain implication. In this case, the text described global demographic trends which point in the direction of the threat of epidemics.

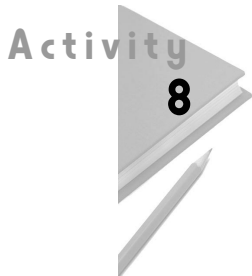
2.3 Reading at sentence level

In your prescribed book, read Section 2.3, entitled **Reading at Sentence Level**, and underline the names of the four main sentence types.

Spend a minute or two thinking about the difference between these sentence types and how they affect the way we communicate:

- A directive can be rude or polite: “Shut up!”, “Please be quiet”. Have you ever been offended by a directive?
- How do you feel about the way shop assistants or service personnel tell you to “Enjoy your day”? Do you pass on messages such as “Tell Lynda I say ‘Hi’ ”?
- How do you feel when a politician or businessman says: “I will not be taking questions but I will be making a statement”?
- What makes one question “good” and another one “prying” or “invasive”?
- Do you have a favourite or habitual exclamation: “Amazing!” “Lovely!” “Great!”? Do you ever feel annoyed by these types of exclamation?

This section introduced you to a very simple grammatical distinction. Later, the prescribed book will introduce you to more complex grammatical features. Try to stay ahead by applying each new bit of grammatical knowledge immediately to the world around you. Become alert to language, and you will find these chapters easier to follow.



2.3.1 Linking words

You have undoubtedly at least once in your life felt a deep sense of relief when a speaker uses the phrase “in conclusion”. This is just one of the many words and phrases that signal an author or speaker’s intention.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 2.3.2, entitled **Linking Words**. This subsection stresses the connections between thoughts; the “signposts” that hold any text together.

Underline the signpost words or phrases in the following text. These have the function to show a choice between two possibilities; to cite examples; to show contrast; to add; or to refer to time:

According to research carried out by the publication Financial Director, 18 companies employ Finance Directors who lack either qualifications or an affiliation with one of the major accountancy sector bodies. These include pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca, British American Tobacco and the travel operator Thomas Cook.

However, five Finance Directors were found to hold qualifications from the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), while a similar number have qualifications from the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA).

In addition, a majority of people in this position do hold MBAs, the research also revealed.

The study cited Suzanne Wood, Managing Partner at head-hunter Heidrick & Struggles, who claimed that more emphasis is now being placed on formal accounting qualifications, with Finance Directors in the “post-Enron” world coming under greater scrutiny.

The ACCA currently boasts more than 131,000 members across the globe, with 362,000 students also affiliated with the body.

Source: <http://www.gaapweb.com/news/1586-Top-finance-directors-working-without-accountancy-qualifications-.html>

How well did you do in this activity, which was designed to check your awareness of how signpost words function? Here are the signposts you may have picked up: *either ... or; these include; however; while; in addition; also; now; currently.*

Signpost words are well named because they indicate which direction the writer is going in. To take just one example from the previous activity: the writer begins with the shock news that many Finance Directors lack formal accounting qualifications. Notice how the word “however” introduces a complete switch in direction: suddenly the writer has discovered a whole bunch of highly qualified Finance Directors, many with South African qualifications.

2.3.2 How punctuation affects meaning

Even the smallest detail on a printed page contributes somehow to the meaning an author creates. Perhaps the smallest of these details is punctuation. Punctuation marks may look small, but they have a big impact on our ability to read well. Without them we would be at sea.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 2.3.3, entitled **How Punctuation Affects Meaning**, and then do Activity 2.8.

There are set rules about how punctuation must be used; while in other aspects English grammar is full of exceptions and irregularities, punctuation is logical and predictable.



What does the punctuation in the following numbered list tell you as the reader?

- Find one example where a person's job title is placed inside commas.
 - Find two examples where a comma and a conjunction introduce another independent clause (a clause that could stand alone as a sentence in its own right).
 - Find one example where the punctuation indicates a list.
 - Find one example where non-essential information is placed between dashes.
-
- 1 Revenue growth is down significantly from the double-digit figures we saw over the last couple of years at only 5.7%, and that's before the effects of the credit crunch are taken into account.
 - 2 Alan Greenspan, former chairman of the United States Federal Reserve Board, claimed that you could tell if an economy was in a recession by tracking the sales of men's underpants.
 - 3 Oxford University compiled a list of the most irritating phrases in the English language: (1) *At the end of the day*; (2) *Fairly unique*; (3) *I personally*; (4) *At this moment in time*; (5) *With all due respect*; (6) *Absolutely*; (7) *It's a nightmare*; (8) *Shouldn't of*; (9) *24/7*; (10) *It's not rocket science*.
 - 4 You can work through an unprofitable period with well-managed cash flow, but even profitable businesses don't last long without cash.
 - 5 Three reports are typically generated in financial accounting: the balance sheet, which summarises the firm's assets and liabilities; the income statement, which reports the firm's gross proceeds, expenses, and profit or loss; and the statement of cash flow, which analyses the flow of cash into and out of the firm.
 - 6 The earth and all its creatures and plants – all things, in fact, that the earth produces – belong to all men.

This activity alerted you to the importance of keeping your eyes open to punctuation.

- One example where a person's job title is placed inside commas: Alan Greenspan, former chairman of the United States Federal Reserve Board,

- Two examples where a comma and a conjunction introduce another independent clause:

1 ... only 5.7%, and that's before

2 ... well-managed cash flow, but

- One example where the punctuation indicates a list:

Three reports are typically generated in financial accounting: the balance sheet, which summarises the firm's assets and liabilities; the income statement, ...

- One example where non-essential information is placed between dashes:

The earth and all its creatures and plants – all things, in fact, that the earth produces – belong to all men.

2.4

Increasing reading speed and efficiency

Open your prescribed book to Section 2.4, entitled **Increasing Reading Speed and Reading Efficiency**. Skim this section to the end of the chapter (glancing quickly at each page to take in the subheadings) so that you are able to predict what it is about.

It is very important that you reflect on the list of reading complaints under sub-section 2.4.2, **Tips for Faster Reading**. This kind of reflection, where you think about your own study methods and look at yourself objectively, is very important. Self-reflexive students, who monitor their own habits, have a better chance of breaking bad habits and adopting good ones.

The tips for faster reading reveal an interesting problem that may be phrased like this: *The slower you read, the slower you'll read*. Reading slowly makes you feel bored. Boredom makes you reluctant to read. The tips suggest a number of practical ways in which you can force yourself to read faster. As with all difficult things in life (losing weight, giving up smoking, getting fit, etc) the main incentive is the wonderful end result. Imagine how much more free time you will have if you read faster. You will be happier, more confident and more optimistic.

The rest of the chapter goes on to give you more practical tips for becoming a better reader:

- Using headings and subheadings to predict what the text will be about (reading is easier when you have some knowledge of the content).
- Finding the main idea of each paragraph by identifying the topic sentence.
- Asking questions and giving feedback as you read.



While the ideas of this chapter are still fresh in your mind, pick up any text (a newspaper, a magazine, or a textbook that you have to read) and try to implement the following basic reading principles:

- Skim the text first to predict what it will be about.
- Try to read faster than you normally read.
- Use context to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- Ask questions and interact with the text.
- Spot the main idea or keywords in each paragraph and underline them.

We hope that this activity proved to you that by becoming conscious of your reading technique, you will gradually start to read faster and with greater comprehension.



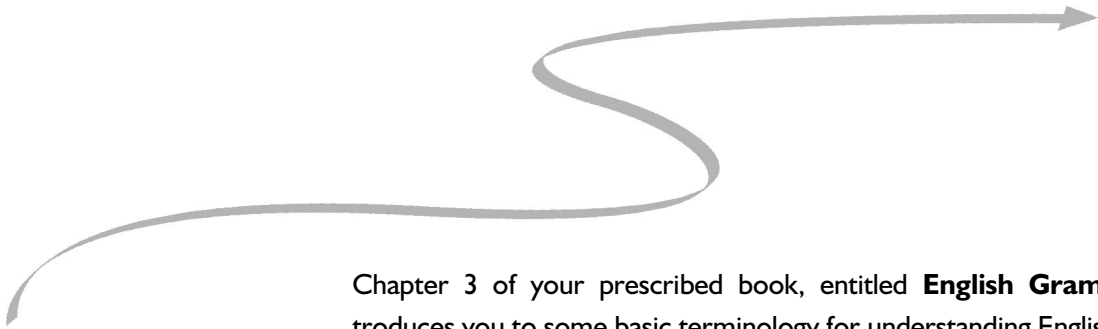
Reading well and with enthusiasm is crucial to your personal and academic success. People who read slowly tend to dislike reading. They do poorly in their studies and careers. To increase your reading speed, try to move your eyes more quickly over the page, taking in chunks at a time rather than reading word for word. The more words you recognise, the faster you will read, so you need to work on increasing your vocabulary. Use context to help you understand what you are reading – you may not understand the word you are staring at, but let the surrounding words give you a clue. Always think about what it is that you are reading. Ask questions and consider implications. Remember that communication is *interactive*: try to see books as people you can have a conversation with, disagree with, love or hate.

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 How does your use of grammar affect the way people judge you?
- 2 What are your particular problems when it comes to English grammar?
- 3 How well do you know the inflections we add to the base word in English?
- 4 Do you know how to use a dictionary to help you with grammar?
- 5 Can you learn to fix the errors you make?

KEY CONCEPTS

Base word; inflections; plural; possessive; apostrophe; third person singular; subject-verb agreement; past participle; contracted negative; objective pronoun; object; subject; verb; present participle; comparative; superlative; compound words; word classes; dictionaries; nouns; noun pairs; adverbs; adjectives; sentences; clauses; simple sentences; complex sentences; and sentence elements.



3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 of your prescribed book, entitled **English Grammar Toolkit**, introduces you to some basic terminology for understanding English grammar. It also provides you with a handy reference to the most common errors we make in English and how to fix them. Do not be put off by the word “grammar”. As we work through the chapter together, you will realise that grammar need not be dry and boring, and that it is possible to understand it without pain!

The way you personally use grammar affects the way important people (employers and clients) see you. However, there is no need to “study” grammar as a whole. All you need to do is to use the chapter to identify your personal weak points and commit yourself to working on the errors you know you make regularly.

Section 3.1, **Introduction**, in your prescribed book refers to the importance of developing an awareness of how language is used in the world around you. How will you do this? *Read, listen and notice*. Look at public signs and headlines, think about the way people around you use language, and get actively involved in the business of language.

Activity

1

In your prescribed book, find Brian's description of why he is unhappy in his job (page 51). Let's start off your study of grammar by seeing whether you can correct his English. Work on Brian's grammar with a pencil in your book, or write out a clean version in a notebook.

How well did you do? A corrected version of Brian's text might read as follows:

I'm very bitter because I wasn't told lots of things about this job, for example, the fact that it entails a 6-day, 35-hour week. The work is repetitious, and the lunch time is too short. My only hope is for promotion.

In this activity, you focused on fixing someone else's grammar. But our real focus in this study unit is to get you to recognise and repair your own sentence errors.

3.2

The base word and its inflections

Your study of grammar begins with a look at the structure of individual words. Do not be frightened by the term "inflections": you already know what inflections are. They are the affixes (prefixes and suffixes) we add to the beginning and end of words.

In your prescribed book, read up to subsection 3.2.1, **Plural**. Change the bullets on page 52 to numbers so that you can clearly see the **two** ways of adding to words and the **three** reasons for adding inflections to words.

Activity

2

Now fill in your own examples in order to show that you understand each of the following:

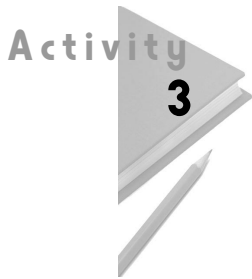
- How a prefix changes a base word (try adding a prefix to the word "connect" or to the word "use").
- How a suffix or inflection at the end of a base word changes it (try adding a suffix or inflection to the end of "peace", "home", "run", "cope" or "head").
- How adding one word to another can create a completely new word (try adding words to "peace", "home" and "head").

How did you do? With prefixes you may have created *misuse*, *abuse*, *disuse*, *disconnect* and *reconnect*. With suffixes and inflections, you may have created *peaceful*, *peacefulness*, *peaceable*, *homely*, *runs*, *headed*, *coping*, *coped* and *cope*s. By joining words together, you could have created *peacetime*, *peacemaker*, *homework*, *homeward*, *homesick*, *homeland*, *homeless*, *homebody*, *runner*, *running*, *runaway*, *runabout*, *runway*, *headstrong*, *headphone*, *headquarters*, *headstone*, *header*, *headache*, *headboard*, *headline*, *headmaster* and *headway*.

3.2.1 Plural

English plurals can be tricky. Why is the plural of house “houses”, but the plural of mouse “mice”? Why do we refer to chiefs, but then turn leaf into “leaves”?

In your prescribed book, read subsection 3.2.1, **Plural**, and mark any plural forms that are unfamiliar to you.



Check that you have grasped the plural by correcting the underlined words:

- Journalists had their knifes out for the CEO of the disgraced company.
- Before you eat salmons, tunas and other fishes, you should check to see whether they are on an endangered list.
- I seldom cook a meal without using potato's and tomato's.
- The staff wanted to know about bonusses.
- I would love to add a few zero's to my salary cheque.
- You might hesitate to employ someone who had tattoes on his face.
- When I got to London I found that I could buy nothing for ten pennies.
- Woman are very difficult.
- Saturday and Sunday are oasises in my week.
- I need some informations about flight times.

How did you do? Your corrections should have included: knives, salmon, tuna, fish, potatoes, tomatoes, bonuses, zeros, tattoos, pence, women, oases, and information. If you got full marks, move on fast. If not, spend a moment making notes here.

3.2.2 Possessive

Just as humans are possessive, so words can show possession too. If I refer to “My *uncle's hat*” then I am referring to his possession. We show possession using the punctuation mark known as the **apostrophe**. This section teaches you the correct use of the apostrophe in English.

Read subsection 3.2.2, entitled **Possessive**, in your prescribed book, and highlight the following rules as you come to them:

- The apostrophe s (-'s) shows that someone or something possesses something else.



- The word “it’s”, however, does NOT show possession. It means “it is”. Like “hers” and “his”, the possessive “its” is written without an apostrophe.
- When a plural word ending in -s takes the possessive, a bare apostrophe is used, for example, “the workers’ demands”.

Check your grasp of the apostrophe by correcting the following:

South Africas demand for credit went up in April, but economists say its unlikely to be a big factor at the Reserve Banks Repo meeting, when the bank makes its interest rate decision.

How did you manage? Your answer should look as follows:

South Africa’s demand for credit went up in April, but economists say it’s unlikely to be a big factor at the Reserve Bank’s Repo meeting, when the bank makes its interest rate decision.

3.2.3 Third person singular

You probably recognise the following sentences as wrong:

- Snow melt very fast.
- René Mulder investigate crimes.
- In this podcast, Wayne McCurrie tell Chris Gibbons that a 100bps rate cut is more than likely.

You are correct if you noticed that in each case, the verb requires an “-s” ending.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 3.2.3, entitled **Third Person Singular**.

If you go back to the bulleted examples above, you will notice that the words “snow”, “René”, and “Wayne” could all be replaced by a third person singular pronoun:

snow = it

René = she

Wayne = he

Verbs belonging to the third person singular require an -s ending: *snow melts; René investigates; Wayne tells.*

Why is subject verb such a common error if these examples seem so simple? As Activity 3.2 in your prescribed book shows, there are some tricky rules to remember. Before you attempt to do Activity 3.2, revise the following rules:

- If the subject is singular, then the verb remains singular even if there is an intervening plural: *One of the numbers which is currently being investigated is possibly Unisa’s switchboard number.*
- If the alternatives offered in an “either ... or” sentence are singular, the verb

must be singular: *Either the Dean of Arts or the Dean of Students is going to contact you.*

- The word “each” must be followed by a singular verb: *Each of the five winners receives a voucher.*
- Two singular nouns joined by “and” take a plural verb, unless they are considered by custom to be a single thing: *Renault and Peugeot are French car manufacturers; BUT Eggs and bacon is my favourite breakfast.*
- Use a singular verb when two singular nouns are separated by “or”: *An orange or an apple is a good snack.*
- Amounts of money take a singular verb: *R13million is the total I get.*

Now do Activity 3.2 in your prescribed book.

As your prescribed book points out, the examples in the activity are the trickiest you will have to face. Experienced users of the English language battle with these particular constructions. Study the third example particularly carefully, as the most common error is to become confused by intervening plural words:

- x *The detective said that one of the telephone numbers that are being investigated is the University of Stellenbosch switchboard.*

The verb should be singular in order to agree with the subject “one”:

- ✓ *The detective said that one of the telephone numbers that is being investigated is the University of Stellenbosch switchboard.*

3.2.4 Past participle

The term “past participle” refers to the inflection that shows the past tense: the grass burned, the children laughed, the car hooted. Even when the past is formed in an irregular way (without the -ed ending) we still call it the past participle: the match has begun, studies have shown, a boy was hurt, the lesson you have learnt. In your prescribed book, read subsection 3.2.4, **Past Participle**.

In addition to acting as a past tense verb, the past participle functions as an adjective: This restaurant really is off the beaten track!; Have you submitted the required documents?; Do you like baked apples?; He’s staying in a rented room; She bought frozen fish.



Check your understanding of the past participle by filling in the correct form of the verb in brackets:

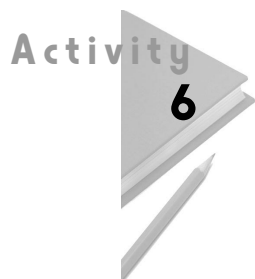
- After the fire, assessors examined the (burn) warehouse.
- Calculate how much money we have (lose).
- The book that he had (write) became a best seller.
- The (choose) few were invited to dinner.
- He was (swear) to secrecy.
- The interest rate has (creep) up.

How did you do? The correct answers were: burnt, lost, written, chosen, sworn, and crept.

3.2.5 Contracted negative

When you say “I can’t”, “I won’t”, “I shouldn’t”, “I mustn’t”, then you are using the contracted negative. In your prescribed book, read subsection 3.2.5, entitled **Contracted Negative**.

Contracted negatives are easy enough to understand, but not always so easy to spell. The contracted negative refers to words like “doesn’t” and “couldn’t”, where two words (for example, could + not) are drawn together and shortened.



Check your use of contracted negatives by turning all of the following sentences into negatives. The first one has been done for you:

- They were asking questions.
They weren't asking questions.
- He opened the door.
- She is answering the phone.
- She does invest in unit trusts.
- They are happy.

How did you do? Your verbs should have looked as follows: didn't open, isn't answering, doesn't invest, aren't happy.

3.2.6 Objective pronoun

Why can't we say: “I don't understand he?” or “I went to visit they”? The problem with these sentences is that the second pronoun needs to be changed into its object case (him or them).

In your prescribed book, read subsection 3.2.6, **Objective Pronoun**.

Objective pronouns are not that difficult to understand. Pronouns change according to whether they are *subjects* (performing the action) or *objects* (receiving the action):

I (*subject*) don't understand him (*object*).
We (*subject*) visited them (*object*).

As your prescribed book points out, most people make a mistake in their choice of “I” or “me”:

- x Jane and me were talking in the passageway.
- ✓ Jane and I (*subject*) were talking in the passageway.
- x Our colleagues complained about Jane and I.
- ✓ Our colleagues complained about Jane and me (*object*).

Activity 7

You can correct your own writing by thinking about which form of the pronoun you would choose if the “Jane and ...” element were not there. Instinctively, you will know that the following are wrong:

- x Me was talking in the passageway.
- x Colleagues complained about I.

Apply the simple rule above as you choose between “I” and “me” in the following examples:

- Thabo and (me/I) are going over the records right now.
- When you’re finished, please report back to Thabo and (me/I).
- Who will be doing the audit? Thabo or (me/I)?

How did you do in these three examples? The correct answers were: I, me, I. You probably noticed that “I” tends to occur at the beginning of sentences, whereas “me” fits at the end. This is because in English, the subject (in this case, “I”) tends to go at the beginning of sentences, whereas the object (in this case, “me”) tends to go at the end of sentences.

3.2.7 -ing and -ed form

Do you remember learning about the past participle? When you answer the following questions in full sentences, you will be supplying a **present participle**:

- Where are you studying?
- Where are you sitting right now?
- What are you thinking about at this moment?

If your answers were something like: *I am studying at Unisa; I am sitting in my room; and I am thinking about my finances*; then you have supplied good examples of the correct use of the present participle.

Activity 8

Now answer the following questions in full sentences:

- What time do you wake up in the morning?
- Where do you live?
- How do you get to work every day?
- What did you most like to do as a child?
- How did you get to school as a child?

If your answers were something like: *I wake up at 6 am.; I live in Mamelodi; I travel to work by taxi; I liked to play soccer as a child; and I walked to school*; then you have correctly used tense to describe a present or past habit.

As your prescribed book points out, South Africans tend to use the present participle incorrectly to describe a habit.



Test yourself by choosing the correct option in each of the following cases:

- I (am catching/catch) the train to town every morning.
- The player (was catching/caught) the ball in a great save.
- The player (was catching/caught) the ball when a spectator ran onto the field.
- I (was playing/played) in the veld as a child.
- I (am finishing/finish) some work right now, but I can speak to you later.

How did you do? The correct answers were: catch, caught, was catching, played, and am finishing. As you can see from this activity, the present participle is only used to describe an action that someone is engaged in right at that very moment.

3.2.8 -er and -est comparison

Are you the same height as your mother or father? Are you as happy now as when you were a child? Have your study methods improved since school?

Think about the answers you gave to these questions. If you answered with sentences such as the following, then you used the -er inflection to create a comparison:

I am taller than my mother.

I am happier now than I was when I was at school.

I am better at studying now.

Read subsection 3.2.8, **-er and -est comparison**, in your prescribed book.

The comparative and the superlative (best, happiest, richest) are only a problem when one of the following rules is broken:

- Long adjectives do not take -er or -est: they are made into comparatives or superlatives through the use of the words “more” and “most” (*more beautiful*; *most successful*).
- Adjectives which already end in -er or -est cannot be preceded by “more” or “most” (*x more lovelier*; *x most best*).
- Unique adjectives do not take “more” or “most” (*x more unique*; *x more perfect*).
- Some adjectives form the comparative and the superlative in an irregular way (little, less, least; good, better, best; bad, worse, worst; many, more, most).



Check your understanding of the -er and -est inflections by correcting each of the following sentences:

- Philip's essay was more better than mine.
- The acting was bad, but the singing was even more bad.
- It was the most unique sight.

- I always thought my sister was more clever than I was.
- Jonas' artwork is definitely originaler than Redi's.

How did you do? Your answers should have been as follows:

- Philip's essay was better than mine.
- The acting was bad, but the singing was even worse.
- It was a unique sight.
- I always thought my sister was cleverer than I was.
- Jonas's artwork is definitely more original than Redi's.

As with all the grammatical rules in your prescribed book, remember that your primary concern is to spot the errors you make and put in an effort to correct them. If you do not make an error, do not worry about the rule.

3.3 Compound words

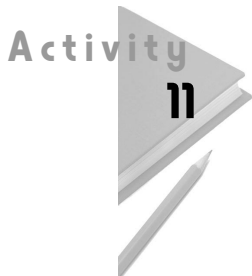
What do the following words have in common: fishwife, lame-brain, point-blank, game plan, free will, heavyweight, puppy-fat?

Well done if you saw that all of these words are formed out of two separate words which come together to form a new concept. These are called **compound words**.

Read Section 3.3, entitled **Compound Words**, in your prescribed book now, and underline the definition of "compound words". Next, find the three different ways in which compounds are formed, and number the examples.

Compound words are tricky to spell and sometimes tricky to look up in the dictionary because they may be formed in three ways:

- 1 Two words are joined together to form one (rainwater; yearend).
- 2 Two words are separated by a hyphen (money-spinner; shake-up).
- 3 Two words stand next to each other (question mark; exercise book).



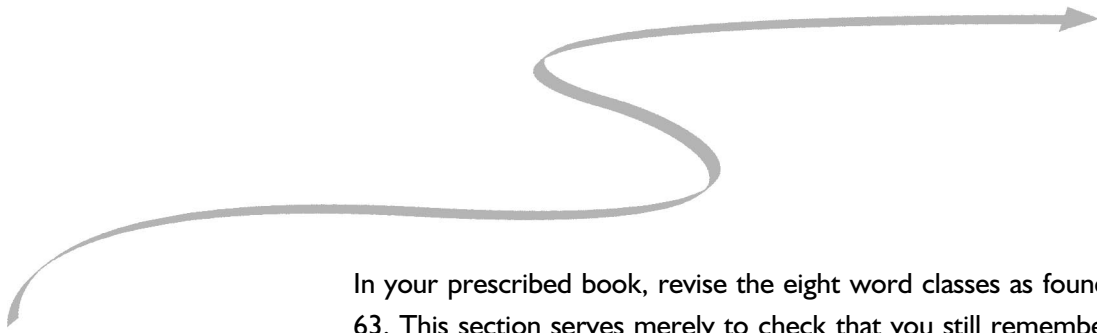
Test your vocabulary by seeing how many compound words you can form with "book". Use your dictionary to decide whether the words should be written as one, or with a hyphen, or separately.

How did you do? You may have come up with some of the following: book club, book-end, book in, book up, book value, bookbinder, bookcase, bookkeeper, bookmaker, bookseller and bookworm.

Look out for new words entering the English language in this way. As we write this, the Oxford Dictionary has listed the following compounds as new entries in the English language:

Shoulder-surfing: the practice of spying on the user of a cash-dispensing machine, or other electronic device, in order to obtain their personal identification number, password, etc.

Blowback: the unintended adverse results of a political action or situation.



3.4 Word classes

In your prescribed book, revise the eight word classes as found on pages 62 and 63. This section serves merely to check that you still remember the terminology you learnt at school. The terminology is not important in itself, but it does help us to talk about certain aspects of language.

Activity 12



Check your understanding of the word classes by indicating whether the underlined word is a noun, adjective, pronoun, verb, adverb, preposition, conjunction or interjection:

- Standard Bank is South Africa's biggest lender.
- Crucially, Mboweni is arguing that banks should lower the margin at which they lend to customers at a time when their lending businesses are losing cash.
- But bank registrar Errol Kruger says bank profits aren't falling off a precipice.

How did you do? The answers were as follows: verb, adjective, adverb, verb, pronoun, noun, pronoun, conjunction, verb, preposition, and noun.

As you check your answers, remember that a word can change its word class depending on context. So in the example above, "lower" is a verb (referring to the action of bringing down), but in another context it might be an adjective (referring to the state of being low).

3.4.1 How dictionaries help

This section provides a quick reminder about the importance of dictionaries. Dictionaries help by:

- providing grammatical information (correct spelling, plurals, inflections, word classes, etc); and
- extending your vocabulary.



Did you look up the word “pay” as your prescribed book suggests? If you look up the word “pay”, you will discover the following phrases. Run through them now to see how many you can define on your own. Use a dictionary to check the meaning of the rest:

- in the pay of
- paid holidays
- paid-up member
- payday
- pay dearly
- pay dirt
- pay for
- pay in
- paying guest
- pay one’s way
- pay one’s last respects
- payback
- pay the piper and call the tune
- pay through the nose
- put paid to

How did you do? Compare your definitions to the ones below:

- **in the pay of** – employed by
- **paid holidays** – an agreed holiday period during which wages are paid as normal (in contrast with “unpaid leave”)
- **paid-up member** – a person, especially a trade union member, who has paid his/her membership
- **payday** – the day salaries are paid
- **pay dearly** – obtain at great cost or effort; suffer for
- **pay dirt** – a financially promising situation
- **pay for** – bear the cost of
- **pay in** – pay money into an account
- **paying guest** – boarder
- **pay one’s way** – cover one’s own costs
- **pay one’s last respects** – attend a funeral
- **payback** – revenge; punishment
- **pay the piper and call the tune** – have control over something by paying for it
- **pay through the nose** – pay much more than a fair price
- **put paid to** – terminate

Try to extend your vocabulary every day by looking up unfamiliar words and by being curious about new words and phrases that you hear.

Activity 14

3.4.2 Noun and verb pairs

One of the top ten grammatical complaints is the confusion of noun and verb pairs. These are words which sound similar or the same but are spelt differently according to whether they are functioning as a noun or a verb.

The troublesome pairs are: affect/effect; advise/advice; devise/device; believe/belief; and prove/proof. Do you know the difference between the words in each pair?

These pairs may seem unimportant to you, but educated people regularly use them as a way of judging you and your level of education.

Check your language competence by choosing the correct option in the sentences that follow:

- In economics and business, a network **affect/effect** (also called network externality) is the **affect/effect** that one user of a product or service has on the value of that product or service to other people.
- How will the recession **affect/effect** business travel?
- Debt collection agencies **advise/advice** businesses about collecting bad debt.
- Here is some streetwise **advise/advice** on how to handle the tax issues that arise from owning your own *business*.
- Your credit card statement might not **proof/prove** a tax deduction.
- What information does the **proof/prove** of registration contain?

How did you do? Your answers should have been: effect, effect, affect, advise, advice, prove and proof. If your answers were all correct, then you have nothing to worry about. If you struggled with this exercise, then you will need to develop a habit of self-checking and self-correction. Make a mental note of the pairs that confuse you, and always pause before you make a choice between them in written documents.

3.4.3 Adverbs that cause trouble

This section is for reading through and quickly noting. Apart from the pair *formerly/formally*, which have very different meanings (as indicated in your prescribed book on page 64), you will frequently hear people using the adverb “literally” incorrectly. Listen to the people around you as they say things such as:

My children are literally tearing my heart out.

My head literally exploded when I read my bank statement.

Full marks if you spotted that the word “literally” is used incorrectly in these sentences: “literally” means “it really happened – this is not a metaphor or a figure of speech”. Go back to the two examples above. Of course the children did not literally tear anyone’s heart out. It would also be impossible for your head to literally explode because your bank statement was so shocking.

“Literally” is, however, an interesting example of language change. Because so many people use the word to add intensity to their sentences, “literally” may end up meaning something more like “completely” or “absolutely”.

The best advice we can give you, is to listen to the world around you. Be curious about the expressions people use. Become an observer of language, and one day you will be an expert.

3.4.4 Adjectives that cause trouble

This section of the prescribed book (page 65) consists of a table of frequently confused pairs of adjectives, such as disinterested (neutral) and uninterested (not interested). Go through this table now and make notes of the pairs that you know you personally confuse.



Test yourself by choosing the correct option in each of the following sentences:

- The ombudsman should conduct himself in a **disinterested/uninterested** way.
- Are you **eligible/illegible** for election?
- Your statement that the robber left with the customers is **ambiguous/am-bivalent**.
- I am **averse/adverse** to the idea of a merger.
- We all want to know what will happen in the event of an **imminent/ eminent** takeover.

How did you do? The first word in each of the above pairs was the correct one (disinterested, eligible, ambiguous, averse and imminent). In these cases, our ears and eyes are occasionally confused because the words sound or look similar. Wherever possible, ask a third party to help you proofread your documents so that errors like these do not creep in inadvertently.

3.5 Sentences

In this section, you will learn the difference between three **types of sentence**, namely, simple, compound and complex. A simple sentence has one main clause, a compound sentence has two, and a complex sentence has several.

Do not be dismayed by the term “clause”. A clause is simply a part of a sentence that could stand on its own. For example, take the following complex sentence:

Economic theory attempts to explain how people behave, and economists can use utility to analyse consumer choice although no consumer has ever seen or measured a unit of utility.

This sentence can be broken up into the following clauses: **(1)** Economic theory attempts to explain how people behave + **(2)** economists can use utility to analyse consumer choice + **(3)** no consumer has ever seen a unit of utility + **(4)** no consumer has ever measured a unit of utility.

Thus, when you are out spotting clauses, all you need to ask is: “Could this part of the sentence stand on its own as a sentence?”

How is this information about simple, compound and complex sentences important from your point of view? Obviously, the simpler (and shorter) your sentences, the less likely you are to make an error. However, we make the mistake of thinking that simple sentences are babyish. This is far from being the case:

When I think about what you are doing, I wonder if you realise the effect you are having on me. It hurts.

As you can see from this example, a short sentence following a long one has great impact.

Activity

16

The most common error is to form a complex sentence by simply inserting a comma between clauses. Consider the following weak student sentence:

He passed away in August 2001, in a terrible car accident, he was the only one who died, he was with colleagues in that accident.

How would you fix this sentence? (*tip*: try using words such as “while”, “which” or “when” to help you tighten the meaning of the sentence.)

How did you do? Here are some ways in which you could have rearranged the sentence:

- In August 2001, while travelling with colleagues, he was involved in a terrible car accident which claimed him as its only victim.
- He was the only one who died in a terrible car accident which occurred in August 2001, when he was with colleagues.
- He was in a car with colleagues when a terrible accident claimed his life in August 2001.

When you work with longer sentences, be prepared to put in a little more effort in order to make your meaning clear.

Chapter 3 of your prescribed book ends with an explanation of the main sentence elements, namely, subject, verb, object, adverbial and complement. Read this section now (pages 70–75).

As your reading shows, each sentence element may consist of several words:

- More cars (S) will be repossessed (V) as a result of the economic downturn (A).
- University grants (S) may not be used to pay for (V) food, clothing or entertainment (O).

Are you comfortable with deciding whether a group of words is a subject (S), verb (V), object (O) or adverbial (A)? Analysing sentences is not that hard once you have learnt to spot the verb element. Let's start with the first example above:

More cars will be repossessed as a result of the economic downturn.

Start by asking: "What action takes place in this sentence?" You are right, the action concerns repossession.

Once you have identified the verb, ask: "Who or what will be repossessed?" Correct – the answer is "more cars". The answer to this who or what question is always the subject of the sentence.

How will you decide whether the remainder of the sentence is a complement or an adverbial? It's simple: a complement is an absolutely essential part of a sentence. Without it, a sentence looks unfinished (for example, "Love is ..."). In your example above, the phrase "as a result of the economic downturn" is not absolutely essential. If it were left out, the sentence would still make sense ("More cars will be repossessed"). Therefore, this clause is not a complement. An adverbial, in turn, answers questions about the verb. This adverbial answers the question: "Why will more cars be repossessed?"

Let's see whether you are starting to get the hang of how sentences are put together. We will do it step-by-step.

Find the action (the verb element) in the following sentence:

Stimulus measures in Japan and China revived world markets.

Did you see that the action was "revived"?

Now find the subject of the sentence by answering the question: "Who or what performed the action of reviving?" The subject of the sentence is thus "Stimulus measures in Japan and China".

Now find the object of the sentence by answering the question: “Who or what was affected by the act of reviving?” The object of the sentence is “world markets.”

Find the subject, verb and object in the following sentence:

Telkom may poach Cell C’s chief executive Jeffery Hedberg.

How did you do? Did you see that the sentence structure is as follows?

Telkom (S) may poach (V) Cell C’s chief executive Jeffery Hedberg (O).

As you become more aware of the way words are grouped according to their function in sentences, so you will become better at constructing those sentences yourself.

3.7

Summary

People tend to judge you according to your use of English grammar. However, don’t worry about the theory of grammar: rather concentrate on fixing the particular errors you make. You can start by increasing your awareness of how individual words change as inflections are added to them to show grammatical features such as tense (-ed), possession (-’s), plural (-s), or comparison (-er). Then you can identify which inflections are problematic for you and work on those (for example, do you try to form the plural with an apostrophe?). Use a dictionary to help you build your vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. The dictionary will help you to identify the eight word classes (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, pronoun, conjunction and interjection). Knowing your word classes will help you to distinguish between tricky pairs such as “effect/affect” and “advice/advise”. Sentences are constructed: learn how they are put together so that your sentences are strong, clear and occasionally even memorable.

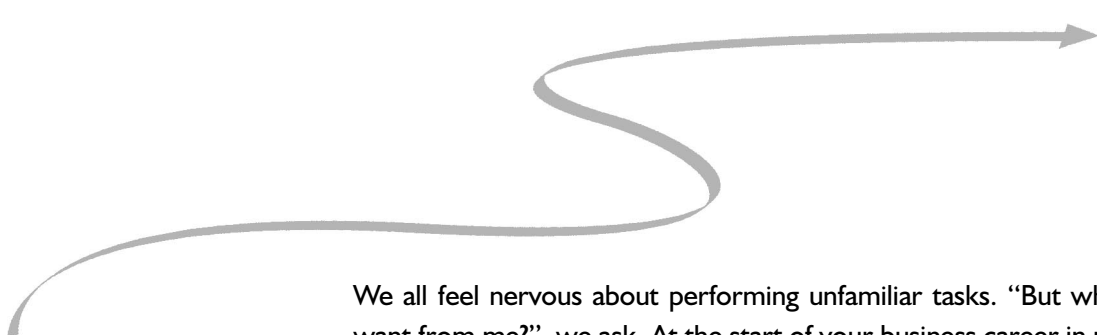


KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 Have you written many formal letters in your life?
- 2 Do you feel confident about writing and sending letters?
- 3 Do you know what a memo is and why we write them?
- 4 Have you ever come across the abbreviation SOP?
- 5 Have you ever written a set of instructions?
- 6 Do you know what a “report” is in the context of business?
- 7 Are you ready to format documents in a business environment?

KEY CONCEPTS

Letter; covering letter; address; salutation; subject line; block format; memo; instructions and procedures; SOPs; report; terms of reference; methodology; findings; conclusions; and recommendations.



4.1 Introduction

We all feel nervous about performing unfamiliar tasks. “But what exactly do you want from me?”, we ask. At the start of your business career in particular, you may feel nervous about the various different types of document that you will have to produce: a report, a memo, a letter, and a set of standard operating procedures (SOP), among others. You will feel much more at ease if you are familiar with the format of these documents – then you will only need to concentrate on the content.

In this study unit, we will give you more practice in the document formats as introduced in Chapter 4 of your prescribed book.



How do you respond when you receive a letter? Many people study the outside of the envelope in their eagerness to know who is writing to them and why. Letters command attention because they tend to be used for important legal correspondence as well as letters of application, resignation, complaint and apology.

The most important letter you will write in your life will almost certainly be the covering letter that you send with your CV when applying for a job. Before we practise this all-important letter, read Section 4.2, entitled **Letter**, in your prescribed book.

Let's see how easy you find it to work within the letter format.

Imagine that you have recently graduated. Last Thursday you saw the following job advertised in a widely circulated newspaper:

ACCOUNTANT

Salary: \$\$\$\$\$\$ per annum

REQUIREMENTS

- Grade 12 and recognised three-year degree/diploma.
- Valid driver's licence.
- Good interpersonal and communication skills.
- Computer literacy.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Manage cash flow and bank reconciliation.
- Manage PMG account.
- Manage ledger account.

Send your CV, a certified copy of your degree, and a covering letter to Mr Xoli Ntuli, HR Manager, Masai Imports and Exports: PO Box 336, Menlyn, 0053.

Write the covering letter now, using the block format. Your letter should consist of no more than **two** paragraphs. In your letter, it should be clear:

- why you are writing; and
- why you are qualified for the position.

How did you manage with your covering letter? Give yourself a mark out of 20. Calculate your mark as follows:

- 3 marks for your address.
- 1 mark for your telephone number and/or email address.
- 1 mark for the date.
- 2 marks for the HR Manager's name and job title.
- 3 marks for the remainder of the address, all left aligned.
- 1 mark for the salutation ("Dear Mr Ntuli").
- 1 mark for the subject line (Application: Accountant).
- 1 mark for saying why you are writing ("I am writing to apply for the post of accountant as advertised in *City Press* of Thursday ...").
- 1 mark for saying why you are fit for the job ("I have a BCom from Unisa and performed exceptionally well in my Communication for Accountants exam").
- 1 mark for mentioning that your CV and a copy of your degree are enclosed (you could do this in a sentence, or by using the abbreviation "Encl.>").
- 1 mark for ending your letter with "Yours sincerely".
- 1 mark for your signature.
- 1 mark for your name printed beneath your signature.
- 1 mark for all address lines free of punctuation (you were asked for the block format).
- 1 mark for line breaks.

This activity gave you some idea of how using the correct format scores points – real marks in the exam, and figurative points in the rest of your life.

Now let's move on to another extremely common form of business communication, the memo.

4.3

Memo

A successful letter of application leads to a letter of appointment. Once you've got the job, it is likely that a great deal of your business communication will take the form of memos. Memoranda, as your prescribed book points out, are used to circulate information within an organisation. They frequently address specific problems in the workplace.

Before attempting the next activity, read Section 4.3, entitled **Memoranda**, in your prescribed book. Study the examples given so that the "look" or layout of a memo is fixed in your mind.

Activity 2



Imagine that you are an accountant in a large state department. One of your jobs is to process claims for expenses. Senior state officials are allowed to claim for certain expenses such as business travel, accommodation at four-star hotels, meals while on business, and gifts given to foreign dignitaries. However, you have noticed several irregularities in the claims submitted to you. Claims for such things as five-star hotels, expensive hire cars, leisure trips, and meals with alcohol have been submitted to you. Claims are frequently not backed up with supporting documentation (receipts). Weeding out invalid claims is time-consuming, plus you are unhappy about your colleagues' lack of ethics.

- Write a memo in which you set out your concerns and establish guidelines for future claims.
- Try to write the memo without looking back at the format examples in your prescribed book.

Did you manage to format your memo correctly without having your prescribed book open in front of you? Give yourself a mark out of 20. Award marks as follows:

- 1 mark for the heading "Memo" (you may also have included the state department's name).
- 1 mark for your "From" line.
- 1 mark for your "To" line.
- 1 mark for the date.
- 1 mark for your "Subject" line (for example, "Expense claims").
- 1 mark if all of these are in the right order (Memo – From – To – Date – Subject).
- 5 marks for stating the problem (invalid claims, claims over budget, lack of receipts, lack of ethics, causing extra work for you).
- 1 mark for leaving a line open between paragraphs.
- 5 marks for laying out the solution (you could use point form or bullets to insist on documentation, standard operating procedures, budget regulations, etc.).
- 3 marks for proofreading your memo (no spelling errors!).

This is the second activity that you have marked yourself. As you can see, in exercises like these your correct use of format will earn high marks.

As you saw from the above activities, problems occur in a business environment when people do not follow the rules. In the next section, you will have an opportunity to set out those rules yourself.

Instructions and procedures

Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are a fact of business life. Employees need to know HOW to do their jobs – how to process documents, how to maintain quality, how to deal with clients, what records to keep, and who to pass them on to – and SOPs provide this valuable training.

Before attempting to draw up a SOP yourself, revise Section 4.4, entitled **Instructions and Procedures**, in your prescribed book.

Activity

3

Set your prescribed book aside.

Imagine you have joined a small boutique hotel called *The Pink House* as their accountant. Management has asked you to help develop a SOP for checking guests into the hotel. They are particularly worried about the method of payment (what can they do to avoid guests walking off without paying?). Some guests will have pre-booked; others will be walk-ins.

- Write the SOP for the reception staff, giving step-by-step instructions on how to check guests in and out, paying particular attention to financial aspects.
- Write at least five instructions.

You may have felt strange completing this activity because SOPs are written as directives or commands, and it can feel strange ordering people around. However, that is what business is all about!

Give yourself a mark out of 20 for your SOP. Award marks as follows:

- 1 mark for the heading “The Pink House Hotel”.
- 1 mark for the subheading “How to check in guests” (or similar).
- 2 marks for the heading “Purpose” and a clearly stated purpose such as: “The purpose of this SOP is to describe how to check guests into the hotel”.
- 2 marks for the heading “Scope” and an outline such as: “This SOP applies to all reception staff”.
- 1 mark for the heading “Definition” and at least one definition such as: “Walk-in: a guest who walks in off the street without a booking”.
- 2 marks for the heading “Affected departments” and a relevant outline such as: “Guest relations”.
- 1 mark for the subheading “Procedure”.
- 10 marks for your instructions, which should be numbered directives following a logical sequence of action. For example: “1. Greet guest and make small talk. 2. Establish whether this is a pre-booking or walk-in. 3. Request credit card with which booking was originally made. 4. In the case of a walk-in, request credit card or cash.”

In this activity you checked your working knowledge of the SOP format. As you completed the task, it should have dawned on you how necessary SOPs are for the running of any organisation.

Once you have risen high enough in an organisation to contribute to the writing of a SOP, the next step will be the task of writing a report. In the last part of this study unit, we will help you to check your basic understanding of how a report is put together.



4.5 Reports

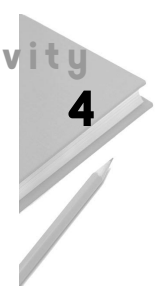
Long written documents such as reports can be confusing to read and daunting to write. Instead of feeling overwhelmed by its density, treat the report you have to read as you would a large fold-out map – it may look tricky at first, but you will soon find your way around it.

We are going to use parts of a real, published report to consolidate your understanding. First, read Section 4.5, entitled **Reports**, in your prescribed book (read up until the end of subsection 4.5.2, **Types of Report**).

From the above, you will learn that reports are made up of many sections. There are different types of report, but they all report findings.

Activity

4



Read the following extract from a report and answer the questions below:

The low level of financial literacy in South Africa has been recognised by various community-based organisations, the financial industry, government and other organisations, many of which have launched financial education projects. Financial literacy is also being incorporated into curricula developed by the Departments of Education and Labour. Furthermore, the financial sector has made a strong commitment to improving consumer financial literacy in the 2003 Financial Sector Charter (FSC) by explicitly committing 0,2% of its annual after-tax operating profits to financial literacy projects.

Against this background, FinMark Trust has appointed ECIAfrica to undertake a scoping study of financial literacy needs and activities in South Africa, paying particular attention to the Financial Sector Charter. FinMark Trust recognises that strengthening the financial market in South Africa requires improved financial literacy across all socio-economic groups, but particularly amongst more vulnerable people who have low incomes.

Source: ftp://ftp.fsp.co.za/public/Consumer%20Education/FinLit_%20Report.pdf

USED WITH THANKS TO ECIAfrica AND FINMARK TRUST.

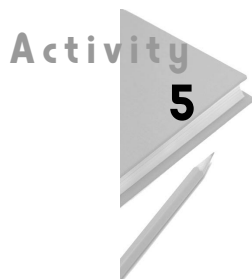
- Where in the report would you expect to find this extract – at the beginning or at the end?
- What makes you say so?
- What is this report about?

4.5.1 Terms of reference

Well done if you spotted immediately that this extract comes from the section entitled “Introduction” or “Terms of Reference”. As your prescribed book points out, this first section of a report must state the following:

- background to the report (South Africa’s low level of financial literacy; efforts to improve the level of financial literacy; etc);
- information about who asked whom to write the report (FinMark Trust appointed ECIAfrica); and
- purpose of the report (to study financial literacy needs and activities with particular reference to the Financial Charter).

Now let’s move further into the report with another activity.



Read the following extract from the same report and answer the questions below:

Given the project objectives of, firstly, a broad scoping study and, secondly, specific discussion points to be developed for implementation of the Charter, we consulted with a broad range of suppliers of financial literacy programmes (from government to consumer bodies, NGOs and private consulting companies). We also approached most of the major signatories to the Charter: industry bodies and individual institutions. The sample is, therefore, neither random nor inclusive, but does provide comprehensive insight into the types of programmes and strategies, and an in-depth analysis of selected programmes.

We attempted to identify most of the major programmes through a reiterative process of desk research, consultation and referral. To add depth to the study, and complement the material on learning and recommendations, we undertook a thorough analysis of global best practices. Finally, we developed a logical framework against which we could assess financial education programmes.

Source: ftp://ftp.fsp.co.za/public/Consumer%20Education/FinLit_%20Report.pdf

USED WITH THANKS TO ECIAfrica AND FINMARK TRUST.

- Under which heading in the report would you expect to find this extract?
- What makes you say so?

4.5.2 Methodology; procedure

Well done if you recognised quickly that this extract belongs under a heading such as “Methodology” or “Procedure”. As your prescribed book tells you, this section of a report tells the reader what methods were used to find information. In this case, the methods were:

Activity 6

- consultation with a broad range of suppliers of financial literacy programmes;
- consultation with major signatories to the Charter, including industry bodies and individual institutions;
- desk research, consultation and referral to identify major financial literacy programmes;
- a thorough analysis of global best practices; and
- development of a logical framework against which to assess financial education programmes.

Let's move on to another section of the report.

Read the following extract from the report and answer the questions below:

The South African marketplace has a plethora of financial education programmes varying in scope, purpose, outreach, nature and form of provider. However, a deeper analysis of some of the initiatives labelled “financial education” in South Africa, found that they were limited in scope and did not practically constitute financial education. Most notable are those initiatives where the focus is limited to product-specific information and the intent is market penetration rather than client education.

Source: ftp://ftp.fsp.co.za/public/Consumer%20Education/FinLit_%20Report.pdf

USED WITH THANKS TO ECIAfrica AND FINMARK TRUST.

- Under which heading in the report would you expect to find this extract?
- What makes you say so?

4.5.3 Findings and conclusions

Well done if you identified the above extract as part of the “Findings” of the report (if you looked closely you would even have discovered the word “found” in the extract). As your prescribed book tells you, a report’s findings set out what the researchers discovered as they carried out their methodology.

In the extracts from this particular report, we find that the “Findings” and “Conclusion” are run together, so that immediately after the above extract we read:

All in all, the financial education offered by the South African marketplace remains inadequate and practitioners perceive financial literacy levels as unacceptably low, particularly in poor communities.

Why is the above statement a conclusion rather than a finding? Let's relate this to a murder investigation: you could find that a suspect had blood on his/her hands; that he/she was in possession of the murder weapon; that he/she had a motive to murder; and that he/she had an opportunity to murder. But you cannot find that he/she was the murderer. This would be your (logical) conclusion.

Activity

7

To return to our example above, the report writers found that there were many so-called “financial education programmes”. They found that many of these did not actually teach financial education but rather marketed products (you can imagine a consultant “educating” a client about a life policy when, in fact, he wants to sell the policy in order to earn a commission). Based on these findings, the report writers concluded that there is poor financial education in South Africa.

As you can tell from the complexity of our discussion, we are deep inside the report. The good news is that we are about to come out on the other side.

Read the following extract from the report and answer the questions below:

Encourage standardisation and accreditation of classroom-based programmes through the NQF and SAQA. Also facilitate the development of “train-the-trainer” courses and encourage providers of financial education to attend such courses.

Assess and monitor financial literacy levels in South Africa. A national study should be undertaken to benchmark financial literacy levels and ascertain financial education needs within the various segments of the population.

Source: ftp://ftp.fsp.co.za/public/Consumer%20Education/FinLit_%20Report.pdf

USED WITH THANKS TO ECIAfrica AND FINMARK TRUST.

- Under which heading in the report would you expect to find this extract?
- What makes you say so?

4.5.4 Recommendations

Well done if you saw immediately that this extract forms part of the “Recommendations” of the report. As your prescribed book points out, recommendations make suggestions about a course of action to solve a problem. The word “should”, plus the directives (“Encourage ... Assess”) were your clues here.

You have now worked through the main sections of the report, familiarising yourself with them. All reports use these sections in one way or another. It may seem difficult now, but soon reading and writing reports will be like unfolding a well-known map.

4.6

Summary

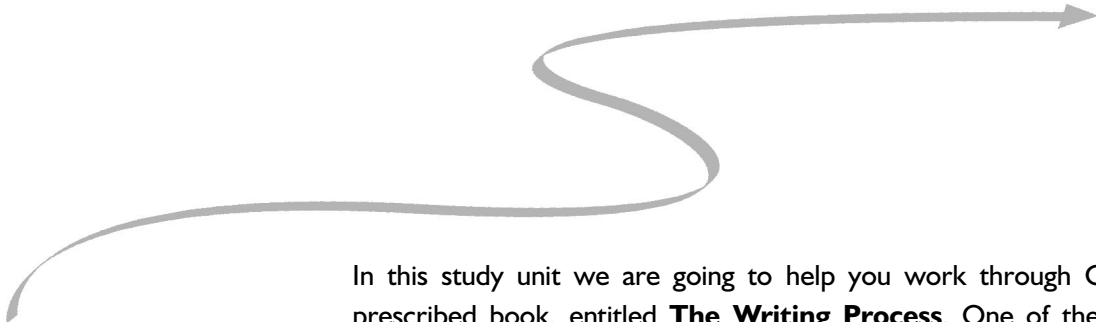
In this study unit you have put in some serious practice with business writing formats, from the relatively easy letter and memo to the demanding SOP and report.

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 Do you put off writing tasks until the last minute?
- 2 Do you do badly in written exams?
- 3 Do you struggle with exam rubrics?
- 4 Can you get down and plan a piece of writing?
- 5 Once you've finished planning, can you take your writing through to completion?

KEY CONCEPTS

Task analysis; rubric; writing purpose; task words; collecting ideas; paragraph plan; topic sentences; introduction; conclusion; paragraph development; connections; final draft; edit; succinctness; clarity; and proofread.



5.1 Introduction

In this study unit we are going to help you work through Chapter 5 of your prescribed book, entitled **The Writing Process**. One of the problems with a chapter like this is that students think it is unimportant because it does not give them a chunk of information to study. Instead, it teaches a method of how to approach a writing task. To get the most out of this chapter you need to apply the techniques. You need to get your hands dirty (well, at least inky!) and do some writing.

What is the reward for you? As Chapter 5 of your prescribed book constantly reminds you, examiners of advanced accounting exams complain bitterly about the poor writing skills of candidates. Rather than trying to fix your bad habits when it is too late, start now with a fresh, focused attitude towards writing.

Every piece of writing, no matter how long or how clever, starts somewhere. It probably doesn't start with beautiful, long, full sentences, but rather with a few jottings on a page.

5.2.1 Task analysis

Writing well starts with a strong sense of purpose and audience. If you know WHY you are writing and WHO you are writing for, you will be filled with energy and direction.

Unfortunately, our fear of strangers and superiors, as well as exam nerves and work stress, can make sitting down to write an unpleasant chore. Distance education makes writing even harder because you often do not know who will be reading or assessing your work. Try to picture someone who wants you to do well. Picture this person with a large pile of marking: kind, but busy.

You have your audience in mind. Now you need to produce an answer that this basically kind but very busy person will appreciate: an answer that goes straight to the point in good, clear English.

As your prescribed book tells you, sit down and break your writing task (rubric) into little bits. Do not just read the rubric; attack it with your pen. Underline the task words (Explain ... Identify ... Advise ...). Circle the keywords. Number the different things you are being instructed to do.

And feel good about yourself! Very few students adequately examine the rubric and follow it to the letter. By concentrating on exactly what the task is, you are setting yourself apart from – and above – the herd. Well done!



Skim through Section 5.2, **Task Analysis**, in your prescribed book and find the seven task words which this section alerts you to. In each case, highlight the bulleted list which tells you how these task words should be approached.

Now respond briefly to each of the following questions, making sure that your answer corresponds to the task word:

- My neighbour's son is very noisy and his shouting and swearing disturb me when I work. As he has just come back from reform school, I am afraid to approach him directly. Advise me.
- What is the difference between a debit card and a credit card? Explain.

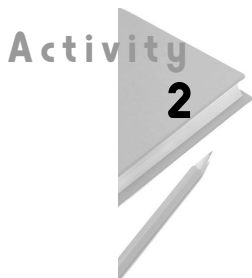
- Think about the different jobs your family and friends have. Identify one who could be classed as running a small business.
- Read over today's business news headlines in a newspaper. Analyse the information in one of the articles, giving your own interpretation of the news report.
- What do accountants do? Define your chosen career.
- List three typical small business opportunities.
- Summarise what you have done so far today.

Reflect on what you have just done. For each question, you subtly adjusted your response according to whether you were asked to advise, explain, identify, analyse, define, list or summarise. Congratulations on flexing your intellectual muscle in this way, and remember to use this well-developed muscle in every test or examination situation.

5.2.2 The planning stage

Writing something is easier once you've planned it. In your prescribed book, skim Section 5.3, entitled **The Planning Stage**, and find the three aspects of the planning stage.

In the following activity, you will begin to plan a memo. As mentioned at the beginning of this study unit, writing is a practical skill which will only improve through practise.



You work for a Johannesburg-based investor who likes to make snap decisions. Today he has an opportunity to invest in a tanzanite mining enterprise. He wants a 500-word memo from you, telling him what tanzanite is and what the advantages and disadvantages of investing in it would be. He wants to hear your opinion, but he will ultimately make his own decision.

You have collected the following rough notes from three sources. Your fourth source (in a magazine article format) needs to be reworked into your own rough notes (similar to what we have done for you with the other three sources). Once you have compiled your own rough notes, read through all of the rough notes (those provided and your own) and draw up a paragraph plan, with topic sentences, for your memo. Hurry – it's urgent!

Text 1:

Notes taken from "An Investment Guide to Tanzania" published by UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), sourced at:

<http://www.unctad.org/Templates/WebFlyer.asp?intlItemID=3449&lang=1>

- The United Republic of Tanzania, formed in 1964.
- Multiparty democracy.
- Politically stable.

- Mining attracts a number of foreign investors.
- Third largest gold producer in Africa.
- Poor transport infrastructure, limited labour skills and excessive bureaucracy.
- Steadily growing economy.

Text 2:

Notes taken from “Tanzanite Price History” by Tanzanite Authority, sourced at:
<http://www.tanzaniteauthority.com/downloads/tanzaniteauthoritytanzanitepricehistory.pdf>

USED WITH THANKS TO JOSH ROBBINS FROM TANZANITE AUTHORITY AND TANZANITE-GEMSTONE.

- At first, tanzanite exclusively marketed by Tiffany & Co (1970s–1980s).
- Demand for tanzanite rose substantially during the 1980s, to the extent where demand actually outstripped supply ... prices skyrocketed.
- Heavy mining led to price drop.
- Tanzanian government closed some mines, which led to prices rising again.
- Prices in 1998 ranging from \$310 to \$400 for the top grade.
- Prices in 2005 approximately \$600 per carat.
- Today: wholesale prices of the top 1% of material fetch between \$600 and \$1,200 per carat. Sapphex in Australia charges \$1,200 AUD per carat for the finest quality tanzanite, and Tanzanite International charges \$2,500 per carat. Stores in Malaysia charge over \$2,000 per carat for AAA grade tanzanite, and airport boutiques in SA charge \$2,500 per carat.
- Tanzanite outsells diamonds in some parts of the world.
- TanzaniteOne owns the rights to mine most rough tanzanite.
- TanzaniteOne does extensive marketing of the gem.
- Very difficult to predict what the price of tanzanite will be in future – possible from \$10,000 to \$15,000 per carat during the next decade.
- Supply is finite.
- Demand for the stone continues to rise.
- Developing markets such as India and China continue to drive demand upwards.

Text 3:

Notes taken from “Tanzanite: Merelani Marvel”, sourced at:
<https://glimmerdream.com/gemjourneys/tanzanite/history>

- Northern Tanzania, where tanzanite industry is based, has strong ties to Islamic North Africa.
- Americans buy about \$300million of tanzanite per year.
- Most popular coloured gem after the sapphire.
- “The Midnight Blue” (122,7 carat tanzanite specimen) is on display in the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History.
- Largest flawless tanzanite ever polished is a 52-carat oval stone set in a platinum ring and surrounded by blue-white diamonds, valued at over

R1 million. It is currently on display at the Clock Tower Precinct at the Victoria and Albert Waterfront.

Text 4:

Read the following article: “Romancing a New Stone” by Sarah Larenaudie. This article can be found at www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1594137-2,00.html

Source: *Time Magazine*, Thursday, March 1, 2007

How did you manage with this practical planning task? You will have noticed that although the notes contained necessary information, the information was jumbled, and thus it needed your organising skills. Bearing in mind the task you were asked to perform, your paragraph plan might have looked as follows:

Paragraph 1: Tanzanite: what it is, where it comes from, important facts about it.

Topic sentence: *Tanzanite is a blue gemstone found only in one location in Tanzania, ranking after the “big four” (diamonds, rubies, sapphires and emeralds) in popularity.*

Paragraph 2: Advantages to investment.

Topic sentence: *The tanzanite industry has become much better regulated and the gem fetches high prices.*

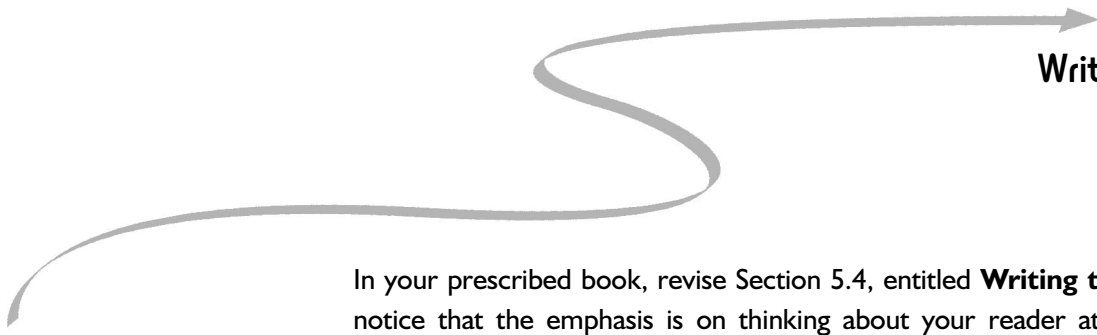
Paragraph 3: Disadvantages to investment.

Topic sentence: *Investing in Tanzania carries certain risks.*

Paragraph 4: Recommendation.

Topic sentence: *Tanzanite is a good investment.*

Do you see how the paragraph plan takes into account all the reading you have done and sorts it into an ordered document? Now you are ready to start writing the body.



5.3 Writing the body

In your prescribed book, revise Section 5.4, entitled **Writing the Body**. You will notice that the emphasis is on thinking about your reader at every stage. You cannot afford to lose your reader’s attention: it may cost you marks in an examination; and one day it might even cost you your job.



Write the body of your memo about tanzanite. You can use the paragraph plan from the previous activity (your own or the one supplied). Remember that you have a 500-word limit. Also remember that you are writing this memo for a busy man who needs the information urgently.

How did you find this activity? Writing can be frustrating – difficult to know where to begin and how to link ideas. Judging your own writing can also be very tricky. Check your work against the following criteria.

Start with your introduction. Your introduction should ideally start with the word “tanzanite” itself. It should also answer the following questions:

- What is tanzanite?
- Where is it mined?
- Who is the main buyer/s of Tanzanite?
- What are the top prices being paid?

By answering these questions, you will be orientating your reader immediately. Your boss needs to know a few essential facts about tanzanite, facts that will whet his appetite for more information.

Your second paragraph should be more focused. In the suggested paragraph outline, paragraph 2 was about the advantages of investing in tanzanite mining. You could have taken a different angle. At this stage, with your introduction completed, you need to give more detail. For example:

The tanzanite industry has become much better regulated and the gem fetches high prices. This is partly due to TanzaniteOne’s successful advertising campaign, “Be born to Tanzanite”. The rareness of the gem and its attractive colour have also secured its popularity in America and South Africa.

If you used linking words (such as those underlined above) to add extra unity to your paragraph – well done! If your third paragraph gave the disadvantages of investing in tanzanite, then you could have indicated the link between them by beginning with “On the other hand ...” or “From a less optimistic perspective ...”.

Finally, check your conclusion. Now the time for giving both sides of the story is over. You needed to come out with a strong recommendation for or against. You will need to make decisions like this in your final exams and throughout your career. Be prepared to stick your neck out. Base your decision on your reading and research, as well as on your instincts. And use logic and reasoning to support your point of view. Be bold! For example:

I would recommend the investment based on the current stability of the industry and the high current and projected prices of the gem.

Or, if you think the opposite:

I would warn against investing in tanzanite. The gem has a limited market that is

not durable; it is mined in a country with bureaucratic challenges; and it is traded in a monopolistic fashion.

Your memo is written: time to give it a final polish.

5.4 Final draft

As you revise Section 5.5, **Final Draft**, in your prescribed book, you will see that you are aiming for:

- succinctness (brevity);
- clarity (clearness);
- coherence (unity); and
- perfection (all silly errors removed).

You may think that this stage is a waste of time. On the contrary, a few extra minutes spent producing a clean final draft will set you far apart from other students and employees. You will gain a reputation for precision, clarity and perfectionism.

Activity 4

Read the following article: “*Tanzanite Gemstones – How Rare are They and How Long Will They Last*” by Christina Klube. This article can be found at <http://ezinearticles.com/?Tanzanite-Gemstones-How-Rare-Are-They-and-How-Long-Will-They-Last&id=1529754>

Source: Ezine Articles, September 25, 2008

Read through the mentioned text that is 261 words in length. Reduce it to 150 words. The text is also poorly written, with unnecessary repetition. Correct the grammatical errors and try to give it greater clarity. Try to group its ideas so that it does not jump around so much.

Did you find it easy to spot the errors in the text? Let’s see which ones you noticed.

5.4.1 Correcting poor grammar

Here you could bring everything you have learnt about correct grammar into play.

Examples of poor grammar	Correction
<i>The rare and unusual conditions the earth has provided to create these stones makes it highly unlikely that <u>it</u> will ever be found in any other location ever again.</i>	The noun is “these stones”, therefore, the pronoun needs to be plural too (“they”).
<i>Tanzanite gemstones get their name from the only location <u>it</u> is found, Tanzania.</i>	The noun is “gemstones”, therefore, the pronoun needs to be plural too (“they”).
<i>A very short time period considering it was discovered in 1964 by a farmer <u>on</u> accident.</i>	This sentence is a fragment. It needs a main verb. In addition, the preposition “on” needs to be replaced with “by”.
<i><u>Less</u> tanzanite gemstones are mined every year.</i>	We use the word “less” with non-count nouns (“This room needs less furniture”). With count nouns (for example, “gemstones”) we use “fewer”.
<i>These precious stones are in such demand that you <u>wont</u> have a hard time finding someone to take it off your hands, for a decent profit.</i>	The word “won’t” lacks an apostrophe in this text. Once again, “it” should be replaced with a plural pronoun, “them”. The comma needs to be deleted.

5.4.2 Examples of unnecessary repetition

The text repeats the phrase “as of right now ...”. This is irritating. Your reader assumes that you are writing about the present unless you indicate otherwise. The writer also repeats the word “rare” and the phrases “only location” and “30 years”. Notice how the word “ever” is repeated in the second sentence: this type of carelessness can really put your reader off. In short texts, state each idea only once.

5.4.3 Revising for clarity

When authors do not reread their texts, they frequently leave us in confusion about their meaning.

Examples of lack of clarity	Correction
<i>As of right now it is possible to purchase tanzanite gemstones at a reasonable price, but keep in mind that the value of tanzanite stones has more than tripled since 2003.</i>	This sentence needs to be rephrased so that the reason for the warning is clear. Try rephrasing the sentence by beginning with: “Although it is possible ...”.

Examples of lack of clarity	Correction
<i>So if you're in the market for tanzanite gemstones now is the time to start investing, whether you just want to collect, make a quick profit, or hold over time for a huge profit, the important thing is that you get your hands on some loose tanzanite gemstones now.</i>	Repetition and sentence length have combined to make this a jumbled sentence. Try to rewrite it, taking care not to repeat the word "now". The idea of "being in the market" is repeated in the idea of collecting, etc: use either one or the other.

When you've finished editing in this careful, self-critical way, print or write out a clean copy of your text. And that's all there is to it.

5.5 Summary

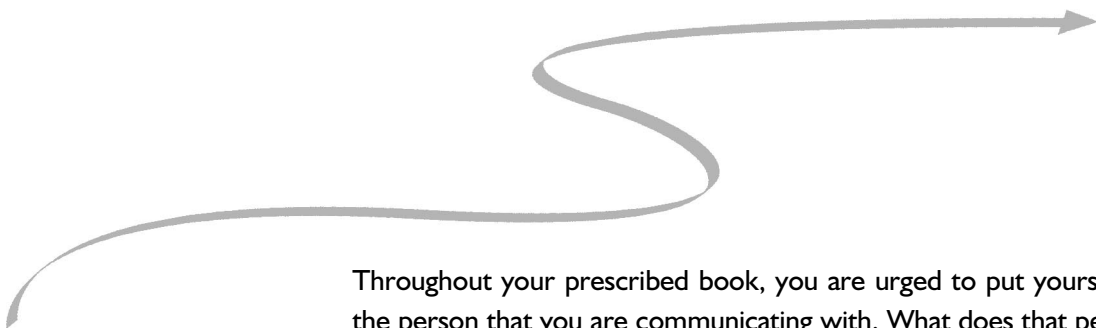
Good writing skills are called for in all senior management jobs. Don't think, "But I'm not a good writer". Anyone can improve their writing. Approach your writing tasks in a step-by-step manner. Spend time analysing your task and really focusing on WHY you're writing and WHO you're writing for. Plan your text. Research it, brainstorm it and then bash out a paragraph plan. The rest is simply a matter of developing your ideas into clear, grammatical sentences. Never hand in any text without giving it a final edit. Aim to set yourself apart from the rest through your writing. Now that you have grasped the writing process, you are ready for the challenge of persuasive writing.

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 Are you confident about expressing an opinion?
- 2 How do you feel about offering your opinion in an exam answer?
- 3 Do you worry that your opinion might conflict with your examiner's opinion?
- 4 Can you justify your opinion with strong reasons?
- 5 Do you know how to use logic to build up an argument?
- 6 How can you win over your reader or examiner to your point of view?
- 7 Can you fix the common errors that make your writing unconvincing?

KEY CONCEPTS

Argumentative writing; task analysis; reasoning; support; thesis statement; pre-mises; bias; prejudice; assumptions; over-generalisations; illogical links; cause and effect; persuasive writing; appeal to reason; appeal to emotion; appeal to ethos; fixing common errors; ambiguity; word choice; awkward phrasing; fragments; article errors; apostrophe errors; wordiness; tense shifts; and illogical statements.



6.1 Introduction

Throughout your prescribed book, you are urged to put yourself in the shoes of the person that you are communicating with. What does that person see and hear when they look at you? Your marker in the examination – how does that important person assess your value? Later, in the boardroom, how do your colleagues see you? Do you make sense to them? Do they respect you?

In this study unit, we will go through Chapter 6, **Persuasive Writing**, of your prescribed book together, looking for ways in which you can become a more persuasive communicator. We will put you in the role of listener/reader as we assess students' exam essays. Your responses will help you to understand what your prescribed book means when stressing the importance of logical argument and reasoning.

Millicent¹ is hoping to enrol for a BA at a university, but first she has to complete an access course. Part of this course involves essay writing. Millicent is looking at her first topic right now:

South Africa is a violent society. Do you agree or disagree? Write an essay in support of your opinion.

Millicent is worried that she might lose marks if she supports an opinion which her lecturer does not share. She hits on a plan. She will write in support of both sides of the argument. This is what she writes:

South Africa is not a violent society. It is a peaceful society with a constitution based on democratic principles. It is a society with a Bill of Rights which protects individuals from abuse.

South Africa is a violent society because of crime. There is a strongly developed culture of gangsterism. There is also a high level of domestic violence and child abuse. Many of these crimes are committed with violence.

She looks over her work with satisfaction. She is sure that she has covered all her bases.

Activity

1

What would you say to Millicent if you were her peer counsellor?

- Write Millicent a note making a polite suggestion about the approach she is taking.
- Remember that as a peer counsellor, you may not actually write Millicent's essay for her. You may only provide guidance.

How did you find this activity? Did you manage to stay calm and helpful? Let's hope so! Here is one possible way of providing guidance:

Dear Millicent

I can see that you are battling with this question. I am guessing that you are afraid of taking sides and that is why you have argued both for and against the proposition.

I do not think this is a very good idea. Your lecturer has asked you directly: "do you agree or disagree?" If you do not come out clearly with an opinion, you will not have answered the question. That makes lecturers cross.

¹ Millicent is a fictional character.

I suggest you sit down and think about violence in South Africa. Think about your own experiences, plus what you have read in the newspaper and seen on TV. Then write down *your* point of view. Your lecturer genuinely wants to know what you think, I promise you that. Try to make him/her happy!

Kind regards

Your counsellor

If your note contained something like the above, then you have grasped what Chapter 6 of your prescribed book says on Sections 6.2 (**Argumentative Writing Tasks**) and 6.3 (**Analyse the Task**). If not, you need to revise these sections now.

6.3

Millicent's opening sentence

Millicent has read your note to her and she agrees that she should change her approach. She has decided that she wants to argue that South Africa is indeed a violent society. This is how her second attempt begins:

I personally firmly agree with the topic above. South Africans are thugs and criminals.

Millicent is sure you will approve of her new approach and she mails you her opening.

Activity 2

As Millicent's peer counsellor, what will you say to her about her opening sentences?

- Write Millicent a note making a polite suggestion about how she could improve her opening gambit.
- Try to help her form a logical argument with logical premises (revise subsections 6.4.1, 6.4.2 and 6.4.3 in your prescribed book if you are confused).

How did you respond to Millicent's essay opening? As you know from your study of previous chapters, an opening sentence needs to be strong and refer directly to the rubric. Your mail to Millicent may have read as follows:

Dear Millicent

You are on the right track now. However, you need to be more direct and precise. "The topic above" could apply to anything. Remember that your lecturer may be marking essays on other topics as well. He/she will wonder: which topic does this student agree with?

In addition to stating your view directly, you might like to develop it into what we call a “thesis statement” – a statement of strong belief, backed up by logical building blocks which we call “premises”. Let’s imagine that the topic you are arguing is: *Many South Africans are financially illiterate.*

This is your belief. You can see evidence all around you that your thesis statement is true. But you still need to prove your thesis by building up to it logically. For example:

Premise 1: The financial literacy of a society may be determined by the number of its citizens who understand money well enough to manage a personal bank account.

Premise 2: In South Africa, only 60% of adults have a bank account.

Thesis: Therefore, a large proportion of South Africans are financially illiterate.

Before I sign off, I would like to point out that your statement, “South Africans are thugs and criminals” is an over-generalisation. Good gracious, Millicent: just because we do have a crime problem does not make EVERYONE in South Africa a criminal!

Kind regards

Your counsellor

If your note contained something like the above, then you have grasped what Chapter 6 of your prescribed book says on subsections 6.4.1 (**Establish a Thesis Statement**), 6.4.2 (**Establish Premises**) and 6.4.3 (**Avoid Flaws in Reasoning**). If not, you need to revise these sections now.

6.4

Millicent’s chain of cause and effect

Millicent writes to thank you for all your help so far. She is making progress with her essay. She’s moved into the body now, and is putting forward some of her reasons for believing that South Africa is a violent society. Here are two of the paragraphs that she sends you:

The police are even involved in crime, helping criminals to escape from jail and illegally selling the firearms they receive from convicted criminals. The killing of innocent people by taxis involved in taxi wars, and the poor condition of the vehicles they use to carry people, is another shocking example of our violent society.

South Africa’s poor standard of infrastructure is also a major concern. Everywhere there are poor roads, poor playing fields, inadequate sanitation and electricity, and a lack of community facilities. Clearly, South Africa is a violent society.

Activity 3

Millicent is keen to hear what you think of the way her argument is developing.

Reply to Millicent's mail. In particular, comment on:

- The relevance of what she is saying to the topic under discussion.
- The links between her ideas.

How did you respond to Millicent's paragraphs? I hope you remained calm! You may have noticed certain problems with logic in Millicent's writing. Perhaps you replied with a message such as:

Dear Millicent

Gosh, your mind is really working overtime! You have got a lot of ideas here, but you need to help your reader (your lecturer – the one who is going to give you a mark!) to see how your ideas are linked to each other. You also need to deal with separate ideas separately.

If the police help criminals escape, is that in itself a violent act? No, it usually simply involves standing back and letting the criminals go past. You need to show how prison breaks actually contribute to violence (remember: your essay is about violence). For example, you might want to point out that South Africa is a violent society because violent individuals are illegally released from safe custody.

You raise the issue of illegal firearms, which is good. Maybe you could say more about how firearms contribute to violence (armed robberies, gang murders, etc)?

I am, however, a bit puzzled about how South Africa's poor infrastructure relates to crime. Could you elaborate and make the logical link clear? Maybe you want to argue that because there are no community centres, youths turn to crime? Or, because citizens feel undervalued by society (its poor infrastructure) they, in turn, undervalue human life?

I hope this helps!

Your counsellor

Millicent's problem, as you identified in your mail, lies in the logical skill of linking cause and effect. You can revise this skill in subsection 6.4.4 of your prescribed book, by looking at the given examples.

Millicent's appeal to reason and emotion

You have been reading (in your prescribed book) how Aristotle said that we can persuade others by appealing to reason, emotion and reputation. You are concerned about Millicent's failure, in her opinion essay, to appeal to these three qualities.

Activity

4

Write to Millicent, giving her some tips and suggestions on how she could use the following in her essay on violence:

- appeal to reason;
- appeal to emotion; and
- appeal to reputation.

Did you find it difficult to give Millicent tips on how to be more persuasive? Here you had to stand back and think: "What could she say that would convince me?" or "What is missing from this essay?". You may have come up with very different approaches for Millicent to try:

Dear Millicent

I have been lying awake thinking about your essay! For your essay to be more convincing, I think it needs to appeal more to reason. Put simply, your essay needs some hard facts. Unfortunately, crime statistics in South Africa have been hard to come by in recent years. Nevertheless, I still feel that you could find some impressive numbers to quote. If you are able to quote reputable sources, then you will be appealing not only to reason but also to reputation.

I have found a few examples for you to use in your essay. Did you know that in a 1998–2000 United Nations survey, South Africa ranked number two in the world for assault and murder? Did you know that in 2006, 55,000 women reported that they were raped – and that www.rape.co.za estimates a further 450,000 women simply did not report their rapes? Over a thousand women are raped in this country every day. In Gauteng, one in every six women who dies has been killed by an intimate partner. Maybe your essay could focus on violence against women?

These numbers will definitely help to make your essay more persuasive. You can also study the numbers and draw your own conclusions, for example, you could conclude that women are the main victims of violence in South Africa.

Apart from reason and reputation, your essay needs to appeal to emotion. I am going to ask you a very sensitive question now, Millicent. Have you ever been the victim of violence? Has anyone ever hurt you or hijacked you or robbed you? Have you seen it happen to anyone else? I believe that your essay could be even more convincing if you

included a real-life scenario. For example: “One night I was lying asleep in my bed. I’d had a hard day looking after my baby and doing the housework. At about midnight, I was shaken awake rudely by my partner, who started to accuse me ...”.

You do not have to do this if you feel uncomfortable – I just want to point out that it is sometimes possible to forge a very strong bond with your reader by sharing something personal.

Kind regards

Your counsellor

6.6

Millicent’s conclusion

You have done very well in helping Millicent complete her essay. She is ready to submit, but needs a last little bit of help from you. This is her conclusion, which she has sent you:

The violence in South Africa has become endemic – it is everywhere and growing every day exponentially, completely dominating our lives. Irregardless of whether you were rich or poor, you cannot avoid becoming a victim of violence. Particularly if you are a woman. They say that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world, but at the rate women and children are being killed in this country, there will be no one left to rock.

Activity 5

Help Millicent to fix up a few things in her conclusion. These are the things that worry you:

- 1 You are not happy about her use of the article in her opening sentence.
 - 2 You also feel that this opening sentence suffers from wordiness – it needs to be cut down.
 - 3 You are not happy about “irregardless”.
 - 4 You are not happy about the switch in tense in that sentence, either.
 - 5 The sentence beginning with “Particularly” seems wrong to you.
 - 6 You are not happy about the ambiguity of the last sentence.
- Try to correct Millicent’s errors (you can correct them directly on the page).
 - You may need to first revise Section 6.6, **Fixing Common Errors**, in your prescribed book.

How did you manage in this final language activity? Well done if you managed to fix up Millicent's conclusion as follows:

Millicent's original version	Your corrected version
<u>The violence in South Africa has become endemic – it is everywhere and growing every day exponentially, completely dominating our lives.</u>	Violence in South Africa has become endemic.
<u>Irregardless of whether you were rich or poor, you cannot avoid becoming a victim of violence.</u>	Regardless of whether you are rich or poor, you cannot avoid becoming a victim of violence.
<u>Particularly if you are a woman.</u>	You are even more likely to suffer violence if you are a woman.
They say that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world, but at the rate women and children are being killed in this country, there will be no one left to rock.	Sadly, it is not the hand that rocks the cradle rules our world, but the hand that smashes, grabs and mutilates.

Do not worry if some of your suggestions were different. For example, you may have cut less of Millicent's opening sentence, or altered her closing sentence differently. What does matter is that you engaged closely with the text, pushing it towards logical expression and convincing argument. Congratulations on your achievement!

From the next study unit onwards, we will be moving away from a close study of language and back to the theory of communication. However, you should carry an awareness of language with you wherever you go. The study of language does not end when you turn this page: it is a lifetime's endeavour.

6.7 Summary

In this study unit, you practised one of the oldest and most important techniques in education: logic. You learnt how to develop a strong argument backed by excellent reasons and expressed in a convincing, appealing voice. Take the lessons learnt in this study unit with you into every exam and every debate you encounter.



STUDY UNIT 7

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION AND LISTENING

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 Do you find that you judge people before they have even opened their mouths to speak?
- 2 What do you do with your hands when you are nervous?
- 3 How do you feel when someone smiles at you with their mouth only; no crinkling of the eyes?
- 4 Have you noticed how many different styles of physical greeting there are?
- 5 Has anyone ever said to you: "I can tell that you're not happy" before you've said a word?
- 6 Can you sometimes tell from a distance that two people are angry with each other or attracted to each other?
- 7 Do you sometimes have to admit: "I can't remember what he/she said?"
- 8 Have you ever had to say to someone: "But I told you ..."?
- 9 Do you sometimes wish that the people around you would listen to you more attentively?
- 10 Are you ready to develop a sensitivity to nonverbal communication into a powerful tool?

KEY CONCEPTS

Nonverbal communication; intentional messages; unintentional messages; body language; silent messages; nonverbal cues; functions of nonverbal communication; reinforcing; complementing; contradicting; replacing; regulating; facial expression; eye contact; gestures and posture; touching behaviour; use of space and time; vocal characteristics; personal appearance; reading between the lines; brand imaging; layout; typeface; tone; active listening vs. hearing; listening for content; critical listening; empathetic listening; external noises; internal noises; cultural barriers; and efficient listening skills.

7.1 Introduction

When you think of the word "communication", you may think of certain words and how we use them. The amazing fact you will discover in Chapter 7 (**Non-verbal Communication and Listening**) of your prescribed book is that, in fact, up to 70% of our communication takes place nonverbally that is, without words.

Think about this for a moment. You receive hundreds of signals from the way people dress, make eye contact, and make gestures. You do not just listen to a person's words, you watch them as they speak, deciding whether you like them, believe them, fear them, trust them or reject them. Similarly, even before you have begun to read the text on a page you have formed an impression from the layout and typeface. All of these messages come to you nonverbally.

In this study unit, we will go through Chapter 7 of your prescribed book together, making sure you understand how nonverbal cues and the way in which we listen contribute so substantially to the messages we send and receive each day.

7.2

Why we need nonverbal communication skills

Clearly, if 70% of the messages we send out and receive are nonverbal, it is incredibly important that we develop skills in this area. In your chosen career, you might use nonverbal communication skills to:

- arrange your office so that it is friendly to visitors rather than dominated by an imposing (and distancing) desk;
- adjust your body language according to the cultural background of your clients;
- use facial expressions to show that you are interested in and listening to colleagues;
- pick up signals about your clients' and colleagues' mood from their gestures and expressions; and
- use your tone of voice and posture to control situations and increase your own power.

All of this will be possible once you have attuned yourself to nonverbal communication. Read Section 7.1, **Introduction**, in your prescribed book now, and then do Activities 7.1 and 7.2.

Let's revise what you have learnt so far. First of all, did you find the definition of nonverbal communication? Go back and underline it now. Now reflect on the meaning of what you have read. What do you think is the difference between an intentional message and an unintentional message?



Go back to the scenario (page 135) in Section 7.1 of your prescribed book. Find one example of an intentional message and one example of an unintentional message.

The purpose of this activity was not just to help you remember the distinction between intentional and unintentional messages. Once you have clarified these two types of message in your mind, you will be able to control (at least in some measure) both the messages you send out intentionally (for example, a friendly, welcoming smile) and the messages you send out unintentionally (for example, a habit like putting your hand over your mouth while you listen).

In the mentioned scenario, did you spot the intentional messages? Throwing a bottle of water at the black commentators sent an intentional message of aggression and contempt. Wearing Blue Bulls paraphernalia sent out an intentional message of support for one of the teams. It also unfortunately sent out an unintentional message of being a “typical” rugby supporter who supports old-style South African prejudices and insensitivities. This unintentional meaning was, however, proved wrong.

Conversely, as Activity 7.2 in your prescribed book brought home to you, there are plenty of occasions where we send out unintentional messages that are a true reflection of our feelings. What was your response to this activity? You may exhibit some of the following nonverbal behaviours:

- When you don’t believe someone, you raise your eyebrows and sigh.
- When you feel weak and powerless, your eyes grow wider and you keep very still.
- When you like someone, you unintentionally “mirror” their gestures, folding your arms in the same way or adopting a similar posture.
- When you’re in a lift, you keep your arms close to your body as if protecting yourself.
- When you’re bored, your eyes drift away and find something else to focus on.
- When you’re attracted to someone, you find playful excuses to touch them.
- When you’re anxious about how you appear, you fiddle with your clothing.
- When you’re very angry, you refuse to sit down even when invited to do so.
- When you don’t like someone, you smile at them but your smile doesn’t reach your eyes.
- When you want to comfort a child, you bring yourself down to his/her level.

These are just a few examples of nonverbal behaviour.

7.2.1 Problems with the interpretation of nonverbal communication

Now that you are getting the hang of what nonverbal communication is, try to notice it all around you, as Activity 7.2 in your prescribed book suggests. Watch how skilled communicators use body language to appear confident, relaxed and approachable. Watch how skilled public speakers use hand gestures. Start to be more observant of yourself too and consider the following:

- Is your shyness coming across as a lack of interest?
- When you sit far away from the CEO at the meeting table, do you know that you are signalling that you don't want to participate in the discussion?
- When you keep standing while someone else is sitting, do you know that you might be making them feel uncomfortable?
- When you speak too softly do you realise that you are coming across as someone who lacks confidence?
- When you touch your face and nose while speaking, are you aware that your listener may find this disconcerting?

Looking at the previous bulleted list, you may realise that your nonverbal behaviour is sending out a message that you did not intend. Similarly, you may be misinterpreting the nonverbal behaviour of others. Let's see if you can help the recipient of the following nonverbal behaviours.

Activity 2

In the table below, various acts of nonverbal communication are interpreted negatively. In each case, suggest another, more positive interpretation of the behaviour.

Nonverbal communication	Negative interpretation	Positive interpretation
Debbie is shopping at the mall when she spots her old school friend, Yolande, whom she hasn't seen for ages. Debbie waves at Yolande, but Yolande merely glances in her direction and carries on walking through the mall.	Debbie thinks Yolande is snubbing her.	
Thabo greets Thuli, who was born in South Africa but grew up in America. Thabo continues to hold Thuli's hand for much longer than a normal Western handshake would last.	Thuli thinks that Thabo is trying to make a sexual advance.	
Thuli says something funny, which Thabo thinks really hits the nail on the head. He stretches out his open palm to Thuli.	Thuli wonders if he wants to hold her hand again.	
Debbie is sitting at her desk in her office. A woman she does not know knocks on her open door. Debbie indicates that the young woman should come inside. The young woman does so, and immediately sits down on a visitor's chair without being invited to do so.	Debbie thinks the young woman is rude.	

Did you find it easy to see where the problems lay? In each of the instances in the previous table, it would be possible to offer a positive interpretation of the non-verbal communication. Perhaps Yolande did not see Debbie, or perhaps she did not recognise her after all these years. Maybe Thabo wanted to maintain hand contact with Thuli in the affectionate African tradition. Later, Thabo probably wants Thuli to slap his open palm to indicate their mutual agreement. Maybe the young woman visiting Debbie's office wants to sit down immediately because she does not want to seem to be standing up in a position of superiority.

Each of these misinterpretations can be explained in terms of three reasons, as given in your prescribed book on page 137:

- Nonverbal messages do not always mean what we think they mean.
- Nonverbal behaviour needs to be understood in context.
- Nonverbal messages differ from culture to culture.

7.2.2 Functions of nonverbal communication

Now that you know how widespread nonverbal communication is, it is time to think in more detail about how nonverbal communication operates in a very similar way to language. Whereas in verbal communication sounds or letter combinations have meanings, in nonverbal communication, gestures and facial expressions have meaning. Think about the following:

- Have you ever watched or participated in a mime? Mime is a type of acting without words. A mime artist can depict an entire story simply through gestures. How is that possible?
- Do you ever mock your family, friends or enemies by adopting their typical mannerisms and gestures? Again, no words are necessary to conjure up the person you are referring to.
- Have you ever communicated with someone in a place where you had to keep quiet – for example, a room in which a baby has just fallen asleep, a church in which silent prayer is taking place? How did you manage to convey your message?

In your prescribed book, read through subsection 7.2.1, **Functions of Nonverbal Communication**, which lists the different functions of nonverbal communication.

Now try to identify the function of the nonverbal communication in each of the following instances:

Nonverbal communication	Function (i.e. reinforcing, complementing, contradicting, replacing, regulating)
1 A CEO looks at his watch and starts to gather his papers together towards the end of a discussion with a visitor.	
2 A teacher is hearing English orals from her class. A nervous boy is about to begin. He looks at her. She gestures slightly with her hand that he should begin.	
3 “Don’t!” shouts a young mother as she grabs a precious object out of the hands of her toddler.	
4 A woman drops a dish of hot food. “Oh no!” she shouts, and stamps her foot at the same time.	
5 Instead of saying: “I can’t hear you”, the recipient of a message cups his hand behind his ear.	
6 A woman who is crying says: “I’m fine”, in response to a query.	
7 You arrive at a crowded restaurant and a friend beckons to you from across the room to indicate that there is a seat available for you at that table.	

How easy did you find it to identify the function of these examples of nonverbal communication? We mentioned mime at the beginning of this section. In examples 5 and 7, the communicator uses a kind of mime to convey meaning. In these examples, the function of the nonverbal communication is to **replace** verbal communication.

In examples 1 and 2, gestures are used to **regulate the flow of verbal interaction**: to tell the boy he must start speaking, or to indicate to the visitor that no further discussion is possible. If the CEO said: “I’m sorry – I must rush off now”, while gathering his papers at the same time, then his gesture would be **complementing** his message (he is in a hurry). If the teacher added: “Please begin”, as she gestured, then she too would be complementing her message. This is the

function of the mother's gesture of grabbing the object from her toddler in example 3.

In example 4, the woman's gesture of stamping her foot **reinforces** her message of dismay and anger.

Finally, in example 6, we find that nonverbal communication (crying) **contradicts** the verbal communication ("I'm fine"). As your prescribed book says, we tend to believe the message that comes to us nonverbally in such cases.

7.2.3 Categories of nonverbal communication

At the beginning of this study unit, you learnt that up to 70% of communication takes place nonverbally. Do we produce all this nonverbal communication with our faces and hands alone?

Let us take an average day in your life and consider the role of nonverbal communication: early in the morning, you greet your child with a warm hug and a kiss. You whisper a sweet nothing into your child's ear and then make long and loving eye contact. You dress in a dark business suit with a crisp white shirt. At a traffic light, you stick your hand out of the window of your car to gesture to a vendor that you would like to buy a newspaper.

You arrive at work to find that someone has sent you flowers – your face at first registers surprise, and then happiness. Unfortunately, rushing across the road to fetch a takeaway coffee, you step in a dog turd. You look down at it with an expression of disgust.

A client from England arrives exactly on time for a meeting. You greet the client with a quick, firm handshake. The client looks like he might be ready to buy a product from you, so you start to talk faster in order to seal the deal.

Before work ends for the day, you have to attend another meeting. You notice that a new employee is slumped in his chair, looking very bored. You try to make eye contact with the new employee to indicate that his posture is offensive, but he carries on texting. Across the boardroom, another colleague catches your eye and you give each other a knowing glance.

The CEO enters and takes the seat at the head of the table. The CEO raises his voice when he addresses the new, badly behaved employee. As you leave the boardroom later, the CEO puts his arm around you, touching your rear as you leave the room. You feel uncomfortable about this and walk ahead to establish more distance.

After work, a friend from Italy meets you for a drink and greets you by kissing both cheeks. Your Italian friend speaks English with an accent which everybody finds very cute – much to the surprise of your Italian friend herself. In the same bar, you meet an African friend who shakes your hand, grabs your thumb and then continues the handshake. He is late but he doesn't make a big fuss about apologising, nor do you expect him to. The mood is casual and relaxed. You and your friends sit close together, with shoulders touching. You discuss among yourselves whether

Activity 4

your waiter is an art student because he has dreadlocks and is wearing an unusual shirt. You signal to the waiter for the bill by making a signing gesture.

All of these messages were received or sent nonverbally. Not all of them were simply hand gestures or facial expressions, though. In your prescribed book, read subsection 7.2.2, **Categories of Nonverbal Communication**, before doing the next activity.

Go through the description above of a day's nonverbal communication and identify examples of the six categories of nonverbal communication. In each case, add another example from your own recent experience. You can work in the table provided or directly onto the text.

Category of nonverbal communication	Examples from text and your own experience
1 Facial expression and eye contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
2 Gestures and posture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
3 Touching behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
4 Use of time and space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
5 Vocal characteristics/paralanguage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
6 Personal appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •

In this activity, you were able to categorise nonverbal communication. Your table may have contained details such as the following:

Category of nonverbal communication	Examples from text and your own experience
1 Facial expression and eye contact	Looking at child, at colleague. Winking; staring; glaring; raised eyebrows.
2 Gestures and posture	New employee slumped in chair. Signalling newspaper vendor. Pointing; thumbs up; thumbs down; waving; holding nose with fingers.
3 Touching behaviour	Handshakes; arm on back; hugging; kissing.
4 Use of time and space	Being punctual; being late; standing or sitting close; keeping distance.

Category of nonverbal communication	Examples from text and your own experience
5 Vocal characteristics/paralanguage	Whispering; shouting; speaking with an accent; adding emphasis to certain words.
6 Personal appearance	Business suit; dreadlocks.

Were you amazed by the many examples you were able to find? Now that you know how important and pervasive nonverbal communication is, it is time to reflect on how to improve your personal command of nonverbal communication.

7.2.4 Improving nonverbal communication

Some friends in their forties were reminiscing about the past. They laughed and teased each other as they remembered really silly things they used to do. Richard remembered how he always used to walk ahead of the girl he was taking out on a date: “I thought she would feel more confident if I was leading the way!”. Sipho laughed and said that because he was brought up in a strictly hierarchical society, he thought it was rude to make eye contact with his superiors: “My first bosses thought I was being rude by not looking them in the eye”. Then Cara confessed that she thought her boyfriends would leave her if she complained about their behaviour: “So I always said I was happy when inside I was miserable about how they were treating me!”. Sipho replied: “Those guys should have seen from your body language that you weren’t really happy!”.

If you were having this type of conversation with your friends, what would you all say? Do you think it’s true that we can modify our nonverbal behaviour so that we are more successful in business and personal encounters?

In your prescribed book, read the bulleted list of tips (page 148) on how you can improve your nonverbal communication before doing the next activity.



Reflect on the nonverbal messages you send. Answer the questions in the table below:

Category of nonverbal communication	Questions to ask yourself
I Facial expression and eye contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you make good eye contact without staring rudely? • Do you know how to disguise your extreme contempt or disgust in order to appear more polite? • Do you remember to smile pleasantly so that you seem approachable and confident?

Category of nonverbal communication	Questions to ask yourself
2 Gestures and posture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you avoid slouching, slumping and other offensive postures? • Are you aware of ways in which you can liven up presentations with appropriate gestures? • Do you try to keep irritating habits (finger drumming, ear cleaning) to a minimum?
3 Touching behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you adjust your handshake according to the preference of the other person? • Are you immediately aware when your recipient dislikes a particular form of touching (for example, ushering someone through a door by slightly prodding them on the back)? • Can you adjust your touching behaviour so that you seem warm and friendly rather than invasive?
4 Use of time and space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you aware of how different people view time, and can you adjust your punctuality to match their expectations? • Are you intuitive enough to know how much physical space your recipient prefers to have between you when you chat?
5 Vocal characteristics/paralanguage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you tried to bring your voice slightly lower so that you are taken more seriously? • Have you tried to use a calm voice when you are angry? • Do you know how to relax your breathing so that you do not burst into tears at a bad time? • Can you project your voice so that everybody in a crowded room can hear you? • Do you know how to emphasise important words when you speak?
6 Personal appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you aware of places and occasions to the extent that you can select exactly the right outfit (neither too formal nor too informal) for the occasion?

Improving your nonverbal communication is something that can only be done with practice. Be observant of others. Pay attention to the nonverbal behaviour of people you admire – are there any habits you could try to adopt yourself?

Nonverbal communication in written texts

How is it possible for written texts – which are, after all, full of words – to have a nonverbal component? As you learnt in Chapter 4 of your prescribed book, your eyes are so well trained that you can tell from a glance at a page whether the text in front of you is a letter, a funny birthday card, a child's book, an academic text or a page of business news. And that is before you have even read a single word. Yes, written texts do have a strong nonverbal component.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 7.2.3, **Nonverbal Communication in Written Texts**, before you do the next activity.

Activity 6

From your reading, identify the nonverbal signals that a text gives out. For example, how does a text indicate to you that something is a list? Or that a particular word is important? How does a text indicate to you nonverbally that a new section is about to begin? How does the lettering on a wedding or bereavement card differ from the lettering on a child's birthday card or the lettering in the Yellow Pages?

Your list of nonverbal signals sent out by written texts may contain some of the following features:

- layout;
- headings;
- white space;
- bullets;
- typeface;
- graphics (pictures, graphs, etc);
- size of typeface; and
- text features (case, bold, italics, underline).

Listening

Your prescribed book has so far concentrated on specific ways to make you a better communicator. You can do this by becoming a better reader and writer. This study unit has shown you that by becoming more aware of nonverbal communication, you are learning to “read” other people better. There is another important form of communication in which you do not use words, namely listening.

Activity 7

First of all, it is important to acknowledge that listening is a skill. Read Section 7.3, **Listening** (up to subsection 7.3.1, **Types of Listening**), in your prescribed book. Note particularly the distinction between “listening” and “hearing”. Now do the following activity.

Describe the listening habits of someone who is what you would call a “bad listener”. Now contrast that person’s habits with the habits of someone you would consider a “good listener” (for example, your mother, a friend or partner).

In your descriptions, you may have highlighted some of the following features of a bad listener and a good listener:

Qualities of a bad listener	Qualities of a good listener
Interrupts	Listens
Does not check understanding by asking questions	Asks questions to clarify meaning
Does not take in main message	Gets the gist
Ignores tone of voice	Listens to tone of voice and asks questions about your mood and feelings
Does not read between the lines	Reads between the lines and urges you to say aloud what you have been too scared or embarrassed to say
Stares blankly or fidgets, waiting for you to finish	Makes eye contact, and uses gestures (nodding), posture (leaning forward), and facial expressions (smiling, reacting) to encourage you
Thinks about something else while listening to you (attention wanders)	Gives you full attention

Think about the above lists for a moment. Wouldn’t you like the person described under “good listener” to be your employer or your employee, your partner or your friend? In short, everyone loves a good listener. It doesn’t diminish your status or represent a waste of time to be a good listener.

7.4.1 Types of listening

Have you noticed how you listen differently in different situations? If someone is explaining to you how to work a tricky electrical appliance or how to fix your faulty computer, you listen as if your life depended on it. When you listen to someone you don’t like, your mind keeps fixing on errors in his/her logic. When a friend or child comes to you in distress, you listen in yet another way.

Activity 8

Read subsection 7.3.1 in your prescribed book now and then do the following activity.

Identify what type of listening is required in each of the following situations:

Listening situation	Type of listening required (listening for content, critical listening, empathetic listening)
You are a manager and one of your employees has been accused of theft. The employee comes to you to argue that he is not guilty.	
Your company has been late in delivering a large consignment of goods to a customer. The customer phones in fury.	
A client phones with a detailed order worth millions of rands.	

How did you do in this activity? In these examples, the types of listening were critical listening, empathetic listening and listening for content. The purpose of this activity was not only to test your understanding of the three types of listening, but also to raise your awareness of how you listen, and how your listening changes according to the situation that you are in.

7.4.2 Barriers to efficient listening

Imagine if someone sent you an email or a letter and you did not receive it. It is a worrying thought. Yet every day someone sends you a message which you fail to pick up because of one or other barrier to efficient listening.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 7.3.2, entitled **Barriers to Efficient Listening**, before doing the following activity.

Identify the barrier to efficient listening in each of the following cases:

Listening situation	Barrier (external noise, internal noise, cultural barrier)
You are the CEO of a company. A junior employee comes to you with an idea she has for improving the efficiency of the company. Afterwards your secretary asks you what the employee wanted to see you about. "I don't know", you reply. "She was wittering on about some harebrained scheme."	
A Chinese businessman comes to see you about an idea he has for developing game farm holidays. You don't really catch his message because he speaks English with an accent. You also wonder what a Chinese person could possibly know about game farms.	
You are in the kitchen cooking. Your partner calls out to you from another room but you cannot hear the message because the pan is sizzling and the kettle is boiling.	

How did you do in this activity which tested your ability to identify barriers to effective listening? In these examples, the barriers were internal noise (believing yourself superior), cultural (accent and stereotyping), and external noise (kitchen sounds muffling the message).

Once you are aware of the barriers that you identified in the above table, you can set about eliminating or minimising them. As with all acts of communication, self-awareness and self-knowledge are the keys to success.

7.4.3 Developing efficient listening skills

It is not easy being a good listener. Some people are garrulous – they talk so much there seems no point in listening to them. Other people talk nonsense or say offensive things. Some people are bad listeners, which makes you wonder why you should bother to listen to them.

Furthermore, it is not always convenient to listen: we are often busy or in a hurry. You, therefore, need to believe in the benefits of being a good listener. In your

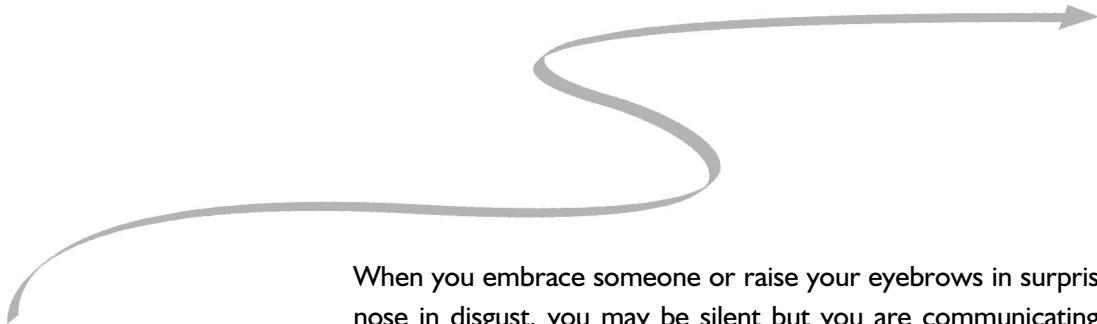
Activity 10

prescribed book, read subsection 7.3.3, **Developing Efficient Listening Skills**, before attempting the final activity.

Joe is a good listener. Identify the good listening strategy that Joe employs in each of the following situations:

Situation	Strategy (appropriate nonverbal behaviour, paraphrasing, active listening, asking questions, showing empathy)
A female colleague has lost her job. She complains bitterly about how this will affect her family income. Joe looks sad and says he thinks it is terrible that she has lost her job and that he will try to help her.	
A secretary tells Joe that she thinks the cafeteria is selling poor quality food. "Could you give a specific example of what you're talking about?" Joe asks.	
Joe's boss says: "I think we should look for markets in SADEC countries and abroad". Joe says: "So you think we should expand our horizons?"	
A colleague tells Joe that he has something highly confidential to disclose. Joe closes the office door and sits close to the colleague on the sofa in his office. He looks at him with a concerned facial expression.	
A junior colleague comes to tell Joe about a problem in her section. While she speaks, Joe nods his head, makes eye contact, and occasionally breaks in to encourage her to speak more.	

How did you manage? Joe's strategies were empathy, questions, paraphrase, appropriate nonverbal behaviour and active listening. All of these are strategies that you too can employ. Start practising now!



When you embrace someone or raise your eyebrows in surprise, or wrinkle your nose in disgust, you may be silent but you are communicating. Nonverbal communication happens even when you do not intend it – if you fail to catch someone's eye, or you fold your arms or turn away from them, that person may feel that you are sending a message of dislike or worse. Yet you may have been feeling shy, or perhaps you did not recognise an old friend across a crowded room. You have learnt many nonverbal signals from your culturally specific upbringing and the place and time of your birth. Whether you think it is normal to kiss both cheeks in greeting, or to give a high five, or a soft handshake, or keep your eyes on the floor, may thus be culturally determined. A massive 70% of our communication happens in this nonverbal manner, so it is important to be sensitive to its pervasive power as we interact with others. Even when we are reading a text, part of what we “read” is nonverbal – the layout of a text, for example, and its illustrations, even the quality of the paper it is written on – all of these supply information which we decode. It is as important to read people as it is to read texts. You can do this by listening actively: asking questions, showing empathy, and giving people enough time to express their meaning.



STUDY UNIT 8

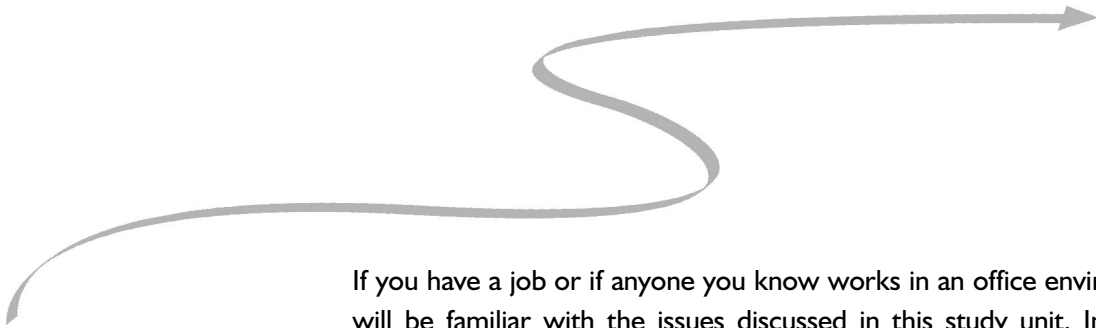
INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 Are you comfortable talking to another person in a face-to-face situation?
- 2 Are you happy with the way you are – your looks, achievements, intellect and sexuality?
- 3 When you are worried or sad, do you give yourself a “pep talk”?
- 4 Do you feel that other people criticise you – either to your face or in secret?
- 5 Do you generally believe that your interviews and encounters with others will go well, or do you expect failure?
- 6 Do you readily share your thoughts with others, or are you unwilling to open up?
- 7 Are you willing to discuss problems, or do you believe that you are right?
- 8 Are you willing to face difficult situations, or do you try to avoid them?
- 9 Do you empathise with people in distress, or do you tend to give them advice first?
- 10 How many interview situations have you experienced in your life?
- 11 Have you considered ways to improve your interview skills?

KEY CONCEPTS

Interpersonal communication; self-image; intrapersonal communication; self-fulfilling prophecies; cultural differences; gender differences; self-concept; interpersonal competence skills; self-disclosure; open communicators; blind communicators; hidden communicators; closed communicators; assertiveness; empathy; and the interview situation.



8.1 Introduction

If you have a job or if anyone you know works in an office environment, then you will be familiar with the issues discussed in this study unit. Interpersonal communication in the workplace can be a major source of stress to both employers and employees. The knowledge and skills you will gain by studying interpersonal communication will help to protect you from negative personality types and turn you into the kind of positive person everyone likes to have around.

Which of the following actions do you regularly perform?

- You check your physical appearance in the mirror.
- You love it when people find you sexually attractive.
- You wonder what kind of good things people will say about you at your funeral.
- You love it when people compliment you or pass on compliments.
- You love it when people seem to need you or seek out your advice.

There is nothing vain or boastful about these activities. They are all signs that you have a healthy self-image or self-concept. When you look good and feel good, you communicate better and people respond to you more positively.

In your prescribed book, read Section 8.2, entitled **Self-image**. You will see that Activity 8.2 asks you to use six dimensions to describe your self-image. The following activity will help you to do this.



Tick as many statements as you feel apply to you:

When I look at my physical appearance ...

- ☐ I always wish I looked like someone else;
- ☐ I am generally satisfied, with the usual niggles like wishing I were an inch taller or five kilograms lighter;
- ☐ I usually feel grateful;
- ☐ I see my face and body as old friends;
- ☐ I think it's a pity I look this way but I will make the best of it; and/or
- ☐ I see several things I like.

If I had to choose a set of words to describe my personality, I would choose ...

- ☐ considerate, kind;
- ☐ shy, hardworking;
- ☐ fun, dynamic;
- ☐ punctual, reliable;
- ☐ confident, charming;
- ☐ introverted, quiet;
- ☐ extroverted, sociable;
- ☐ depressed, overburdened; and/or
- ☐ victimised, oppressed.

My experience of school, university and life suggests that I am ...

- ☐ good at debating and using logic;
- ☐ good at writing exams and essays;
- ☐ quick to learn new words and concepts;
- ☐ quick to learn new methods and techniques;
- ☐ quick to identify the cause of a problem;
- ☐ inventive when it comes to finding solutions;
- ☐ average at learning new things;
- ☐ average at writing exams and essays;
- ☐ average at debating and using logic;
- ☐ in the dark about logic and reasoning;
- ☐ not very good at learning new things; and/or
- ☐ far behind when it comes to writing exams and essays.

When I consider the range of things I know how to do (for example, drive, cook, repair, negotiate, argue, calculate, diagnose, etc), I think it would be true to say that ...

- ☐ I am a specialist – I know how to do a few things, but I do them exceptionally well;
- ☐ I am a generalist – I can do a wide range of things competently;
- ☐ I am a beginner – there are loads of things I'd love to learn, but I'm only starting out;
- ☐ I am an expert in some things;
- ☐ I am an expert in everything;
- ☐ I am wise enough to leave certain tasks to others;
- ☐ I am a failure at most practical tasks; and/or
- ☐ I am a jack of all trades and a master of none.

People who know me very well would probably say that I ...

- ☐ have high principles and ethics;
- ☐ am a bit of a wheeler-dealer;
- ☐ seem easygoing but really adhere to high ethical standards;
- ☐ tell the truth and do the right thing when it matters;
- ☐ have done some rough things in my time but have turned over a new leaf; and/or
- ☐ had to do the things I did.

When it comes to sexual relationships ...

- ☐ I usually have to fight them off;
- ☐ I don't seem to attract people to me;
- ☐ I think I'm a catch;
- ☐ I feel confident about my attractiveness;
- ☐ I'll never attract the kind of person I like; and/or
- ☐ it's easier to stay home alone.

In this activity, you thought about your self-image. The answers probably came easily to you, because, after all, you know who you are. But do you? Look over any negative answers you gave to the questions above. Your prescribed book suggests that if you feel negative about yourself, you will not attract success.

Go back over the activity now and label each subsection of questions with the names of the different dimensions of self-image that they represent: physical, psychological, intellectual, skills, moral and sexual.

8.2.1 Self-fulfilling prophecies

Have you noticed how when you believe that you cannot do something – for example, finish an essay on time or pass an exam – your negative belief comes true? This is what your prescribed book calls a “self-fulfilling prophecy”. By the very act of making a prophecy, you are enhancing the chances of that prophecy coming true. To clarify this concept in your mind, notice the pattern in the following incidents:

- A man sees a woman for the first time and thinks: “There’s the woman I am going to marry”. Later, he does, indeed, marry her.
- You drive to town on a busy day and visualise a parking spot close to the place you need to visit. There is, indeed, an open parking bay when you arrive.
- You think that you have no chance of getting a particular job, so you do not put much effort into the interview. You do not get the job.

When your self-image leads you to believe that you are capable of high achievements, those high achievements are more likely to come true.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 8.2.1, entitled **Self-fulfilling Prophecies**, before attempting the next activity.

Activity 2

Jan was brilliant at his job. His private life, however, was a mess. His wife had left him, taking the children. Jan’s confidence was at an all time low. When a promotion position came up, Jan decided not to make himself available for it because he felt that he would not be able to compete with the other candidate, one of his colleagues. He also felt that he could not deal with the responsibility and stress of such a high position when he was such a mess inside. His wife had told him he was a loser, and she was probably right, thought Jan. The colleague got the post. Jan was miserable working under the management of this colleague, and his stress increased.

- In what way does this story illustrate a self-fulfilling prophecy?

As you probably noted, Jan failed because he thought he would fail. He believed his wife’s criticism when his attitude should have been, “I’ll show you!”

But how can we learn to believe in ourselves more, and to reject the negative images that others try to force onto us?

8.2.2 Cultural and gender differences

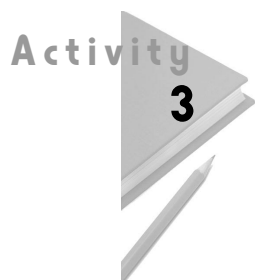
In response to the last question, you might quite rightly have replied: “A lot depends on your upbringing”. If your parents praised you for your attributes, you may have developed a natural pride in yourself. If your mother, father or siblings called you “fat” or “clumsy”, these criticisms may still haunt you. If you were constantly told, “Boys don’t cry” or “Girls can’t do maths”, these stereotypes may still be lurking inside you, holding you back.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 8.2.2, **Cultural and Gender Differences**. To help you complete Activity 8.3 in your prescribed book, think about how you would complete the following sentences:

- The best thing anyone ever said to me was ...
- I was always brought up to believe something different, but now I think that ...
- The worst thing my parents ever said to me was ...
- The most hurtful thing anyone has ever said to me was ...
- I wish I had never said ...
- It came as a complete revelation when I left home and discovered that ...

The activity above encourages you to reflect on how your self-image is affected by the people around you right now, as well as by the people who nurtured you when you were young. You have the right to reject negative messages and to shape your own self-image.

As the final bullet in the activity above suggests, your self-image is directly related to your current and future job applications. Which ten adjectives would you choose to describe yourself? The following activity will help you choose.



Employers look for people with qualities in the following categories: communication skills; honesty and integrity; teamwork; interpersonal skills; strong work ethic; motivation and initiative; flexibility and adaptability; analytical skills; computer skills; and organisational skills. Let’s see whether adjectives related to any of these categories apply to you:

Category of skills that employers look for	Adjectives related to these categories (tick those that most apply to you)
1 Communication skills	Articulate, communicative, open, outgoing, sociable.
2 Honesty and integrity	Honest, reliable, loyal, sincere, frank, direct, truthful, dependable, trustworthy.
3 Teamwork	Cooperative, supportive, helpful, unselfish, friendly.

Category of skills that employers look for	Adjectives related to these categories (tick those that most apply to you)
4 Interpersonal skills	Accommodating, understanding, compassionate, sympathetic, empathetic.
5 Strong work ethic	Hardworking, diligent, thorough, conscientious.
6 Motivation and initiative	Motivated, inspired, creative, energetic, committed, enthusiastic, enterprising, innovative.
7 Flexibility and adaptability	Flexible, adaptable, versatile, multi-talented, resourceful.
8 Analytical skills	Analytical, logical, questioning, rational, common sensical.
9 Computer skills	Computer-literate, technologically savvy.
10 Organisational skills	Well-organised, orderly, systematic, disciplined, well-ordered, methodical.

Do not despair if these qualities do not all apply to you. It is far better to be honest about yourself than to lie. For example, you might say in an interview: “I think my natural inclination is to be shy or even introverted, but recently I have really started to enjoy working in a team”. The purpose of this activity was to help you set goals for the self-image work you will do in years to come.

8.2.3 Improving self-image

You may still be developing a more positive self-image. As your prescribed book tells you, self-image is not a settled thing: it is a dynamic process. Read subsection 8.2.3, entitled **Improving Self-image**, in your prescribed book. Complete the following sentences in order to help you focus on this section:

- I hate it when people say to me, “You always ...”
- Something I think people misunderstand about me is ...
- I would like people to see me as more ...
- Someone I think I can help with his/her self-image is ...
- I would do this by ...
- I think [insert name] hates it when I call him/her ...

These sentences should help you to see areas where people may be contributing to a negative self-image. They will also help you to reach out to others who may suffer from low self-esteem. Reaching out is an interpersonal competence skill – a

way of getting on better with other people. This is then also the topic of the next section that we are covering.

8.3 Self-disclosure

Have you noticed how, when some people enter a room, they are immediately welcomed, eyes turn towards them, and friends and colleagues move closer? We often call these people “approachable” or even “charismatic”. They draw other people towards them. They are never sidelined. Charismatic, approachable people are not frightening, cold or mysterious. We feel that we know them. This is because we do: they have let us know who they are through the way they communicate.

In many of the activities in this study unit and in your prescribed book you have opened up about yourself. Letting other people know about the kind of person you are is called “self-disclosure”. The responses people give to your disclosure are called “feedback”.

Obviously, you would not tell everyone everything about yourself. But some degree of self-disclosure is important for others to feel that they can trust you. The truth is that we do not always get the balance right between revealing and hiding ourselves.

Read subsection 8.3.1, **Self-disclosure**, in your prescribed book before attempting the following activity.

Activity 4

Complete the information in the following table:

Four interpersonal communication styles	Example from your own life (complete the sentence)
1 Open communicator	An example of an occasion when I am a trusting and friendly communicator is
2 Blind communicator	I think I was a bit overconfident and threw my weight around when
3 Hidden communicator	I was a bit two-faced when
4 Closed communicator	Poor self-image caused me to be non-communicative when I

This activity helped you to fix the four different interpersonal communication styles in your mind by applying them to instances in your own life. It also showed you that, while open communication is your goal, there have been times when you may have adopted less successful interpersonal communication styles.

8.4 Assertiveness

So far we have dealt with self-disclosure – how open or closed you are as a communicator. The next interpersonal competence skill discussed in your prescribed book is the skill of assertiveness.

Do you admire confident people who stand up for themselves? How would you rate yourself when it comes to assertiveness? Do you sometimes let people “walk all over you” and then suddenly erupt in anger and indignation at the way they have treated you? Wouldn’t it be better if you had established the boundaries right from the start?

Assertiveness is *NOT* the same as aggressiveness. Standing up for your rights is not the same as infringing on the rights of others. However, assertiveness can feel uncomfortable, especially the first time you practise it. Many of us were brought up to “turn the other cheek” and to be meek and mild.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 8.3.2, entitled **Assertiveness**, and then complete the following sentences:

- When [insert name] said that to me, I wish I had ...
- When [insert name] did that to me, I wish I had ...

As you can see from completing these sentences, practising assertiveness will help you to avoid regrets. Use the next activity to fix the different levels of assertiveness in your mind.

Complete the next table, using Chapter 8 of your prescribed book to guide you:



Level of assertiveness	Example from your own life (complete the sentence)
1 Passive	Someone I know who matches the qualities of a passive person is because
2 Aggressive	Someone I know who matches the qualities of an aggressive person is because
3 Assertive	Someone I know who matches the qualities of an assertive person is because

Here you had a chance to compare different levels of assertiveness. You probably know careworn people who take the blame for everything. They are usually deeply unhappy because they know that they are being exploited. You also know aggressive people who crush others and who try to talk louder and longer than anyone else. Finally, your ideal is to be an assertive person. You want to be firm but communicative. You want to speak up for yourself but also be fair to others.

8.5 Empathy

Don't you hate it when you are upset about something and the person you are talking to says something like the following:

- "Don't be upset."
- "I wish you wouldn't be so sensitive."
- "Just don't worry about it."
- "Ignore it and it will go away."

You wish they would just allow you to have the feelings that you are having.

The interpersonal skills you have learnt about so far are self-disclosure and assertiveness. The third and last skill is empathy: the ability to put yourself in another person's shoes and feel their pain and their joy. You are empathetic when you encourage a friend to cry or rage as a way of working through their feelings. You are sympathetic when you say something comforting but keep your distance. Empathy takes patience.

Read subsection 8.3.4, **Empathy**, in your prescribed book. The following activity will help you to tell the difference between sympathy and empathy.

Activity 6

The table below gives a situation and a sympathetic response. Add an empathetic response.

Situation	Sympathetic response	Empathetic response
A colleague has made a huge error at work and will probably lose her job.	"I am so sorry to hear about what happened to you. What caused you to make that mistake?"	
Your partner comes back from a doctor's visit with bad news.	"You poor thing. What are you going to do about it?"	

This was a rather tricky exercise. True empathy is only possible when you have been through the same experience as the person in distress. Sympathetic responses can make the other person feel isolated and alone (note the pronoun "you"). An empathetic response might be: "I did exactly the same thing – I know how you feel" or "We'll get through this together".

Throughout this study unit, you have been working on developing your interpersonal skills. Perhaps one of the most important uses for your interpersonal communication skills is the interview situation. Let's look at it now.

8.6

The interview situation

Have you ever been interviewed or conducted an interview? How did it differ from meeting a new person by chance at a party or in a public place?

Your answer to this question leads us to the first aspect of interviews as stressed in your prescribed book, namely the fact that an interview is "an intentional face-to-face communication" with "preconceived objectives". In other words, unlike a chance meeting, the participants in an interview know **why** they are meeting and **what goal** the meeting hopes to achieve.

In your prescribed book, read Section 8.4, entitled **The Interview Situation**. The following activity will help you to understand the different types of interview as listed in your prescribed book.

Activity 7

In the left column, identify the type of interview where the questions given are most likely to be asked.

Type of interview (employment, counselling, performance appraisal, disciplinary, exit, orientation, research)	Typical questions
	"What do you know about our company and why would you like to work here?"
	"Your colleagues rated your punctuality as 5 out of 10. How would you rate yourself?"
	"Have you been given a copy of our standard operating procedures for this task?"
	"Was there a bad relationship with a particular colleague that caused you to resign?"
	"How long have you been experiencing this level of stress?"
	"Could you give us your side of the story?"
	"Is there a correlation between risk aversion and the size and reputation of the auditing firm concerned?"

How did you do in this categorising activity? The correct answers were: employment, performance appraisal, orientation, exit, counselling, disciplinary and research.

Interviews are not natural communicative encounters, so you should not feel bad about your nerves, or about being an unsuccessful candidate. However, you can prepare for interviews. Your prescribed book describes the usual sequence of events in an interview on page 174. Let's end this study unit by preparing you for an employment interview.

Activity 8

Consider how you would respond to each of the following questions or approaches:

- The interviewer greets you with a handshake and introduces you to the committee, mentioning each member's name and job title.
[Consider your response]
- The chairperson begins with an open-ended question: "Tell us about yourself".
[Consider your response]
- Member A of the committee asks: "What would you say your strengths and weaknesses are?".
[Consider your response]

- Member B of the committee asks: “Where do you see yourself in five years’ time?”.
[Consider your response]
- Member C asks: “How do you deal with conflict and criticism?”.
[Consider your response]
- The chairperson asks a closed-ended question: “Would you be prepared to accept a lower salary than the one you have indicated here?”.
[Consider your response]
- Member A of the committee asks: “Do you have any questions?”.
[Consider your response]

Yes, interviews really are this gruelling! The good thing is that by preparing for your interview, you can come across as an open communicator. It may seem strange, but it is possible to rehearse something so that it appears natural.



8.7 Summary

The way you feel about yourself – your self-image – affects the way you communicate with others and the way they see you. A positive self-image leads to open communication characterised by appropriate self-disclosure, assertiveness and empathy. By working on your self-image, you will gradually develop the type of interpersonal competence that causes other people to respond to you positively and with warmth.



STUDY UNIT 9

COMMUNICATION IN GROUPS AND TEAMS

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 Why do we say “two heads are better than one” and “a problem shared is a problem halved”?
- 2 How would you define a “team”?
- 3 What do you like about being part of a team?
- 4 What do you dislike about being part of a team?
- 5 Do you think all members of a team should have similar qualities?
- 6 Have you ever left a meeting thinking: “What a waste of time”?
- 7 How can we make meetings more efficient?
- 8 How can we stop dominant personalities from hijacking meetings?
- 9 How can you steer a discussion away from irrelevant personal agendas and back to the official agenda?
- 10 How will you manage and resolve conflict in group situations?

KEY CONCEPTS

Face-to-face communication in a group; small groups; advantages and disadvantages of groups; leadership of groups; authoritarian leadership; democratic leadership; meetings; agenda; evaluation; resolution minutes; formal minutes; problem-solving; decision-making; group conflict; and conflict resolution.

9.1 Introduction

One day you will have a job with excellent financial rewards. The downside of this is that your job will probably entail managing groups of people. You will have to attend and run meetings, resolve conflict and lead teams. How will you cope?

You are a member of several groups and teams already. Any group of three or more members with a common goal is a team – it could be your family, your child’s school committee, a neighbourhood watch, a political party, a book club, a charity or a community organisation. You already know that while teamwork often solves problems, every team has to deal with badly behaved members or conflict between members. Bear this in mind as we take you through Chapter 9 of your prescribed book, which deals with the basic principles of communicating in small groups and teams.

Eleven players wearing identical uniforms – except for the names on the back of their shirts – run onto a rectangular field. Some of them are called “strikers”. Strikers aim to manoeuvre a ball into the net belonging to the eleven opposing players. These attempts are frequently thwarted by “defenders” in the opposing team. The team may be organised so that it has more forwards and fewer defenders, or the other way around, depending on whether the game is to be played aggressively or defensively.

Why do we call these two groups of players “teams”? In what way is a soccer team similar to a team in a work situation? What are the main characteristics of a small group? How would you define a team? In your prescribed book, read the bulleted section on page 178 before attempting the following activity.

Activity 1

Some businesses on a stretch of road have been affected by crime. The business owners meet to discuss ways to counteract crime in their high street. They form a neighbourhood business watch. Each subscriber to the neighbourhood watch agrees to pay a certain amount of money towards security every month. They appoint a committee of five representatives to meet and make decisions about what form this security will take, and to monitor it and report back. What makes this odd assortment of business people a team? Complete the table below, matching the characteristics of a team (as described in your prescribed book) with this specific case of a neighbourhood business watch.

Characteristics of teams	Example as found in the neighbourhood business watch
1 Definite goals	
2 Three to five people	
3 Communicate	
4 Interdependent	
5 Specific roles	

Were you able to apply the definition of a team, as given in your prescribed book, to the specific example of a neighbourhood business watch committee? You probably saw that the committee has a common goal, which is to protect their business precinct. The committee is a small group consisting of five members. They communicate at meetings. The final two characteristics required your imagination. In the committee meetings, it is likely that interdependence would

emerge. For example, if one member strongly believes in CCTV cameras, he/she might canvas support for his/her scheme. Each member would also be assigned a specific role, such as treasurer, chairperson or police liaison.

9.2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of small groups

The neighbourhood business watch committee immediately uses some of the subscribers' money entrusted to them to employ 24-hour security guards to patrol their section of the high street. Immediately crime levels drop, and the wider business community praises the committee for its work.

But the committee also has problems. The richest member is a restaurant owner and he wants subscriptions to be raised so that they can afford CCTV cameras. The restaurant owner is in everyone's good books because he supplied the uniforms and bicycles for the security patrol. He has a particular interest in the CCTV camera project because one night a gang raided his restaurant and tied up all his guests before robbing them.

The smallest shop, an antique bookshop, cannot afford to pay more for cameras to be installed and knows of several other businesses in the area that would feel the same. The owner does not see why he should pay for a service that he does not need. The committee has another problem too: when to schedule meetings. The restaurant owner wants meetings in the morning, when the restaurant is quiet, whereas many of the other businesses would prefer evening meetings.

Clearly, there are advantages and disadvantages to working in teams. By working in a team, the neighbourhood business watch committee brought crime down: it achieved its main goal. But the committee has experienced practical difficulty (when to meet) and conflicts of interest.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 9.2.1, entitled **Advantages and Disadvantages of Small Groups**. Now do Activity 9.1 on page 179. If you have trouble completing the activity, think about your family as a team:

- Is your family effective as a team?
- Do you achieve common goals?
- Do personal goals sometimes interfere with group goals? Is there a forceful member in your family – is it you?
- Are there people in your family who sit back while others do the work – are you one of these people?

9.2.2 Leadership in groups

Many families are based on old-fashioned principles and are thus led by the father. In these families, the father makes all the decisions and directs the other members, sometimes including the mother. Clearly there are advantages and disadvantages to this authoritarian leadership style. On the plus side, the family follows a single set of values, and has clearly marked boundaries of behaviour. Children – especially teenagers – can develop some pretty wild ideas and destructive patterns of behaviour; they are also often lazy. For these reasons a strict disciplinarian in charge

can be a good idea. But on the down side, an authoritarian family head can lead to long and lasting unhappiness, with some children breaking away forever.

In your prescribed book, read subsection 9.2.2, **Leadership in Groups**, and do Activity 9.2. If you have trouble completing the activity, think about whether an authoritarian or democratic style of leadership is called for in the following situations:

- There is a fire in your building and you have recently completed a fire safety course – you have been issued with the necessary helmet, whistle and megaphone to deal with a fire-related emergency.
- You are in charge of a very experienced team who all know their jobs very well.
- You are in charge of a brand-new employee.
- Your team is working on a new marketing strategy that needs to be as creative and full of surprises as possible.

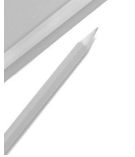


9.3 Meetings

The neighbourhood business watch we discussed earlier in this study unit would never have been successful without holding a meeting. The soccer team we described would never have won a match if they had not met beforehand. The family groups we have talked about would fall apart without regular formal and informal meetings.

Given their power and success rate, why do we so often dread meetings and feel that they accomplish nothing? In your prescribed book, read Section 9.3, entitled **Meetings**, before completing the next activity.

Activity 2



In the table below you will find the basic sequence and primary elements of a business meeting. In the right-hand column, jot down why each step or element is necessary in order to avoid the conclusion that a meeting has been “a waste of time”.

Sequence/primary elements of meetings	Reason why element is important from a communication point of view
Decide whether a meeting is necessary	
Select participants for the meeting	
Send out a notice of the meeting	

Sequence/primary elements of meetings	Reason why element is important from a communication point of view
Distribute the agenda	
Research the agenda items	
Agree on the duration of the meeting and monitor time	
Prevent loud and dominant members from hogging the floor	
Encourage shy and retiring members to express their views	
Clarify the meaning of difficult terms or acronyms	
Prevent the meeting from being side-tracked into irrelevant areas	
Seek feedback from members	
Listen actively	
Treat all members as equals, including junior staff	
Summarise the main points of the discussion and decisions taken	
Thank participants	
Conduct an evaluation	
Publish the minutes of the meeting	

The purpose of this activity was to give you an overview of meetings, as well as to encourage you to reflect on the communicative purpose of meetings, which is to share ideas, opinions and knowledge in order to arrive at decisions.

If you take care to adhere to the guidelines in the table above, you will avoid the usual criticisms about meetings being “a boring waste of time”. Instead, you will be known for running meetings which are:

- necessary;
- relevant;
- focused;
- goal-orientated;
- informative;
- coherent;
- fair;
- democratic;

- productive;
- polite; and
- time-conscious.

9.3.1 Problem-solving and decision-making

A large supermarket chain decides to offer home deliveries for a reasonable fee – probably equivalent to the amount the shopper would spend on fuel driving to the supermarket anyway. The service immediately becomes very popular, especially with career women. However, the supermarket chain is soon deluged with complaints about late deliveries. Deliveries promised for the late morning slot only arrive in the afternoon, and deliveries scheduled for the afternoon frequently arrive as the family is sitting down to dinner. Customers are irate and the delivery staff are angry at working overtime and dealing with furious customers in their homes.

The above scenario gives you a typical example where a business has to solve a problem and make decisions. Bear this scenario in mind as you read Section 9.4, **Problem-solving and Decision-making**, in your prescribed book.

Activity 3



The supermarket chain is very concerned about its reputation and a team of its employees sit down to talk about the problem. This is what they say:

Driver: “I know everyone is looking at me pointing fingers. These deliveries are not late because of me. In the morning when I fetch the first batch for delivery, the packers are often late. Then I get into the morning rush hour traffic. Sometimes I get delayed by road works and traffic jams. I think you are expecting too many deliveries from me in each slot.”

Packer: “It’s true that we cannot always find all the items a customer has asked for. Either we’re out of stock, or we do not have it in the requested size, or we have a different brand. Why can’t we substitute a requested item with another similar item?”

Runner: “Some people live in upstairs flats and we have to wait for the lift. Or else they take so long to open the door and when they do I nearly get eaten by the dog! Those bags are heavy, man! If I walk any faster I’ll put my back out.”

Manager: “Well, we clearly have a problem. Basically, you are all admitting that deliveries are late.”

Supervisor: “I think we are all taking too much blame. It is not as if ALL deliveries are ALWAYS late. We have a problem of some deliveries being late. Also, some customers have a genuine complaint if their groceries arrive two hours late. But if it’s fifteen minutes late, then I would say that the customer is just being fussy!”

Manager: “Late is late. If our deliveries are late, we have a problem we need to fix. I’m appointing a task team to look into this.”

- What stage of the problem-solving sequence is the group at?
- Have they been discussing questions of fact, value or policy?
- In your opinion, what should the solution to this problem accomplish?
- What could the supermarket's task team do to research this problem further?
- Brainstorm (list randomly) possible solutions.
- What policy decisions would you suggest in the light of this problem?
- Once the policy decisions have been implemented, how could the supermarket chain evaluate their success?

Congratulations! You have just taken yourself through the problem-solving sequence. The meeting transcript above showed the early stage of attempting to define the problem. What is interesting about this stage is how the apparent problem (deliveries are late) leads to the discovery of underlying problems (workload, supply, orders and traffic).

At this early stage, the group is mainly concerned with a question of fact: are deliveries late or not? Questions of value are never far away though. The question of substituting products may relate to the quality of the service. Similarly, the supervisor's query about the degree of lateness is also a question of value. If most deliveries are getting through in reasonable time, should the company worry about the occasional very late delivery?

The solution to the problem could aim for complete punctuality. But you might also have suggested something like: "No more than 5% of deliveries should be late". Or: "No delivery should be more than 15 minutes late".

The supermarket's task team could research the problem by spending a day on the road tracking deliveries and seeing where the delays crop up. They could follow up on the traffic problem by researching traffic flows at particular times of the day on particular routes. They could follow up on the supply issue by calling for a list of out-of-stock products and finding out whether availability will always be a problem.

A random list of brainstormed solutions might include: allow substitutions of similar products; change delivery routes to avoid heavy traffic; schedule fewer deliveries per slot; phone customers when delays are expected in order to re-schedule delivery; allow incomplete orders to be delivered and missing items to be delivered later; source deliveries from shops closest to the clients; and take on more packers and runners.

Policy decisions should be made in respect of substituted items. A policy decision needs to be made on what "late" is. Other policy decisions would derive from the brainstormed list and the results of the task team's research.

The supermarket could evaluate the success of its policy decisions by conducting customer questionnaires or simply monitoring customer feedback. Drivers' log books and order receipt books could also be used for evaluating whether or not the problem of late deliveries has been solved.

There is a crisis at work. One of your senior employees, Mervyn, has an authoritarian leadership style. He is a loud, aggressive person who shouts others down. His second-in-command, whom we will call Theresa, is a gentle-natured woman who is easy to talk to and who carefully nurtures young members of staff. As a result, members of staff tend to take their problems and complaints to Theresa instead of confronting Mervyn. They cannot bear Mervyn's bullying managerial style and they are terrified of the way he shouts. Theresa does not pass on their complaints to Mervyn, but bottles them up. Poor Theresa is now at her wit's end and close to a nervous breakdown. Not only does she have to hear all the complaints, but she also has to deal with Mervyn's bad temper which is often directed at her. Theresa breaks down. She hands in her resignation. Mervyn hears about his colleague's resignation and says: "Good! That woman was way too soft and prone to tears anyway". However, you do not want Theresa to resign as she is a valuable member of staff. You do not want to risk losing Mervyn either, because despite his aggression, he gets things done and has brought in millions of rands' worth of business.

How did this problem get so bad and is there any solution to the conflict?

Bear this scenario in mind as you read Section 9.5, entitled **Group Conflict**, in your prescribed book.

Activity

4

Consider the situation between Mervyn the bully and Theresa the nurturer in the light of the following questions:

- How could being pro-active have prevented the conflict?
- How could communication have prevented the conflict?
- What research could you do as you look for solutions?
- How do Mervyn and Theresa respectively see the solution to the conflict?
- Are there alternative solutions, and, if so, what are they?

Did you recognise the scenario? Group conflict often comes from strong personality differences that are allowed to fester for too long. As your answers to the questions suggested, early pro-activeness would have prevented the escalation of the crisis. You should have picked up Theresa's meekness and Mervyn's bullying methods earlier, perhaps through interviews or simply by dint of casually chatting to them. Communication was definitely a problem. Younger members of staff should also have participated in solving problems rather than simply reporting them. Theresa should have spoken to you earlier.

Clearly, there has been a lack of openness. People have been speaking behind one another's backs. Here is a tip for you if you are ever in a situation like this: everyone hates to be accused ("You always ..." or "You never ..."). However, most people respond favourably to expressions of genuine emotion. For example: "When you speak to me in that tone of voice, I feel terrified". Or: "When you did x, I felt so inadequate".

This is not a problem you can research on the Internet. You need to interview the staff members concerned. You also need to bring in a professional conflict resolution firm and involve your Human Resources Department.

Mervyn's and Theresa's solutions are not realistic. In fact, they are not solutions at all. If Theresa resigns, Mervyn will continue to be a bully and Theresa will be unemployed. Alternative solutions include establishing a proper chain of command with procedures for complaints. Theresa must not be the buffer between Mervyn and the rest of the staff. Both Mervyn and Theresa may need training courses in self-image and conflict resolution (for very different reasons). Since there is such a personality difference, you may need to introduce a third senior member of staff who is able to stand up to Mervyn but who also appreciates Theresa's more sympathetic approach.

9.4.1 Strategies for conflict resolution

Let's return to the analogy of the family as a team in order to understand strategies for conflict resolution.

Mr and Mrs Dube have a gorgeous 15-year-old daughter, Sindi, with perfect skin and braided hair. She attends a private school where she has achieved excellent grades so far in most subjects, except for Mathematics which she hates. But trouble is brewing in the Dube family. Sindi wants to wear short skirts, use Facebook and go to late-night parties like all her friends. Mr Dube says: "Over my dead body".

Where is this conflict headed?



Consider the conflict in the Dube home and then answer the following questions:

- Give two ways in which this conflict could end in a win–lose outcome.
- Explain how this conflict might end in a lose–lose outcome.
- How could skilled negotiation result in a win–win outcome?

The purpose of this activity was to fix in your mind the three different strategies for conflict resolution. It should also have made you reflect on the delicate process of negotiation that leads up to the ideal of a win–win outcome.

In a win–lose outcome, either Sindi or her father could have gained the upper hand. Imagine the bitter resentment that would have followed: probably estrangement and a cooling of the father–daughter bond. The daughter would have

gained her freedom at her father's expense. Or the father would have maintained his authority to his daughter's detriment.

In a lose–lose outcome, Mr Dube might begrudgingly allow Sindi to use Facebook. Sindi might begrudgingly agree to put in more hours on her Maths homework. There would be a bad-tempered atmosphere at home.

In a win–win situation, the two could negotiate a system of gradual freedoms. If Sindi passes Maths with a B symbol at the end of the term, she can use Facebook. If her father agrees that she has been using Facebook responsibly, she can buy a short skirt. If he has met the parents concerned, she can attend a late-night party. They would learn to respect one another's point of view. The compromises each one makes are more meaningful when they are negotiated with an emphasis on common interests.



9.5 Summary

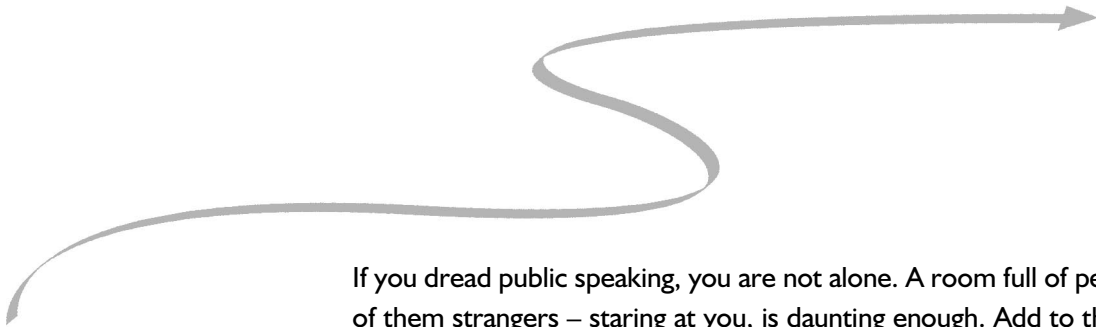
Communicating in groups – a group of colleagues or a family group – is never easy. Personal goals may conflict with group goals, or there may be factions. Leaders may have a bullying or authoritarian style. Groups need to meet, which can lead to a frustrating waste of time. But it does not have to be this way. Through skilled communication, you can place the emphasis on achieving common goals, hearing all sides of the story, solving problems, and resolving conflicts.

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1 Do you break out into a sweat at the thought of having to speak in public?
- 2 Do you secretly hope that you will be able to get through your career without public speaking?
- 3 Do oral presentations have to be boring?
- 4 What makes someone a good public speaker?
- 5 What can you do to make public speaking less stressful?
- 6 Do you know how to capture and keep your audience's attention?
- 7 Do you feel confident about explaining new information?
- 8 Do you feel competent enough to tell a group of people how to do something?
- 9 Are you brave enough to try to persuade a group of people to adopt a certain course of action?

KEY CONCEPTS

Oral presentations; speeches; business talks; informative talks; instructional talks; persuasive talks; audience; time; venue; preparing an outline; time limit; introduction; body; conclusion; preparing notes; rehearsing; nonverbal behaviour; voice; Monroe's motivated sequence; and evaluating talks.



10.1 Introduction

If you dread public speaking, you are not alone. A room full of people – some or all of them strangers – staring at you, is daunting enough. Add to that the problem of how to speak without notes, or with only note cards; how to capture and keep the audience's attention; how to get your message across; and how to respond to the questions at the end. No wonder that most people say that they fear public speaking more than they fear death!

Successful public speakers command thousands of rands in fees. Let's start by hearing what audience members have said about professional speakers whom they liked:

- "He held a very mixed audience spellbound throughout his talk."
- "Her humour appealed to all."
- "He conveyed very important life lessons."
- "She opened a lot of eyes and ears to new knowledge."
- "It changed my way of thinking."
- "I loved his dramatic contrasts from loud to soft voice; from large, rapid gestures to an outstretched hand steeped in pathos; from rapid fire delivery to a quiet moment of reflection."
- "Her storytelling is like a trip on an emotional rollercoaster."
- "Time flies by as she brings her story to a conclusion."
- "You are left wishing it would never end."
- "We were spellbound and drank up every word."
- "There were a good number of light bulb moments."

This ideal of the gifted public speaker may seem a long way off, but it is possible to train yourself so that you too make an impact on your audience. In this final study unit we will take you through Chapter 10 of your prescribed book with the aim of making you a better than average public speaker.

In your prescribed book, read Sections 10.1 and 10.2 and then do the following activity.



Summarise how you feel about public speaking by completing the following sentences:

- When I listen to public speakers (for example, at a wedding) I always enjoy ...
- When I attend speeches or presentations, I always wish that the speaker would be more ...
- I wish public speakers would be less ...

Almost certainly your responses to this activity were to wish that speakers would be more interesting and funny, and less boring. You may have mentioned that you enjoy jokes or stories – both of these are good ways of capturing an audience's attention.



Think about what you have written, and realise that there are hundreds and thousands of people out there who wish exactly the same thing. There are hungry audiences out there longing for a speaker who can:

- tell stories;
- say something different;
- speak audibly;
- make the audience laugh;
- provide insight;
- stick to a time limit; and
- make time fly.

Why not become this desirable speaker? Your experience of school speeches, university lectures, wedding speeches, political speeches and radio commentary has already taught you a lot even if you were not conscious of it. However, do not imitate the bad speakers. Choose a role model who captivates the audience.

Think about that word, “captivate”. Similar words that are used to describe good public speakers are “spellbinding” and “enthraling”. What all these words have in common is magic. A good speaker casts a spell on the audience, making us forget the passing of time. When you have to stand in front of a lectern one day, think of yourself as a magician, a performer, or a person with special powers. You can capture your audience by doing the following:

- Looking directly at them, without fear.
- Smiling and being at ease.
- Saying something striking or surprising.
- Telling them something personal about yourself – an anecdote.
- Saying something funny about the room or the occasion.
- Asking them a direct question.
- Reading their thoughts.
- Reading their emotional mood.

You can start working on these strategies secretly right now. As you speak to friends, family and colleagues, actively try out ways of drawing people towards you. The main tip we can give you here is that people are most interested in themselves. Use the pronoun “you”, and speak directly to concerns and interests you know that your audience has.

Activity

2



However, before you can begin to decide how you will captivate a public audience, you have to know why you are speaking: what the purpose of your oral presentation is.

Read through the following list of oral presentation titles and answer the questions that follow:

- 1 Examining the China business landscape
- 2 Why we should do business with China
- 3 Sony vs. Samsung: battle for global supremacy
- 4 Savvy young entrepreneurs
- 5 International business issues
- 6 What comes after quality management?
- 7 Productivity: what we know about it, what we must – and can – do about it
- 8 The organisation in transition – are the traditional functions obsolete?
- 9 Middle managers and professionals – can business regain their trust?
- 10 Why we should choose Samsung over Sony
- 11 The argument for moving HQ to Tshwane
- 12 How to design a web page

- Find one example of an informative talk.
- Find one example of an instructive talk.
- Find one example of a persuasive talk.
- Which of these talks would most interest you and why?
- Do you think the title or titles that attract you have used any particular technique or word/s that grabbed your attention?

The purpose of this activity was to fix in your mind the three different types of talk, namely informative, instructive and persuasive. Examples of informative talks include “Examining the China business landscape” and “International business issues”. An example of an instructive talk is “How to design a web page”. Persuasive talks include “Why we should do business with China”, “Why we should choose Samsung over Sony” and “The argument for moving HQ to Tshwane”.

This activity also drew your attention to the importance of giving your talk or presentation a title. Titles are often referred to as “sexy” when they attract an audience and grab our attention. Notice how the titles with questions in them are particularly appealing. Certain words in the above titles are of very specific interest to business people: “China”, “productivity”, “middle managers”, etc. Titles that suggest a conflict or change will also attract an audience because of their controversial value.

Organising your presentation

The more relaxed and chatty a public speaker appears, the more preparation he or she has done. When you know that your preparation is adequate, when you know what you want to say, and how you are going to say it, you will be able to concentrate on simply charming and engaging your audience.

In your prescribed book, read Section 10.3, entitled **Organising Your Presentation**.

Now, think back to your schooldays. The worst orals were those in which a child either read his or her oral from the page, without looking up or really noticing that the rest of you were there. Children who learnt their orals off by heart like parrots were not much better. You do not want to be locked into your notes or sound as though you are reciting. Your aim is to reach out, to convince, to win over, to arrest.

This is where preparation is very important. You need to be able to speak directly to your audience, using only a few key points written on cards or a single sheet of paper to guide you.

Activity 3

Let's imagine that you have been invited back to your school to give a prize-giving address. You have decided to give your talk the title "Lessons I've learnt".

- Draw up a basic outline for your talk.
- Think about your introduction – how will you draw your audience in? Write down two or three keywords that will remind you of what you want to say.
- Come up with three or four "life lessons" that you would like to pass on: what are they? Write down two or three keywords that will remind you of what you want to say.
- Support each lesson with an anecdote. Write down two or three keywords that will remind you of what you want to say.
- How will you conclude? Write down two or three keywords that will remind you of what you want to say.

The purpose of this activity was to show you how simple it is to plan a speech that everyone will enjoy. Moreover, you have planned a speech that you can deliver from a piece of paper with only a few words jotted down, perhaps in the form of a numbered or bulleted list.

Your task was made easier because you were able to visualise your school and the exact place where you would make your presentation. You had a really good idea

of your audience's needs and wants. It was almost like preparing a pep talk for a younger version of you.

You may have begun your talk with a light-hearted joke, for example: "I can assure you that every lesson I've learnt in life was learnt outside the walls of this school".

After that opener, you may have turned more serious. Your notes might have looked like this:

- 1 Intro – About me – I was a rebel, learnt nothing at school.
- 2 The importance of teamwork – Matric dance example.
- 3 Value of friendship – Thabo story.
- 4 Failure actually helps – Things I got wrong and how failure helped guide me.
- 5 Love lessons – The prettiest girl isn't *the* one – How I met my wife.
- 6 Conclusion – Teamwork, friendship, failure and love.

Yes, that's all you need! Speakers who stand up with pages and pages of typed notes do not have the gift of public speaking.

10.5

Giving speeches about complex material

But what if you have to deliver a long report or comment on a company's annual results? A technique you can use in this situation is called "speaking to" your report or paper. Use this technique:

- Distribute a copy of the report or main document to each participant or attendee.
- Do not read it word for word!
- Draw your listener's attention to certain key points and highlight only those key points.
- Put across these salient points in a chatty, explanatory, lively manner.
- Add humour, examples, anecdotes and a personal touch in order to make a dry subject interesting.
- Do the hard work for your audience – in other words, be prepared and know your material back to front.
- Help your audience to read and understand difficult results, tables or graphs (say: "What you can see here is ..." or "What you are looking at here is ...").

In the last point above, we mention graphs and tables. Read Section 10.4, entitled **Preparing Visuals for Presentations**, in your prescribed book, before giving a bit more thought to how you would manage this aspect of oral presentations.

Imagine that you are the chairperson of your child's PTA (Parents-Teachers Association). The PTA committee needs presentations on the following topics. Choose one topic and explain how a visual aid (or several visual aids) would help your presentation:

- An address to prospective parents, pointing out good things about the school including the teacher-learner ratio, the pass rate, the number of distinctions, teacher qualifications, participation in sport, range of facilities, and subject options.
- A report to the PTA committee showing the school's annual income and how it was spent.
- A persuasive speech to the PTA committee arguing either for or against maintaining the expensive Art and Drama departments of the school.
- A report back from the fund-raising committee, showing the funds raised from a variety of projects.

The purpose of this activity was to force you to think visually. A great deal of information can be packed into graphs (line graph, bar graph, etc), tables and charts (pie chart, pyramid chart, flow chart, etc). These could be projected onto a screen as part of a PowerPoint presentation or by using an overhead projector. They could also be drawn onto a flip chart or handed out on sheets of paper. When it comes to showing off the school's facilities or its happy multi-racial and co-educational nature, photographs would work best.

Visual aids are an excellent way of bolstering your confidence during oral presentations. They help you capture the audience's attention; they are proof to the audience of how well-prepared you are; and they give the audience something to stare at other than your tie or shoes!

10.6

Rehearsing and delivering the speech

The last sentence of the previous section reminded you of the physical problem of delivering your oral presentation. No matter how expert a speaker is, you can be sure that he or she experiences nerves. In fact, it is only because of that "fight or flight" instinct that speakers are able to stand up before an audience and shine. They need the blood rush and the adrenalin to help them succeed.

In your prescribed book, read subsections 10.5.1 to 10.5.5 and do the activity that follows.

Activity 5



Read the following Oscar acceptance speech by actress Gwyneth Paltrow. Why do you think it was criticised?

"And the winner is ... Gwyneth Paltrow for Shakespeare in Love!"

(Camera focuses on Gwyneth Paltrow in her seat, covering her face in a state of amazement before kissing her parents and getting onto the stage. She is wearing a pink ball gown that is too loose around the bodice. She accepts the Oscar and starts to speak.)

"I would like to thank the Academy from the bottom of my heart! (voice breaking up with emotion) I would like to thank Emily Watson, Fernanda Montenegro, and my friend Cate Blanchett and the greatest one who ever was, Meryl Streep. I don't feel very deserving of this in your presence, but ... I would like to thank Harvey Weinstein and everybody at Miramax Films for their undying support of me.

I would like to ... I wouldn't be in this auditorium, let alone up here, if it wasn't for two incredibly talented men: our director John Madden, thank you so much for all that you gave me, you are so inspiring; and to my soulful partner, Joseph Fiennes who I share this with. (crying) I would like to thank you.

Um, I would like to thank the rest of our miraculous cast and crew. Our producers Donna Gigliotti and David Parfitt ... I didn't forget you this time! (starts to laugh and sob) Especially, Jim McGill and Sophie Shant and my friend Ben Affleck and, um, I would like to thank my wonderful agent Rick Kurtzman, who is a beautiful man and a wonderful agent. And in his case that is not an oxymoron! And I would like to thank Harold Brown, Stuart Gelwarg and Steven Huvane.

Um, I would not have been able to play this role had I not understood love with a tremendous magnitude, and for that I thank my family (crying so that her words are inaudible); my mother Blythe Danner, who I love more than anything, and my brother Jake Paltrow, who is just the dearest person in the whole world.

My earthly guardian angel, Mary Wigmore. (crying loudly now) Um, and especially to my father Bruce Paltrow (sobbing), who has surmounted any surmountable obstacles this year. I love you more than anything in the world. And to my grandpa Buster who almost made it here tonight, but couldn't quite get here. (half laughing, half crying) Grandpa, I want you to know that you have created a beautiful family who loves you and loves each other more than anything and we thank you for that. I would like to dedicate this to two young men who lost their lives very early: Harrison Kravis and my cousin Keith Paltrow. We miss you very much and I thank you. Thank you so much everybody!"

You might like to consider the following in your assessment:

- length;
- relevance;
- rehearsal; and
- voice quality.

Gwyneth Paltrow's speech was criticised mainly because she sobbed throughout. This level of emotion embarrassed her audience and made her words occasionally inaudible. Secondly, her speech was far too long. Oscar acceptance speeches are supposed to be about 45 seconds long – hers was over five minutes. In addition, the audience was concerned about her loose dress – it made her look too thin and not smart enough for the occasion. The content of her speech was repetitious (thanking one person after the next, most of them unknown to the audience) and not well-rehearsed (notice the “ums”).

The speech you have just studied and critiqued was a thank-you or acceptance speech. The final chapter of your prescribed book ends with a much more exciting kind of speech: the motivational or persuasive speech. Read from subsection 10.5.6 to the end of Chapter 10 in your prescribed book.

10.7

Monroe's motivated sequence

Have you ever watched a TV commercial that goes something like this: a mother is depicted trapped in a cubicle, unable to reach her child who is desperate for her attention. A voice informs us that the mother cannot spend time with her child because she has to spend all her time scrubbing the shower cubicle. Suddenly on our screens we see a solution: a container of super-efficient household cleaner. If the housewife uses this cleaner, imagine the wonderful times she can spend with her child! The advert ends with a call to go and buy this household cleaner immediately.

As you may have realised, this advert perfectly follows Monroe's motivational sequence:

- Grab attention (why is the poor mother in a prison away from her child?).
- Describe need (mother cannot spend time with her child because of time-consuming cleaning duties).
- Satisfaction (there is a product to solve this problem).
- Visualisation (think of all the fun things mother and child could do together).
- Action (buy this product now).

From now on, watch TV adverts with this sequence in mind. Advertisers know more about the topic of persuasiveness than most public speakers.

Let's see if you can apply Monroe's motivational sequence to a political speech.

Activity 6



Read Barack Obama's 2009 election rally speech and answer the questions that follow:

"A few weeks ago, no one imagined that we'd have accomplished what we did here tonight. For most of this campaign, we were far behind, and we always knew our climb would be steep. But in record numbers, you came out and spoke up for change. And with your voices and your votes, you made it clear that at this moment – in this election – there is something happening in America.

There is something happening when men and women in Des Moines and Davenport; in Lebanon and Concord come out in the snows of January to wait in lines that stretch block after block because they believe in what this country can be.

There is something happening when Americans who are young in age and in spirit – who have never before participated in politics – turn out in numbers we've never seen because they know in their hearts that this time must be different.

There is something happening when people vote not just for the party they belong to but the hopes they hold in common – that whether we are rich or poor; black or white; Latino or Asian; whether we hail from Iowa or New Hampshire, Nevada or South Carolina, we are ready to take this country in a fundamentally new direction. That is what's happening in America right now. Change is what's happening in America.

You can be the new majority who can lead this nation out of a long political darkness – Democrats, Independents and Republicans who are tired of the division and distraction that has clouded Washington; who know that we can disagree without being disagreeable; who understand that if we mobilize our voices to challenge the money and influence that's stood in our way and challenge ourselves to reach for something better, there's no problem we can't solve – no destiny we cannot fulfil.

Our new American majority can end the outrage of unaffordable, unavailable health care in our time. We can bring doctors and patients; workers and businesses; Democrats and Republicans together; and we can tell the drug and insurance industries that while they'll get a seat at the table, they don't get to buy every chair. Not this time. Not now.

Our new majority can end the tax breaks for corporations that ship our jobs overseas and put a middle-class tax cut into the pockets of the working Americans who deserve it. We can stop sending our children to schools with corridors of shame and start putting them on a pathway to success. We can stop talking about how great teachers are and start rewarding them for their greatness. We can do this with our new majority. We can harness the ingenuity of farmers and scientists; citizens and entrepreneurs; to free this nation from the tyranny of oil and save our planet from a point of no return.

And when I am President, we will end this war in Iraq and bring our troops home; we will finish the job against Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan; we will care for our veterans; we will restore our moral standing in the world; and we will never use 9/11 as a way to scare up votes, because it is not a tactic to win an election, it is a challenge that should unite America and the world against the common threats of the twenty-first century: terrorism and nuclear weapons; climate change and poverty; genocide and disease.

All of the candidates in this race share these goals. All have good ideas. And all are patriots who serve this country honourably. But the reason our campaign has always been different is because it's not just about what I will do as President, it's also about what you, the people who love this country, can do to change it.

... We've been warned against offering the people of this nation false hope. But in the unlikely story that is America, there has never been anything false about hope. For when we have faced down impossible odds; when we've been told that we're not ready, or that we shouldn't try, or that we can't, generations of Americans have responded with a simple creed that sums up the spirit of a people.

Yes we can.

It was a creed written into the founding documents that declared the destiny of a nation.

Yes we can.

It was whispered by slaves and abolitionists as they blazed a trail toward freedom through the darkest of nights.

Yes we can.

It was sung by immigrants as they struck out from distant shores and pioneers who pushed westward against an unforgiving wilderness.

Yes we can.

It was the call of workers who organised; women who reached for the ballot; a President who chose the moon as our new frontier; and a King who took us to the mountain top and pointed the way to the Promised Land.

Yes we can to justice and equality. Yes we can to opportunity and prosperity. Yes we can heal this nation. Yes we can repair this world. Yes we can.

And so tomorrow, as we take this campaign South and West; as we learn that the struggles of the textile worker in Spartanburg are not so different than the plight of the dishwasher in Las Vegas; that the hopes of the little girl who goes to a crumbling school in Dillon are the same as the dreams of the boy who learns on the streets of LA; we will remember that there is something happening in America; that we are not as divided as our politics suggests; that we are one people; we are one nation; and together, we will begin the next great chapter in America's story with three words that will ring from coast to coast; from sea to shining sea – Yes. We. Can."

Source: www.essex.ac.uk/centres/theostud/Barack%20Obama.doc

- How do the first four paragraphs of Obama's speech manage to capture his audience's attention?
- The paragraphs beginning with "You can be the new majority ...", "Our new American majority ...", and "Our new majority ..." express the needs facing America at the time of his speech. Underline some of these needs.

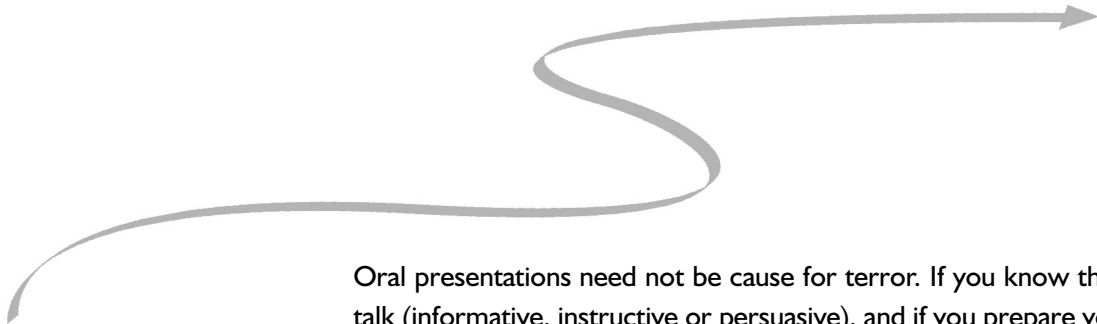
- Which aspect of Monroe's motivated sequence is represented by the phrase "And when I am President ..."?
- What does Obama visualise will happen if he is elected?
- What kind of action does he want his audience to take?
- In your opinion, what makes this a successful public speech?

Barack Obama was too busy to write this speech himself, so it was written for him by someone who happened to be only 26 years old at the time. Jon Favreau chatted with Obama, took notes, and shaped the politician's ideas into the speech you have just read.

How did you manage the questions?

- Obama's speech captures his audience's attention by stating that something historic has happened – in fact, the impossible has been made possible. He praises the crowd by saying "You ... you ... you". He makes them feel that his victory is their victory. They were the underdogs but now they are the victors. He emphasises the difficulties – including the snow – which they have overcome. He uses dramatic contrasts: "rich or poor; black or white; Latino or Asian; whether we hail from Iowa or New Hampshire, Nevada or South Carolina". He uses the keywords "new" and "change".
- The needs which Obama identify are many: a long political darkness; division and distraction clouding Washington; disagreements, money and influence has been against the will of the people; health care has been unaffordable and unavailable. Big corporations have enjoyed tax breaks and shipped jobs overseas. Children have attended schools with corridors of shame. Government has praised teachers but not paid them. The planet itself is on the point of no return.
- The moment Obama says, "And when I am President ..." he is offering satisfaction: he is the solution.
- Obama visualises justice, equality, opportunity and prosperity. He visualises the realisation of the dreams of humble people.
- Although he does not state it directly, Obama wants them to vote for him. His speech also implies that he wants them to stand together despite political and other divisions. Finally, he wants them to adopt a "Yes we can" attitude.
- The speech works for a number of reasons. It compliments and praises the audience. It keeps repeating the motivational phrase "Yes we can". It keeps uniting rich and poor, black and white. It paints a miserable picture of an isolated, hated America suddenly being welcomed back as the world's saviour.

You have now reached the end of your prescribed book and this study guide. We hope that you too now have the feeling that "you can".



10.8 Summary

Oral presentations need not be cause for terror. If you know the purpose of your talk (informative, instructive or persuasive), and if you prepare yourself thoroughly, your nerves will only serve to add energy to your performance. Start by arousing your audience's interest and ensure that you use repetition, summary, clear explanations and visual aids to help them grasp your key points. Stick to your time limit and speak clearly. Breathe.



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