

## Unit III

### Introduction:

Formal communication refers to interchange of information officially. The flow of communication is controlled which makes it possible for the information to reach the desired place without any hindrance, at a little cost and in a proper

<b>Unit – III Formal Correspondence and Thinking Skills</b>	Introduction to formal Writing techniques- Difference between Formal and Informal Writing
	Formats of Letter and Email Writing- Practice of letter and email writing with real time situations
	The Art of framing communication with effective content
	Implementation of High order thinking skills with Critical thinking to explore Creativity
	Abstract Writing/Newspaper article/Extempore

way. This is also known as **‘Through Proper Channel Communication.’**

Formal communication is still very much present in medium-sized and large companies. Here, the hierarchical organization is clearly defined. It mostly refers to the structured channel of information within an organization.

### Use of emails - Significance

Email communication is important type of written communication. Today, communications are conducted among business firms, organizations and companies mostly via emails. This is not only the cheapest but also the most reliable means of communications. The companies communicate with other companies for business purposes through emails. The orders are placed through emails; the enquiries are placed through emails; the picture samples of being imported/exported things are sent via emails as attachments. Moreover, email provides most authentic and secure means of communication. The records of past emails can be retrieved very easily in moments.

Nowadays, most of the organisations attempt to efficiently blend formal & informal communication channels. This is to improve the efficiency,

productivity & trust among the employees. Formal communication is one that flows from pre-defined channels of communication throughout the organization. Hence such communications are official in nature. Employees are well aware & communicated with their roles & responsibilities which helps the communication to flow formally within the business environment. The purpose of formal communication is to give orders, convey instructions, & fulfill the objectives of the organization through pre-determined rules & regulations. It maintains the superior-subordinate relationship & follows the **chain of command**.

### **Types of formal communication**

I. Vertical Communication: This includes the downward & upward way of communication.

a) **Downward Communication:** The communication by top hierarchy with their subordinates is called downward communication. This communication includes orders, rules, information, policies, instructions, etc. The chief advantage of the downward communication is that the subordinates get useful & timely information which helps them in their work performance.

*Example: The manager communicates to his/her team members is a downward communication*

b) **Upward Communication:** This is the reverse of the downward communication. This flows from the subordinates to the superiors. The subject-matter of this communication includes suggestions, reactions, reports, complaints, approvals, solutions, etc. This sort of communication helps the superiors in taking decisions. *Example; a junior requesting to his superior or immediate reporting boss.*

**II. Horizontal/Diagonal Communication:** Horizontal communication takes place when two individuals of the same level exchange information. Horizontal communication is used by the same level or same position of employees to solve the problems of similar nature. The subject-matter of horizontal communication includes information, requests, suggestions, mutual problems and coordination-related information. Whereas diagonal communication includes communicating with employees of diverse department. Here the hierarchy / position of employees can also be diverse.

The rank, position & authority have great significance in such types of communication. Generally, in formal communication flexibility is not found & can be rigid in nature. Informal communication can be used but avoiding casual communication at workplace should be avoided strictly.

Formal communication channels can be via emails, cellphones, group meetings, team meetings, video conference, seminar, interviews etc.

Formal communication in written can be seen in appointment letters, appreciation letters, journals, project reports, organization websites, & so on.

### **The main advantages & importance**

Formal communication is still widely used in the corporate world due to its many advantages that allow management to reach their goals and keep productivity high. Some of the most important advantages that kept formal communication relevant to this day.

1. Clear & reliable: Abiding to a clear set of rules, formal communication has a clear intent. There is little room for misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Informal communication may sometimes miss the credibility of information exchange.
2. Available for future references: With formal communication being based on written instructions, you can always go back and check that email received from the boss.
3. Saves time: Even though writing an email may take a bit more time as it requires great focus that requires explaining your side. But once that's done, a great deal of time can be saved rather than long discussions made verbally.
4. Helps in keeping the sanctity: Important information getting exchanged informally may lead to undesired effects such as rumors or hard feelings. But in formal communication, the same message / information can be reached out to everyone concerned at same point of time & thus treating employees equally. This keeps away any major crisis in the flow of information within the organization.

Following are few examples of formal Vs. Informal words that can make an impact in written / verbal communication.

It is a skill to know when to use the language required for different situation/scenario.

INFORMAL	FORMAL
Get	Receive
Saying sorry	Appologise
Look at	Examine
Put off	Postpone, delay
Go against	Oppose
Point out	Indicate

Think about	Consider
Start	Commence
Need	Require
Anyways	Nevertheless
More/ plus	Moreover, furthermore
I think	In my opinion
In the end	Finally
ASAP	As soon as possible
EOD	End of the day
W.r.t	With respect to
Viz;	Namely
Cheap	Inexpensive

## **Email structure**

Email for more than two decades has been a core tool for business communication. To write emails & to get the results & responses we want, let's look at the strategies to ensure, clear, effective communication. An average employee receives 50-80 emails daily. At workplace we heavily rely on emails to communicate with our colleagues, clients, customers or even vendors. Hence, we should send well written emails to serve the objective.

1. **Subject line:** The subject line is what the reader sees first in his/her inbox. The more formal your email is, the more detailed your subject line should be.
2. **Salutation:** The salutation directly addresses the person you are sending the email to. Eg; if you are sending email to a group, then you can address the entire group as “ Dear team, “Dear students”  
Incase, you have got the persons name then you may include salutation as “Dear Mr. Rohit Aggarwal”, “Dear Madam” ,“Dear Sir” If the email id relates to a particular department, then you can address it as; Dear HR Manager, Dear Sales Team, Dear HR Team,

For most of the times if the email id does not mention the name or department its good to address it as “To whom it may concern”

3. **Introduction:** The opening of the formal email often requires the sender to introduce themselves. The introduction helps to give the meaning & purpose of the email. For eg;

*Dear Sir,*

*My name is Neha Agarwal. I am the student of GH Raisonni Engineering College.*

*Dear mam,*

*This is with reference to our telephonic call regarding....*

4. **The Body/Main content:** After making a good introduction & purpose in the email, the main content further draws the attention of the reader. Here the information needs to be written to the point & without any repetition of the content. It should be to the point, clear & concise structure. The body of the email can be 2-3 para as per the requirement of the **entire content & purpose**. A new para should be used in this section & after the introduction is done.

**For example;**

Dear Sir,

My name is Neha Agarwal. I am the student of GH Raisonni Engineering College.

This email is regarding my enrollment for the project competition.

5. **Closing:** How you end a formal email is equally important. Since the email closing is the last thing, your recipient looks at, your email closing which can leave a lasting impression. A good formal email closing also reminds the reader who you are since it should include your full name, contact information, and title (if appropriate). If you can, use a professional signature template for added impact.

### **For example;**

I look forward for your response.

Best Regards,

Neha Agarwal

System Analyst – TCS

+91 8888 253 253

### **Guidelines for effective email writing**

1. Create a professional email address that uses your first and last name.
2. Do not over-communicate
3. Make good use of subject line
4. Keep messages clear & brief
5. Be polite
6. Check your tone
7. Write the email address correctly. Use of CC should be made keeping in mind who all need to know the information of your email. Avoid usage of BCC in a professional environment
8. Don't use shorthand such as "idk," "2" instead of "to," "B" for "be," etc. Use full sentences with proper spelling and grammar
9. Never use emoticons when crafting a professional email
10. Phrases such as Regards, Best Regards, Best wishes, Thanks & Regards, Sincerely, can be used. Pls, remember to use a comma after making closures.
11. Don't write everything in caps, unless certain words might need (proper nouns) Proof read before you hit the 'send' button.
12. Avoid phrases such as: **I wanted to ask you, I wanted to let you know that, I am reaching out to, the reason of my email is that, the purpose of this email is to.**
13. Use phrases such as: I am writing to let you know...OR this is with reference to...OR *it is my pleasure to announce....*

## **Formal Email example**

To: neha.joshi@gmail.com

Cc:

Subject: **New offer on Office Furniture**

Dear Mr. Mahesh,

As your business associate, it gives me great pleasure in informing you about the new offer we are making on our latest design in **Office Furniture Series 2.2**

As our customers of many years, you can avail this offer at a special discount rate of 20% This offer is valid only to our elite customers like you and not across the board.

We are glad to inform you that this latest series has been designed by our skilled team keeping in mind the comfort, style & durability.

We request you to kindly order your requirement at the earliest, so that you can avail the fabulous discount.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Neha Joshi

Head Marketing

Comfort & Style Furniture Pvt.Ltd

+91 8888 253 253

## **Abstract Writing**

What is an Abstract?

An abstract is a short and powerful summary that describes the focus of a research OR project paper usually between 150-250 words. An abstract lets readers get the gist / central idea or essence of your project paper or research quickly. It prepares readers to follow the detailed information, analysis, and arguments of the project paper. It helps readers remember key points from the project paper.

### **Components of Abstract Writing**

1. **Introduction:** The beginning of the abstract writing should include the motivation behind your project. It must describe why your project is significant and how will it create an impact in the reader's mind. The **introduction** must not exceed more than **2 sentences**.
2. **Problem Statement / Objective:** You need to define the problem identified behind the project purpose and that how the objective of the project will overcome this gap.
3. **Method/Procedure/Approach:** In 2-3 sentences, you need to describe how you applied valid and reliable methods to reach your results. Here you need to only mention the process & avoid writing the minute details of the project. The whole purpose is to make the reader understand about the approach or methodology used in the project. Here the key words /terminologies can be mentioned.
4. **Results /discussion:** It is important to mention the key results that have been achieved while working on the project. Remember, other supporting information is not required as it will reflect in the main project paper.
5. **Conclusion:** The broader implications of the project should be written at the concluding part in abstract writing. The concluding abstract should describe how the project or research has added value in the study & community in large. Here one thing has to be kept in mind, to not exaggerate the advantage or success of the project. Otherwise, such tone will make reduce the credibility of the Abstract writing & the project overall.
6. The word limit can range between 150-250 words only.

## **Format of Newspaper article**

**Headline:** This being an important sentence must give the whole idea of the news to the readers. Shouldn't be too long. It should highlight the essence of the news only

**Byline:** This should contain the name of the writer & should come after the Headline.

**Place:** This is from where the writer is writing the report/news for eg; if you are present in Kolkata writing about the news, but something that occurred in Delhi, then the place should mention Kolkata & not delhi.

**Date:** The date should reflect on the day the news has ben written. Usually the format of date is July 20: No need to mention the year. Use a colon: after the date.

**Introduction:** Introduction should mention & explain the about the event, making it clear about the event – what happened, where, how & when.

**Body:** The body is the main part of the news article & should include the central idea & details about the news or event. The body can be more than 2 para as required.

**Conclusion:** This can be a small para, mentioning what can be expected in near future. Here the objective is to give a proper closure & hence not sound that the report ended abruptly.

# Headline

Byline  
Place; date

Introduction Paragraph

Body / Main content

Conclusion

Qs.: Write an article in your city local newspaper about your College Golden Jubilee Function celebration.

Qs. Write an email to the Sports coach of the college requesting to extend coaching time by 1 hour for students on the weekend.

Qs. Write an email to the CEO of a company inviting him/her to your Robo Competition event at your institute.

Explain the structure of email & explain its components.

## **Thinking Skills :**

- High Order Thinking skills
- Critical Thinking
- Creative Thinking

HOTS also known as **High Order Thinking skills** are important competencies any individual can utilize in order to improve learning process & critical thinking. Those who make use of these skills can understand how to analyze & evaluate complex information, troubleshoot for solutions, think big, solve problems & ultimately develop a skill of reasoning.

***HOTS in other words also means to go beyond memorizing the facts. It helps build the thinking pattern in Critical thinking.***

Critical thinking is one of the forms on high order thinking. It is analytical in nature & thus helps in assessing the worth or validity of something that already exist. Critical thinking is not limited to any specific profession.

## **Significance:**

1. Our present & future depends on technology, information & innovation. Critical thinking becomes very important & a **niche** skill in order to solve problems effectively.
2. The ability to know how to break down information into smaller parts ultimately helps improve the ability to comprehend (understand) Hence it helps to improve language skills & presentation skills
3. Critical thinkers often make best choices (decisions) It helps us think independently.
4. Critical thinking improves creativity, since people constantly think to take things further which is crucial at workplace.
5. Hence it also enhances the problem-solving skills.

## Qualities & difference between Critical & Uncritical thinkers.

Sr.	Critical Thinkers	Uncritical Thinkers
1	Critical thinkers acknowledge personal limitations.	Uncritical thinkers pretend to know more than they do
2	They see problems as existing challenges	They get annoyed by problems
3	They use evidence to make judgements	They judge on first impression & intuition
4	They are interested to listen & understand others' ideas	They tend to focus only on their own opinions
5	They think before acting	They start claiming that thinking gives them a headache
6	They avoid emotionalism They tend to think more rational & practical	They are generally guided by feelings rather than thoughts
7	They keep an open mind	They are impatient & jump to conclusions.

**Remember:** Sometimes how you solve the problems (method) is equally important as the solution. Open ended questions such as How? What? What if? should be used while gathering information & analyzing.

### How to develop critical thinking?

In simple words critical thinking is the opposite of regular or everyday thinking. Thinking happens automatically. But when you critically think you deliberately work on evaluating, analyzing, judging to reach more accurate conclusions.

**There are several ways to improve critical thinking skills at workplace to become an efficient employee.**

- 1) **Become more self-aware:** It means considering your thought process, values, morals, ethics & beliefs. Think objectively about your likes &

dislikes, weaknesses & strengths. All this can help you understand your approach & perspective towards any situation.

- 2) **Understand your mental process**: Identify & evaluate how you receive & process information. Understanding how you listen then interpret & finally react to information. Taking time to analyze before making a work decision can help you act objectively.
- 3) **Develop foresight**: Having a foresight to predict how your actions at work will produce reactions will help you make right choices.
- 4) **Practice active listening**: Active listening is the foundational element of effective critical thinking. Listen carefully when co-workers / superiors are talking – to understand what they need & expect. Because this will subsequently help in productive conversation with colleagues & seniors.
- 5) **Ask questions**: Whenever you are not sure, always ask questions. Start with what you already know, before you ask a question to understand the details, facts or information.
- 6) **Evaluate existing facts** / information: Use previous experiences to make current decision through critical thinking. What was your past learnings while making a decision, will help you to sort information for the current situation

### **How to practice Critical thinking?**

**Our job is to learn how to think rather than what to think.** An ability to think means to know how to make connections between ideas & evaluate information critically. Thinking critically involves applying reason & logic to assess arguments & come to your own conclusions. Instead of reciting textbook answers, critical thinking skills encourage students to move beyond knowing the information & get to the heart of what they really think & believe.

## Critical thinking includes following steps :

- 1) Identify the problem: Here, one must be specific about question you are asking.
- 2) Gather & organize information: Use references from the sources that you have gathered data.
- 3) Analyze & evaluate the data: evaluate the credibility & reliability of the sources of information.
- 4) Determine importance of information: Establish which information makes it most important to make a decision.
- 5) Make decision & communicate: Make decisions by gathering, analyzing, evaluating to come to a possible solution or decision. Present / communicate your final decision to your team.

## What is Creative thinking?

Creativity is the skills of producing something new & valuable. It can be a product, an idea, a concept, a process or a solution to a problem.

A creative person is able to use existing knowledge in new ways to search for all possible new solutions to problems. Thus creative thinking is a skills which lets you consider things from a new perspective. Creativity is what drives innovation & progress. It can be processed by brainstorming or lateral thinking to generate ideas.

## Why Creative thinking is an asset?

- 1) When creative processes & people skills come together to solve different problems, they develop innovative solutions that will met the current demands of clients & end users. **Hence creative thinking drives innovation.**

- 2) **Solves VUCA problems**: Manuals, procedures, or rules don't always solve problems especially the **VUCA – volatile, unpredictable, complex & ambiguous**. Problems of all shapes & sizes are made more manageable through creative problem-solving techniques.
- 3) **Creativity makes you “Future proof”**- to stay current & get ahead one has to adapt the method of learn-unlearn-relearn pattern. In today's era, where it is bit difficult to predict future jobs adaptability needs to be way of living. We must Learn something new, to create a safe, secure & comfortable world for ourselves. Once the basics are covered & we educate ourselves with needed knowledge, we tend to stick to a common pattern to follow whatever knowledge we have gained. In this situation we are habituated to avoid problems / situations where we are forced to learn something from it. Unlearning the old rules & re-learning the new ones is the need to stay fit in today's era. Being agile is the way to survive.

**Let's also understand what are hypothetical questions & its advantages.**

**Example: What would you do if you were given 24 hours to live? OR, If you were a robot, what would you want to do? OR, If you are offered 3 wishes what would they be?**

**Advantages of Hypothetical questions (interviews)**

- Gives you a chance to define your core values
- Allows you to demonstrate your collaboration skills.
- It encourages us to practice how to think rather than what to think.

**Similarly we should also understand certain types of questions that encourage critical thinking.**

- How do you know this?
- How would your perspective be different if you were on the opposing side?
- How would you solve this problem?
- Do you agree /disagree – and why?
- How could we avoid this problem in future?
- Why does it matter?

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