Skills Programme 2: Oral Communication (NQF 3)

SA CAMPUS

Learner Guide

admin@sacampus.co.za | www.sacampus.co.za | +27 87 357 7801

INFORMATION

LEARNER	
Name and surname	
Learner ID	
Cell Number	
Email Address	
Organisation	
Unit/Dept	
Facilitator	

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ICONS

The following icons may be used in this Learner Guide to indicate specific functions:

Title	Icon	Description
Books		This icon means that other books are available for further information on a particular topic/subject.
References		This icon refers to any examples, handouts, checklists, etc.
Important		This icon represents essential information related to a specific topic or section of the guide.
Activities		This icon helps you to be prepared for the learning to follow or assist you to demonstrate understanding of module content. Shows transference of knowledge and skill.
Exercises		This icon represents exercises that must be completed on a specific topic individually or in a group.
Task/Projects		An important aspect of the assessment process is proof of competence. This can be achieved by observation, or a portfolio of evidence should be submitted in this regard.
Workplace Activities		An essential aspect of learning is through work experience. Activities with this icon can only be completed once a learner is in the workplace.
Tips		This icon indicates practical tips you can adopt in the future.
Notes		This icon represents important notes you must remember as part of the learning process.

INTRODUCTION

About the Learner Guide:

This Learner Guide provides a comprehensive overview of Skills Programme 2: Oral Communication. It is designed to develop learners' communication skills and knowledge, enabling them to interact effectively and appropriately in a variety of workplace and social contexts. Learners are required to attend training workshops as a group or as specified by their organisation. These workshops are presented in modules and conducted by a qualified facilitator.

Purpose:

A learner achieving this skills programme will be able to communicate effectively in a range of contexts by interpreting, analysing, and responding appropriately to spoken and written texts.

Outcomes:

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Use a range of reading and viewing strategies to understand texts
- Interpret and analyse both literal and implied meaning in communication
- Communicate effectively in written and oral forms for different contexts
- Adapt communication to suit audience, purpose, and workplace situations
- Engage in sustained oral communication and evaluate spoken texts

Assessment criteria:

The only way to establish whether a learner is competent and has accomplished the specific outcomes is through assessment. Assessment involves collecting and interpreting evidence about the learner's ability to perform a task. This guide may include assessments in the form of activities, assignments, tasks, or projects, as well as practical workplace tasks. Learners are required to perform tasks on the job to collect sufficient and appropriate evidence for their portfolio of evidence, signed by their supervisor to confirm successful completion.

To qualify

To qualify and receive credits towards the learning programme, a registered assessor will conduct an evaluation and assessment of the learner's portfolio of evidence and overall competence.

Range of learning

This describes the situation and circumstances in which competence must be demonstrated, as well as the parameters in which learners are expected to operate.

Responsibility

The responsibility for learning rests with the learner, therefore:

- Be proactive and ask questions
- Seek assistance and support from facilitators when required

LEARNING UNIT 1

INTERPRET AND USE INFORMATION FROM TEXTS

US: 119457– NQF 3 – 5 Credits

Learners at this level read and view a range of texts. People credited with this unit standard can read and view a variety of text types with understanding and justifying their views and responses by reference to detailed evidence from texts. They are also able to evaluate the effectiveness of different texts for different purposes by using a set of criteria for analysis.

Learners credited with this unit standard can:

- Use a range of reading and viewing strategies to understand the literal meaning of specific texts
- Use strategies for extracting implicit messages in texts
- Respond to selected texts in a manner appropriate to the context
- Explore and explain how language structures and features may influence a reader/viewer

Learning assumed to be in place:

The credit calculation assumes that learners are already competent in terms of the following outcomes or areas of learning when starting to learn towards this unit standard: the NQF Level 2-unit standard, entitled Maintain and adapt oral/signed communication.

LEARNING UNIT 1

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 1

USE A RANGE OF READING AND/OR VIEWING STRATEGIES TO UNDERSTAND THE LITERAL MEANING OF SPECIFIC TEXTS.

US: 119457

Learning outcomes:

1. Unfamiliar words/signs are identified. Their meanings are correctly determined by using knowledge of syntax, word-attack skills/sign parameter/analysis skills, and contextual clues.

2. Different options for the meanings of ambiguous words are tested, and selected meanings are correct in relation to the context.

3. Main ideas are separated from supporting evidence and paraphrased or summarised.

4. The purpose of visual and/or graphic representations in texts are recognised and explained.

5. Features of visual texts are explained in relation to the way they impact on meaning.

In this section, we will examine various key concepts and ideas and participate in a range of activities. The activities will help us to increase our understanding of the subject, as well as to put this into practice. There will also be some self-assessment tasks to ensure that students are on target.

1 <u>Unfamiliar words</u>

What do we do when we come across a word we do not understand? We are going to explore techniques you can use to understand the exact (literal) meaning of certain unfamiliar words in a piece of writing or part of a talk. If a word is unfamiliar to us there are certain strategies or techniques, we can use to help us make an intelligent guess at what the meaning of the word is. To do this we need to know a little bit about how sentences are structured.

Look at the difference between these two sentences:

- Drinking water from the streams is very dangerous as the run-off from mines and commercial farms have poisoned a lot of rivers.
- Commercial farms and mines run-off drinking water from very dangerous streams, which have poisoned a lot of rivers.

The orders in which we have placed the words, the syntax, have made all the difference in meaning between the two sentences.

Now look at this sentence:
Themba was playing a pleasant tune on the mbiro when his mother called him. We may not know what the word "mbiro" means but from where it is in the sentence we can guess that it is an object of some sort. It is a musical instrument which may be described as a 'thumb piano' and is of sub-Saharan origin. We can thus see how syntax gives us some clue as to the meaning of an unfamiliar word.

<u>Word attack</u>
Another useful strategy for trying to understand what an unfamiliar word means is word-attack skills. Word-attack skills refer to looking at the unfamiliar word in its context and trying to see what you can work out from the context and the syntax and any other clues, such as capital letters, to help you understand the word.

An example could be the word 'agribusinesses. If we had never heard the word before and heard the following sentence "The statistics for the production of wheat was poor compared to last year in the agribusiness" we could do a word attack on "agribusiness" by thinking of its parts. We are familiar with "Agri" from terms like "agriculture" which we associate with farming. We also know the word "business" as referring to trade, industry or a company. So, we could guess that 'agribusiness' is something, which could be seen as a group of industries or trade dealing with farm produce and services.

When we looked at the word "agribusiness" the context in which it was used also helped us guess at its meaning. We picked up clues from the fact that it was connected to agriculture and farming and concerned with trade.

Unfamiliar words

Sometimes we borrow words from another language. Borrowed words are foreign words and we can usually only use the context and syntax in our word-attack to try and work out what they mean, as the parts of the word will not be familiar to us.

For example: Look at the syntax, and context in which the word that is in bold is used. Use your word attack skills to try and work out what it means if you are unfamiliar with the word. Then look at the solutions.

- Escargot is my favourite dish," said Francois.
- My hunger was satisfied with the ostrich biltong which was so lekker.
- I would rather watch flamenco than classical ballet.
- Will you be having the legumes and chips with your steak?
- That gogo must be over 80 years old.
- These samosas are delicious.
- We survived poverty through sharing and ubuntu.
- We can see from the context and syntax that escargot refers to a food item. It is in fact French for snails.
- We can see from the context and syntax that biltong is a food. This is derived from Afrikaans and is dried raw meat. 'Lekker' is Afrikaans for delicious.
- We can see from the context and syntax that flamenco refers to a type of performance. It is a Spanish word describing a particular style of dancing.
- We can see from the context that legumes are a type of food to be eaten with steak. Legumes in French means vegetables.
- We can see from the context and syntax that gogo refers to an old person. It means granny in Zulu.
- We can see that samosas refer to a food item. It is an Urdu (Indian) word for a spicy delicacy that is triangular.
- We can see that poverty was alleviated through ubuntu. Ubuntu is a Xhosa word for
- family/friends helping each other in all circumstances.

Complex terms

A complex term is a word made up of more than one word to combine two ideas together. Complex is the opposite of simple; it means having many parts made up of many interrelated parts.

The context will usually help us understand what the acronym might be referring to, whether it is an organization or a group of people. Sometimes we use acronyms without knowing what the individual letters stand for. For example, we talk about SMS-ing somebody. Did you know that SMS stands for Short Message System? Did you know that e-mail stands for electronic mail? Do you know what AIDS stands for?

2 Colloquialisms and slang

A colloquialism is an informal expression; an informal word or phrase that is more usual in conversation than in formal speech or writing, e.g. "I am beat" meaning I am tired; "I am now finished and klaar" meaning "I am tired."
Or "I want to give up".

Slang is also an informal manner of speech. Slang can be defined in two ways, firstly as very casual speech or writing when words, or expressions, are casual, or playful replacements for standard ones; slang words or phrases are often short-lived and are usually considered unsuitable for formal contexts.

Secondly it can be defined as language of an exclusive group; a form of language used by a particular group of people, often deliberately created and used to exclude people outside the group, e.g. "hang ten" is a phrase that comes from surfers' slang. We all use colloquialisms and slang in our ordinary day-to-day speech and in emails or other forms of written communication to our friends and family. In the formal settings however we should guard against using them to our superiors and to our colleagues. In the professional world it is more acceptable to use more formal standard ways of expressing ourselves, whether in writing or in oral communication. As always, we need to be aware of our audience (listeners).

For example:
Look at these examples of slang and colloquialisms that are in bold font. If you are not familiar with them, look at the syntax and context, and use your word-attack skills to try to figure out what they mean. Then look at the explanations below and match the appropriate numbers.

1. Charlize is an ace actress.
2. Thabo asked where the action was in Mbekweni.
3. Has the green chop been fed to the grazing animals yet?
4. Tomorrow our boss is bringing in the big guns.
5. Is the sheep suffering from bloat?
6. If Marlena doesn't go on diet soon, she will end up a blimp.
7. Ismail never touches any booze.
8. The fresh cow is looking after its young.
9. If the weather is nice tomorrow Senta is going to go and catch some rays.
10. I did an all-nighter to get my work finished on time.

<u>Explanations:</u>

a) most interesting place
b) important people
c) very fat person
d) alcohol
e) cow has recently given birth
f) suntan
g) freshly cut forage fed directly to animals
h) abnormal accumulation of gases in ruminant animals which causes the upper left
i) side of the animal to swell
j) stayed up late
k) very impressive

Think carefully about whether you use too much slang or too many colloquialisms in your formal communications. Jargon can be defined as specialist language; it is language that is used by a particular group, profession, or culture, especially when the words and phrases are not understood or used by other people, e.g. farmers' jargon, or medical jargon. Often the words used are so specialized that unless we are familiar with the field it is very difficult for a person off the street to work out what is meant by something. If we are with people who are in the same profession or a group of friends who share the same hobby, it is perfectly acceptable to use jargon.

Example:

Read this extract that is aimed at people in the computer field (the jargon is in bold) "Many people use MWEB as their ISP. When doing a search on the net you may just want to browse. If the page is written in Java or in HTML, then you can scroll up and down. You can also download on to a floppy or a stiffy. A frustrating thing that happens is when the URL can't be located, even though you have done a good search with keywords, or the server is down".

How much did you understand? If you are very computer literate you may have understood quite a bit. If you know little about computers or the Internet this talk would not have meant very much to you.

This is an example of jargon. Can you think of ways that could help you understand this better? You could ask someone who is an expert or you could find a good reference book to explain these terms. Remember; do not get intimidated by jargon. If someone like a doctor or a salesperson uses jargon that you do not understand you should always ask for a clear explanation.

Now think of a field in which you know quite a bit, such as plant growing techniques. Do you ever use jargon that would not be understood by people outside this field? How do you think it makes your listener (audience) feel?

South African English as used by native English speakers can be seen as a single dialect with the main differences being in accent. It is not very different from standard (British) English although a few different dialects have been identified with non-native speakers, these include a few varieties of 'township' English and the Cape Flats dialect (although this is a mixture of English and Afrikaans).

Example:

- Here is an example of Standard English "translated" into Scottish dialect. "We are having a great time and are learning to communicate better in South African English."

  "We urhavin' a braw time an' urlearnin' tae communicate better in soothafrican sassenach".
- Here is an example of Standard English "translated" into an Ali G dialect:

  "Hallo everybody! What are you up to on this fine day?"

  "Alo everyone! wotizyous up to on dis wicked day?"

Could you have used your word-attack skills to work out what "braw", "sassenach", and "wicked" mean in this context?

3 Ambiguous words

Ambiguous words are words that have more than one meaning.

A word, phrase, sentence, or other communication is called ambiguous if it can be reasonably interpreted in more than one way. The simplest case is a single word with more than one sense: Let us look at the word "bank", for example, which can mean "financial institution" or the "edge of a river". Sometimes this is not a serious problem because a word that is ambiguous by itself is often clear in the context in which it is used. Someone who says "I deposited R100 in the bank" is unlikely to mean that she buried the money beside a river!

Activity: What do these sentences mean?
Look at these ambiguous newspaper headlines. • Kids make nutritious snacks • Grandmother of eight makes hole in one • Milk drinkers are turning to powder • Drunk gets nine months in violin case • Farmers hooked on nitrogen fixation Rewrite each one so that the ambiguity is eliminated, in other words the double meaning is fully explained. To do this you will need to rewrite each sentence twice. Write the literal (but incorrect) version first then what the headline is trying to say). Example: 1. Grandmother makes a hole in one of her eight children! 2. 2. Grandmother of eight children achieves a hole in one (in golf).

4 Summarizing and paraphrasing

Paraphrase is to rephrase and simplify; to restate something using other words, especially in order to make it simpler or shorter, e.g. "he was suffering from an acute case of influenza and thus absented himself from his place of learning", could be much more simply put as "he had bad flu and so didn't come to college".

Summarize is to make a summary; to make or give a shortened version of something that has been said or written, stating its main points, e.g. "The farm could have been over a million acres; it looked as if it could stretch to outer space" can be summarised as "the farm was very big".

To paraphrase (and summarize) we need to be able to separate the main ideas from the supporting evidence used as examples or additional material.

For example: Look at the examples of long complicated sentences given here and see if you can separate the main idea from the supporting evidence in each case. Write down what you think the main idea of each sentence is.

- Dr Tshabala, who is a kind and honourable man who has received much recognition for his excellent service to the community, is currently working at the university.
- AIDS is a terrible illness which strikes at the immune system of rich and poor alike and has caused the death of millions worldwide in a horrible and tragic manner.
- All the players in the orchestra, and by this, I mean even the most insignificant clasher of cymbals, need to always focus their total and undivided attention on the conductor, indeed, for every second of the performance.
- The successful Farming Institute, which has been conducting classes since the year 2000 and is situated in the Boland with more than a thousand students registered now, is investigating merging with other agricultural educational institutions.

5 Graphic and visual aids

Graphic representations are a form of non-verbal communication.

Graphic communication:
Tells us information briefly and is often a more effective way of communication than words. Graphic communication includes the use of devices such as pictures, drawings, photographs, aerial photographs, mind maps, maps, schema, bar graphs, pie charts, illustrations, cartoons and diagrams.

Illustration:
An illustration is a general term that refers to the picture that complements a text; an illustration can be a drawing, photograph, or diagram that accompanies and complements a printed, spoken, or electronic text

Photographs:

We are all familiar with photographs. It is said that the camera cannot lie but of course we can be selective about what we include in a photograph, so photographs do not necessarily always tell the whole truth. They do, however, always provide a permanent record of visible objects. On some occasion's photos can be too realistic and will not be included with text, e.g. a close-up photo of a child mutilated in a hand-grenade attack. Can you think of any other examples where a photo would be too realistic?

Aerial photography:

Refers to a particular type of photo that is taken from an aeroplane. It can be used to show the layout of a neighbourhood (like a map) or used to estimate the number of people living in a particular area. It could also be used to show the features of a piece of land, relative to surrounding areas. Think of the view you get from an aeroplane when you are coming in to land and try to think how this perspective could be used to illustrate a text.

Pictures:

We are also familiar with the notion of pictures which can be described as something drawn or painted; a shape or set of shapes and lines drawn, painted or printed on paper, canvas or some other flat surface, especially shapes that represent a recognisable form or object.

Drawings:

A drawing is an outline picture; a picture of something made with a pencil, pen or crayon, usually consisting of lines, often with shading, but generally without colour. An example is that of the capsicum plant structure, seen on your right. Advertisers might choose to use drawings rather than coloured pictures if there is a financial constraint. Sometimes it might also be felt that a coloured picture is too distracting, so in certain textbooks or reference books a simple drawing might be chosen. Next time you see a drawing ask yourself whether a more detailed coloured picture would improve the message or detract from the point of the illustration.

Graphs:

- The Bar Graph:

A bar graph is a graphic representation where vertical or horizontal bars or columns represent some information. The length of the bar tells us the size of the illustrated item. If the numbers in the bar graphs are representing percentages, these must add up to 100%. Bar graphs are sometimes called bar charts or bar diagrams.

When drawing a bar graph remember the following:

- Bars should be of equal width.
- There should be spaces of equal width between the bars.
- Bars can be vertical or horizontal.
- The bars are usually of different colours to show the difference between the various sets of information.
- Label each bar showing the exact value of each bar.;=

- The Pie Chart

A pie chart is a graphic representation of data in the form of a circle or pie, which is divided into wedges. The total of the pie represents 100%. Pie charts are relatively easy to understand and are popular ways of graphically representing numerical data to the public.

- Tips for reading pie graphs:
- Read the title of the pie graph if there is one. It explains what the pie graph is about.
- Look at the different colours or shadings. This tells you how many parts or sections there are of the whole.
- Notice the size of each section. Find the biggest and smallest sections.
- Look for any numbers that give you information about how big or small each section is.

A diagram and a schema

Can be defined as a simple explanatory drawing; a simple drawing showing the basic shape, layout, or workings of something. Diagrams and schema should have all parts clearly labelled. Diagrams often accompany products we buy, for example a video machine will come with a booklet that has diagrams showing us what each piece represents and how it should be used. Textbooks on subjects such as life sciences will often be illustrated with diagrams as will medically books.

A map

Can be defined as a geographical diagram; it is a visual representation that shows all or part of the Earth's surface with geographical features, urban areas, roads, and other details, e.g. "We carefully studied the map of Africa to see exactly where Zanzibar is when we won tickets to go there. It can also be defined as a drawing showing a route or location; a diagrammatical drawing of something such as a route or area made to show the location of a place or how to get there, e.g. "I asked her for a map showing where her house was as I had never been to Bellville before."

Think of some examples of texts, which could be effectively illustrated with accompanying maps. Mind maps and brainstorming. A mind-map is a diagram that shows us graphically how we could think about a particular subject. It is often linked to the process known as brainstorming when you write down all your ideas about a particular topic.

Cartoons

A cartoon can refer to a sequence of drawings that tell a short story, or are humorous, published in a newspaper or magazine, e.g. the comic strips that appear in the newspaper are done in cartoon form; cartoon versions of written texts such as: "The Tale of Two Cities" in cartoon form.

It can also refer to a satirical drawing or a humorous drawing published in a newspaper or magazine and commenting on a current event or theme. For examples, look at the 'Letters Page" in all daily newspapers for a cartoon on some current event.

Cartoons are used to lighten the mood of a text or to make a serious point in a humorous way. They can convey a message in a powerful way. They are often used in campaigns aimed at the youth, e.g. a campaign launched in June 2004, to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS made use of cartoons, in the form of talking condoms.

LEARNING UNIT 1

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 2

USE STRATEGIES FOR EXTRACTING IMPLICIT MESSAGES IN TEXTS

US: 119457

Learning outcomes:

1. Source of text is identified and discussed in terms of reliability and possible bias.
2. Attitudes, beliefs and intentions are explored to determine the point of view expressed either directly or indirectly.
3. Techniques are explored and explained in terms of purpose and audience.
4. Promotion of, or support for, a particular line of thought/cause is identified and explained with reference to selection or omission of materials.

1 Implicit

An implicit message is an indirect message, which can be picked up directly from the context. To imply something is to suggest it without stating it directly. If I say, "Gee you are very early for lectures today!" when you are exactly on time, my implicit message to you is that you are generally late. Authors of texts often imply or suggest a message without stating it directly. We need to explore how to recognize this.

2 Source of text

We are exposed to a range of texts in our everyday lives. We read adverts, listen to news broadcasts that have been written by someone, receive emails, read lecture notes, notices, marketing material, magazines, newspapers and books.

Reliability

Reliability means the extent to which the text is likely to be accurate. The extent to which text is to be trusted to be accurate, correct or to provide a correct result, e.g. "I don't think the report that aliens have landed is very reliable." One way to check reliability is to look at the source. If we heard on the 7 o'clock news that aliens had landed, we might be seriously concerned. We assume that news reports are reliable. We also assume that newspaper reports are reliable, so again if we read in the "Cape Times" that aliens had landed we would take it seriously. If, however we read this in a sensationalist magazine we should have serious doubts about it.

Sensationalism

Sensationalism refers to the use of shocking material; the practice of emphasizing the most horrifying, shocking, and emotive aspects of anything under discussion or investigation, especially by the media. Some magazines specialise in sensationalism. They publish stories, which are difficult to back up or prove, and they appeal to that part of our nature that enjoys being shocked. Such magazines may be fun to read but their claims should not be taken too seriously. We need objective and reliable evidence to back up wild claims.

Objective

Objective refers to statements which are free of bias or prejudice caused by personal feelings; based on facts rather than thoughts or opinions, e.g. it is an objective fact that drug use among teenagers is increasing in Cape Town's. Sometimes an implicit or implied message is transmitted through a biased source.

Bias

Bias can be defined as a preference; it is an unfair preference for or dislike of something, e.g. "The teacher is biased against black learners – she always picks on those learners unfairly"; "The report on the gay club was biased against homosexuals - it gave a very negative impression of them."

Activity: Identifying bias (pairs)
Look at these examples of biased statements and identify what source you think they came from. Match the number of the statement with the appropriate number of the source given in the list. Keep in mind that a source can be biased for or against something. 1. Baboons are a menace and should be shot on sight. 2. The Israeli forces are evil and are illegally occupying Palestine. 3. The Palestinians have no right to own land in the Gaza strip - it belongs to Israel. 4. Eminem is one of the greatest rappers of all times. 5. Eminem's lyrics are disgusting. He should be banned. 6. Baboons are peaceful, fun-loving animals that do no harm. 7. Men are lazy and our lives would be improved if they were all eliminated. 8. Gambling is a vice - it will lead to moral decay. 9. Women are the best! Long live women! 10. Charities benefit enormously from the Lotto therefore gambling is a good thing. 11. Farm labourers are unable to negotiate with management. 12. Farm workers preferred the 'tot system'. <u>Sources:</u> A. A newspaper article in favour of gambling. B. An article from a leaflet entitled "Protect All Animals!" C. A writer who dislikes swearing and obscenities in music. D. A fan writing to a fan club newsletter. E. A pamphlet promoting Israel's right to occupy the Gaza Strip. F. An article written by someone who dislikes men intensely. G. A letter from someone who has been plagued by baboons. H. A poster advertising Women's Day. I. An article that is written by someone whose life was ruined by gambling. J. A brochure published to support the Palestinian struggle for land. K. An Apartheid era, anti-union, farm policy document. L. l) A letter from a farmer who wanted to extract cheap labour from workers.

3 Author's attitude and Belief

Attitude

Attitude can be described as a personal view of something; an opinion or general feeling about something, e.g. "Many people in South Africa have a positive attitude to change"; "Rapists have a very negative attitude to women".

Belief

Belief can be described as the acceptance of the truth of something; acceptance by the mind that something is true or real, often underpinned by an emotional or spiritual sense of certainty, e.g. "She has a strongly held belief in an afterlife". It can also mean to have trust or confidence that somebody or something is good or will be effective, e.g. "He has a great belief in democracy". Finally, belief refers to an opinion that is a firm and considered one, e.g. "I have a firm belief in the superiority of women".

What an author believes and what his/her attitude to something is will have an influence on the message he/she is putting across. The attitudes and beliefs of the author may be directly stated or put across in an indirect, implied, more subtle manner. An example to illustrate this is: when someone states "I do not like women." they are directly stating their attitude; if they were to say, "Women are a very difficult bunch." they would be indirectly expressing a negative attitude to women; the message would be implied.

Activity 6: Identifying attitudes and beliefs
Look at these examples of extracts from articles. Then match the extract with the attitude or belief being expressed either directly or indirectly. A list of attitudes and beliefs is given below - some of which are correct, some of which are not. Choose the one you think best describes the attitude and beliefs of the author. Match appropriate numbers. 1. Children are a mixed blessing. On the one hand they give meaning to our lives, are entertaining, fun to be around and keep us young. On the other hand, they are a great responsibility. 2. Modern music is in a strange state. There are no more great guitarists like Clapton and Hendricks from the 60's. Today's guitarists think it is sufficient to learn a few chords and then blast the audience with their new-found skills.

3. The abuse of Iraqi prisoners was to be expected. The Americans have always shown little regard for those they hold captive in times of war. Abuse has occurred frequently in previous wars.
4. The current trend of concern about genetic modification of food crops is based on various scientific misconceptions. The potential benefits of GM crops far outweigh the few disadvantages.
5. Studying by correspondence is challenging. The advantages are that you can pace yourself and decide when you wish to study. You can also earn a wage while being a student. A disadvantage is that you cannot have class discussions.

Attitudes and beliefs:

A. Negative attitude to correspondence courses
B. Positive attitude to genetic modification; belief that its advantages outweigh any disadvantages
C. Negative attitude to the USA; belief that they tend to abuse prisoners of war
D. Belief that modern music is better than it was 40 years ago
E. Belief that having children is a positive thing, positive attitude to children
F. Positive attitude to the USA; belief that they are a humane nation
G. Negative attitude to genetic modification; belief that it is ultimately harmful
H. Negative attitude to modern music; belief that it has got worse over the years
I. Positive attitude to studying through correspondence colleges; belief that they are
J. better than full-time institutions
K. Belief that having children is a bad thing, negative attitude towards children

Intentions

Intentions can be described as the aim or objective of something; something that somebody plans to do or achieve, e.g. "The students learnt about agricultural practices so that they would become good farmers". Authors can have a huge variety of aims or intentions. They may wish to entertain, to educate, to convince readers of a political point of view, to persuade people to believe in a cause, to convince readers to purchase something, to express their own point of view publicly and so on.

Writing techniques and purpose

In a text that is relatively simple and aimed at a public, where the author wished to make sure his/her purpose is clearly transmitted, shorter sentences will be used. Shorter sentences are generally easier to follow than very long complicated ones.

Punctuation

Punctuation is critical to the reader as it helps us know when to pause, when to stop and when people are speaking amongst other things. A poorly punctuated piece of writing is usually very difficult to understand. If an author was composing an advert that had dialogue it would be critical both for his/her audience and purpose that the punctuation was correct. For example, look at the difference in meaning between:

1. Ms Viljoen said I am too slow when I move, and,
2. Ms Viljoen said: "I am too slow when I move!".

Choice of words

The choice of words depends a great deal on whom the intended readers are and what the purpose or intention of the author is. If we want to ensure that our communication is understood by any reader, we will obviously choose simple, clearly understood words. If we knew we were writing to a person, or people, who were totally familiar with the topic, we could use words they could understand.

Jargon

Technical jargon may not be understood by the public. This could apply to slang as much as to jargon. Another technique used by authors is to vary the extent to which they use figurative language.

Figurative language

Figurative language refers to language that is not literal. Literal is the actual meaning of the word, so figurative means using language that contains a non-literal sense of a word or words, "she will bite your head off if you tell her that" literally means she will use her teeth to remove your head; the sense in which it is used is figurative here, meaning "she will get very angry if you tell her that".

Activity 8: Who and why
Read through the following extracts and match them with the sets of author and purpose given in the list below the extract. Then decide what type of writing technique each one is an example of. These are listed after the list entitled Author & Purpose and are given letters. 1. G'day mate! I'm taking the ute and my Sheila down to watch the Kiwis play rugger t'day. 2. Jeez last night was way cool - that club is so not old style, it's awesome! 3. The following diagram is a pie chart representing infant mortality rates by province for 2002. 4. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is when the bronchi and alveoli become inflamed. There is a high incidence among smokers. 5. A picture of the Teletubbies waving goodbye and saying "Goodbye Winkie!" 6. Two isotopic forms deuterium and tritium, in which the atomic nuclei also contain one or two neutrons respectively, found to a small degree in water. <u>Author & Purpose:</u> 1. An illustration accompanying a schedule for the day's TV programs, written by the entertainment editor to keep viewers informed. 2. Text from an article on child death rates written for a factual reliable magazine by a serious journalist who wishes to inform the public. 3. Extract from an email to a friend, written by an Australian with the purpose of friendly communication. 4. Extract from a medical journal written by an expert with the purpose of informing first-year medical students about lung diseases. 5. A quick note written by a friend to another friend with the purpose of informal friendly communication. 6. Extract from Learner Guide on Generic Agricultural Practices. <u>Type of device:</u> A. Slang/colloquialism B. Jargon/technical terms C. Graphic illustration of data D. Picture accompanying text E. Dialect F. Technical terms

<u>Humour</u>

Humour is a way of relaxing and entertaining the reader. It is used when the purpose of the author is to entertain or amuse the reader. Humour would be out of place in a very formal text. Advertisers often make use of humour; certain companies such as 'Vodacom' and 'Kulula dot com' have very humorous advertisements.

Irony

Irony can be defined as a type of humorous device or technique based on using words to suggest the opposite of their literal meaning, e.g. "That is great news!" as a response to hearing your working hours are to be extended.

Sarcasm

Sarcasm is cutting language: remarks that mean the opposite of what they seem to say and are intended to mock or deride or make fun of something or someone. Sarcasm and irony are effective ways of communicating for friends or in informal settings. It would generally be considered inappropriate to use sarcasm or irony when addressing people formally or people who are senior to you.

Examples of sarcasm:

- In Hollywood a marriage is a success if it outlasts milk. -- Rita Rudner
- I love being married. It's so great to find that one special person you want to annoy for the rest of your life. -- Rita Rudner
- Politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is thought necessary. -- Robert Louis Stevenson
- Politics is the skilled use of blunt objects. -- Lester Pearson
- Every time I look at you, I get a fierce desire to be lonesome. -- Oscar Levant
- Zimbabwe kicked out its best source of income, employment and food. – Richard Perks (letter to Farmer's Weekly May 2005)

Satire

Satire can be described as the use of wit: especially irony, sarcasm, and ridicule, to attack the evils and stupidity of humankind, e.g. the play in which politicians were represented as greedy children was a satire - it was making fun of politicians. In South Africa Pieter-Dirk Uys is the best-known satirist. His creations of Evita Bezuidenhout and others were done to poke fun at the Nationalist government. During the Apartheid era, his plays were sometimes prevented from being performed. Some politicians however found his satires amusing.

4 Visual techniques used by authors

There are various camera angles that can be used for different purposes.

A low angle is used to dramatise and make the product or subject seem larger than life, e.g. a low angle shot of specific flowers to illustrate a Nature text; a low angle shot of faces to illustrate a text entitled "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder".

A natural angle is used to get the audience to relate to a product in its everyday setting e.g. a series of pictures of houses could be shot using a natural angle to accompany a text on architectural styles.

You can also use an unnatural angle where the camera is tilted during filming or shooting. This can be used to give the impression that something is looming or leaning over, e.g. a shot of tall skyscrapers in New York taken at an unnatural angle to illustrate a text on how buildings are blocking out natural light.

5 Video, tv and movies

A Cinematographic technique is a term that includes camera angle, lighting, background, use of music, use of accompanying text and so on. Thrillers for example are often shot using dark lighting and in dark colours to add to the suspense, e.g. the film "Seven" is very dark and grainy. (Can you think of another example?)

A movie that is set outdoors such as Lord of the Rings makes great use of the natural beauty of the countryside. (Can you think of another example?)

A feel-good movie like "Wondrous Oblivion" is shot using natural camera angles and with bright naturalistic lighting. (Can you think of another example?)

Adverts aimed at young people for example are often very brightly coloured and are fast moving and make use of colloquialisms and slang. The implied message here is that young people are always on the move, busy and active and need products to suit their lifestyle. Think of cell phone adverts, or adverts for Fast Food places. Can you think of any other examples of adverts aimed at young people that use a particular type of cinematographic technique?

6 Promotion of line of thought

Let us now move on to look at how a particular line of thought or a cause is promoted and supported. This is achieved by selecting or omitting (leaving out) certain materials. In the Apartheid era history textbooks often used to leave out critical information relating to the role black people played in creating our nation. We simply need to recap now, focusing on how a particular cause can be promoted in this manner.

LEARNING UNIT 1

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 3

RESPOND TO SELECTED TEXTS IN A MANNER APPROPRIATE TO THE CONTEXT.

US: 119457

Learning outcomes:

1. Instructions and requests are acted upon.

2. Text-type, format and register used are on the appropriate level of formality.

1 Responding to selected texts in a manner appropriate to the context.

• Instructions and Requests.

• Text-type, format and register.

Requests

Let us look at text that consists of a request. Certain texts require us to respond in certain ways - we are asked or requested for example to supply our personal details when we apply for a student loan or bursary.

There are times however when to respond to a request we would need more information. There are other times when to respond to a request we need to sort out the order of things being requested to be able to respond appropriately.

If you were asked to help a developing farmer, choose the most suitable crops for her area you would first need to establish a lot more information about where her farm was, how much land she had, what type of soil she had and other relevant points. Requests are often, but not always, phrased as questions.

<u>Instructions</u>

Instructions can be defined in two ways: firstly, as orders, e.g. "I was just following instructions when I forwarded that email"; "acting on instructions we received we went on to the next Lesson". Or they can refer to a list of things to do; printed information about how to do, make, assemble, use, or operate something, e.g. "the instructions are printed on the back of the packet".

For example, Are the statements below instructions or requests?

1. Finish the work today or you will be fired.
2. Please go to Worcester then to Robertson.
3. You must fill in this form.
4. Will you help the grape grower choose his cultivars?
5. You need to first check the plug and the switch carefully, then use the power point.
6. Please fill in Section A followed by B, then C, then D.
7. Please could I have more information?

To determine the type of soil you are working with here is a very easy test: Take a spade full of the soil and moisten it with a bit of water. Work the soil until it no longer changes in feel. Now press the soil between your thumb and fingers, note the feel of the soil and now try to squish the soil into a long thin strip.

2. Text-type, Format and Register

<u>Text-type</u>

Text-type refers to the font you choose to use when using the word processor. Here are some examples of text-type or font:

- Hi! My name is Avela and I live in Gugs.
- Please reply to this letter by return of post.
- Old texts looked like this.
- This is a more formal type of font.
- This is quite a complicated font and is not so easy to read.
- When would you use this font?
- Which one is your favourite font?

Format

Format refers to the structure of something; the way in which something is presented, organized, or arranged; specifically, in this context it refers to the way a written communication is presented or structured.

Register

Register in this context means language of a type that is used in social situations or when communicating with a particular set of people, e.g. when speaking to her boss Meranisa used a formal register; when you are using slang, you are using an informal register.

We use different registers depending on whom we are communicating with and what the purpose of our communication is. Friendly emails, notes or letters would tend to be written using an informal register, if our purpose was to communicate with someone we know well.

Office memos, business letters, faxes (for official business) and business emails would be written using a formal register.

We all can use either register and we swap between the two depending on who our audience is. This is referred to as code-switching. Watch how your style changes depending on who you are writing to. A lecturer or a business associate would be very surprised to receive a letter that started with "Howzit?" and ended with "Lots of love"!

LEARNING UNIT 1

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 4

EXPLORE AND EXPLAIN HOW LANGUAGE STRUCTURES AND FEATURES MAY INFLUENCE A READER/VIEWER.

US: 119457

Learning outcomes:

1. The choice of words/signs, language usage, symbols, pictures and tone/sign size and pace is described in terms of how a point of view is shaped or supported.

In this session we explore the following concepts:

This section will look at exploring and explaining how language structures and features may influence a reader. We focus on Shaping Point of View.

1 Introduction

Language structures and features can influence a reader. We are all influenced by what we read. Sometimes we are very aware of this and at other times the influence is more indirect.

2. Shaping a point of view

Point of view is shaped by choice of words, language usage, accompanying visuals, or pictures, tone and style.

<u>Bias</u>

Bias can shape or support a particular point of view. We have mentioned bias in an earlier section. Remember that we said bias was an unfair preference for or dislike of something. Bias is unfair, because it is not representative of how we should treat people. In South Africa we are lucky enough to have an extremely good constitution through which we are all protected. Our constitution does not permit us to discriminate against, or treat unfairly, people based on cultural or ethnic identity, gender, religion, age or sexual preference. This guarantees us all our basic human rights. Bias is encountered frequently. We must guard against it influencing us to make unfair judgements about people. Most of the research done in South Africa shows that we have more in common with each other than we think.

Newspaper surveys show that people from all race groups, income groups and age groups, of both sexes and genders have similar fears about life in South Africa. We all worry about crime, unemployment, the cost of living and corruption. Of course, there will also be differences, but to be biased against people for any of the reasons shown in the example above is to cut yourself off from experiencing the rich diversity this country has to offer us all.

If an author has a particular point of view which is biased, what he/she writes will reflect this bias. The choice of words used by the author may influence us. The difference between facts and opinions have previously been dealt with. Facts are statements we can test whereas opinions are what someone thinks. If the author has a biased opinion about some group, they will express their point of view by using biased language. Always be alert to statements about groups of people that contain the word "All" in them. It is seldom possible to make statements like "All black people are bad-tempered" or "All fat people are lazy" or "All young people use drugs" or "All Zulu's are brave" without being guilty of bias. Groups of people vary enormously in their behaviour and generalised statements are seldom accurate. We will look at generalisations in greater detail later in the Lesson. We must also guard against misrepresenting facts and showing bias in that way - because some members of a particular group behave in a certain way that does not mean that all members follow this behaviour. It is a misrepresentation to say, for example, that all British soccer fans are thugs. How else can the written word influence the reader? What other language usage or choice of words do authors use to shape or support a point of view?

Humour can influence the reader in indirect ways. If we constantly read or hear jokes about how dumb blondes are or how stupid a particular race is, we can start to be influenced by this. There are many examples of humour that are based on negative messages about a particular group. Some examples are jokes about fat people, disabled people, old people, and so on. We have already mentioned earlier in this Module how humour can be used in adverts to influence a reader. While humour can add a great deal to our enjoyment of things and can successfully be used to influence readers in positive ways, we should be aware that humour that is based on the supposed weakness or vulnerability of a particular group is usually being used to attempt to influence us in a negative way about that group.

See if you can find any examples of humour that are based on an implied negative message about a group. Now we are going to move on to look at how the use of omission and silences can influence a reader. We have already looked at the example of the baboons that wreaked havoc earlier in the Lesson. Let us look again at how not including information about something can influence a reader.

Figurative expressions

Figurative expressions make written language more interesting. To say someone was a tiger in a fight or as strong as an ox, is to enliven the written word. Because figurative expressions grab our attention, they can be used as devices or strategies by authors to convince us of a point of view.

Consider the earlier example, above. If the author had written a passage describing smokers in a highly figurative way, he/she could make their point even more strongly. An example might be "Huffing and puffing, the smokers clutch desperately on to their cancer-sticks, dragging at them for all they are worth. What a pitiful bunch! They pollute the perfect atmosphere with foul smelling yellow clouds of poison!" Would the reader of this be in any doubt as to what point of view was being put across? If you had no objection to smokers, would reading a passage like that influence you at all? In what way?

Repetition

Repetition is another example of a technique an author can use to influence the reader and build support for a point of view. By stating the same facts or opinions repeatedly in different ways, the author can push his/her point of view.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole can be defined as exaggeration; it is deliberate and obvious exaggeration used for effect, for example, "I could eat a million of these"; "There are miles of people waiting in the queue".

Hyperbole is an effective way for a writer to make his/her point of view and attempt to influence the reader.

Example:

Look at these sentences. They are all taken from an article written by someone who is trying to convince readers of something.

1. This is the saddest story ever told in history.
2. You will weep buckets of tears at this movie.
3. The most beautiful child of the best mother in the world is kidnapped.
4. The kidnappers demand a ransom of 2 million rand from the estranged father.
5. Action scenes galore follow, enough to satisfy the most bloodthirsty audience.
6. Above all however, the movie breaks your heart.
7. The two lead actors act their hearts out and the result is a tear-jerker of note.
8. Your life will not be complete if you don't see "The Boy Who Never Was."

Now see if you can find:

- Two examples of hyperbole.
- Two examples of figurative language.
- What sentence contains a fact and not an opinion?
- What message about the movie is repeated several times?
- Would this review convince you to go and see the movie? Why or why not?

Stereotypes:

Stereotypes can be defined as an oversimplified idea; an oversimplified standardised image or idea held by one person or group of another, e.g. the stereotype of a blonde is that she is dumb; the stereotype of an Italian is that he/she is very emotional. Stereotypes are not accurate, as no single group of people ever have the same characteristics as each other. There are plenty of highly intelligent blondes and plenty of cold, rational Italians. It is wrong to judge someone according to a stereotype - it will simply be inaccurate, and unfair. Authors could also use stereotypes to support their points of view. We know that to stereotype people is wrong, yet it still happens, and we need to be aware of it. Stereotypes are closely linked to generalisations.

Generalisation

A generalization can be described as a sweeping statement; a statement presented as a general truth but based on limited or incomplete evidence, e.g. "All Americans are greedy capitalists"; "All Homosexual men like flowers".

We are more easily swayed by stereotypes and generalisations when an author is writing about something we have very limited knowledge about. Imagine that someone had encountered Martians. If she/he wrote something in which Martians were described as amazingly ugly, bad-tempered creatures, who were lazy and greedy, we would have almost no way of checking up on this. If, however an author wrote this about a group of people living in the jungles of the Amazon, even if we had not been there, we could check whether other authors had the same view. We also could check up on the source of the report - is it a reliable source? Is this a fact or an opinion?

Many times, generalisations and stereotypes are used together. Authors use them to build up support for a point of view. Extremely negative forms of stereotypes, bias, and generalisation are forms of hate speech (the term is applied to the written and the spoken word) are not allowed by law.

For example:

- Men are not emotional.
- Women are too emotional.
- Jewish people are good businesspeople.
- The French are great lovers.
- Old people are useless.
- Young people are sex mad.
- Black people are poor.

To what extent do you agree with these statements? Make a note of which ones you agree with.

<u>Pictures and captions:</u>

An author can use pictures and captions (headings to pictures) to attempt to influence readers and support a particular point of view. Carefully chosen pictures can influence us more even than the written word. If we are reading a text on starving children in Rwanda, and there is no visual material, we may not be too distressed. This would especially be true if the text was written in a factual, unemotional manner. If, however photographs of children on the brink of death from starvation accompanied this text, we would probably feel upset and disturbed by what we were reading. The photos would make even more of an impact if they were headed with a caption such as: "Mwangi's last minutes."

Some time ago (2003) the Argus published a picture of a dead child, killed in the Iraqi war, on the front page. Many readers were upset and said that such an image was too graphic and detailed a representation of the horrors of war to be shown.

Journalists might argue that this is the truth of what war is. What do you think? Do you think detailed pictures of horrific scenes should be published? You decide. Advertisements of course use accompanying visuals to attempt to influence readers to buy products.

Typography

Typography refers to the layout of a page or pages. The visual impression created by a piece of text is important and can influence the reader. If a page is well and neatly laid out, we are more likely to take its contents seriously.

Magazines that appeal to a broad-based readership, popular magazines in other words, tend to use typography that is quite eye-catching. There will be lots of big headlines and accompanying pictures. Magazines that appeal to a more serious readership such as specialist current affairs magazines will use a much less dramatic layout.

Go to a bookstore and look at the magazines that are for sale. Look at a "You" magazine and an "Economist" magazine. Take note of the differences between them. Can you see how their typography differs? What other differences do you notice?

Can authors influence readers by their use of typography? A fast-zippy layout that is eye catching and accompanied by many pictures is likely to signal to readers that they are about to be entertained. A more serious appearing, straight forward layout with not much variation in font and few accompanying visuals, would signal to a reader that what they were reading was seriously written.

Grammar

Grammar or correct language usage is another technique of which authors need to be aware if they are trying to build support for an argument. A well-written piece of text is likely to have a greater impact on us than something which is full of errors. Grammar and typography together form the style of the written word. Style refers both to appearance and to how a text reads. We talk about authors as writing in a particular style.

LEARNING UNIT 2

WRITE, PRESENT, SIGN TEXTS FOR A RANGE OF COMMUNICATIVE CONTEXTS

US: 119465– NQF 3 – 5 Credits

The purpose of the unit standard requires learners to follow a process in writing texts and reports required in business. It is intended to promote clear, unambiguous communication in plain language and to improve the quality of written reports and other texts that are specific to a business environment, require a particular format and may include specified legislated requirements. The unit standard enables learners to recognise and effectively use textual conventions and features specific to business texts.

The qualifying learner is capable of:

- using textual features and conventions specific to texts
- identifying the intended audience for the communication
- identifying the purpose of a text
- selecting the appropriate text type, format and layout for the purpose
- organising and structuring a technical text appropriately
- using appropriate grammar conventions
- drafting and editing a technical text
- recognising errors and checking for accuracy
- presenting the same information in different ways
- using plain language in business
- Write/sign for a specified audience and purpose
- Use language structures and features to produce coherent and cohesive texts for a wide range of contexts
- Draft own writing/signing and edit to improve clarity and correctness

Learning assumed to be in place:
It is assumed that learners are competent in Communication at NQF Level 3 or equivalent.

LEARNING UNIT 2

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 1

WRITE / SIGN FOR A SPECIFIED AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

US: 119465

Learning outcomes:

1. The purpose for writing/signing, the target audience and the context are clear in relation to the learning task or activity.
2. The text-type, style, and register selected are appropriate to audience, purpose and context.
3. Language appropriate to socio-cultural sensitivities is selected and used in an appropriate manner without compromising own values or arguments.
4. Writing/signing is well-structured and conveys its message clearly.
5. Critical thinking skills are used as strategies for planning.
6. Writing/signing reflects a clear point of view with sound reasons and facts to support arguments and logical development of a clearly articulated premise.
7. Research skills are evident in the way data and information relevant to the context is identified, located, selected and synthesised for inclusion in the final text.

1. <u>Written communication:</u>

The written form of communication is as important as the oral form of communication. It is a record of the conversation or agreement that has taken place between people. It must be filed in a filing system that will keep it safe until such time as it is needed.

Written communication is the most important means of providing proof in a business environment. It helps to ensure that you handle your business in an efficient and credible manner. What is written down and signed stands as proof in a court of law. As a businessperson, you need to handle some matters in a written form e.g. a presentation to your financiers; a letter for a specific request to the Task Team or the Dept. of Transport; an order with a supplier – many suppliers will not supply unless they have received written notification.

1 Forms of written communication:

There are a few different forms of communication used in business today. It must be remembered that the form / medium of communication, will depend on the purpose of the communication and who it is being addressed to.

Reports

A report is a document, written in a specific format, because of instructions given to someone either to investigate or report on a specific matter/subject.

Purpose:

- To inform
- Record facts
- Persuade
- Help in decision-making
- Give recommendation

Types:

- Informative: It stresses the facts.
- Investigative: It gives the results of an investigation and recommends action.
- Feasible: It examines whether something can be done and recommends actions.

Preparing a Report:

In business, the information provided in reports needs to be easy to find and written in such a way that the person reading it, can understand the message being communicated. This is one reason why reports are divided into sections clearly labelled with headings and sub-headings.

The structure of a business report:

- Title page
- Report tile
- Your name
- Submission Date

Executive Summary

The executive summary provides the reader with an overview of the report's essential information. It is designed to be read by people who will not have time to read the whole report or are deciding if this is necessary. The executive summary should briefly outline the subject matter, the background problem, the scope of the investigation, the method(s) of analysis, the important findings arguments and important issues raised in the discussion, the conclusion and recommendations.

It is usually written last (so that it accurately reflects the content of the report) and is usually about two hundred to three hundred words long (i.e. not more than a page).

The Table of Contents

Introduction

The introduction presents:

- The background to the issue (i.e. Why was the report commissioned),
- The objective or purpose of the report
- A definition of the research problem/topic
- A definition of the report's terms of reference (what, where and when of the research problem / topic)
- An outline of the report's structure
- An overview of the report's sections and their relationship to the research problem / topic
- An outline and justification of the scope of the report (the boundaries the report is working within)
- A description of the range of sources used (i.e. Personal investigation, interviews, statistics and questionnaires)
- Acknowledgment of any valuable assistance received in the preparation of the report.

The Body

The body section expands and develops the material in a logical and coherent way, reflecting the structure outlined in the Introduction. It contains a description of the findings and a discussion of them.

The body of a report will also probably contain supporting evidence such as tables, graphs or figures.

Conclusion

This section wraps up the ideas and discoveries laid out in the main body of the report and provides recommendations for the way forward.

Reference List

This is a list of reference material used during the research for the report.

2. Letters

Letters are the most used written form of communication.

Purpose:

Writing a letter is one means of contacting a person / people or an organisation or business regarding certain issues, such as:

- Reporting good/bad news (giving out information)
- Making Enquiries
- Complaints
- Adjustments
- Invitation
- Application
- Resignation
- A reminder

Steps taken in writing a letter:

a) Planning stage:

b) Execution:

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Why are you writing this letter?
- Who is going to read this letter?
  i. Write a letter in a draft form.
  ii. Read it through to decide whether it meets the objective.
- If it does not, add or delete information as necessary
- If it does, then…

c) Re-write the letter in a final form.

d) Write in a clear style

In a business format if it is business related:

- Today's format (blocked form)
- Written on the letterhead
- Addressed to the relevant department with the name of a specific person, for example:

  The Claims Department.

  Attention: Mr B Smith

  P O Box 320

  JOHANNESBURG

  2000
- Heading of the subject: for example:

  RE: POLICY NO.8401245 LIFE COVER: S T MWELI

e) The tone of the letter should be in line with the content.

Example of a Business letter:

Mrs. S. Dlamini
Director
S. D. Promotions
12 Berry Lane
Durban
4001

12 October 2005

Dear Mrs. Dlamini

RATES AND FACILITIES - CROWN HOTEL

With reference to your telephone enquiry of today's date, I enclose the Crown Hotel's brochure and rates schedule.

It may interest you that we have reduced conference packages in the months of April and May. In addition, I have enclosed a selection of special event packages which may be applicable for your awards evening.

Since we specialise in conferences and launches, we have considerable contacts as far as executive gifts are concerned and would be happy to source whatever you would consider appropriate in this regard.

I will contact you to arrange to meet with you and discuss your requirements in greater detail.

Assuring you of our very best service.

Yours sincerely

Ms. T. Smith

CONFERENCE CO-ORDINATOR

3. Faxes

A fax is short for “facsimile”. A means of transmitting paper (and sometimes electronic) documents over phone lines. A fax is used when information must reach someone quickly.

An example of a fax template:

Fax

To:		**From:**	
Fax:		**Pages:**	
Phone:		**Date:**	2 / 15 / 2026
Re:		**CC:**	

☐*Urgent* ☐*For Review* ☐*Please Comment* ☐*Please Reply*

NOTES:

4. Memos

The word “memo” is short for “memorandum”. It is a short “note” passed in an office.

A memorandum is a written form of communication most often employed in business environments. It is used as a means of communication between executives and their employees.

Memos are short reminders, quick announcements, or concise pieces of information and are sent through the internal mail to a specific addressee. and it is a reminder to a person of something or some event and should be used to communicate something that is not of high confidentiality or importance.

A memo would look like this:

MEMORANDUM

To: ______________________________
From: ______________________________
CC: ______________________________
Date: ______________________________
Subject: ______________________________

5. E-mail

E-mail is short for Electronic Mail. This is the way in which messages are passed from one computer user to another using a local network or by using modems over telephone lines. The message is then delivered to the recipient's mailbox which is a file on his / her computer.

E-mail is quick, easy and efficient to use and is used for sending short messages to others.

LEARNING UNIT 2

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 2

USE LANGUAGE STRUCTURES AND FEATURES TO PRODUCE COHERENT AND COHESIVE TEXTS

US: 119465

Learning outcomes:

1. Meaning is clearly expressed using a range of sentence structures, lengths and types.
2. The use of paragraph conventions and links between paragraphs in texts, promotes coherence and cohesion in writing/signing. Their use is explained with reference to logical progression, cause and effect and/or contrast
3. The overall structure of a piece of writing/signing is controlled, and the conclusion is clearly formulated.

<u>Preparing the communication:</u>

There are three things to consider when preparing and sending out written communication.

1. The purpose of the communication:

Before putting pen to paper, you must think about why you need to communicate? What do you want to say and who do you want to say it to? Answering these questions will help you to determine which form of written communication (format) to use.

For example, if you want to tell your friend about a wedding that you attended, you can send her a letter.

If some information was urgently required by one of your colleagues at another office, you could fax or e-mail it to him / her.

If you want to propose the launch of a new product, a multi-media presentation to stakeholders will be appropriate.

The purpose of the communication will also determine the way in which it is written:

- Written in the first-person voice. ("I went to the market" or "I spoke to Tom").
- Written in the third person voice ('This happened to Peter". "It is recommended…." Rather than "I recommend…."
- Subjective (reflecting the opinions of the writer).
- Objective (focus is on facts, not opinion).
- Reflective (relating past events, experienced by the author, usually subjective).
- Narrative (relating a story).
- Scientific (technical).

2. The Audience

Think about who is going to read this communication. Writing a letter to a friend is not the same as writing a letter to your manager. A letter written to a friend will be informal, friendly and may contain words not used in professional communication, for example, slang. A letter written to your manager will be formal, professional and should include proper grammar and vocabulary.

- Tone: This is the attitude or feeling being expressed in the writing, e.g. a sympathetic or congratulatory tone.
- Style: This refers to the formal or informal way the message is being written.
- Register: This is the style and type of language that is used in different situations. You will have to choose between using common or sophisticated language.
- Appropriate vocabulary: As mentioned above, the words you use to communicate with a friend are different to the words used to communicate with someone in business.

Do not use slang, swear words or clichés in professional communication. There is also no need for lengthy or complicated words. Use words that are short, concise and which will clearly explain your message/request to the recipient/audience.

Obfuscation and jargon should also be avoided.

Obfuscation refers to concealing the meaning of a communication by making it more confusing and harder to interpret.

If you want your audience / recipient to understand your message and what you require, you should explain this in your communication clearly and concisely. Confusing the audience/ recipient will make your communication useless.

Jargon is the specialised or technical language of a particular trade, profession, or group. You should not use jargon in your communication, if the recipient does not belong to that field/group and will not understand it.

Be Sensitive

The person who reads your communication has his / her own value system, beliefs and culture. In South Africa especially, our society is made up of people from different backgrounds. This needs to be borne in mind when preparing written communication. For example, there may be some words or phrases that one culture may find offensive, but the other culture may not.

Another example is the circulation of office e-mails. Many e-mails containing jokes are passed on from colleague to colleague. Whilst the content of these e-mails may seem humorous to you, they may not be humorous to someone else. If a joke contained a racist remark and a recipient takes offence, it could hurt the person concerned and cause bad working relations in the office.

Remember, communication, especially business communication has a purpose. Even if you do not particularly like the recipient (audience), focus on the purpose, not the person. Insulting someone will not get the job done.

3. Preparing, Editing and Correcting the Document:

The purpose of the communication will determine which format to use. Each of these formats has specific layouts that need to be adhered to.

Think about and source the information required for the communication. This will depend on the purpose of the communication - some communication may not require research at all.

For example, if you want to acknowledge receipt of someone's e-mail, you will just e-mail them back and state that you received their communication. There is no research involved in this case.

However, other types of communication may require extensive research and critical thinking on the topic, like reports.

Written communication consists of paragraphs. A paragraph is a group of words or sentences about a particular idea or point. A new paragraph, dealing with another idea or point, starts on a new line and is separated from the previous paragraph.

These paragraphs must follow a logical sequence (order). For example, if you are writing an article about computers, the following paragraphs would be written in this order:
1st paragraph – What a computer is and what it does.
2nd paragraph – The uses of computers.
3rd paragraph – How computers work.
4th paragraph – The types of computers available.
5th paragraph – The benefits and advantages of computers.
6th paragraph – The disadvantages of computers.
7th paragraph – Conclusion.

As you can see, the article introduces the reader to computers, provides the reader with information about them (uses, how they work, advantages and disadvantages, etc.) and then ends with a conclusion.

It will be very confusing for readers, especially for those who do not know about computers, if the first paragraph was about the disadvantages of computers and the last paragraph explained what a computer is. Paragraphs must thus be written and structured in such a way that makes sense and clearly explains the message to the reader.

Paragraphs must also be connected to each other. In the above example, the paragraphs stating the advantages of computers and the paragraph stating the disadvantages of computers, follow each other. It would not make sense if they were placed apart.

Logical sequencing of paragraphs is also required when writing about "cause and effect" topics. For example, if your topic is "The Effects of Pollution", you must start off by writing about the causes of pollution first. This makes more sense and will better inform the reader.

Another tip – when comparing and explaining the differences between two or more things (referred to as contrast) each difference and comparison must be explained in a separate paragraph.

Paragraphs must also be written and laid out to optimise fluency. In written communication, fluency refers to the clear, smooth and easy way in which a text is written and read.

Using one writing style, proper language and grammar, paragraphs that flow and are connected to each other and a certain level of words, consistently throughout the text, creates fluency.

The message and meaning of the communication must come across clearly. Slang, swear words, clichés, jargon and confusing language must be avoided. Do not use long sentences unnecessarily, when a short one will do.

Short and concise words must be used to clearly explain your message and your requirements to the intended recipient.

Depending on the type of communication you use, visuals, graphics, figures of speech and rhetorical devices can be used to make an impact on the reader; attract and maintain the reader's interest; or enhance the reader's understanding of the communication.

Use the correct language and grammar. By this we mean:

- Punctuation (refers to the marks used in writing to clarify meaning and organise sentences for example, full stop. Question mark? Exclamation mark!).
- Tense (refers to the time frames used in the communication. i.e. present tense, future tense and past tense).
- Tone (refers to attitude or feeling being expressed in the writing, for example, a sympathetic tone).
- Style (refers to the formal or informally way in which a message is written).
- Vocabulary (refers to the choice of words used).

In the above example, a conclusion was used. A conclusion usually ends a written communication. It can be one or more of the following:

- A summary of the communication.
- A position, decision or judgement reached, after considering the information.
- Instructions or requests after considering the information in the communication.

To form a certain opinion or make a certain judgement on the written information, points in the document must logically build up to a convincing conclusion.

There is a need to edit and correct the document before it is sent to the intended recipient. It is very unprofessional to send someone communication filled with errors. Therefore, a draft of the document needs to be prepared and checked for the following:

- Correct layout.
- Correct content.
- Communication is structured in a logical, fluent sequence.
- The message is conveyed clearly.
- If applicable, instructions or requirements for the intended recipient are clear.
- The spelling of words.
- The proper use of language and grammar.
- The correct details, such as dates, times, venues, contact details.
- Appropriate vocabulary (no offensive words used).
- The communication serves its purpose.

After reviewing the above, errors must be identified and corrections must be made. The communication must again be reviewed thereafter. If there are no further adjustments to be a made at this point, a final version can be prepared and sent to the intended recipient.

It is important to have your own copy of the communication to file. This serves as a record and can be referred to should any disputes or queries arise.

A Business Communication Checklist, like the one below, can be used before any written communication is sent out. It is helpful in ensuring that no details are left out from the communication and that the language and grammar used is correct.

Business communication checklist

When writing, check the following points:	YES	
1. Is the company address correct?		
2. Is the date written correctly?		
3. Is the spelling of the reader's name correct?		
4. Is the salutation correct?		
5. Is there a brief subject heading?		
6. Are there separate paragraphs for each topic?		
7. Does it follow in a logical order?		
8. Does it give all the necessary information?		
9. Is it free from errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation?		
10. Is it concise and to the point?		
11. Have you used simple and positive words?		
12. Is it free of technical jargon?		
13. Have you used short sentences?		
14. Is the tone correct? (Tactful /helpful /etc?)		
15. Is the complementary close correct?		
16. Is there a signature?		
17. Is your name, marital status and designation correct?		
18. Are there any enclosures?		

<u>Institutional Assessment:</u>

The task that you must perform is to find out more about the opinions of the employees regarding the establishment of a CHILD CARE centre for your organisation. Before you can go around asking people questions, you will need to have the permission of the manager of the labour centre allowing you to do this.

Write a formal letter to the person in charge of your centre asking for this permission.

<u>Brief: A child-care centre for head-office, Department of Labour</u>

Members of staff at Laboria House have expressed the need for a crèche or child-care centre on the premises or nearby. Although this issue was aired before the renovation of Laboria House began, it had no positive outcome for the parents of young children.

Parents of young children still feel the need to establish such a facility and motivate for it in a variety of ways. Their main concerns include the difficulty of dropping their children off early enough for them to make the Department's official starting time of 07h30 and fetching the children in the middle of the day, when crèche hours have ended.

The concerns of the Department of Labour, as an employer, are several. and If the Department provides such a facility at head-office, it forms a precedent that other offices may have to follow – with all the related costs. The Department has, in previous rounds of discussion, cited the fact that only certain members of staff stand to benefit from making such a facility available. Management of the Department is also aware (as are its members of staff) that organisations such as the Human Sciences Research Council down the road, has a well-used child-care centre for its members of staff.

The issue of a child-care centre has come up again and this group is appointed as a task team – their purpose is to conduct a thorough investigation and make recommendations to senior management.

You have some preliminary work to do in the days before your first meeting.

LEARNING UNIT 2

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 3

DRAFT OWN WRITING / SIGNING AND EDIT TO IMPROVE CLARITY AND CORRECTNESS

US: 119465

Learning outcomes:

1. Writing/signing produced is appropriate to audience, purpose and context. Corrections are an improvement on the original.
2. Control of grammar, diction/clarity of sign, sentence and paragraph structure is checked and adapted for consistency.
3. Logical sequencing of ideas and overall unity are achieved through redrafting.
4. There is clear evidence that major grammatical and linguistic errors are edited out in redrafts.
5. Inappropriate or potentially offensive language is identified and adapted/removed.
6. Experimentation with different layouts and options for presentation is appropriate to the nature and purpose of the task.

Critical thinking skills, such as (1) brainstorming and (2) mind-mapping, are used as strategies for planning.

1. <u>Brainstorming</u>

Brainstorming is a process for generating new ideas. It usually occurs when a group of people meet to generate ideas around a specific area of interest.

Brainstorming can be used for:

▪ Determining possible causes and / or solutions to problems.

▪ Planning out the steps of a project / assignment.

▪ Developing a new product, process or idea

Besides solving problems and creating new ideas, brainstorming motivates and develops teams. Brainstorming motivates because it involves all the members of a team working together to find a good solution / idea – in this way all team members must contribute and will want to come up with good ideas.

Brainstorming needs to be structured and it follows brainstorming rules.

The Brainstorming process is as follows:

1. In a small or large group select a leader and a recorder (they may be the same person).
2. Define the problem or idea to be brainstormed. Make sure everyone is clear on the topic being explored.
3. Set up the rules for the session. They should include:
   - Letting the leader have control.
   - Allowing everyone to contribute.
   - Ensuring that no one will insult, demean, or evaluate another participant or his/ her response.
   - Stating that no answer is wrong.
   - Recording each answer unless it is a repeat.
   - Setting a time limit and stopping when that time is up.
4. Start the brainstorming. Each team member can have a turn to provide his / her input. This is called the "round robin format". Another way is to allow all team members to shout out their ideas as and when they think about them. They do not take turns to provide input. This is called the "freewheeling format". The leader must encourage everyone to participate.

The recorder should write down all responses. They should preferably be recorded on flip chart paper and placed on the walls so that everyone can see them.

Do not criticise or analyse the ideas at this point. The aim is to get as many ideas as possible and then review them later. If the ideas are critically evaluated and edited at this point, it will slow down the creative process. Also, some team members may not want to share more ideas with the group, for fear of being embarrassed or criticised.

Wild and exaggerated ideas must be encouraged. Team members can also build on the ideas of others. For example, one team member might say something that "sparks" another members' idea.

The session must be ended by the leader when everyone has had a chance to participate, and no more ideas are being offered. The leader must thank the team for their participation.

5. After the brainstorming process has ended, the ideas must be reviewed and evaluated. Some initial qualities to look for when examining the responses include:
    - Looking for any answers that are repeated or similar.
    - Grouping similar concepts together.
    - Eliminating responses that do not fit.
    - Discuss the remaining responses as a group.
    - Develop an action plan with timeframes and the people responsible must be developed.

Brainstorming can also be done alone. Although the group work elements will be left out, the same principle will apply when it comes to ideas. Ideas should be written down as you think of them and should be analysed later. It is also important that you are not distracted and can properly focus during your allotted time for brainstorming.

2. Mind-Mapping

Developed Created by Tony Buzan in the late 1960's, a Mind Map is a graphic technique for representing ideas, using words, images, symbols and colour.

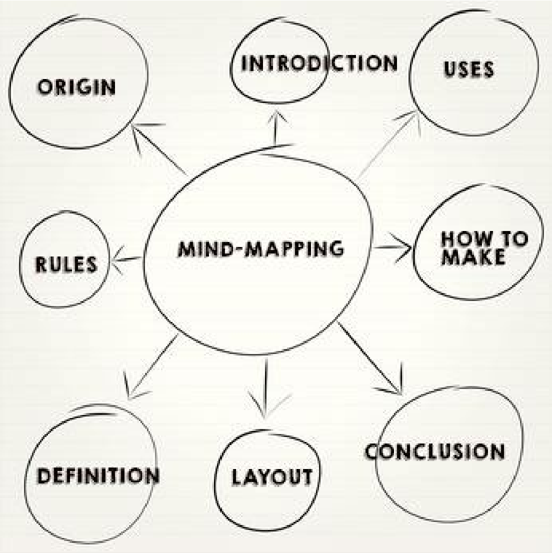
Mind Maps have the following purpose:

- Summarise information.
- Consolidate information from different research sources.
- Assist to think through complex problems.
- Present information that shows the overall structure of an idea / subject.

The uses of mind-mapping:

- Teaching and giving presentations.
- Creative thought and problem solving.
- Writing.
- Web site design.
- Planning.
- Note-taking – assists with memory and learning.
- Dialogue and group work.
- Making decisions.
- Design.

How to do a Mind Map:



Mind mapping involves writing down a central idea and thinking up new and related ideas which radiate out from the centre. By focusing on key ideas written down in your own words and then looking for branches out and connections between the ideas, you are mapping knowledge in a manner which will help you understand and remember new information.

Look for relationships

Use lines, colours, arrows, branches or some other way of showing connections between the ideas generated on your mind map. These relationships will assist grouping ideas together and structuring your work. By personalising the map with your own symbols and designs you will be constructing visual relationships between ideas that will assist in remembering and understanding them.

Draw quickly on unlined paper without pausing, judging or editing

All these things restrain creativity. There will be plenty of time for modifying the information later but at this stage it is important to get every possibility into the mind map. Sometimes it is one of those "wild ideas" that may become the key to your knowledge of a topic.

Use capitals

The idea of using capitals encourages you to get down to the key points. Capitals are also easier to read in a diagram. You may, however, wish to write down some notes next to your key points in small letters. This can also be done at a later stage when going through your mind map again.

Put the main idea in the centre

Most students find it useful to turn their page on the horizontal side and do a mind map in "landscape" style. With the main idea or topic in the middle of the page this gives the maximum space for other ideas to radiate out from the centre.

Leave lots of space

Some of the most useful mind maps are those which are added to over a period. After the initial drawing of the mind map you may wish to highlight things, add information or add questions. For this reason, it is a good idea to leave lots of space.

Highlighting key points

This can also be useful in terms of memory and focus. Your institutional assessments required you to meet as a group, think about having a child-care centre issue and research the need for a child-care centre. Here are some steps to assist you in conducting the research.

3. Basic research

Research is defined as the collection of information on a specific topic and the use of that information for a specific purpose. To get information so that you can learn a specific topic, so you might have to do some basic research. The information obtained because of this research should be useful for you to learn from it should also be available to others if necessary.

Research will help to identify and solve problems so that you can make responsible decisions. In some cases, one person will be responsible for doing research, especially if the research is required as part of your personal learning. In other cases, you might have to work in a group, or with other organisations or the community, to get research results. In each case, the research will mean collecting, analysing, organising and critically evaluating information.

There are a few ways in which you can conduct research and most of these will use the same types of resources as was listed for learning in general. The problem in research is to decide on what information to use from all these sources.

A lot of information is available for free, but not all of it. It is advisable to use various resources to conduct research to compare the information you found for accuracy. This will however depend on how much time or resources you have available for the research that you are doing.

Research can be complex or very basic, with topics that are targeted or broad. Very often it is necessary to deliver research reports within a limited time. Research reports require attention to detail, specific research strategies and at least basic knowledge of and access to, a range of resources. You might have to locate public records and legal or technical documents.

Research is a process that involves identifying and evaluating sources for your research, using the right methodology to implement the correct research tools regularly monitoring new sources, to replace sources which are no longer relevant, applicable, or available.

Steps in the Research process

The different types of research are called 'Research Methodologies'.

We generally distinguish between research that uses mostly statistics and numbers to answer a question or prove a point, or research that uses words to express findings. The two methods are used together for most research projects.

Whatever type of research we do, three broad steps are relevant to the research process:

- Collection of information.
- Analysis of information.
- Interpretation of information.

The way in which each step is performed will be determined by the type of research that is conducted and the tools that are used as part of the research process.

Research planning

Good planning is essential for research to succeed, as it is important to know what, when, how, why and with whom you are about to do a research project.

Bad planning could result in missing deadlines for work, confusing work schedules, a lack of progress and unsatisfactory results. On the other hand, good planning will result in the research being finished on time by the relevant people.

Important factors that should be kept in mind during research planning:

- Clear problem definition: The way the research is done will be determined by the research problem. The research objectives should be stated specifically and in detail.
- Well-defined context: You should have a good idea of the context in which the research has to be conducted, in other words which factors can influence the research process and results. You might need to focus on specific population groups or age groups for specific research. Or the opinion of subject experts might be more important than what your colleagues have to say in your research.
- Good documentation: Research results will only be acceptable if you can prove your findings. It is therefore necessary to document everything and to manage the information as you would manage all your other information.
- Effective management: Even the most basic research project will benefit from an effective management process. The more complicated the research, the more essential this management becomes to ensure relevant results. It is probably a good idea to appoint a specific person to manage any research project.

Research techniques

Once you've decided on the research methodology (qualitative or quantitative or a combination of these) that will be suitable for your specific research project, you must decide on research tools that will assist you to obtain the information required.

We can use a single tool or combination of research tools to get information. For this module, the most common research tools are:

- Surveys: This is done through questionnaires, designed for a specific purpose for a specific group of people, called 'respondents. Questionnaires can be posted, e-mailed or faxed to these people, or can be answered through face-to-face interviews
- Focus groups: These are discussions by a group of people, which are recorded by researchers, who later report on the results of the discussions.

- Literature survey / desktop study: Information for research can be obtained from similar sources as the literature for learning, including journals, books, magazines, newspapers and the internet. Desktop studies are often used in conjunction with other techniques. As part of a training programme researchers will often have access to libraries and academic experts, who can provide further information on specific topics.
- Simulation: Also referred to as experimental research. A situation is set up to simulate real life with outcomes recorded.

Selecting a research tool

To prevent a waste of resources, careful consideration must be given to the use of research tools. The choice of research tool will be determined by several factors, including the following:

- Area of research: The tool used in a research project must be relevant to the topic. In learning programmes most of the research can probably be done through literature sources.
- Research objectives: The tools used will be determined by the research objectives, which could indicate that only one specific tool is necessary, or that more than one should be used.
- The context: The background to the research is important in the decision of which tools to use.
- Resources available: Large scale surveys might not be possible if only one researcher with no money is available. You must be realistic about research that can be conducted.
- Limitations due to different factors: Research in rural areas is more difficult because of transport and postal problems. Factors such as language and cultural differences also must be considered in choosing a research tool. Research is also generally time-consuming. Questionnaires must be completed by respondents and then returned.
- The research team: A team of twenty researchers can conduct a bigger project with several research tools, while a single researcher will be able to do less on his / her own.

4. Capturing, Coding and Editing Data for a Research Project

The capturing of data, coding of information and editing of results are part of information gathering. The information must be sorted through these steps before you can determine what is useful for the purpose of your research.

The effective and correct coding of information is applicable to all aspects of the research project, for manual as well as electronic data. Various computerised research packages are available to simplify the process, but not all researchers will have access to such packages. It is therefore necessary to know how to apply the basic principles of data capturing and analysis to any kind of system.

'Data' is the term used for the basic information, collected as relevant to the report. Data thus provides the 'raw' materials from which information is obtained. The basic data provides the necessary information once it is organised.

Capturing of Data:

This involves the collection of information from various sources. After reading textbooks or articles and writing notes on what you read, you will capture the necessary information to write a report on the topic. If a survey was conducted, you will also write notes on the answers from respondents to summarise the information gleaned through the survey.

Coding of Information:

This involves the sorting of information into various categories. This would assist you in coding the information to the most applicable and useful reporting categories.

Editing of Information:

Editing involves a review of the information gathered, ensuring that the correct information for the specific report was collected and included. Editing also involves correction of information or documentation to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Evaluation and Analysis of Research Information

Once all the relevant information has been gathered, the researcher must analyse this to answer the original research question. This involves understanding the information and knowing what is relevant and what not, keeping in mind the original research question and objectives.

The first step is to read through the data, to determine which sources are applicable. You then summarise the notes gathered during reading of information before including the findings from surveys, focus groups, etc. in the research report.

The next step of the research cycle is to write and present the findings in a research report. The research findings as presented in the final report provide the opportunity for other parties to give feedback on the research. This might result in further research being conducted, if problems or further questions are discovered. It is important to ensure that all statements and findings from a research report can be substantiated.

5. The research report

In general, a research report is done according to the following format:

- Cover page with research title and name of author/s.
- Table of contents.
- Preface.
- List of acronyms and abbreviations.
- Lists of tables and figures.
- Executive summary.
- Introduction.
- Body of report – in numbered sections covering different aspects of the research.
- Bibliography / list of references.
- Appendices, including examples of questionnaires.

The research report should be presented in a format useful and acceptable to the relevant people. Reports prepared for an academic audience will therefore have a more academic approach and more complicated language, whereas a report aimed at providing information for the implementation of a new training programme will contain more basic language and grammar that can be of use to trainees and trainers.

A written report is often followed by an oral presentation, and this must also be in a format applicable to the relevant people. In most cases the presentation will include power-point slides, but this will depend on the technology available and the circumstances of the presentation.

Now that you understand research, let's look at your institutional assessment. How will you gather information for your report?

One way in which this could be done, is to conduct a survey:

- Identify the target audience for the survey:

What this means is that you must decide WHO the people are that you will be speaking to. Obviously, you will have to find out information from those who think that this is a good idea as well as those who are less sure.

For example, it is unlikely that you will want to speak to people who have no children and who will never have children as it is unlikely that they will be interested and so the information that they give you is not likely to be very useful.

- Identify the information you wish to gather:

You will need to decide EXACTLY what it is that you need to know from the people that you are interviewing or questioning. There is no point in discussing matters with them that are not about the childcare centre. This will waste your time and theirs and will not help you to formulate the report that is required.

- Prepare the document(s) required for the survey:

These documents will obviously depend on the WAY in which you are going to gather information. Remember that if you are going to interview people, you might not want to have questions where you will need to write down very detailed and lengthy answers.

However, if you are asking people to fill in questionnaires, then their answers could be more detailed. The problem with very detailed answers could be that people answer MORE than you are asking…. you will then have to sift through this information and choose what is relevant to the topic. Remember to only ask questions that will provide you with useful information.

- Use a format, tone and register suited to the task and the audience:

The document chosen in the above stage MUST meet these requirements, so that the purpose of your research is clear and respondents will be able to give you the information you are looking for. Questions must also be business-like and to the point.

- Improve and edit the document before final presentation:

If you hand out a questionnaire that is full of errors, people are not going to believe that you are conducting serious research or capable of compiling the report. As a result, they will probably not give the questions their serious attention.

To avoid any mistakes, read it several times and, if you are not sure that your language (grammar, spelling, etc.) is correct, ask someone else to check the document for you as well.

6. Creative writing

The Creative Writing Process permits the author to construct through a series of well-planned out stages, a thorough piece of writing that is both organised in its presentation and thorough in its development. Since this is a process, there are several stages of development from the initial thoughts and ideas to the final polished product.

The Creative Writing Process:

1. Choose the topic

Brainstorming allows you the freedom to put several possibilities that interest you on a page and consider which one is the most suitable. If more than one person is participating in this selection process with you, keep the rules of brainstorming in mind.

For example, assume you have been given the following topics:

- My Experiences at the Labour Centre.
- Unemployment in South Africa.
- Facilities for Physically Disabled People at the Labour Centre.

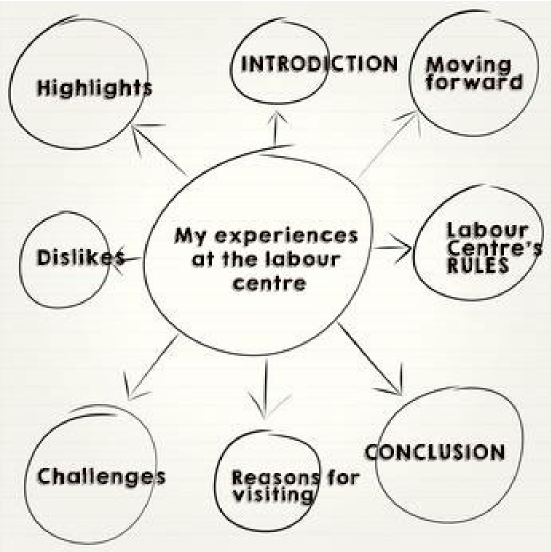
Careful consideration must be given to each of these topics. Some will hold more interest than others. It is sometimes easy to choose a topic because you have access to a good source of information on that topic.

When you have made your choice, make a note of the topic you have chosen and the reason for choosing it, for example:
"I chose "My Experiences at The Labour Centre". Since I went through these experiences myself, I have first-hand information that I can use."

2. Use a mind-map

A mind-map can assist you to organise your essay. Start with a large circle in the centre of a page and write down your topic in that circle. Then decide on a point to discuss/topic for one of your paragraphs.

Put the paragraph topic in another circle. Statements radiating from that circle will eventually form your paragraph. At this stage, they are all in point form but will be "fleshed" out later. Use this process and add more paragraph topics.



3. Prepare an outline:
Write down your paragraph topic with all the related points underneath. Arrange the paragraphs in order. Remember, as mentioned above in "Preparing the Document", paragraphs must be placed in a logical order and connect to each other.

4. Revision:
Look at all the points you have placed under each paragraph topic. Flesh them out into sentences. Look at all the sentences and see if they make sense. Delete or relocate the sentences that do not belong under that paragraph point.

5. The First Draft:
Use your revised outline as a guide when preparing your first draft. Flesh out your sentences and write them out in a different, more interesting way. This is the time to use adjectives, rhetorical devices, good vocabulary, etc. However, you must ensure that your use of these devices must be appropriate.

6. Edit and make corrections:
Check spelling and grammar. Ensure that the text is fluent and the message is clear and coherent. You may need to go back and change a few sentences or paragraphs.

It will be a good idea to let someone else read and correct your work for you.

7. Use references:

If you have used someone else's words or ideas in your work, it is important to give that person credit. If you use someone else's work and do not mention it, it amounts to plagiarism (stealing another's work). This is the way in which you reference:

- Name of book: Author(s). Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.
- Article from a reference book: "Article." Reference book. year edition.
- A Website: Title of web page, Year, Date accessed online, <URL>.

<u>Conclusion</u>

Besides oral communication, written communication is just as important in dealing with people professionally and personally. There are some things that need to be recorded and for which oral communication would not be suitable.

There are different forms of written communication, each with their own uses and purposes. When you need to communicate with someone in writing, you will need to choose the format and writing style for the purpose of your communication.

It is important to bear the audience as this will determine the type of language, tone and vocabulary to use. Before sending off any communication, it must be checked for errors and corrections must then be made.

Bear in mind that at certain times, you will use both written and oral communication.

The critical thinking skills and research procedure explored in this section, will assist in preparing some forms of written communication.

Critical thinking skills will also assist you in other types planning, solving problems and making decisions. Learning how to write formal texts, such as business letters, will also assist you in your personal matters and records. For example, applying for a business loan or requesting the municipality to connect the electricity at your new home.

LEARNING UNIT 3

ACCOMMODATE AUDIENCE AND CONTEXT NEEDS IN ORAL COMMUNICATION

US: 119472– NQF 3 – 5 Credits

Learners at this level are aware of their audiences and purposes for communication. They adapt their style and language register to the requirements of different situations. They can listen and speak/sign confidently in both formal and familiar settings. They can articulate their purposes and reasons for the adoption of a particular register and style in any situation. They can usually identify the assumptions and inferences implicit in what people say/sign and how they say/sign it.

Learners credited with this unit standard can:

- Interact successfully in oral/signed communication
- Use strategies that capture and retain the interest of an audience
- Identify and respond to manipulative use of language

Learning assumed to be in place:
The credit calculation assumes that learners are already competent in terms of the following outcomes or areas of learning when starting to learn towards this unit standard: the NQF Level 2-unit standard, entitled Maintain and adapt oral/signed communication.

LEARNING UNIT 3

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 1

INTERACT SUCCESSFULLY IN ORAL / SIGNED COMMUNICATION

US: 119472

Learning outcomes:

1. Contributions to group work are appropriate to the task and nature of the group and promote effective communication and teamwork.
2. Interviews successfully establish a relationship appropriate to the context and provide a non-threatening opportunity for participants to share information.
3. Participation in formal meetings is appropriate to the purpose and context of the meeting. Participation is consistent with meeting procedures and contributes to the achievement of meeting objectives.
4. Participation in discussions, debates or negotiations is appropriate to the purpose and topic. Participation is consistent with the formality of procedures and contributes to meaningful interaction between participants.
5. Responses to the ways others express themselves are sensitive to differing socio-cultural contexts.

1. Oral communication

Effective oral communication is an important skill in business, academic and scientific endeavour. Although there are some people who have a natural talent for delivering outstanding presentations, hard work and practice can carry most of the rest of us into the 'very good' level of presentation skills. You will find that presentation skills will benefit you, as they are an essential part of working life.

To interact successfully implies working well in a group. The group process leads to a spirit of co-operation, co-ordination and commonly understood procedures. If this is present within a group of people, then their performance will be enhanced by their mutual support (both practical and moral). Functional groups are ones in which members work effectively to enhance their own and other's learning. Working in a group enables you to:

- Develop communication skills: skills of listening, explaining, questioning, responding - the management of discussion.
- Develop intellectual and professional competencies: analysing; evaluating evidence or data; thinking critically; synthesizing; arguing rationally; transferring skills to new contexts; seeing new relationships and problem-solving.
- Personal growth: development of communication skills; thinking; self-confidence; managing your own learning; working with others and insight into yourself and others.

2. Group learning

The 5 basic elements of group learning:

- Positive interdependence
- Individual accountability
- Primitive interaction (face-to-face)
- Use of teamwork skills
- Group processing

Why you are communicating falls into four general categories:

- to provide information
- to persuade the listener
- to give instructions
- to enact (or prohibit) something

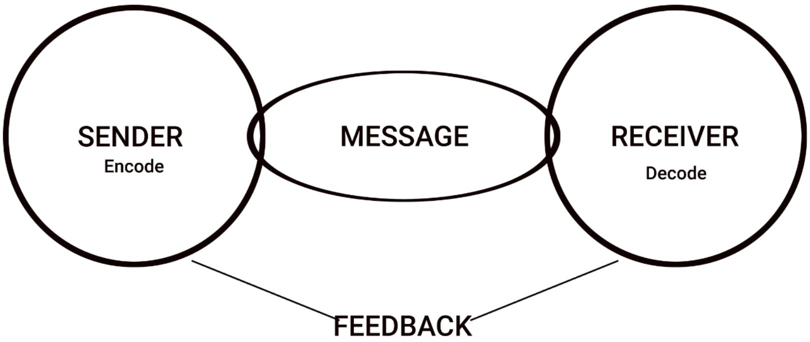
Once you have determined the above, together with the actual topic of discussion, you should know exactly what to say.

Who you are communicating with is determined by your identification of:

- Listener type and their level of expertise - i.e. are they experts, managers, technicians or laypersons, or a mixed group of listeners.
- Listener's purpose in using the information.
- Listener's attitude to both you and the content of your presentation.

On determining the above, together with knowing what to say, you should know exactly how to say it. For the oral transfer of information to be successful, we need to take some important aspects into consideration:

3. The communication model



There are many factors which influence the communication process, all of which impact each other in a variety of ways.

- Sender - the sender is the speaker/writer. A sender starts with an impulse he or she wishes to express and then must encode that idea into symbols (words) and signs (facial expressions, tone of voice, etc.).
- Message - the message is the symbols and signs which are transmitted. All messages are carried by a channel (face-to-face, over the phone, email, letter, etc.).
- Receiver - the receiver is the listener/reader. The receiver must decode the symbols and signs of the message, sent through the channel. Decoding involves working through one's own perceptual filters, to arrive at thoughts which approximate the sender's original intent.
- Feedback - feedback is the signs the receiver projects while the sender is sending the message. Feedback allows the sender to know how his or her message is being received, and whether the received message is the same as the intended message.
- Environment - environment is the physical, social and emotional influences (often referred to as 'noise'), the communication takes place in. Environments can place expectations and/or constraints on communication.

In looking at the above communication model, we must understand that the environment or 'noise' factor plays a larger role when it comes to oral communication. The reason for this, is that a person listening to another person, is far more easily distracted than a person reading something.

Take note of the following:

- When other people are talking nearby while you are listening to someone, you often 'eavesdrop' on their conversation and miss what is being said to you.
- When music is playing nearby, you often listen to that, instead of what is being said to you.
- When you see something interesting/funny/or a person nearby, you focus on that instead of on what is being said to you.

We can see from the above that it is vital to focus/pay attention, when wanting to receive oral information successfully.

4. Group dynamics

When people work in groups, there are two quite separate issues involved.

1) The first is the task and the problems involved in getting the job done. Often this is the only issue which the group considers.
2) The second is the process of the group work itself: the mechanisms by which the group acts as a unit. If both the task and the process issues are well managed, the worth of the group could be many times the sum of the worth of its individuals.

Therefore, successful group dynamics are just as important as the final presentation. The following information is designed to help you make the most of group work:

Meetings

The place for groups to make decisions is in a meeting. Once the group is set up and assigned a task it should:

- have an early first meeting,
- meet regularly,
- let everyone have a say.

Planning

To divide up a task between a group of people and deliver it to a schedule requires a plan. Planning can be formal or informal - a formal plan makes deadlines and responsibilities clear. For a group work presentation:

- Make a plan,
- Assign clear responsibilities,
- Set deadlines,
- Monitor progress at the meetings,
- Do fair shares of the work.

Group/Individual Tasks: Divide up your project into group and individual tasks. Groups are best at:

- Generating ideas,
- Making plans,
- Checking and agreeing outputs.

Individual work is most suited to:

- Discussion leader: keeps group on track; maintains full participation,
- Recorder: records assignments, strategies, unresolved issues, data; convenes group outside of class,
- Reporter: reports out during whole class discussion; writes up final draft of assignments,
- Accuracy coach: checks group understanding; finds resources.

Further Points:

- Keep copies of work (someone else may lose it)
- Report any insurmountable difficulties to your leader
- Get the job done on time

Therefore, the main determinants of group effectiveness are:

- Equal distribution of work
- Efficient management and control of work
- Brainstorming - gathering ideas, information and suggestions
- Ground rules - e.g. - come to class on time everyday
  - ⇒ come to class prepared/with work completed
  - ⇒ notify group in event of absence
  - ⇒ be willing to share information
  - ⇒ respect the views, values and ideas of other members of the group
- Resolution of disagreements

Groups are like relationships - you must work at them. The individual's talents are better utilized in a group.

Dynamic areas where oral communication takes place:

<u>Interviews</u>

Companies do not interview every job applicant, they pre-screen. If you do not meet the preliminary qualifications, you are not interviewed. Some jobs that require interviews:

- Jobs working with the public,
- Jobs answering telephones,
- Jobs where special skills are needed (accounting, finance, banking).

Some jobs that would not require interviews:

- Digging ditches
- Pruning trees
- Digging graves

<u>For an interview to flow smoothly, it must be carefully planned:</u>

- The venue: The venue should be quiet (away from traffic and other noise, especially people who could cause a distraction) and comfortable (chairs should be soft and comfortable and there should be something pleasant to look at e.g. flowers or a good painting). This is the ideal situation, but it often cannot happen. It is then that the interviewer must be flexible and make do with the given circumstances. A good interviewer will be able to conduct a successful interview, irrespective of the circumstances!

- Background research: It is generally accepted that the more interviewee data can be gathered before the interview, the more reliable and easier the interview will be. Prepare for the interview by reviewing the application, resume (CV), test results and other materials submitted by the candidate. It is also imperative that the interviewer has extensive knowledge about the environment, its people and their jobs. He needs to know what is happening and what could happen in future.
- Thorough research about the interviewee serves three purposes:
  - Because the interviewer knows all the 'superficial' facts, he can focus on underlying problems, without having to do additional research,
  - The interviewer does not waste time with unnecessary questions,
  - It supplies guidelines as to the types of questions that need to be asked.
- The interview: A structured interview will prevent confusion and repetition on the side of the interviewee as well as the interviewer. It is, however, necessary to be flexible, depending on the circumstances. The amount of structure will be determined by the type of interview. Questions need to be planned and ordered in a meaningful way. Put the interviewee at ease and ask interview questions that cannot be answered with a "yes" or a "no" response. Open-ended questions allow interviewees to talk about their skills, knowledge and abilities. For example: "Why are you leaving your current employer?" "Do you prefer routine, consistent work, or fast-paced tasks that change daily?" "And why?"
- Final preparation: The interviewer must prepare himself mentally and block out any thoughts that are not relevant to the interview. He must make sure that he is not biased and that he will assess the interviewee on their merits. Background research, the interview and final preparation should assure that the conclusions drawn are correct and fair.

Developing questions

- Descriptive: Does something need to be described? E.g. "How do graduates of the XYZ program for the unemployed seek out and find jobs in the community?"
- Normative: Does something need to be compared? E.g. "How well does the program meet its goals for placing graduates in jobs?"
- Impact: (cause + effect) Has something made a difference? E.g. "Why do some graduates find jobs and others do?”

There are different ways of asking the same thing: For example, when determining age: "How old were you on your last birthday?" OR "On what day, month and year where you born? "Both questions help you determine the individual's age, but the second question elicits much more information.

Interview problems to avoid

- Be familiar with topics that aren't permissible as interview questions. Don't ask a female applicant detailed questions about her husband /children and family plans. It could be used as proof of sex-discrimination if a male applicant is selected.
- Avoid making statements during the interview process that could be alleged to create a contract of employment. Terms like "permanent", "career job opportunity" or "long".
- Avoid making excessive assurances about job security unless the employer can prove that he did not do a good job. For example: The applicant is told "if you do a good job, there's no reason why you can't work here for the rest of your career". The applicant accepts the job and six months later is laid off due to personnel cutbacks, which he refuses to accept.

Disciplinary interview structure

Disciplinary and grievance interviews occur when either the employer or the employee has a cause for complaint against the other. They take place in a quasi-legal framework according to internally documented procedures designed to comply with legislation.

Rules for the interviewing manager conducting a disciplinary interview:

- Must be very clear about the reasons for the interview,
- Must articulate the reasons to the employee,
- Must ensure that investigations are conducted as quickly as possible,
- Must give clear and unambiguous warnings (verbal or written),
- Must state clearly what the employee is expected to do to rectify the situation,
- Must follow the internal procedure,
- Must keep records of the interview and any actions arising.

Structure:

Opening:

- Tone: the interviewer should always be in control of the interview.

Discussion:

- Explaining: explain clearly the reasons for this interview, nature of complaint and company policy; refer to company procedures.
- Listening: allow the employee to tell his/her version of the facts or to offer mitigating circumstances.
- Outlining: explain what will happen next, the exact nature of warning the warning you are Giving and the consequences.

Conclusion:

- Agree: ensure that the employee has understood the understanding warning, the implications and what he/she must do next.
- Close out: terminate the interview and record it according to procedures.

8. Formal meetings

It is important to remember that matters discussed at a meeting can only be legally effective and binding if the following legal requirements have been met:

- The meeting must be properly convened. Notices must reach the members in accordance with the constitution of the organization.
- The meeting must be properly constituted. The right person must be in the chair, and there must be a quorum; in other words, the minimum number of members entitled to vote, must be present.

All types of meetings are subject to:

- The country's laws or statutes,
- The organization’s constitution,
- The common law,
- The organization’s own customs and practices.

Formal meetings are made up of (1) private meetings and (2) public meetings.

Private meetings

Only members are entitled to be present at private meetings. Sometimes an outsider is allowed to attend such a meeting as an observer, but he does not have the right to vote.

The following organizations, for example, hold private meetings:

- Companies with limited liability,
- Bodies such as church, school or city councils,
- Bodies such as private clubs or associations.

Public meetings include the following

- Conferences,
- Symposium,
- Seminars,
- Political meetings,
- National meetings.

Such meetings are advertised in the media or by mail and are attended by the public at large. The conveners usually appoint the chairman and the meeting then proceeds according to its usual custom.

Structure of a formal meeting:

- Booking the venue: Book the venue well in advance, keeping in mind the requirements of the meeting.
- Preparation: Simplify your arrangements as much as possible, by getting the logistics right, e.g. tables and chairs, lighting, stationery, name badges/stickers, programs/agendas, water jugs and glasses.
- Notice of a meeting: The timing and the form required is very important. Don't send the notices out too early, people forget easily and the notices may lose their effectiveness
- Agenda: The agenda is a list of matters to be discussed at a meeting in a specific order. The chairman may only change the order with the meeting's consent.
- Notes: Jot down only the most important points. Make a note of all the changes to the minutes.
- The minutes: These are a report of the decisions made at the meeting. They are the official historical record of an organization.

6. Discussions, debates or negotiations:

Discussion

A discussion is to have a conversation about, or consider by talking over, a specific topic/s.

Here are 10 discussion techniques:

1. Asking someone for their opinion about a topic,
2. Delaying strategies,
3. Presenting several arguments,
4. Giving your opinion about a topic,
5. Agreeing - completely or conditionally,
6. Disagreeing,
7. Countering,
8. Logical argument,
9. Clarification,
10. Expressing solutions and alternatives.

Discussions can be formal or informal and can play a very important part in the communication in an organization.

Debate

A debate is a formal discussion in which opposing arguments are put forward. It includes persuasion, which appeals to the emotional responses of an audience. The outcome of a debate may be decided by audience vote, by judges, or by some combination of the two. A debate can be informal or formal.

Informal debate has several advantages:

- Debating reflects the learning process. Debate establishes extremes, allowing the viewers and participants to see the areas in between more clearly.
- Debating allows students to explore ideas and arguments in a non-threatening atmosphere, because presentational guidelines are provided.
- Debating is an effective method of acquiring knowledge, as arguments need to be supported by relevant, accurate, and complete information.
- Students who debate informally learn to recognize the elements of a good argument and to develop further their abilities to speak confidently.

Structure of a formal debate:

- There are two teams with three speakers each.
- One team agrees with the moot (the Affirmative) and the other team disagrees (the Negative).
- Usually, you are given the topic and told whether your team is affirmative or negative. This means you may be debating a position you personally don't agree with. This is the skill of debating, and it helps you understand that there are two sides to most questions.
- Each team divides up the job of researching the evidence and preparing the case. Each team member writes speech notes. The first people to speak use their notes more, while the later speakers will be answering what their opponents have said (rebuttal).

1.	Affirmative leader	Define moot, introduction
2.	Negative leader	
3.	Affirmative second speaker	Further arguments
4.	Negative second speaker	
5.	Affirmative third speaker	Mostly rebuttal
6.	Negative third speaker	
7.	Negative leader	Summary (no new arguments)
8.	Affirmative leader	

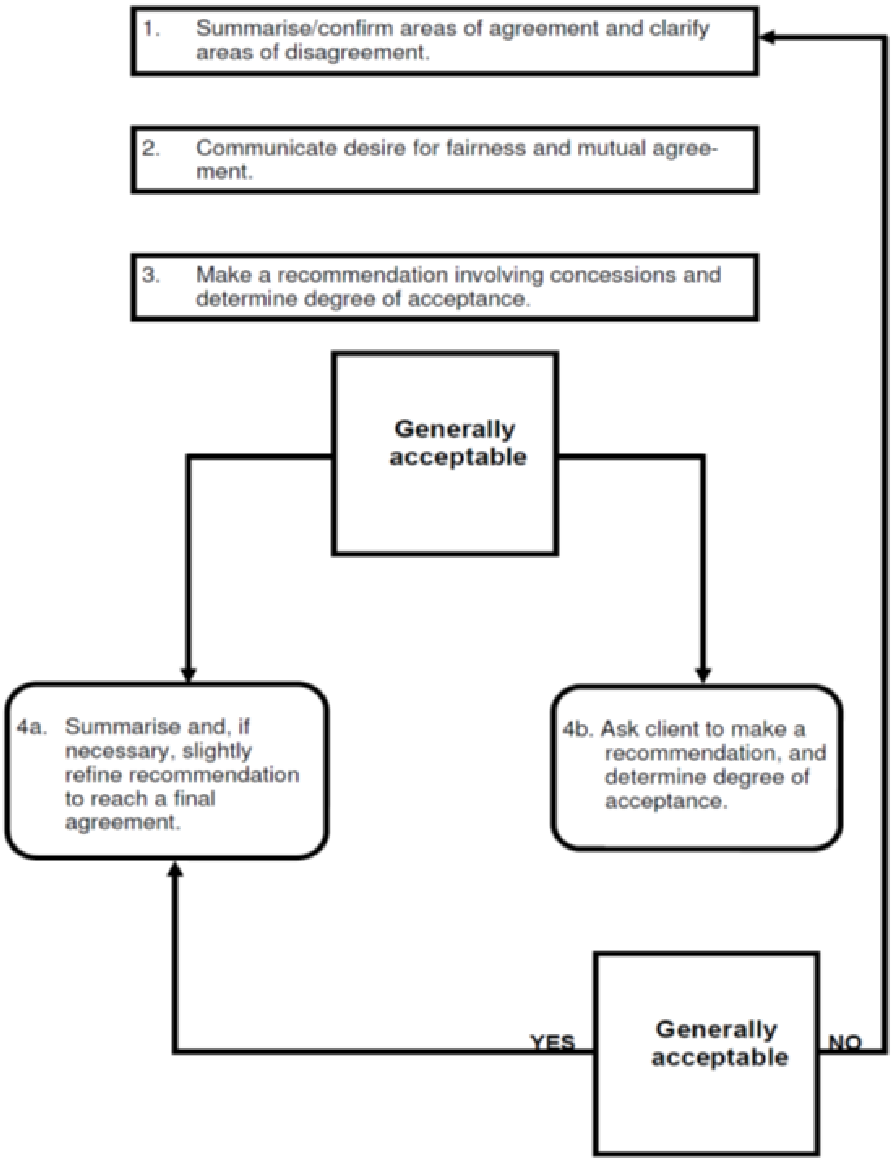
What is the Purpose of a Debate?

Each team is trying to win by doing the best job of arguing their case. This does not mean that one team must be right and the other one wrong. There are two sides to any debate, and either side could win.

<u>Negotiations:</u>

Broadly speaking, negotiation is an interaction of influences. Such interactions, for example, include the process of resolving disputes, agreeing upon courses of action, bargaining for individual or collective advantage, or crafting outcomes to satisfy various interests. Negotiation is thus a form of alternative dispute resolution. Negotiation involves three basic elements: process, behaviour and substance. The process refers to how the parties negotiate: the context of the negotiations, the parties to the negotiations, the tactics used by the parties, and the sequence and stages in which all of this play out. Behaviour refers to the relationships among these parties, the communication between them and the styles they adopt. The substance refers to what the parties negotiate over: the agenda, the issues (positions and - more helpfully - interests), the options, and the agreement(s) reached at the end.

NEGOTIATION MODEL



These three communication tools (discussion, debate and negotiation) are of great importance in an organization, and their use will be determined by the topic and the circumstances/situation. Register reflects the situation and determines the most appropriate language. Socio-cultural sensitivities must be kept in mind, so that offensive language is not used. Own values or arguments must, however, not be compromised in doing so.

LEARNING UNIT 3

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 2

USE STRATEGIES THAT CAPTURE AND RETAIN THE INTEREST OF AN AUDIENCE

US: 119472

Learning outcomes:

1. Key words/signs, pace and pause, stress, volume and intonation or sign size, pace, rhythm and non-manual features (NMFs) are used in appropriate ways to reinforce the message.
2. Body language is appropriate to context and topic and reinforces main ideas and points of view.
3. Formal communications are planned in writing/signing, and plans are detailed, complete, and realistic with respect to time allocation and content.
4. Visual aids are appropriate to topic and context and enhance the presentation and the transfer of information and understanding.
5. Techniques are used to maintain continuity and interaction.

1. Strategies that capture and retain the interest of an audience

The material of your presentation should be concise, to the point and tell an interesting story. In addition to the obvious things like content and visual aids, the following are just as important, as the audience will be subconsciously taking them in:

Your voice

How you say it is as important as what you say. Throughout your presentation, try to convey your enthusiasm and belief in the topic. The use of your voice establishes:

- Rapport,
- Maintains interest,
- Emphasizes points and assists comprehension of the information by the audience.

This can be achieved by the following:

- Varying volume,
- Pace,
- Pitch,
- Pause and
- Tone.

Talk at a moderate pace if you have excellent content. If your arguments are weak, speak at a faster pace as this will give people less chance for developing counter arguments. Fast talkers are regarded as more competent, truthful, fluent, energetic, enthusiastic and persuasive. By talking fast, you move the attention from the content to yourself. It is important to match your pace to what needs to be said. Important instructions or explanations need to be presented at a moderate pace, whilst general information could be presented at a faster pace. Use a quiet, reasonable tone for the content, but still show some energy and interest. Pauses of two seconds before key points are recommended to create interest and attention in what follows. Pauses after key points allow people to reflect on what was said.

Body language

Your body movements express what your attitudes and thoughts really are. Your movements attract attention and give the audience something to follow. The following tips can assist you.

- If you have been standing still or behind a podium, move to the right or left or toward the audience.
- Use gestures to emphasize a point.
- Facial expressions also help to convey a message.
- Maintain eye contact and don't forget to smile!

First impressions influence the audience's attitudes to you. Dress appropriately for the occasion and to show you respect the audience.

As with most personal skills, oral communication cannot be taught. So as always, practice is essential, both to improve your skills generally and to make the best of each individual or group presentation you make.

2. Planning

Initial Planning: This is where you begin to tailor the talk to the situation, and for that reason, this stage is very important for a successful presentation. Begin this stage early, the more lead time you allow yourself, the more time you will have to think up potential approaches to the topic and the more interesting and substantial your presentation will be. Before you begin preparing the presentation, you'll need to determine:

- The type of talk you'll be expected to give: Will this be an informal chat, a seminar discussion, or a more formal presentation? Different talks have different purposes.
- The composition of the audience: Will you be speaking to a general audience or specialists? How many people are expected to attend?
- The time allotted for the talk: The longer the talk, the more freedom you will have to explore the topic. A short talk needs to be very clear and to address the topic directly. Let your audience know that you regard their time as precious. Keep to your allotted time. Do not extend it and do not keep rambling on just to fill your time slot. "If you haven't struck oil in five minutes - stop boring!"
- Expectations for information content: What is the purpose of your talk? Clarify the expectations beforehand and plan to address them during the presentation. Will you be presenting novel concepts to this audience, or building upon their prior knowledge? Either way, make sure you cover the basics clearly, and early in the talk, to avoid confusing the audience.

3. Visual aids:

Visual aids enhance the presentation, the transfer of information and the understanding thereof. They do, however, must be appropriate to the topic and the context.

- Cue cards: These are a visual aid for you, the presenter. The notes must be written boldly, in print not script, and must list key words only. The cards must fit in the palm of your hand.
- Handouts: Do not hand out material to read when you begin the presentation. It may cause the listeners to get out of step with the speaker, unless the handout contains information that needs to be referred to during the presentation.

The purpose of this material is to convey information more clearly and concisely than can be transferred orally.

Do not include anything that is unnecessary. All tables, charts, graphs, maps and diagrams should be made simple and as clear as possible. Too much detail will make them difficult to understand.

It is a good idea to include your references on a handout, so that people can follow up on them later. A paper record (handout) tells your audience that you are serious, responsible, exact and credible. It gives the audience something they can read, take away, make copies of and refer to at a later stage.

Multi-media and visual aids:

PowerPoint presentations, transparencies, or flip charts can help people follow the talk. This is especially important to show organization, present lists, highlight illustrations and exhibits, and summarize data. People think in pictures. Say Nike and people "see" the swoosh. Say Energizer and people "see" the bunny. Say (your name here) and what do people see? That is why logos and other graphical elements are so important. Tapping into the visualization part of the brain is probably the most powerful way to communicate with anyone.

When putting together a PowerPoint presentation, keep the following in mind:

- Key words on bullet points -this helps to retain audience attention and gives you a reason for being there (anyone can read, so you do not want to read to them).
- Omit anything that is not vital. PowerPoint often leads people to include irrelevant things (only if you have nothing important to say, should you use lots of bells and whistles).
- Only use colour when the colour has a meaning. Keep in mind that some people are colour-blind and others may make black and white copies of the slides, in which case the colour would be meaningless

4. Continuity and interaction:

Continuity and interaction are vital for a successful presentation. It is imperative that the speaker/presenter be very well prepared. This will ensure a smooth presentation and good timing. It will allow the speaker to pick up on any confused or perplexed listeners, as well as check understanding by asking questions. If questions and answers follow your presentation, remember to always repeat the question for the entire audience. Then look at the questioner when answering. If you are unsure, don't make up an answer, rather say you don't know and say you need to get back to them.

LEARNING UNIT 3

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 3

IDENTIFY AND RESPOND TO MANIPULATIVE USE OF LANGUAGE

US: 119472

Learning outcomes:

1. Facts and opinions are identified and distinguished.
2. Omission of necessary information is noted and addressed.
3. The implications of how the choice of language structures and features, specifically tone, register, style and point of view affect audience interpretations of spoken/signed texts are explained
4. Distortion of a contributor's position on a given issue is explored with specific reference to what has been selected and omitted.

1. Identify and respond to manipulative use of language:

Humans all over the world tend to be manipulative beings. They achieve this through acts, but mostly through their choice of words.

To manipulate means to control or influence something or someone cleverly, deviously or skilfully, often for one's own advantage.

A person can say the same sentence twice but using a different body language or tone of voice the second time, and the listener/receiver of the message will receive two very different messages. E.g. "sit down" said in a gentle, kind manner, would make a person feel comfortable and nurtured, while "sit down!" shouted in an unfriendly way, would make a person feel nervous and expect trouble.

In the same way, a person can manipulate others by 'confusing' facts and opinions, by selective omission of necessary information and by subtly forcing their own point of view onto them. To avoid the above, one needs to be able to identify and distinguish facts and opinions:

- Fact: A statement of actuality or occurrence. A fact is based on direct evidence, actual experience, or observation. A fact is a statement that can be proven true
- Opinion: A statement of belief or feeling. An opinion expresses someone's belief, feeling, view, idea, or judgment about something or someone.

Guidelines to help keep fact and opinion apart:

Opinion:	Fact:
– Does the author/speaker use words that interpret or label, such as: pretty; ugly; safe; dangerous; evil; attractive; well-dressed; good? – Are there words that clue you to statements of opinion such as: probably; perhaps; usually; often; sometimes; on occasion; I believe; I think; in my opinion; I feel; I suggest? – Can you identify differing opinions and their effect on the author's/ speaker's views? – Does the truth of the premise depend on us accepting a certain definition of key words or concepts? – Has the author/speaker defined the conditions for using the concepts?	– Can the fact be verified by direct observation? – Can the facts be trusted? How did the author/speaker come to the facts? – Does the author/speaker have the skill and experience to make such a statement? – Are the facts presented in an objective manner? (any bias evident or suspected?) – Does the author/speaker make clear the sources of statements from authorities? – Are these authorities reliable? – Can the study which generates the facts be duplicated? – Are the facts relevant to the point being made? – Have unfavourable or negative points been left out? (are there counter-studies?) – Do the facts prove the claim being made or do they merely suggest that the claim is reasonable?

Remember that your acceptance of an author's/speaker's opinion or claim depends on your own view of the subject and of the writer's/speaker's work. To help evaluate an author's/speaker's ideas, you need a clear understanding of your own opinions. For example: "Registration and control of firearms in Canada is not supported by the Canadian public and will not lead to a decrease in gun-related crime" The underlined statement is a fact. The statement in italics is an opinion. There is nothing wrong with mixing opinions and fact together in an argument. What is important is that the reader be able to distinguish the fact from the opinion, to make a sound judgment about the information they are receiving.

2. Omission

Just as opinions disguised as facts can mislead and manipulate readers/listeners, the omission of important/necessary information can do the same. A classic example of the consequences of omission, is when getting a recipe from someone! How often does a person not really want to share their culinary secrets with you but is obliged to do so. For their dish/product still to be the best, they leave out a specific ingredient, or a specific part of the method, which is vital to the success of the recipe.

Another example, which can have far reaching consequences and occurs regularly in the workplace, is when a subordinate becomes a threat to his/her superior. It is the superior's duty to lead by example and to teach/assist the subordinate when necessary. As soon as the superior realizes his/her position is in danger, he/she omits necessary information, which then makes the subordinate look bad when things go wrong that he/ she has done. If management does not pick up on this, it buys the superior time and sometimes favour.

Often people do not realize that necessary information has been omitted, because they do not have sufficient knowledge about the topic. To try and avoid this, it is necessary to get confirmation that your understanding is correct. It is also advisable to be aware of any negative attitudes that might be present.

When attending a talk or presentation, it is difficult to judge whether necessary information is being omitted. It is therefore necessary to check the reliability of the information by discussing it with other audience members - often some of them have sufficient knowledge on the topic.

3. <u>Choice of language structures:</u>

One of the easiest ways to manipulate people is by the choice of language structures and features, such as tone, register, style and point of view. These have been looked at before but need to be recapped.

- Register reflects the situation and determines the most appropriate language. Socio - cultural sensitivities must be kept in mind, so that offensive language is not used. Own values or arguments must, however, not be compromised in doing so.
- Style is the way a writer addresses a matter, a manner which reveals the writer's personality, or 'voice'.
- Tone is the sound of your voice, with reference to quality, pitch and volume.
- Point of view is your mental viewpoint or attitude.

Listen for tone, attitude, and clarity. Is the tone you project appropriate for your audience and your purpose? Is each sentence easy to understand? Are you speaking too rapidly? Are the major divisions in your presentation easy to hear? Are any sentences difficult to understand?

By looking at the above, it is easy to see how it can be used to manipulate an audience - positively or negatively.

The best examples of manipulation using language are found in the advertising world and political speeches.

#X ip !tbzt !zpv bffe !bjsujnf !up !ubml@#

As soon as you read the above, you think free calls! Whether you intended phoning someone or not, you start thinking of the possibilities, because you might not need airtime to do so. You have been manipulated! You are doing exactly what Vodacom wanted you to do, i.e. think about phoning someone.

The rest of the advertisement reads as follows: "Introducing Vodacom Reverse Charge. Simply dial 082 180 + the full number of the person you need to reach. Now all Vodacom contract customers can accept call charges from any Vodacom customer."

By reading the rest of the advertisement, you realize that you cannot phone for free - someone is still going to pay for it, even if it is not you. Vodacom did not lie to you by promising free talk time, they just manipulated you with their choice of words.

Another example: "Live in the spirit of Africa. Africa. The Serengeti - a place where your spirit can soar above endless, rolling grasslands."

Add to this a beautiful picture of a sunset over a plain with the silhouette of just one thorn tree, and you are transported to another world, free of stress and problems. Just the place most people would like to be!

The beginning of this advertisement has already manipulated your thoughts. You think of your present situation and often become disillusioned with it, or you start planning for something that you would love but can't really afford.

On reading the rest of the advertisement, you find a wonderful lifestyle that is out of reach for most of the population. Another example: "This is what you'll find once you secure a lifestyle at Serengeti Golf and Wildlife Estate. Within this 780ha estate you will not only find peace and tranquillity, but also a range of facilities for the whole family to enjoy: …"

These are two examples where nothing wrong or dishonest has been done, but by clever use of language, have managed to manipulate the reader into thinking of previously insignificant things.

The following extracts are from remarks by President George W Bush to teachers and students at Townsend Elementary School in Townsend, Tennessee, on 21 February 2001.

<u>Manipulative use of language</u>
"Yesterday I also outlined some funding priorities of mine. I'm going to submit a budget next week to the United States Congress -- it's a budget that sets clear priorities. A priority is going to be to make sure that our Social Security system and the payroll taxes are saved for Social Security and the Social Security system is strong. A priority would be Medicare. A priority is going to be to make sure our troops are well-paid and well-housed and well-trained, so that we can keep the peace. A priority is going to be pay down debt. A priority is going to be tax relief, so hardworking Americans have got more money in their pocket to pay down their own debt and to cover the cost of high energy costs."

We can see in the first extract that President Bush was telling the teachers and students what they wanted to hear. His style and register were appropriate to his audience, which would most likely ensure their support for him.

In the second part of the extract, he spreads his manipulation even wider, to include the rest of the population. He addresses the Social Security System, which provides for the poor; he addresses salaries, housing and training for the troops; he addresses tax relief – which will affect the whole population. By his clever use of language, he manages to win the support of millions of people.

Distorting facts:

To distort means to alter or misinterpret facts, or to twist or pull out of shape. In the following extract from 'Distortion of Fact' by Andrew Burfield, we can see how the omission of vital information can distort the whole picture. The Commission had reported that there were nineteen hijackers, all of whom had died in the attack. "The omission of evidence that at least six of the alleged hijackers — including Waleed al-Shehri, said by the Commission probably to have stabbed a flight attendant on Flight 11 before it crashed into the North Tower of the WTC — are still alive." The above extract clearly illustrates how the credibility of "The Commission" is affected and the whole picture distorted, by the omission of credible reports that provide the necessary proof that those people are still alive.

LEARNING UNIT 4

USE LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION IN OCCUPATIONAL

US: 119467 – NQF 3 – 5 Credits

The purpose of this unit standard is to facilitate learning and to ensure that learners can cope with learning in the context of learnerships, skills programmes, and other learning programmes. Many adult learners in the FET band have not been in a learning situation for a long time and need learning and study strategies and skills to enable successful progression.

Competent learners at this level will be able to deal with learning materials, to access and use useful resources, to seek clarification and help when necessary, and apply a range of learning strategies. They do this with an understanding of the features and processes of the workplace and occupations to which their learning programme refers.

Learners credited with this unit standard can:

- Access and use suitable learning resources
- Use learning strategies
- Manage occupational learning programme materials
- Conduct basic research, analyse and present findings
- Function in a team
- Reflect on how characteristics of the workplace and occupational context affect learning

Learning assumed to be in place:
The credit calculation assumes that learners are already competent in terms of the full spectrum of language knowledge and communication skills laid down in the Revised National Curriculum Statements and unit standards up to NQF level 2.

LEARNING UNIT 4

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 1

ACCESS AND USE AVAILABLE LEARNING RESOURCES

US: 119467

Learning outcomes:

1. Relevant learning resources are identified.
2. Learning resources are used effectively through appropriate selection of information and acknowledgment of sources.

1. Introduction.

This learning unit is meant to assist learners in the process of learning within the context of learnerships, skills programmes and other learning programmes, but the principles of learning covered in this unit can be applied to any situation where you have to learn something new, so the skills obtained through this programme will be of use throughout any situation.

The Skills Development programmes, including this language and communication information, are meant to help people with doing specific jobs. For this reason, the materials are all developed so that this can be applied within your workplace. It is stressed however, that learning is an on-going process and you should continuously practice your knowledge in the workplace to get the most use out of this. In addition, remember that communication is a two-way process, so you should ask questions, give responses and participate in discussions to practice your communications skills.

2. Communication basics

Communication is commonly divided into verbal and non-verbal communication.

Verbal communication happens when two or more people are talking, while non-verbal communication is understood as any other way of getting information across to another person. This can include writing, signs, sounds other than talking and even body language.

In this we are interested in the types of communication that can assist in learning, which can be verbal or non-verbal. For effective communication to happen, the following elements are necessary:

- A sender
- A receiver
- The channel
- The message
- Feedback

The communication process entails the sender using a specific channel to relay a message to the receiver and feedback is provided when the receiver responds back to the sender in some way.

3. Learning resources

Learning can result for several reasons and in different ways. It is true that we all learn every day continuously. However, when you are studying towards a specific qualification, you will probably try to use several different resources which will all provide some information, so that you can get the qualification in the end. It is important that the information you require and obtain for the purpose of this must be relevant to what you are studying and must also be from a source that is relevant to the course you are doing.

The most important learning resources for studying a specific subject or course are generally resource centres, literature sources, other people (such as subject experts) and the internet. These are all discussed in the following paragraphs:

Resource centres

Resource centres are generally attached to specific organisations, such as Universities or Government Departments. Each resource centre will generally specialise in a particular topic. For example, the Biomedical Resource Centre at the University of KZN performs scientific research, mostly in the biological and medical fields and so will be able to provide information on disease patterns and the development of medicines. On the other hand, the Media Centre at the same university gathers information on historical developments in the country and can provide data on events that were covered by newspapers and magazines throughout the last century.

Resource centres are useful for information on specific topics, but also for statistics on various problems. They can also assist in some cases in carrying out research projects that might be required to solve specific problems. Further to this, Education Institutions themselves can also be seen as a good source of information for the purpose of learning, because of subject specialists employed by them, as well as the different resource centres and literature sources that they house.

Literature

Literature sources are used more than any other source in getting information for a specific purpose such as learning. The term 'literature' covers just about every written form of information, including journals, textbooks, newspapers, magazines, reports, financial statements, dissertations, printed conference proceedings and research dissertations.

It is important to remember that not all literature sources are reliable. For learning towards a qualification, you will more than likely require specific textbooks, rather than getting the information from magazines. Business and specialist magazines and newsletters are used more often in learning than popular gossip magazines and daily newspapers.

Literature sources are obtainable from libraries, or from bookstores specialising in specific topics. All tertiary education institutions and schools have libraries, but these are mostly only for use by students who are studying at these institutions. Public libraries are found in most towns and cities, and anyone can become a member of these. Resource centers, as discussed under the previous heading, also sometimes keep literature on specific topics, but will mostly not lend these out. They can, however, assist in providing copies of articles in some cases.

Most publications are available in English, which makes learning easier for learners who are proficient in English, but poses a problem for those who are not.

Internet

Although use of the internet is increasing daily, there is a perception that the internet is available only to the wealthy. In fact, it is estimated that in South Africa only about 4% of people have access to the Internet. Despite this, the Internet is an important source of information. For this reason, you are encouraged to learn how to use the internet and to learn in which circumstances to use it.

The Internet is particularly useful when information is required from other countries. Most universities worldwide now have websites, which provides information on everything from the courses that they offer, to the staff members working for them. Some websites also include reports and articles written by academics and even electronic copies of books that they have in their libraries. The internet therefore makes it easier to get hold of information from all over the world.

Further to this, the use of e-mail is linked to the internet, and this makes it easier to communicate with people from across the world. This makes the internet an important source of information, but also an important communication tool.

You should also be careful in using the internet, as not all information available is accurate. For this reason, most academic institutions discourage their students from relying on internet sources too much.

People as learning resource

People are an important source of learning, as can be seen by the fact that teachers are still used widely as a way of getting information to learners. In most cases, another source of learning is added to this. For instance, in schools, universities and colleges, learners must use textbooks and other written materials in addition to listening to teachers and lecturers in the classroom. In most situations, literature sources will be used as proof of statements by people. This is especially true in research reports, where people's opinions are used in surveys, but written questionnaires are filled in to confirm each person's opinion in writing.

People are also a source of information for learning in the workplace, where more senior staff can show less experienced workers how to perform certain tasks. Skills development therefore makes provision for mentors, who are involved in constantly guiding learners in the jobs they are doing.

The reason for this is that theory from a textbook cannot always describe exactly how a task is done. The mentor can show a learner the practical steps involved in specific jobs. People are also an important source where learners battle with issues such as language; a bilingual person can translate documents so that learners understand the principles better. People therefore remain important in efficient communication for occupational purposes.

Selection and acknowledgement of information

Different sources of information are suitable to different types of situations. As explained under the previous headings, people are used as a learning source in teaching situations, while textbooks are more suitable when you need information to help you in an exam. Some situations will mean that you require a combination of information sources.

After deciding which source of information is suitable for your situation, you must decide which information from a specific source is necessary. You will not be able to learn every word from a specific textbook for an exam and so you will decide on which sections are more important and study these sections. In other cases, the topic that you are learning will determine what information is important and where you can get this information from. For instance, if you want to learn about labour law in South Africa, you will probably need specific textbooks for this purpose, rather than looking for the relevant information in popular magazines.

In most cases, it will be important to look at the most recent information on a specific topic. In an example on labour law, a textbook that was written in 1960 will not give you the information you need on current labour law, as the law has changed considerably over the last four decades. If, however, you want to make a comparison on how the law has changed over this time, then the old textbook will be of use. Whatever information is used, when you write it down for a report, exam, article or presentation, you must acknowledge the source of the information. If you used a textbook, the title of the book, author, year of publication and country in which it was published must be included in your writings. The same type of details must be provided for any other source and in the case of the internet, you must include the website address and the date that you accessed the information.

LEARNING UNIT 4

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 2

USE LEARNING STRATEGIES

US: 119467

Learning outcomes:

1. Information is summarised and used for learning purposes.
2. Specific techniques are selected and applied appropriately.
3. Relevant questions are asked.
4. Texts are read/viewed for detail, interpreted and analysed for a given context
5. Spoken/signed input is listened to/viewed for detail, interpreted and analysed for a given context.
6. Learning takes place through communicating with others in groups or as individuals.

1. Learning strategies

Learning can be done in several different ways, and everyone has their own individual approaches to learning. In general, you will learn better and remember more if you access information in more than one way. This means that if you listen to a teacher talk on a specific topic, then read the teacher's notes and follows this up by performing the task that was spoken about, you will be far more likely to learn all the details of the task than if you just listened to the teacher talking about it. We also tend to remember more from images and pictures than from written words.

Because it is not possible to remember everything you hear, read and observe, it is necessary to decide on a specific strategy that will enable you to learn what is essential for the purpose of performing your job. The following approaches are used most frequently in learning:

Summarising information

The approach is especially useful when a large volume of information must be accessed and learnt.

To summarise, you will read through sections of the work you are trying to learn and write down only key words under different headings. These will enable you to still remember what the full sentences under each heading were about. The idea is that you actively study only these key words, but because you have read through the whole section, the key words will remind you of the overall facts contained under different headings.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is done in a group set-up and is often used in management and marketing sessions. A specific topic will be supplied and all members of the group state all the ideas that this topic reminds them of. Every statement is written down, and no judgments are made about any statements during the process. Afterwards a designated person or team will summarise all the ideas that came from this session, to retain the most useful ideas. The aim of such a session is to allow everyone to be creative in looking for new ideas.

Group analysis

This also is done in a group set-up, encouraging everyone to give their personal opinions on a specific issue, which is stated up-front. It is often used to solve a problem within organisations but is used in learning as part of group activities. Group analysis works best when one person is assigned as leader of the discussion, to keep the attention of the group on the specific topic and to keep to a time-limit.

Mind maps

Mind-maps can be done in a group or by individuals as part of the learning process. Mind-maps are in some ways like summarising. For a mind-map, a specific topic is written down and all related ideas that you can get from your textbook or other source of information, is stated in one or two words and linked to the central topic with lines. The result resembles a spider-web structure.

While doing the mind map, you are summarising the facts related to the topic written down first and this gives you a short version of the text to study. As for summarising, you will have to read through the original text thoroughly before starting with the mind-map, to find out which ideas are relevant.

Note taking

This is especially applicable to gathering information from other people, i.e. taking notes during a lecture or during a presentation. In most cases you would have to summarise what is said while you take notes, as it will be difficult to write down every word that is spoken.

It is important to follow note taking up by writing a more detailed report of your notes for your own use; this way you will also be able to approach the lecturer or facilitator if you do not understand.

Memorising

By far most learning activities result in memorising some of the material. The idea behind mind maps, summaries and note taking is to store the facts presented during lectures or from books in your memory so that you can use this information during your work activities. It is important and useful to understand the basic ideas on a topic, rather than memorising every word from textbooks or other learning materials.

Underlining, skimming and scanning

These techniques are used in conjunction with most of the other ideas discussed above. Underlining helps to provide a summary of what is written in textbooks and articles. You would underline only the most important words or sentences and can follow this up by writing down a summary – including the words or parts of sentences that you underlined, before learning this summary.

Skimming and scanning are techniques used to read through large volumes of texts to determine what is important to learn. For this you are not reading each word written on each page but let your eyes 'skim' over the paragraphs to catch specific words. These techniques are developed only after practice and for the inexperienced learner is probably not a good idea, as this can result in you not reading the important information

LEARNING UNIT 4

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 3

MANAGE OCCUPATIONAL LEARNING MATERIALS

US: 119467

Learning outcomes:

1. Occupational learning materials are organized for efficient use.
2. Layout and presentation of learning materials are understood and used effectively.
3. Technical language/ terminology is engaged with, and clarification sought if needed.

General principles

Once you have gathered all the information you need for learning, you must make sure that this information is available to you and possibly to other people as and when it is needed. In some cases, you might have obtained the learning materials from textbooks that are kept at a library, and you don't really have a say in how this is managed. In other cases, you might have the relevant information in electronic form, or you have reports and assignments that you wrote on specific topics.

It is important to not just have access to these materials while you are learning, but also afterwards, so that you can confirm procedures or update your knowledge. To manage occupational learning material, you will need to use technology efficiently, as well as manage time and resources in the right way. Where other people must use these learning materials, you will have to ensure that they know where and how to use the sources and that they understand the information.

Organizing of learning materials

Learning information can be distributed by way of articles in journals, newsletters, departmental circulars, seminar and if necessary, the mass media. The type of work environment that you are in will decide whether information needs to be presented in different languages and for people with different qualification levels.

The learning materials in a workplace can include videos, articles, magazines, handouts, various books, charts, maps, plans and diagrams. All of these have different requirements for storage and management. For instance, low-cost audio and visual media, such as video, slide sets, filmstrips, audiocassettes and flipcharts, are valuable tools to assist in training groups. These technologies have been improving and developing over the years, and equipment is now cheaper, lighter, battery-operated and portable, thus making it suitable for a variety of uses. However, where such equipment is not available, these technologies will be useless.

Even the management and storage of books, texts and hand-outs will require some form of filing system and designated space to keep the materials, for individuals as well as departments.

Presentation of learning materials

In most learning situations, a combination of learning materials and learning strategies are applicable.

The learners should be able to use the learning materials and the way in which information is presented should be suitable to the audience. Materials should be appropriate to the age, culture, qualification level and language group of the people who must learn from these. It is suggested that written materials should be provided to learners in addition to any verbal communications in a learning environment

LEARNING UNIT 4

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 4

CONDUCT BASIC RESEARCH AND ANALYSE AND PRESENT FINDINGS

US: 119467

Learning outcomes:

1. Appropriate or relevant topic and scope is identified and defined.
2. Research steps are planned and sequenced appropriately.
3. Research techniques are applied.
4. Information is evaluated for relevance.
5. Information is classified, categorized and sorted.
6. Research findings are analysed and presented in the appropriate format.

1. Basic research

Research is defined as the collection of information on a specific topic and the use of that information for a specific purpose. To get information so that you can learn a specific topic, you might therefore have to do some basic research. The information obtained because of this research should be useful for you to learn from. It should also be available to others if necessary.

Research will assist in identifying and solving problems so that you can make responsible decisions. In some cases, one person will be responsible for doing research, especially if the research is required as part of your personal learning. In other cases, you might have to work in a group, or with other organisations or the community to get research results. In each case, the research will mean collecting, analysing, organising and critically evaluating information.

There are several ways in which you can conduct research and most of these will use the same types of resources as was listed for learning in general. The problem in research is to decide on what information to use from all these sources. A great deal of information is available for free, but not all of it. It is advisable to use various resources to conduct research to compare the information you found for accuracy. This will however depend on how much time or resources you have available for the research that you are doing.

Research can be complex or very basic, with topics that are targeted or broad. Very often it is necessary to deliver research reports within a limited time. Research reports require attention to detail, specific research strategies and at least basic knowledge of access to, a range of resources. You might have to locate public records and legal or technical documents.

Research is a process that involves identifying and evaluating sources for your research, using the right methodology to implement the correct research tools regularly monitoring new sources, to replace sources which are no longer relevant, applicable, or available.

Steps in the Research process

The different types of research are called 'Research Methodologies'.

We generally distinguish between research that either uses mostly statistics and numbers to answer a question or prove a point, or research that uses words to express findings. These two methods are used together for most research projects.

Whatever type of research we do, three broad steps are relevant to the research process:

- collection of information
- analysis of information
- interpretation of information

The way in which each step is performed will be determined by the type of research that is conducted and the tools that are used as part of the research process.

Research planning

Good planning is essential for research to succeed, as it is important to know what, when, how, why and with whom you are about to do a research project.

Bad planning could result in missing deadlines for work, confusing work schedules, a lack of progress and unsatisfactory results. On the other hand, good planning will result in the research being finished on time and by the relevant people.

The following are some of the important factors that should be kept in mind during research planning:

- Clear problem definition: The way in which the research is done will be determined by the research problem. The research objectives should be stated specifically and in detail.
- Well-defined context: You should have a good idea of the context in which the research has to be conducted, in other words which factors can influence the research process and results. You might need to focus on specific population groups or age groups for specific research. Or the opinion of subject experts might be more important than what your colleagues have to say in your research.
- Good documentation: Research results will only be acceptable if you can prove your findings, so it is necessary to document everything and to manage the information as you would manage all your other information.
- Effective management: Even the most basic research project will benefit from an effective management process. The more complicated the research, the more essential this management becomes to ensure relevant results. It is probably a good idea to appoint a specific person to manage any research project.

Research techniques

Once you've decided on the research methodology (qualitative, quantitative or a combination of these) that will be suitable for your specific research project, you must decide on research tools that will assist you to obtain the information required. We can use a single tool or combination of research tools to get information. For this module, the most common research tools are:

- Surveys: These are done through questionnaires, designed for a specific purpose for a specific group of people, called 'respondents. Questionnaires can be posted, e mailed or faxed to these people or can be answered through face-to-face interviews
- Focus groups: These are discussions by a group of people, which are recorded by researchers, who later report on the results of the discussions.

- Literature survey / desktop study: Information for research can be obtained from similar sources as the literature for learning, including journals, books, magazines, newspapers and the internet. Desktop studies are often used in conjunction with other techniques. As part of a training programme researchers will often have access to libraries and academic experts, who can provide further information on specific topics.
- Simulation: Also referred to as experimental research. A situation is set up to simulate real life and the outcomes recorded. This is not often used in the learning environment.

Selecting a research tool

To prevent a waste of resources, careful consideration must be given to the use of research tools. The choice of research tool will be determined by several factors, including the following:

- Area of research: The tool used in a research project must be relevant to the topic. In learning programmes most of the research can probably be done through literature sources.
- Research objectives: The tools used will be determined by the research objectives, which could indicate that only one specific tool is necessary, or that more than one should be used
- The context: The background to the research is important in the decision of which tools to use.
- Resources available: Large scale surveys might not be possible if only one researcher with no money is available. You must be realistic about research that can be conducted.
- Limitations due to different factors: Research in rural areas is more difficult because of transport and postal problems. Factors like language and cultural differences also must be considered when choosing a research tool. Research is usually also time-consuming questionnaires must be completed by respondents and then returned.
- The research team: A team of twenty researchers can conduct a bigger project with several research tools, while a single researcher will be able to do less on his / her own.

2. Capturing, coding, editing data for a research project

The capturing of data, coding of information and editing of results are part of information gathering. The information must be sorted through these steps before you can decide what is useful for the purpose of your research.

The effective and correct coding of information applies to all aspects of the research project, for manual as well as electronic data. Various computerised research packages are available to simplify the process, but not all researchers will have access to them, so it is necessary to know how to apply the basic principles of data capturing and analysis to any kind of system.

'Data' is the term used for the basic information, collected as relevant to the report. Data provides the 'raw materials' from which information is obtained. The basic data provides the necessary information once it is organised.

Capturing of Data

This involves the collection of information from various sources. After reading textbooks or articles and writing notes on what you read, you will capture the necessary information and write a report on the topic. If a survey was conducted, you will also write notes on the answers from respondents to summarise the information gleaned through the survey.

Coding of Information

This involves the sorting of information into various categories. This would assist you in coding the information to the most applicable and useful reporting categories.

Editing of Information

Editing involves a review of the information gathered, ensuring that the correct information for the specific report was collected and included. Editing also involves correction of information or documentation to ensure accuracy and consistency.

3. Evaluation and analysis of research information

Once all the relevant information has been gathered, the researcher must analyse this to answer the original research question.

This involves understanding the information and knowing what is relevant and what not, keeping in mind the original research question and objectives. The first step is to read through the data, to determine which sources are applicable. You then summarise the notes gathered during reading of information before including the findings from surveys, focus groups, etc. in the research report.

The next step of the research cycle is to write and present the findings in a research report. The research findings as presented in the final report provide the opportunity for other parties to give feedback on the research. This might result in further research being conducted, if problems or further questions are discovered. It is important to ensure that all statements and findings from a research report can be substantiated.

4. Research report

In general, a research report is done according to the following format:

- Cover page with research title and name of author/s
- Table of contents
- Preface
- List of acronyms and abbreviations
- Lists of tables and figures
- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Body of report – in numbered sections covering different aspects of the research
- Bibliography / list of references
- Appendices, including examples of questionnaires

The research report should be presented in a format useful and acceptable to the relevant people, so reports prepared for an academic audience will have a more academic approach and more complicated language, whereas a report aimed at providing information for the implementation of a new training programme will contain more basic language and grammar that can be of use to trainees and trainers.

A written report is often followed by an oral presentation, and this also must be in a format applicable to the relevant people. In most cases the presentation will include power-point slides, but this will depend on the technology available and the circumstances of the presentation

LEARNING UNIT 4

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 5

FUNCTION IN A TEAM

US: 119467

Learning outcomes:

1. Active participation takes place in group learning situations.
2. Responsibilities in the team are taken up, and group work conventions are applied in learning situations.
3. Conflict management and negotiating techniques are practised in defined context.
4. Teamwork results in meaningful product or outcomes.

1. Team functioning

Within the workplace most activities are carried out in a group setting. Learning is also often done in a group, especially where lectures are attended and group exercises are required and the importance of teamwork is emphasised for this reason.

Group learning situations can occur in formal lecture meetings, discussion groups, group activities, workshops and conferences. All of these may consist of small or large numbers of people. The different cultures, languages and beliefs of group members can make the group situation more challenging. Although learning situations such as lectures and discussion groups will mostly mean that the group members are on the same qualification levels, during workshops and conferences the people may be from a variety of education backgrounds. All these factors play a role in effective team functioning.

Member responsibilities

In group situations people have several different roles. This will be the case even if roles are not specifically given to people. For example, in a group of friends one person will take the role of leader, making most of the decisions relevant to the group's activities, while the rest of the people will follow the leader's decisions in group activities most of the time. Of course, in formal group settings such as at work, specific roles will probably be assigned to the people in the group.

The learning situation in a work environment often means that one person will be in a supervision role, or will be mentor to the learner / s. While the supervisor is appointed formally by the organisation, the mentor is not necessarily the learner's superior but is mostly informally appointed to guide the worker. The people in these two roles have the responsibility of directing and advising the learner or worker so that he / she can learn while working.

The main task of doing the actual work will, however, remain that of the learner/ worker. This is different from the role of facilitator, where the main activity in the group set-up is performed by the teacher, while the learners only have the responsibility of gathering information.

In some group situations a rotation of roles is appropriate. This will be planned, for instance, to give more than one person the chance of leading the group. In the workplace this is often relevant to different functional tasks so that all workers can learn how to perform several work tasks. The rotation of roles can also be relevant to workshop and conference groups, with different people getting the opportunity to chair meetings or report on research findings to the rest of the group.

Having the right person for a specific role within a group will ensure that the group functions well, but it is also necessary in a learning situation that all group members learn different skills, and this should therefore form part of the learning strategy.

Conflict management and negotiation

Conflict frequently occurs in a group setting. This is most commonly a result of disagreements on aspects such as the different roles within the group, the functioning of the group and the workload of different people.

In conflict management the first important principle of solving problems is that a group should agree upfront on the group's functioning. This means that the different roles, whether there will be rotation of roles, the responsibilities of each group member and the purpose of the group should be decided before the group starts with its work. This type of agreement will make it easier for the group to sort conflict out.

Another principle of conflict management is that people with a common purpose will be more likely to agree on aspects of the group's functions. For this reason, where people volunteer to be part of groups, there will be less chance of conflict. It is however not always possible to include only people who really want to be in a group; in the work environment groups are not always formed by choice; but more through management decisions.

When conflict situations arise, the leader of the group will probably have the responsibility of resolving the conflict. Where the group works on a democratic basis, the votes of the majority will determine the group decisions. In some cases, certain people in a group will have more say than others, for example the manager of the group might have the final say in decisions, even if not all group members agree with this person. Certain people in a group may also know more about a specific subject and their opinions would be more valid when decisions are made.

In all situations, it is suggested that the communication process should include paying attention to what everyone in a group has to say about a problem before the leader takes a decision. In the workplace, the group will have to adhere to general rules in the workplace and conflict will therefore be resolved in the same way that it is resolved in other situations in the organisation. In some instances, a mediator might be asked to sort out problems in a group, if the group cannot manage to do so without assistance.

As a final solution, a group may have to be dissolved, or someone removed from the group, to resolve conflict. If a temporary group has completed the tasks or projects that it was meant to, this might also be a reason to dissolve the group.

LEARNING UNIT 4

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 6

REFLECT ON HOW CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORKPLACE AND OCCUPATIONAL CONTEXT AFFECT LEARNING

US: 119467

Learning outcomes:

1. Sector and organisation type is identified.
2. Features of the occupational environment are described and discussed.
3. Ways in which these features affect learning processes and/or application of learning are described and discussed.

1. The influence of workplace characteristics on learning

Because the learning discussed in this module is meant to happen at the workplace, the characteristics of the workplace play an important role in how effective this learning will be. The factors determining workplace characteristics include physical factors, like the buildings, the facilities (including cafeterias and tearooms for the staff), individual office space and availability of equipment, stationary, telephones etc.

Non-physical factors include the relationships between workers, how management relates to workers, the values of the organization and what the organization does to make sure that staff and clients are treated well.

Decisions made in organizations are all made by people in the organizations. These decisions will determine how the physical and non-physical factors are used or agreed upon in the organisation. The decisions will therefore also determine whether learning is encouraged and how workers are assisted by management and colleagues in the learning process.

Different workplace environments

Different types of organizations will have different characteristics and approaches to how staff is managed and how much learning is encouraged within the workplace.

One way of describing organizations is according to the industry that they function in.We distinguish three major industry types in South Africa:

- Primary industry – like farming and mining. These industries are responsible for getting the raw materials for products through to the secondary and tertiary industries. In other words, the primary industry will produce maize, which is forwarded to the secondary industry to make bread and the tertiary industry to sell it to the public.
- Secondary industry – mostly manufacturing enterprises, that take the raw materials from the primary industry and make food products, clothes, cars, etc. These products are then usually forwarded to the tertiary industry, before being sold to the people who use it in the end.
- Tertiary industry – the organizations and shops that sell final products and services. The tertiary industry is not responsible for making products; the basic components or products are obtained from the secondary and primary industry, ready to be sold. This industry also includes financial institutions like banks and educational institutions such as schools and universities. These institutions do not sell products, but offer services such as insurance and loans, or education to people.

Another way of describing organizations is to state whether they are government or non-governmental organizations. Government organizations include the different departments, such as the Department of Labour or Department of Education and the divisions and units within these departments. These organizations are all subject to specific controls and laws, which prescribe how the departments should be run and what workers are allowed to do.

Non-governmental organizations are not necessarily subject to the same rules and regulations, although several laws, such as the Skills Development Act and the Labour Relations Act, determine how employees are to be treated in the workplace, regardless of which organisation they work in. Some of these laws also make allowance for training, especially the Skills Development Act, which is meant to encourage organizations to assist their workers in training and learning.

The effect of occupational features on learning

The different categories of organizations have different characteristics, based on the type of industry, the types of controls and the laws that control the different work environments.

All industries require workers who can perform specific duties, but specific requirements differ amongst different organizations. Workers in the primary industry are mostly not highly educated and are often only able to do a very specific job, so the characteristics of the industry mean that workers will learn how to do specific tasks and will probably not be encouraged to study further. The work in this industry often requires a worker to handle machinery like farming equipment and workers will undergo specialised training for this.

On the other hand, because of the lack of education in this industry, these workers are more in need of training than workers in other industries. The secondary industry shows some of the same problems, with workers skilled in manufacturing processes but not much else.

In the tertiary industry and specifically in financial organizations, employees with good qualifications and specialized skills are highly in demand. The organizations in this industry are usually willing to assist workers to get skills that will help the organizations in their functions and the work environment is made to assist workers with learning. Educational organizations are probably the best types of organizations for this, with staff members allowed to study towards degrees and the organizations paying for such studies in a lot of cases.

These broad categories of organizations will have different approaches to learning programmes. Government organizations are subject to more stringent regulations and rules and because the South African government has given a lot of attention to skills development, workers at government departments will be more able to access learning programmes. One of the requirements will probably be that the learning programmes must be relevant to the work that a person is doing.

In addition to the influence that the overall industry has on learning within an organisation, it will also be important to look at whether an organisation is classified as a large, medium, small or micro enterprise. Large organizations often have specific budgets for training and encourage workers to go for specific learning programmes. On the other hand, small and micro-organisations might need their staff to be able to do more than one task or job and could therefore be more willing to provide training for these workers.

The type of industry and size of organizations is also relevant to the resources that will be available to help workers learn. In the tertiary industry and in larger organizations, employees will be far more able to have access to computers and other technology, which can be important in what and how much they manage to learn. Large and medium organizations are also more likely to have enough staff so that people can attend courses, or to help each other in learning new tasks.

Larger organizations and governmental departments usually are better at planning for training programmes and having specific strategies for this. These strategies will normally include ways of making sure that people who are not English first language speakers also have access to good training programmes.

It is, however, true that learning can be done in any environment. If an organisation does not really assist a worker in learning, the learner can still improve personal knowledge by accessing materials in his or her free time or can learn how to perform tasks by watching senior staff members. The choice to learn rests on each separate individual, no matter what the circumstances are.

Conclusion

This learning unit provided information on ways to make learning easier. The use of specific techniques is emphasized, but it is also important that each learner find the approach and technique that suits her or him. What is also stressed is that new knowledge should be applicable to the workplace environment of each worker and should make it possible for the worker to perform her or his duties better.

Information was also provided on how to do basic research, as this is often required as part of learning programmes. In addition, the specific workplace in which a learner is employed affects how the learner will learn and specific organizations will have different approaches to encouraging workers to learn.

LEARNING UNIT 5

ENGAGE IN SUSTAINED ORAL / SIGNED COMMUNICATION AND EVALUATE SPOKEN / SIGNED TEXTS

US: 119462– NQF 4 – 5 Credits

Learners at this level are aware of their audiences and purposes for communication. They listen effectively and critically. They can identify or adopt the style and language register required in different situations. They can usually identify the assumptions and inferences in what people say/sign. They speak/sign fluently and confidently in both formal and familiar settings and can articulate their purpose and meaning clearly. They can use language to convey detailed information, and to express their ideas and feelings. They control complex sentence structures and language conventions in their spoken/signed communications.

Learners credited with this Unit Standard can:

- Respond critically yet sensitively as a listener/audience
- Analyse own responses to spoken/signed texts and adjust as required
- Use strategies to be an effective speaker/signer in sustained oral/signed interactions
- Evaluate spoken/signed discourse

Learning assumed to be in place:

The credit calculation assumes that learners are already competent in terms of the full spectrum of language knowledge and communication skills laid down in the Revised National Curriculum Statements and unit standards up to NQF level 2.

LEARNING UNIT 5

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 1

RESPOND CRITICALLY YET SENSITIVELY AS A LISTENER / AUDIENCE

US: 119462

Learning outcomes:

1. Responses show a clearly developed understanding of complex issues under discussion in one-on-one or group situations. Own understanding is clarified and further developed during discussions, and opportunity is provided during interactions for the clarification of one another's understanding.
2. Discussions and/or conflicts are managed sensitively and in a manner that supports the goal of the group or one-on-one interaction.
3. Characteristics of a speaker's/signer's style and tone/register that attract or alienate an audience are identified with reference to the effect of each feature in creating audience response.
4. The underlying assumptions, points of view and subtexts in spoken/signed texts are identified and challenged when appropriate to clarify understanding, remove bias and/or sustain interaction.

Responses show a clearly developed understanding of complex issues under discussion in one-on-one or group situations. Own understanding is clarified and further developed during discussions, and opportunity is provided during interactions for the clarification of one another's understanding.

Effective responses for healthy communication are those perceived as being empathetic, caring, warm and thoughtful. The eight responses listed are in the order of most effective to least effective. Remember, however, that each of these responses could be effective depending on the context in which it was used.

1. Understanding

An understanding response is most likely to create a climate were honest and frank communication can occur. It is a feeling-oriented response that conveys sensitivity and understanding. Strong negative feelings can become a barrier to communication; this response can diminish those feelings. Understanding is empathy or accurately tuning in to what the other person is feeling at the time. It implies listening beyond the words and reflecting the feelings.

By focussing on others' feelings, you recognise them as individuals, persons worthy of your concern. This type of response can reduce hostile feelings in normal persons. It can also be used with persons when they are over-emotional, crying, or fearful, to get beyond those feelings or reactions. Understanding or empathy can repair a damaged relationship.

2. Clarification

The clarification response indicates your intent to comprehend what the other is saying or to identify the most significant feelings that are emerging. It indicates that what others are saying is important, and you are checking it out to ensure your perceptions. This can be done in several ways: echoing the last few words spoken, summarising the points that seem most relevant or paraphrasing. A response of this nature can be followed profitably by a period of silence. This gives the others a chance to draw thoughts together or to correct your impression. Clarification responses reinforce your desire to see from the other's point of view.

This response is useful in reducing hostility. It not only encourages the others to explain more fully but also serves to focus the discussion, especially when followed by silence on your part. It gives the others a chance to draw their thoughts together and to take responsibility for coming up with their own ideas. Another use for clarification responses is to stall for time to think of a more appropriate response.

3. Self-disclosure

Self-disclosure shows your attempts to give others insight into who you are. It is sharing something about yourself that relates directly to the conversation: your personal beliefs, attitudes, values, or an event from your past. Self-disclosure can reduce anxiety by reassuring others that they are not alone in their feelings or fears.

Self-disclosure is useful in connecting with another person who has similar problems or life concerns. In peer support groups, this lets newcomers know that they have come to the right place, that there are people here who have experienced similar problems. Overuse of this response is not helpful because it focuses attention on the wrong person. It can be viewed as an attention-getting device. Use sparingly for the best effect.

4. Questioning

Like it sounds, the question response seeks to elicit information. It allows others to develop a point. Open questions focus on the others' general situation, thoughts, reactions, and feelings. They tend to promote communication. Closed questions focus on specific facts or aspects of the other's situation, generally evoking “yes” or “no” answers.

Open questions are recommended for exploring a broad topic. Closed questions can be interspersed to get to specific facts or can be used to cut off long, irrelevant explanations. In either case, listening to the answer, both what is said and what is left unsaid, is vital to the questioning process. Caution is needed with questions beginning with “why.” They pressure the other for an explanation and can cause resentment. “Why” questions can seem to express disapproval, being perceived as a cut-down or criticism.

5. Information

Giving Information giving involves relating facts in an objective manner without judgment or evaluation. It leaves the other person free to accept or reject the facts. It allows the other to take responsibility for using the information. This response is useful in giving both positive and negative feedback (confrontation). The others relate only to what has occurred and the effect that this has had. Words such as “always,” “never,” “should,” “ought” to be only used in setting limits. (The facts about what must or must not be done, time frames and limitations.)

6. Reassurance

Reassurance responses reduce anxiety, diffuse intense feelings, and express confidence. They provide a pat on the back but imply that certain feelings or thoughts should be dismissed as being ``normal'' or ``common.'' This response does not foster a relationship because it tends to discount people's problems. Cliches fall into this category. Reassurance is often used by people who come upon a situation that is out of their realm of experience; they don't know what to do or say, and they may be embarrassed.

This response could be reworded into an understanding, clarifying or information giving response and be more effective. Used as an expression of sympathy in conjunction with other responses can be helpful. For example, instead of "You will manage," substitute "You have handled this situation before. Relax and use your best judgment. Do what you feel is right for you" (information giving) and "I have confidence in you" (reassurance).

7. Analytical

The intent of the analytical response is to analyse, explain or interpret the other person's behaviour and feelings. It goes beyond whatever the other has said to explain or connect ideas and events. Unlike clarification, this response adds something from your own thoughts, feelings, and values. It implies that you are wise; you know more than the other person. Under most circumstances, the analytical response leads to resentment in others.

The analytical response is more appropriate for therapists where there is an ongoing counselling relationship and where the patient needs to become aware of certain behaviour or reaction patterns. Even then, it sometimes works better to use an information giving response. Interpretation is a poor response to use in confronting a person with behaviour of which you disapprove.

8. Advice giving

Advice giving is usually unproductive. It implies that you can know the reasons for the other person's problems and what she ought, must or should do about them. You are, thus, judging the goodness, appropriateness, effectiveness, or correctness of the other's actions. Others are being measured by your personal value system and are found somehow lacking. This is a process of blaming others for their own problems.

Telling people what to do takes away their responsibility for decisions and problem-solving. Advice often arouses resistance and resentment, even when there is outward compliance. Giving advice, even when requested can, foster dependency. Reword advice into information giving a response or a question.

9. How can Empathy be Conveyed?

Responding in a healthy manner means conveying understanding, referred to as empathy. One effective technique used to convey empathy is reflection, which acts as a mirror to provide feedback. It conveys understanding to both the emotional content of what is said and the environmental components (events having an impact on the emotions expressed).

Being in tune with others provides valuable feedback, which is useful in improving the effectiveness of your communication. When others see that what they say and feel is important enough to be listened to, a warm, respectful kindred feeling evolves. This affinity contributes to unity in the relationship and increases task abilities and motivation. Also, since you become more sensitive to others' needs, you can respond accordingly. Reflection of empathy means responding with intense interest using different words to convey the original meaning.

Tips for responding to others to create a supportive relationship:

Respond in a way that focuses attention on the issues and concerns. Clarify inconsistencies and gather facts quickly and unobtrusively.

- Let the other person know that you are listening and following what is being said. Give an occasional ``Yes, I see,'' or ``Uh-huh.''
- Probe with open-ended statements to gain more information. Use ``Tell me more about ...'', ``Let's talk about that,'' or ``I'm wondering about ...'' Responding in this manner is usually more effective than using specific who, what, when, where, and why questions.
- Ask for clarification. For example, ``I'm having trouble understanding what you're saying. Is it that ...?'' or ``Could you go over that again, please?''
- Use understandable words. Listen to the vocabulary of the other person to get a clue to their level of understanding.
- Try not to preach, blame or be demanding.
- Try to avoid straying from the topic.
- Show understanding and sincerity in your responses, so the other person will feel comfortable discussing additional information.
- Try not to talk excessively about yourself. Keep self-disclosure to a minimum.
- Give responses appropriate for the age, sex, and emotional state of the other person.
- Avoid responses that put you on the defensive. ``I'm sorry, I really didn't mean that,'' is a bad approach.
- Be comfortable with silence. Don't feel that silence needs to be filled with talk. Don't do all the talking.
- If you become tangential (straying from the topic), try to refocus the discussion.
- Use responsive body language by making eye contact and leaning forward

10. <u>Discussions and/or conflicts are managed sensitively and in a manner that supports the goal of the group or one-on-one interaction.</u>

Part of the task of any group leader is to solve problems. And when it comes to managing personality conflicts amongst group members, it may seem like you're more a referee than a manager.

Conflicts within groups occur for several reasons. They could come from personality clashes, poor communication and misunderstandings, or anger for legitimate reasons, such as a member not doing his or her work or taking credit for things, he or she didn't do.

Regardless of the cause of the conflict, if you are dealing with some level of group conflict, it is important that you resolve it for several reasons. Conflicts or problems that are left unchecked can result in unproductivity in groups

When working to solve interoffice conflicts, there are several ways you can address the conflict, including:

1. Collaboration: With this solution, those who are against each other work together to come up with a solution that benefits both parties.
2. Compromise: With a compromise, the individuals both give a little to reach an agreement that both are satisfied with.

Other ways to address conflict include avoiding or ignoring the situation completely, which can lead to a blow-up and increased frustration, or competing to get what you want. These are not constructive ways to handle conflict within the office and could compromise your work performance and maybe even your job.

The following are some tips for resolving group conflict:

1. Approach the individual in person, privately. Don't confront someone where everyone can hear or when there are other people present. In addition, don't take the easy way out and send an e-mail or leave a note. This looks cowardly and is unproductive as well.
2. State the cause of the problem. This is important to make sure everyone is on the same page because one person may think the problem lies elsewhere or could be upset about something completely different. Make sure the person knows why it is a problem. Chances are, the person doesn't even know they have done anything, or they don't know how it affects you.
3. Focus on the issue at hand. If your discussion gets heated, avoid bringing up past issues or those that don't have anything to do with the problem. Stick to the problem at hand.
4. Be aware of your wording. Be careful not to make such statements as "You always" and other "you" statements that sound like personal attacks. Instead, try to make statements that reflect your feelings and how you are affected.
5. Be friendly. Often, a person will not even know there is a problem and will gladly stop what they are doing if you approach them professionally and in a non-confrontational manner. For example, if you say, "I'm having trouble concentrating with your music, would you mind turning it down?" sounds much better than, "Your music is always so loud, and it's giving me a headache."

Personality conflicts are inevitable in most office environments. Bringing different personalities, tastes, and opinions together is bound to result in some type of clash sooner or later. However, by being professional and understanding, you can resolve inter office conflicts by practising some of the above tips and suggestions.

11. <u>Characteristics of a speaker's/signer's style and tone/register that attract or alienate an audience are identified with reference to the effect of each feature in creating audience response.</u>

When making an oral presentation, it is important to always maintain the audience's interest. One's presentation style and tone should be able to achieve this. It is important to:

1. Speak clearly. Don't shout or whisper - judge the acoustics of the room.
2. Don't rush or talk deliberately slowly. Be natural - although not conversational.
3. Deliberately pause at key points - this has the effect of emphasising the importance of
1. a particular point you are making.
4. Avoid jokes - always disastrous unless you are a natural expert.

To make the presentation interesting, change your delivery, but not too obviously, e.g.:

- speed
- pitch of voice

12. <u>The underlying assumptions, points of view and subtexts in spoken/signed texts are identified and challenged when appropriate to clarify understanding, remove bias and/or sustain interaction.</u>

When one is listening to spoken text, one must deal with a variety of situations, types of input, and listening purposes. This helps to clarify understanding and remove bias

<u>Critical listening strategies</u>

These are techniques or activities that contribute directly to the comprehension and recall of listening input. Listening strategies can be classified by how the listener processes the input.

Top-down strategies are listener based; the listener taps into background knowledge of the topic, the situation or context, the type of text, and the language. This background knowledge activates a set of expectations that help the listener to interpret what is heard and anticipate what will come next. Top-down strategies include:

- listening for the main idea
- predicting
- drawing inferences
- summarising

Bottom-up strategies are text-based; the listener relies on the language in the message, that is, the combination of sounds, words, and grammar that creates meaning. Bottom-up strategies include:

- listening for specific details
- recognising cognates
- recognising word-order patterns

Strategic listeners also use met-cognitive strategies to plan, monitor, and evaluate their listening.

- They plan by deciding which listening strategies will serve best in a particular situation.
- They monitor their comprehension and the effectiveness of the selected strategies.
- They evaluate by determining whether they have achieved their listening comprehension goals and whether the combination of listening strategies selected was an effective one.

Listening for meaning

To extract meaning from a listening text, students need to follow four basic steps:

- Figure out the purpose for listening. Activate background knowledge of the topic to predict or anticipate content and identify appropriate listening strategies.
- Attend to the parts of the listening input that are relevant to the identified purpose and ignore the rest. This selectivity enables students to focus on specific items in the input
- and reduces the amount of information they have to hold in short-term memory to recognise it.
- Select top-down and bottom-up strategies that are appropriate to the listening task and use them flexibly and interactively. Students' comprehension improves, and their confidence increases when they use top-down and bottom-up strategies simultaneously to construct meaning.
- Check comprehension while listening and when the listening task is over. Monitoring comprehension helps students detect inconsistencies and comprehension failures, directing them to use alternate strategies.

LEARNING UNIT 5

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 2

ANALYSE OWN RESPONSES TO SPOKEN / SIGNED TEXTS AND ADJUST AS REQUIRED

US: 119462

Learning outcomes:

1. Own responses to spoken/signed texts are analysed in relation to audience, purpose and context. Inappropriate responses are identified and adjusted accordingly.
2. When confronted by opposing views, own position is put forward with confidence in a manner appropriate to the interaction.
3. Tone/register, approach or style is appropriate to context and is adapted to maintain oral/signed interaction when it breaks down or is difficult to initiate or maintain. Pedantic, illogical, or aggressive language is identified and modified to sustain interaction.

1. Own responses to spoken/signed texts are analysed in relation to audience, purpose, and context. Inappropriate responses are identified and adjusted accordingly.

When responding to spoken texts, it is helpful to consider three types of response. However, when responding, it is likely that one will combine elements of more than one response type or even using elements of all three techniques. Even so, it is beneficial in the beginning to have writers separate the techniques and learn the fundamentals of each one.

Any type or combination of responses should be supported by details, examples, facts, and evidence. This support can take the form of personal experience, evidence from the primary text, or evidence from other texts. Also, the response should focus on making a single, overall main point.

Agree/disagree response

This form of response is not merely the listener's opinion. In crafting this response, one might find that he/she disagrees with some of the speaker's points but agree with others. In that case, their response will be a combination of agreeing and disagreeing. Whether they agree or disagree, or some combination of both, the writer must support their response with details, examples, facts, and evidence. Again, this support can take the form of personal experience, evidence from the primary text, or evidence from other texts.

Interpretive/reflective response

In this type of response, one focuses on a key idea from the spoken text, explaining and/or exploring it further. They also might reflect on their own experiences, attitudes, or observations in relation to the ideas of the text. The listener might use their response to consider how the speaker's ideas might be interpreted by other listeners, how the ideas might be applied, or how they might be misunderstood

Analytic response

This sort of response analyses key elements of the text, such as the purpose, the audience, the thesis and main ideas, the argument, the organisation and focus, the evidence, and the style. For example, how clear is the main idea? What sort of evidence is used to support the speaker's thesis, and is it effective? Is the argument organised and logical? How are elements such as the speaker's style, tone, and voice working? This type of response looks at the essay in terms of the effectiveness of specific elements, whether they are working or not. Part of the listener's response might include suggestions for how the speaker could have made the spoken text more effective.

2. When confronted by opposing views, own position is put forward with confidence in a manner appropriate to the interaction.

In any discussion, there are many different facets of communication. Depending upon the nature of the discussion, there may be physical aspects and, more importantly, mental connections. Communication is one of the most important parts of any group discussion. Alas, with communication comes opposing vies/disagreement. Although some people feel as though disagreements are all bad, a good argument can help each other see different points of view. Unfortunately, most people don't know how to argue properly and turn it into a spiteful and hateful episode. If your group discussions are to be healthy ones, you need to be a good arguer so that your viewpoints are put forward and accepted by fellow members. Here are some tips to help you become just that.

Soft & steady

When debating, you should never raise your voice. You should always remain calm. The louder you talk, the louder your opponent talks – and the result is a yelling match. And of course, it goes without saying that you should not resort to violence. You can even try to talk quieter than normal – as this can draw people into you, and it can make you appear wise.

An argument is not won by the person with the loudest voice; it is won by the person with the most compelling arguments.

Get your opponent on your side

It is a good idea to try to get your opponent on your side by making statements that you know he agrees with – this puts you in a strong position in the debate. You don't even need to use a fact relating to your debate – you could, for example, in a debate about the existence of God, state, "I am sure you agree with me when I say that petrol is overpriced". As soon as your opponent agrees, you have won a psychological battle. You are no longer the opponent – you are a comrade. This technique is so effective it is used by telemarketers all the time.

Don't attack

It is not a good idea to blatantly tell your opponent that he is wrong – instead, you should show that he is wrong through good counterarguments. Telling a person, they are wrong merely annoys them and does nothing for your argument as (at least until you can prove it), it is a subjective comment. Be humble in the debate and show goodwill – not only will it make you look good if you win, but it will also show that you are a worthy opponent even if you lose.

"Don't Play Dirty."

Never resort to name-calling – even if your opponent does. You must attack your opponent's argument – not their person. As soon as you begin to criticize your opponent, it becomes obvious that you have run out of ways to defend your view. These types of insults (ad hominem) are a sure way to lose a debate. You should be pleased if your opponent resorts to this feeble attempt to escape the real debate as it means you are close to victory.

Define the fundamentals

When arguing, both parties need to agree on fundamental "truths" to begin with – if you don't, there can be no debate. What is the point of arguing that the Bible was written by God when your opponent doesn't even believe in God? First, you should debate the existence of God. If you both agree that He exists, you can then debate the smaller points.

If your opponent convinces you that God cannot exist, there is little point in arguing about the authorship of the Bible.

Stick to the subject

When a person is beginning to lose an argument, it is quite common to see them try to divert the topic at hand to another – thereby hoping you will not notice their weakness and will get entangled in a whole new debate. When this happens, don't fall for it. Return to the original topic immediately. Do not give any time to other topics (no matter how tempting it may be) until you have completed the first.

Ask questions

This is the "Socratic method". When your opponent states a "fact" – probe deeper into the fact with questions that are designed to expose its flaws – these are usually "tell me more" type questions: "can you give me an example?", "Another way of looking at this is …, does this seem reasonable?". These questions will invariably lead your opponent to the truth – and if they are honest, they will concede. Unfortunately, this is not always the case – I have seen frustrated people depart the debate in anger because they believe you are "trying to trick" them. But don't worry – this is a win if it happens.

Be silent

After making a strong argument, let your opponent do all the talking – especially if he lacks the facts to oppose you. He will bluster and fumble – giving you a variety of new weapons with which to attack him. This may not lead to him conceding defeat – but it may lead to him walking away from the debate – a clear victory for you. Many an argument has been won by not arguing at all! As an aside, this is an excellent method for getting your own way – make your request, and when it is declined, remain silent. This usually makes the other person so nervous (as no one likes silence) that they may give in just to get out of an uncomfortable situation.

Know your facts

Do not state that something is "true" unless you absolutely know it is – be prepared to prove it if necessary. It is incredibly annoying to debate a topic with a person who is simply making up their argument on the fly. You wouldn't like it if people did it to you – so don't do it to others.

Only engage in a debate that you know you can win based on facts.

Know When you are beat

If you have all the facts to back you up, you should be able to win your argument if your opponent is honest. But there will always be times when your opponent gets the better of you, and they corner you. When this happens, be a gentleman and concede the win. You should always be graceful in defeat. Nothing is worse than a person who argues simply for the sake of it and absolutely will not give in – no matter how obvious their loss.

3. Tone/register, approach or style is appropriate to context and is adapted to maintain oral/signed interaction when it breaks down or is difficult to initiate or maintain. Pedantic, illogical, or aggressive language is identified and modified to sustain interaction.

Our voice is a tool and used effectively; it is one of the most powerful in our toolbox. Just as important as what we say, however, is how we say it – the tone of our voice is part of that.

Intonation

Intonation is the way that the sender's pitch of voice rises and falls when speaking. For example, it shows the interpreter whether the speaker expresses his or her message in the form of a question or statement. In the first case, the voice rises at the end of the phrase or the sentence and in the second case, it falls. At the same time, intonation indicates the end of an entity of information, which – in written communication – is shown by means of a comma, semicolon, point, exclamation mark or question mark. Another function of intonation is to lay emphasis on a particular word or idea, a detail that the interpreter must not fail to be aware of.

Tone of voice

The tone of voice is a means by which the speaker implies his or her attitude to the message. It is also a means by which he seeks a reaction from the hearer. In a political debate, for instance, the tone of voice is likely to be rousing, whereas, on television, the daily news is communicated in a more factual tone. Other examples of tone of voice are aggressive, critical, nervous, disappointed, monotonous, friendly, enthusiastic, vivid, persuasive, etc.

LEARNING UNIT 5

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 3

USE STRATEGIES TO BE AN EFFECTIVE SPEAKER / SIGNED IN SUSTAINED ORAL / SIGNED INTERACTIONS

US: 119462

Learning outcomes:

1. Planning of content and presentation techniques is evident in formal communications.
2. The impact of non-verbal cues/body language and signals on audiences is analysed and used appropriately.

1. The influence of rhetorical devices is analysed and used for effect on an audience.

1. Planning of content and presentation techniques is evident in formal communications.

Formal communications can take place in a range of settings: the small group classroom, the workplace, as a section of a large lecture, in a one-to-one tutorial, in a team meeting. Presentations take different forms, from read-out mini-lecture to an improvised explanation or elaboration of a series of key points, to a question-and-answer session, to an audience-activity workshop, or a blend of all of these. The format may be flexible or fixed whenever you need to deliver a presentation; however, there are several basic facets that you will need to make sure you consider.

- When planning the presentation's content, consider your audience.
- Are there different expectations (for example, are there lay, people, technical experts)?
- What will members of the audience want, need, or expect to learn from you?
- Think about how to make the most effective use of the time you have available, planning your work so that it runs to Schedule, and having a strategy to monitor your progress as you talk.
- Work on your delivery and ways of engaging your audience. What ways of providing and responding to information are appropriate in your context?

There is a lot to learn about presenting well; it is certainly a skill that demands practice and reflection. But the resources found via the sign will help you to develop it.

2. The impact of non-verbal cues/body language and signals on audiences is analysed and used appropriately.

Facial expression

Facial expressions are responsible for a huge proportion of nonverbal communication. Consider how much information can be conveyed with a smile or a frown. While nonverbal communication and behaviour can vary dramatically between cultures, the facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, and fear are similar throughout the world.

Gestures

Deliberate movements and signals are an important way to communicate meaning without words. Common gestures include waving, pointing, and using fingers to indicate number amounts. Other gestures are arbitrary and related to culture

Paralinguistic

Paralinguistics refers to vocal communication that is separate from actual language. This includes factors such as tone of voice, loudness, inflection, and pitch. Consider the powerful effect that tone of voice can have on the meaning of a sentence. When said in a strong tone of voice, listeners might interpret approval and enthusiasm. The same words said in a hesitant tone of voice might convey disapproval and a lack of interest.

Body language and posture

Posture and movement can also convey a great deal of information. Research on body language has grown significantly since the 1970s, but popular media have focused on the overinterpretation of defensive postures., arm-crossing, and leg-crossing. While these nonverbal behaviours can indicate feelings and attitudes, research suggests that body language is far more subtle and less definitive than previously believed.

Proxemics

People often refer to their need for "personal space," which is also an important type of nonverbal communication. The amount of distance we need and the amount of space we perceive as belonging to us is influenced by several factors, including social norms, situational factors, personality characteristics, and level of familiarity. For example, the amount of personal space needed when having a casual conversation with another person usually varies between 18 inches to four feet. On the other hand, the personal distance needed when speaking to a crowd of people is around 10 to 12 feet.

Eye gaze

Looking, staring, and blinking can also be important nonverbal behaviours. When people encounter people or things that they like, the rate of blinking increases and pupils dilate. Looking at another person can indicate a range of emotions, including hostility, interest, and attraction

Haptics

Communicating through touch is another important nonverbal behaviour. There has been a substantial amount of research on the importance of touch in infancy and early childhood. Harry Harlow's classic monkey study demonstrated how the deprivation of touch and contact impedes development. Baby monkeys raised by wire mothers experienced permanent deficits in behaviour and social interaction

Appearance

Our choice of colour, clothing, hairstyles, and other factors affecting appearance are also considered a means of nonverbal communication. Research on colour psychology has demonstrated that different colours can invoke different moods. Appearance can also alter physiological reactions, judgment, and interpretations

3. <u>The influence of rhetorical devices is analysed and used for effect on an audience.</u>

Rhetorical devices are an effective way of conveying ideas to the audience. In both speech and writing, rhetorical devices can be used to generate interest in an audience, highlight certain ideas, improve the flow of words, or otherwise direct attention to a specific idea. Commonly used rhetorical devices include alliteration, allusion, parallelism, simile, metaphor, and personification.

Rhetorical Device	Meaning
Allusion	A reference, sometimes indirect, to a person, place, theory etc., of which the reader is assumed to have some knowledge. e.g., a Biblical allusion with which the reader is assumed to be familiar.
Analogy	A parallel case with one or more points of resemblance. This is often used by writers to help the reader to understand a complex or abstract point.
Emotive language	Language deliberately designed to arouse emotions. (Often to be found in tabloid newspapers) e.g., murderers described as "beasts" or people who might have unusual views on something being described as "raving lunatics", etc.
Metaphor	A comparison but this time, one thing becomes another in every sense, except the literal. There is no "like" or "as" acting as links: e.g., The man was a mountain. The wind was a knife, cutting through outer garments to attack the defenceless body.
Rhetorical Question	This is a literary device used to indicate a question to which no answer is expected: the answer is implied in the question. e.g., Is there such a thing as evil in the human child?
Simile	A literary device whereby two things or actions are compared to each other, linked by the words "as" or "like". e.g., The litter drifted around the playground like tattered butterflies lost in flight.
Tone	This is the emotional feel of the passage, the unspoken voice of the writer. e.g., amused, mocking, angry, indignant, sympathetic, approving, cynical, scathing, indifferent. (N.B. a tone can also be neutral, as in an informative passage where the writer is not conveying any point of view).

Slang	A more extreme form of colloquialism of a racy, offensive, or abusive nature. e.g., Referring to the police as "pigs".
Register	This is a technical term for words, phrases or sentence structures that are associated with a particular group of writers or professionals. e.g., legal, medical, pop musical, computer magazine, specialised instruction manuals etc. These will all use a particular type of specialised language or jargon which is peculiar to their genre.

LEARNING UNIT 5

SPECIFIC OUTCOME 4

EVALUATE SPOKEN / SIGNED DISCOURSE

US: 119462

Learning outcomes:

2. Points of view in spoken/signed texts are identified and meaning described in relation to context and purpose of the interaction.
3. Values, attitudes, and assumptions in discourse are identified, and their influence on the interaction described.
4. Techniques used by speakers/signers to evade or dissipate responsibility for an issue are identified, and interpretations of the text reflect this insight.
5. The impact (e.g., clarity of purpose, speaker's/signer's capability) is described, explained, and judged.

1. <u>Points of view in spoken/signed texts are identified and meaning described in relation to context and purpose of the interaction.</u>

Point of view (POV) is the unique perspective given by the narrator in a piece of fiction or nonfiction. The listener senses the world of the spoken text, hears characters, and perceives the behaviours of characters and the action through the narrator's point of view. The POV directly influences how the listener experiences the message. One can best identify and best understand POV by doing the following:

Understand first-person

First person is told from the "I" perspective. This POV places the audience in the speaker's head and with the speaker's voice. A first-person narrative does not have to be from the protagonist's POV. The audience will not know other characters' true thoughts and feelings unless other characters express them in dialog, or their behaviour gives them away. However, the first-person speakers can misperceive or not completely understand the actions of other characters. The speaker will also have certain biases and values that will colour how she sees the world and those around her. This makes all first-person speakers somewhat unreliable; an unreliable speaker is not credible, and the audience must judge what is and isn't true

Understand third person limited

This point of view uses the pronoun "he" or "she," based upon the focus character. Third person limited is like first person, but it is not as intimate. While the audience is in the first-person narrator's head, they are distanced somewhat from the third-person limited speaker. It's like the audience is looking over the speaker's shoulder or walking behind them. Like first person, third person limited gives the audience the focus character's perceptions on events, thoughts and feelings. This point of view can also provide a somewhat unreliable narrator. It is possible to tell a story from multiple third-person limited POVs. The story can shift from character to character to reveal what is going on in the story and how the characters are responding to events.

Understand third-person objective

Third-person objective is like third person limited, but it does not give the audience any of the characters' internal thoughts.

Understand third-person omniscient

This point of view uses a "godlike" speaker. The speaker is aware of all characters' thoughts and feelings and action in the story. The omniscient speaker may follow one character around and give the perspectives of characters he encounters, or it may follow several characters. Third-person omniscient is not as popular as it used to be.

Understand second person

Seen as more experimental, second person uses the pronoun "you" and has the effect of placing the reader in the story. The "Choose Your Own Adventure" series, "Bright Lights, Big City" and "If upon a winter's night a traveller" all use second person. Some audience see second-person narration as gimmicky. But if you're a speaker thinking about using this POV, consider why it is the most appropriate point of view for the story.

2. Values, attitudes and assumptions in discourse are identified and their influence on the interaction described

Values

These make up our belief system. Values are beliefs that guide our behaviour. However, they are socially constructed and devised to allow society to operate with the least amount of conflict. VALUES define what we accept as good, right or acceptable. We may have our own personally thought-out and constructed values but many of the values we accept are socially or culturally constructed. Authors can shape reader's values and so can speakers. These groups can change audience's perception of values.

Society develops a value system or a set of values and conveys these to us through publications for examples.

Attitudes

Attitudes are how values are manifested in our actions and thoughts to others. ATTITUDES are our feelings towards certain idea or issues. Attitudes dictate how we react in concrete situations. Authors reveal certain attitudes within their texts whether these texts be fiction or non-fiction, print or non-print. As readers or viewers, we need to be aware that texts position us to accept certain attitudes so that we can either accept or reject these attitudes.

Remember to distinguish between:

- the reader's attitudes and values.
- the author's attitudes and values.
- or the attitudes and values revealed within the text (which may be different to the author's values and attitudes in satire for example).

3. Techniques used by speakers/signers to evade or dissipate responsibility for an issue are identified and interpretations of the text reflect this insight

Speakers and writers sometimes are faced with writing or speaking on controversial issues that will course public outcry. Speakers and writers tend to use fictional characters and satire when dealing with such subjects. Good authors will bring out and tackle the issue using evading tactics so that they are not pinpointed as custodians of the thought. They aim to evade responsibility.

4. <u>The impact (e.g. clarity of purpose, speaker's/signer's capability) is described, explained and judged</u>

A common obstacle that many people who speak face is being able to speak clearly. This is more of an issue for those who speak infrequently as opposed to those who speak regularly – those in the former category are often unaware of the issue.

You can have a well written speech, practice it until you know it cold and then deliver it with confidence. But if your audience can't understand what you're saying, it'll have minimal impact. You've probably seen speakers like this. So, what are some of the things that can interfere with the clarity of your speech and what can you do about it? Let's start with some of the reasons an audience doesn't understand your talk:

- You're speaking too softly or too fast.
- You're using language that the audience doesn't understand.
- You have a thick or heavy accent.
- English is not your first language.
- Your grammar usage or pronunciation is unusual.
- Your ideas are presented in a confusing or hard to follow manner.

There are many other reasons, but these are the most common. Again, many of us are unaware of these issues so I highly recommend recording one of your presentations so you can get a more realistic view of your presentation abilities. A video recording is best because you can also evaluate the visual aspects of your presentation style, but audio is adequate for improving your speech clarity. If you have friends that will provide you with honest feedback, you can ask them about your clarity when you speak. Another great option is a Toastmasters club – just make sure you don't choose a club that only gives softball evaluations.

Once you know what the issued you need to work on are, you can start addressing them. So, here are some ways that you can improve your clarity.

Watch your voice

Do you speak too fast or too slow? Are you speaking loud enough or into the microphone so people can hear you? Often, people tend to speak faster when presenting to a group – this is often caused by nervous energy. If you catch yourself speaking too fast, practice slowing down. A recorder (again, audio is all you need) can help you see if you're improving. If you're one of those rare breeds that speaks too slow, practice your talk at varying speeds to see if there's any improvement. Regardless of your pace, make sure that you sound natural.

Speaking too softly is a common problem as is not speaking directly into the microphone. There's nothing wrong with asking people in the back of the room if they can hear you – in fact, I recommend this. It allows you to adjust your volume at the beginning. However, many speakers tend to dip their volume in the middle of their talks, so periodically checking with your audience can help you (just don't ask them every few minutes if they can hear you).

Watch your language

Are you using words, terms or acronyms that the audience is not familiar with? Are you mispronouncing words? One of the biggest mistakes that people make in all forms of communication is to use language that others many do not understand. Some people do it to show off their powerful vocabulary while others are completely oblivious of the issue.

Try to use words that are appropriate for your audience. A college educated audience can tolerate your verbal artistry more so than an audience made up of folks who barely graduated from high school. Likewise, if your audience is made up of people in the same industry, then it's okay to use technical terms from that industry. Otherwise, you may want to explain acronyms, jargon and technical terms to help those members of the audience that may not be familiar with them.

Mispronunciation and word misuse are common problems that can negatively impact your speech. Some people get really hung up on them and will find you less credible if you mix up affect and effect or pronounce the word "produce" as "per-deuce." There are several audio programs out there to help you improve your vocabulary. Many of which also will help you with pronunciation and grammar.

Improve your English

In a prior article, I went into detail about how people can succeed at public speaking when English is not their primary language. In general, you want to get feedback from others who are native English speakers as to what parts of your speaking need attention. Many people have problems with certain sounds such as "b", "ch" or "k" so practicing these sounds can help. There's nothing wrong with adults using the same techniques that children use to learn to speak English.

Organize your speech:

When you jump around from idea to idea, it's difficult for people to follow you. Putting in the effort upfront when you're creating your speech will improve its overall clarity. Make sure that thoughts and ideas flow neatly and naturally. If a point, thought or fact doesn't fit in with the rest of your talk, leave it out. Many speakers make the mistake of trying to interject a funny quote or story into their speech that just doesn't fit and all it does is make the speech less comprehensive.

Take the time to create an outline and only include the things that fit with your topic in your speech. Make sure your transitions are smooth or use pauses to move from one thought to another.

So, there are several things that you can do to improve the clarity of your speech and improve your audience's retention. Figure out what you need to improve and experiment with some of these solutions. Read your audience to see whether or not they're following you. If they're not, take some of these actions to fix the situation.