

Communication Skills

Tax Reform Component
Governance Programme

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

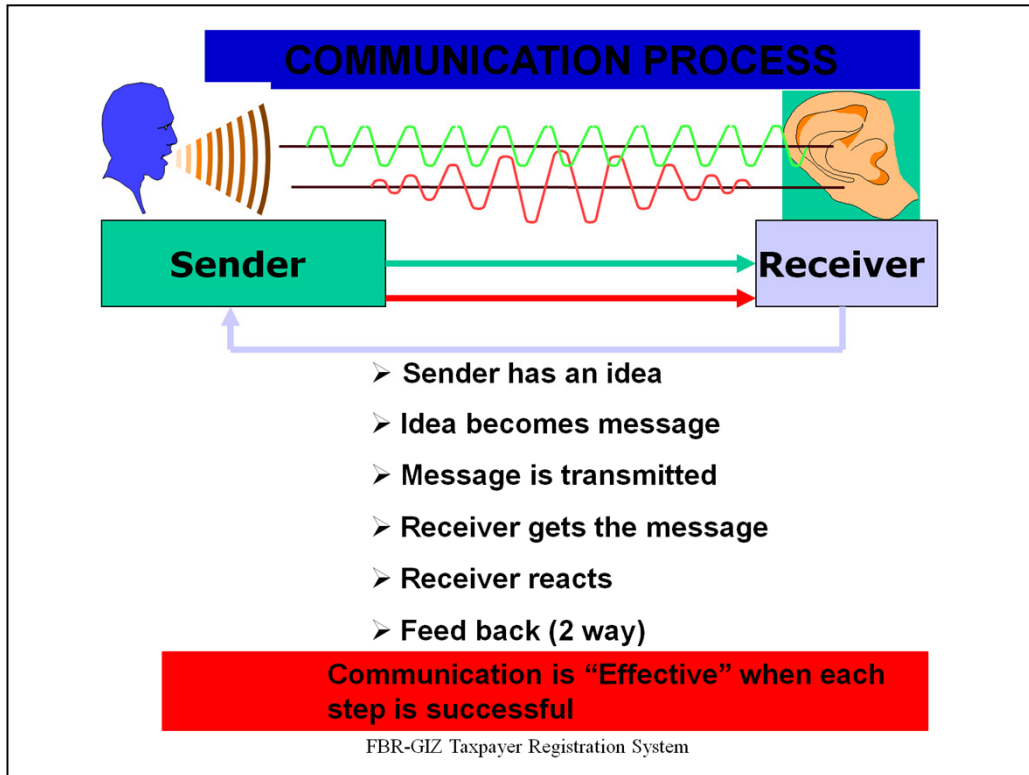
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To comprehend the basic process of communication:

1. Communication between sender and receiver is necessary for the former to achieve predetermined objectives.
2. The steps involved in converting the sender's idea(s) are logically listed.
3. To ensure the correct understanding the sender takes feedback from the receiver.
4. It is also advisable that the receiver before commencing to initiate action reconfirms by taking feedback from the sender.

Thus feedback is most essential two-way technique for effective achievement of desired results.

COMMUNICATION

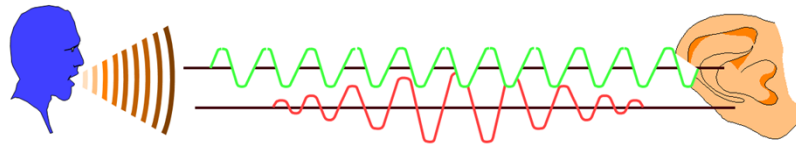
1. Thought

2. Encoding

3. Decoding

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1. Thought: Information exists in the mind of the sender. This can be a concept, idea, information, or feelings.
2. Encoding: A message is sent to a receiver in words or other symbols.
3. Decoding: The receiver translates the words or symbols into a concept or information as understood.



To create a thought words are arranged according to:

- **Content of communication**
- **Rules of grammar**
- **Sequence**

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- Sequence the content:

- Logically
- Move discussion from simple to complex ideas
- Explain and shift from concepts to practical tips/action

SENDER SKILLS

- ✓ Planning/Clarity
- ✓ Appropriate Setting
- ✓ Style
- ✓ Pacing
- ✓ Maintain Focus
- ✓ Body Language

We Speak
What
We Think

THINK
Before
YOU
SPEAK

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Tips for enhancing sender skills;

- Determine the outcomes/aim of the communication.
- Plan suitability of setting i.e. on-the-job, discussions, training, presentations etc. for best achievement of the aim.
- Select your style i.e. formal, informal, tone etc depending upon the type of audience i.e. receiver of your communication.
- Pace your communication and style in accordance to the response of your audience.
- Maintain focus on achievement of your communication objectives. Do not shift or loose sight of your focus.
- Use appropriate body language (non-verbal) for positive acceptability by the receiver. Avoid authoritarian styles or distracting mannerisms.

Tips On Mastering Successful Speech

EYE CONTACT ----- MAKE IT & KEEP IT

Except for your voice, your eyes are the most important tools used in speaking.

■ **People trust you**

■ **People care about what you say**

■ **People believe you**

(If they can see your eyes looking directly at them)

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- Maintain and shift eye glance to all participants.
- DONOT fix your gaze at one or a select number of audience.
- Interpret “body language” of your participants and pace accordingly.

Tips On Mastering Successful Speech

SPEAK LOUD ENOUGH TO BE HEARD CLEARLY

A clearly audible voice reflects:

- **Directness of Message**
- **Firm Grasp of the subject**
- **Full commitment of speaker**

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- Start and maintain your speech at a slower speed than you normally speak.
- Helps in giving confidence and avoids words mumbling or sentence mix up mistakes/confusion.
- Use simple, few words.
- Avoid long, misunderstood, biased words, jargons etc.
- Use specific “terminology” that is clearly understood by the audience.

LISTENING SKILLS

- ✓ **Preparation**
- ✓ **Interruption**
- ✓ **Meaning Of Words**
- ✓ **Maintain Focus**
- ✓ **Seek Clarifications**

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- Listening is as important as speaking. YOU have to listen first to respond accordingly.
- Listening effectively is mastered via outlined tips.
- Prepare to listen without interruption, unless very essential, and understand the correct meaning of words. Do not look for deep rooted/remote meanings of words. Stick to commonly understood meanings and maintain focus as related to achievement of objectives.
- Obtain feedback and seek clarifications, as needed, to reach conclusions.

**ACTIVE
LISTENING
SKILLS
(10-TIPS)**



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10 TIPS ON EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

1. Face the speaker.
2. Maintain eye contact.
3. Minimize external distractions.
4. Respond appropriately
5. Focus solely on what the speaker is saying

(...contd.).

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1. **Face the speaker.** Sit up straight or lean forward slightly to show your attentiveness through body language.
2. **Maintain eye contact**, to the degree that you all remain comfortable.
3. **Minimize external distractions.** Turn off the TV. Put down your book or magazine, and ask the speaker and other listeners
4. **Respond appropriately** to show that you understand. Murmur (“uh-huh” and “um-hmm”) and nod. Raise your eyebrows. Say words such as “Really,” “Interesting,” as well as more direct prompts: “What did you do then?” and “What did she say?”
5. **Focus solely on what the speaker is saying.** Try not to think about what you are going to say next. The conversation will follow a logical flow after the speaker makes her point.

10 TIPS ON EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

6. Minimise internal distractions

7. Keep an open mind

8. Avoid letting the speaker know how you handled a similar situation.

9 Even if the speaker is launching a complaint against you, wait until they finish to defend yourself.

10. Engage yourself.

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6. Minimize internal distractions. If your own thoughts keep horning in, simply let them go and continuously re-focus your attention on the speaker, much as you would during meditation.

7. Keep an open mind. Wait until the speaker is finished before deciding that you disagree. Try not to make assumptions about what the speaker is thinking.

Have you tried and tried but your best is still not good enough? Don't know what to do next?

8. Avoid letting the speaker know how you handled a similar situation. Unless they specifically ask for advice, assume they just need to talk it out.

9. Even if the speaker is launching a complaint against you, wait until they finish to defend yourself. The speaker will feel as though their point had been made. They won't feel the need to repeat it, and you'll know the whole argument before you respond. Research shows that, on average, we can hear four times faster than we can talk, so we have the ability to sort ideas as they come in...and be ready for more.

10. Engage yourself. Ask questions for clarification, but, once again, wait until the speaker has finished. That way, you won't interrupt their train of thought. After you ask questions, paraphrase their point to make sure you didn't misunderstand. Start with: "So you're saying..."

FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION...

- **Speak Effectively**
- **Be Understandable**
- **Be Positive**
- **Create & Maintain Interest**
- **Illustrate Clearly**
- **Avoid Distracting Mannerisms**

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- To be effective use simple and power words(action verbs) that are easily understood by the audience.
- Take and maintain a positive approach that will be helpful in achieving objectives. Remember your level of motivation is reflected in your voice (tonality, pace etc)
- DONOT be side tracked by casual or biased comments from the audience.
- In case of an occurrence immediately shift back to the focus of your communication.
- Explain logically/systematically using simple language coupled with proper terminology related to the topic.
- Explain one point at a time in sequence. Avoid opening up parallel discussion on a range of topics. This will result in confusion and waste of time.
- Move from one point to another only once it is understood by the audience.
- Avoid any mannerisms or any other form of distractions.
- Do not take issues personally. Practice social grace.
- NEVER put people down. Even if you disagree, use logic and reason rather than emotions to prove your view point.

THE HUMAN ELEMENT VOICE



- Volume
- Tone
- Pitch
- Pace
- Colour

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- The voice element plays a vital role in improving effectiveness of your presentation
- Simple points to keep in mind for improving quality of voice to make communication more effective and consequently achieving the desired aims/results.
- Once aware, improvements will be forthcoming overtime with conscience use and practice.
- Important point to remember is to “pace” and match these elements as per type of audience and environment.

BODY LANGUAGE

- Eye contact
- Facial expressions
- Gestures
- Posture and body orientation
- Proximity



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- The use of non-verbal or body language plays a very important role.
- “A picture is worth a thousand words”.
- People mostly believe/do what they see. Body language depicts confidence, motivation, commitment etc that substantially enhances communication /presentation skills.
- Avoid any gestures that puts people “off”. DONOT finger point or make any other gestures that could belittle/ridicule the audience.
- Simple rule is to behave as you would do with a trusted friend.
- Be graceful, warm, relaxed and use normal socially acceptable body language.
- This will also help build your rapport with audience.

PROBLEMS IN COMMUNICATIONS

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PROBLEMS IN COMMUNICATION

- **Pre-occupied mind**
- **Bias/prejudice**
- **Perception of reality**
- **Emotional reaction**
- **Lack of knowledge**
- **Inappropriate language**
- **Lack of interest**

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A list of typical issues which result in communication gap.

-The communicator can self-evaluate against these traits and manage to avoid/remove these barriers.

-In some cases like lack of knowledge, biases, perception of reality etc. help or clarifications should be sought from authenticated resources.

COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

Characteristics of the Sender

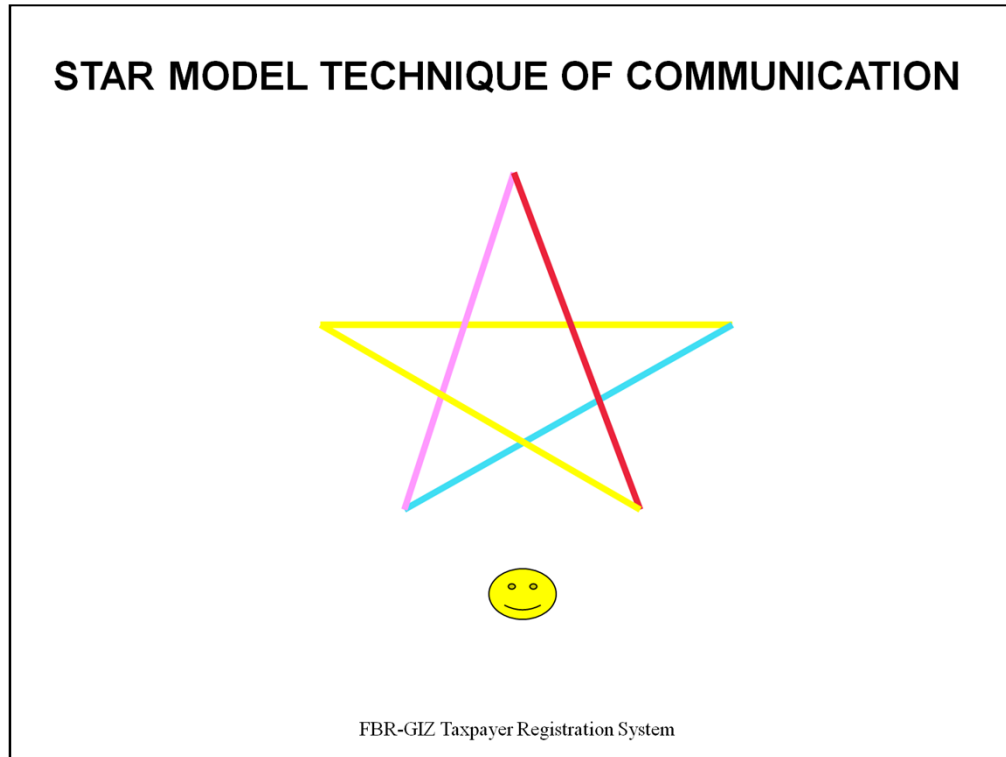
- **Conflicting or inconsistent signals**
- **Credibility about the subject**
- **Reluctance to communicate**

Characteristics of the Receiver

- **Poor listening habits**
- **Predisposition about the subject**

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- Communication barriers are on two accounts i.e. senders or receivers view point.
- Remedial measures as appropriate should be taken immediately to avoid conflict or confusion about the communication objectives.
- All tips provided in the foregoing slides on the topics should be practiced and mastered to overcome/manage these barriers.



The star model techniques shows simple steps in making communication effective.

Step 1: Determine the aim i.e. outcome of communication. Tip: Maintain focus of all communication on this aim(s).

Step 2: Determine the contents that support and will be most helpful in achieving the aim. Ideas can be brain stormed to **include** the relevant and **exclude** the irrelevant matter.

Step 3: Next sequence these ideas logically and use the best methodology i.e. use specific data, information, examples, case studies etc that will best assist in clarifying and ultimately achieving the aim(s).

Step 4.: Next determine the situation in which to present the foregoing. It could be done via presentations/discussions in class room/office or on the job. Important point to consider is best suitability for comprehension by the “target audience” that will result achieving the “aim” of step 1.

Step 5. Now take feedback to ensure that “aim(s)” have been achieved. Otherwise repeat the process till achievement of aim(s).

QUESTIONING SKILLS

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This segment is included to provide an overview on the topic and how to make the optimum use of these skills.

USE OF QUESTIONS

To:

- ✓ Revise
- ✓ Promote Participation
- ✓ Test Learning/Understanding Level
- ✓ Recall Attention
- ✓ Draw In Silent Members
- ✓ Seek Knowledge & Opinion

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- The various purposes for which questions are used by the presenter are listed herein.
- Point to note: Trainer first decides the purpose and then frames and poses the question accordingly.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

1. DIRECT
 - Question
 - Pause
 - Name
2. INDIRECT
 - Question
 - Answer by Anyone
3. RE-DIRECTED
 - By Trainer to Individual/Group



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The three main types of questions are:

1. Direct
Asked directly to a specific participant, depending upon the purpose of the question.
2. Indirect
A question not directed to anyone. Also used as an “ice breaker”, or draw in silent/introvert participants.
3. Redirected
In case of an incorrect/undesired response from the audience shifting to other participants till the correct/desired response is available.

RESPONDING TO ANSWERS

- Commend Sound Reasoning
- Accept Principally Correct Answers
- Do not accept “Yes” & “No” Type Answers
- Avoid Accepting Ambiguous Answers
 - Clarify

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Tips for responding to various types of answers by the participants include:

1. Discuss answers using reason and logic to reach to conclusions.
2. Even if words are different than the desired answer, accept principally correct answers and expand the learning element.
3. Do not accept vague/yes/no answers because they do not give any clear indication of the participant’s state of mind. Seek clarification. Reframe the question or recall attention to major points till clarity is achieved.

RESPONDING TO ANSWERS

- Confirm When Correct
- Repeat So All Can Hear
- Expand Learning Element
- The Diplomatic Pass

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Additional responding techniques for the presenter include:

1. Agree and thank the participant for correct answers.
2. Even if you do not agree with the answer from the participant do not say “NO” but say “YES’ and the logically discuss to lead to a NO(incorrect) conclusion. DONOT show your emotional responses(manage them)
3. Then repeat the answers so all can hear and agree or discuss further.
4. Expand the learning element as you conclude the discussions.
5. Avoid ‘self answering’ and keep passing on the question till the desired response(s) are achieved and agreed.

**TOP TIPS FOR
MASTERING THE
ART OF DELIVERY**

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TOP TIPS

- Relax & Welcome
- Introduction:
 - Agenda
 - Outcome
 - Schedule
 - Administration, Handouts etc
 - Emergency Response
- Opening Impact(Rapport building)
- Involve Audience
 - Something for their benefit

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Additional tips on rapport building techniques to convince the audience on "BENEFITS for ME" include:

1. Acknowledge participants feelings and show helping attitude.
2. Assuage their fears and provide clarifications about the training objectives with no hidden motives.
3. Share something about yourself that will help them identify you as their partner in training on the same side of the desk.
4. Don't whine about your problems, rather ensure your help in the facilitating the audience to succeed in achieving their objectives.
5. Identify and address subgroups to ensure harmony and acceptability of training objectives/deliverables.

(...contd.)

TOP TIPS

- **Focus On Their Needs**
 - Not Yours
- **Build Anchors**
- **Express Your Emotions**
- **Maintain Your “Cool”**

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6- Focus on their needs and not yours.

7- Build anchors in the audience i.e. those people who are responsive and positive towards the training objectives/deliverables.

8- Express your sincere and positive emotions about the topic and your motivation level to move forward. Avoid making any “off the cuff” or “off the record” comments.

9- Maintain Your “Cool” and do not get involved in any “war of words” or stir up discussion on “irrelevant” issues.

(...contd.)

TOP TIPS

- Focus Of Questions
- Keep To The Point
- Do Not Read Presentation
 - Bridge gaps
- Maintain Eye Contact
- Avoid Back To The Audience

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10. Maintain focus of all questions on what you presented and avoid accepting questions on what you DID NOT present.

11. Keep your explanation/discussion to the point. In case you provide new information then link it and maintain focus with the main topic.

12. Do not directly read off the presentation. Let the audience read off first and then add to bridge necessary information gaps.

13- Maintain eye contact and shift your glance to all segments of the audience.

14- Avoid turning your back to the audience. When you speak look towards the audience and not towards the screen.

NERVOUSNESS – Overcoming Butterflies

One Day Before Training:

- Preparation (Prepare-Prepare-Prepare)
- Learn About Participants
- Prepare question plan(FAQS)
- Anticipate Potential Reactions
- Interact/meet Participants

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Suggested check list and tips for managing nervousness during while delivering training.

NERVOUSNESS – Overcoming Butterflies

One Hour Before Training:

- Check :
 - Venue
 - Arrangements
 - Time Schedule
 - Training Equipment
 - Lights, Cooling/Heating etc.
 - Training material
 - Stationary
- Test Training CD's, Videos etc.

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Suggested check list and tips for managing nervousness during while delivering training.

NERVOUSNESS – Overcoming Butterflies

One Hour Before Training:

- **Arrange Transparencies/Presentation**
- **Stop Preparation**
- **Spend Few Minutes Alone**
- **Eliminate Possible Distractions**

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Suggested check list and tips for managing nervousness during while delivering training.

WRAP UP STYLES

- Refer Back To Opening
- Use A Quotation
- Ask A Question
- Way Forward
- Candid Assessment
- Match Conclusions With Objectives

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Suggested check list and tips for managing wrap up of training.