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# UNIT 1 THE BASICS

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## 1.0 OBJECTIVES

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After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- understand the different styles of communication;
- extend your vocabulary by matching words from the text;
- get an understanding of barriers to listening and get some tips on effective speaking; and
- practice the simple present tense and paragraph writing.

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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Communication is all about getting the message across correctly. To make this happen, you need to have good speaking skills and good writing skills. If you have these skills coupled with good listening skills and interest in reading, you have all the potential to be a good communicator. Along with these, you also need to have proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and presentation. In this introductory Unit, you will be introduced to some of the basic but important aspects of communication. The importance of all these in communication is stressed along with guidance notes and tips to help you.

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## 1.2 WARM UP

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- 1) Reflect on the following:
  - i) Think of an instance when your meaning was distorted because of miscommunication.
  - ii) Did it create a ‘comedy of errors’ or lead to a ‘sad situation/sorry state of affairs’?
  - iii) How should you have communicated to be effective?

2) How will you react when faced with the following situations? Give your answers both through verbal and non-verbal communication. The first one has been done for you.

i) Your grandparents have come to visit you.

*You will greet them verbally by saying 'namaste', 'salaam', etc. The non verbal greeting would be a warm hug, a welcoming smile and/or touching their feet in respect. The communicative mode is thus a mix of both formal and informal.*

ii) You have gone with your friends to see a film. You meet your teacher at the theatre who is going to administer a test the next day.

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iii) You meet an old friend unexpectedly in the library.

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iv) You want to complain to the librarian about the problem of noisy teenagers talking in the library.

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v) You have to visit your boss who has lost his father recently. You must also mention whether you want to use the formal or informal mode of communication.

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## 1.3 READING COMPREHENSION: DIFFERENT STYLES OF COMMUNICATION

Read the text below. After that you will find some questions. Answer these questions.

### Styles of Communication

The way in which we express ourselves is our style of communication. Consider the situation of a delay in the departure of the Rajdhani train. The different ways of reacting to this situation are:

- Some people become very angry and show it through their facial expressions and body gestures. They may walk up to the customer help desk and shout at the person sitting behind the counter, using bad language and a rude tone.
- Others may react in a passive way by shrugging their shoulders and resign themselves to a long wait.
- Some others may walk up to the counter and try to enquire about the cause of delay. They may probably be given the option of refund of fare or a food voucher and they will, in all probability, walk away smiling.

The situation is the same for all groups yet the reactions are differently conveyed. In order to communicate effectively it is important to understand our own style of communication which could fall into any one of the above categories or be a combination of these styles.

### The Relater

For the relator the focus is relating to people and building interpersonal relationships. They are easy to work with and are cooperative. They are ready to provide a listening ear and helping out others. They do not like conflicts, disagreements or arguments and prefer to have matters sailing smoothly. They may not be amenable to change if it upsets their smooth pattern of working (this could work negatively).

How to deal with them:

- Share personal experiences or common interests with them
- Build a rapport with them
- While discussing any matter, impress upon them the facts of the case and focus on how changes may affect relationships.

### The Socialiser

They are enthusiastic, expressive individuals who value relationships and have a desire to be socially accepted. They are useful to have on a team as they can motivate others and work well in a group. Their focus on the larger picture rather than on smaller details can prove to be negative at times. They dislike routine and prefer change and challenges. For them, disagreements are a matter of spirited discussion rather than a setback. They often make decisions based on their intuition rather than on facts.

How to deal with them:

- Try to keep pace with them
- Be patient and bring them to the main subject when they stray from it
- Involve them in group activities
- Keep a watch on them if they have been assigned any job independently.

**The Thinker**

They are systematic, logical people with a tendency to focus upon facts and figures. They approach problems in a precise methodical way and prefer to work independently. They could lose sight of the larger picture in their efforts to focus on details. Emotions and conflict have no place in their scheme of working. They are not very open to change and need time to adjust to it.

How to deal with them:

- Present new ideas in a logical format backed with data and evidence
- Do not rush them in conversation or in work
- In case of changes taking place, help them by presenting a logical explanation as to why the changes are necessary.

**The Director**

Such people tend to be forceful, dominating and aggressive. They are bold, direct and don't believe in a soft approach. They believe that achieving the goal is more important than focusing on the ways to accomplish it. It is not a matter of concern for them if a few people are hurt in the process. For them, people and emotion are secondary to the goal. They handle conflict mainly by imposing their ideas upon others. They may not be able to work as a team as they are confrontational and not open to listening to other people's views.

How to deal with them:

- Do not ramble, get to the point directly
- Communicate your ideas clearly and quickly
- Relate your ideas to the set goals
- If working in a group with them, try to maintain peace and harmony as such people disrupt smooth functioning with their aggressive behaviour.

**Self Check Exercise**

- Note:** i) Write your answers at the space given below.  
ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.
- 1) Mention any two characteristics of relaters and say how you can handle them.

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2) Does 'socialisers' mean socially acceptable people? What are the ways of dealing with them?

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3) Thinkers are obviously people who think their way through things. Does this mean that they have intellectual abilities but no heart? How will you deal with them?

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4) Suppose your colleague at work is dominating and aggressive in his manner. Into which category or type would you put him? What will you do to ensure smooth functioning of work?

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5) Find words/phrases from the reading text which match with their meanings given below. You may consult a dictionary if necessary.

- i) A gesture showing disinterest
- ii) Serious disagreement and argument about something important
- iii) Willing to do something
- iv) A relationship where you understand each other's feelings or points of view
- v) Full of positive energy
- vi) Unexplained feelings

- vii) Not concentrating on the particular topic, but thinking or starting to talk about something else
  - viii) Behaving in a forceful way without caring about the feelings of others
  - ix) Talking in a confused way without any order
  - x) Prevent something from proceeding.
- 6) Look at the table given below. Some parts are filled in while others remain empty. Fill in the gaps with suitable and appropriate information. Check your answers with the answers provided at the end of the Unit.

<b>Factors→ ↓</b>	<b>Types Relaters</b>	<b>Socialisers</b>	<b>Thinkers</b>	<b>Directors</b>
<b>How to recognise Them?</b>	Helpful, like positive attention, want people to like them			
<b>Tend to ask: Why, How, What, Who? (Choose the correct question type)</b>		Who? (The personal, dominant question)		What? (The result oriented question)
<b>What they dislike?</b>	Don't like people to be uncaring towards them, hate rejection	Don't like boring explanations, or too many facts & figures		
<b>Reaction to pressure</b>		Become argumentative and try to sell their ideas		Become more dominating and take charge and control
<b>Best way of dealing with them</b>			Provide lots of data and information	
<b>Like to be measured by</b>	Friends, close relationships			Results achieved, goal oriented
<b>Best results with</b>		Inspire and encourage them to better and bigger accomplishments	Structure a framework or "track" to follow	

## 1.4 VOCABULARY

The more extensive your vocabulary is, the better your chances of success — success in educational achievements, success in business, success in your professional career, and most important success in achieving your intellectual potential. It will be a major handicap if your proficiency in vocabulary is not good enough, particularly when you communicate. You should be able to use the right word at the right place. To enable you to do that, you need to know the meanings of as many words as possible. Building your “word power” will help you throughout your life while communicating, whether through the written or oral mode.

It is not difficult to improve your vocabulary, and it is never late too. A determined effort can make it happen. One easy and practical way is to note down when you come across a new word/phrase and later consult a good dictionary. In this way you can strengthen your vocabulary proficiency gradually. You must own a good dictionary.

### Activity

- 1) Visit a library in your neighbourhood and locate at least two good English language dictionaries.

#### Dictionary 1

Title of the dictionary .....

Year of publication of the dictionary .....

Name of the publisher of the dictionary .....

#### Dictionary 2

Title of the dictionary .....

Year of publication of the dictionary .....

Name of the publisher of the dictionary .....

Compare both the dictionaries and make a list of differences you notice, if any. Which one do you think is better and why?

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## 1.5 LISTENING: BARRIERS TO LISTENING

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Mark “yes” or ‘no” against the following questions:

- i) Are you a good listener?
- ii) Do you listen to radio/television news daily?
- iii) When someone at home speaks to you, do you always listen with concentration?
- iv) Do you get irritated when you notice that the person to whom you are talking to is not listening to you?

To be a good communicator it is important to be a “good listener” first. Being a good listener helps you to develop and maintain good interpersonal relations, it helps you to succeed in your career/workplace, in the classroom, and indeed at home. When you are in meetings or attending lectures, if you have good listening skills, you do not miss out on the important points. It is a fact that many people do not have good listening skills as they do not pay much importance to it. As a result, they find their attention wavering away easily from the current conversation.

We spend a great deal of our time, starting from the very early stage in our life, listening to others: our parents, relatives, friends, teachers, employers, colleagues and so on. We also make others listen to us. Think of a day in the recent past and check how much time you must have spent listening to others.

### Activities

Listen to the audio on ‘Barriers to Listening’ and answer the questions given below. You may play the CD provided and listen to the audio as many times as you require. Please note that the text of the audio has been provided in the answers section.

2) Fill in the blanks with appropriate words/phrases:

- i) The 5 barriers to communication are: (a) .....  
(b) ..... (c) .....  
(d) ..... (e) .....
- ii) The first barrier means (a).....  
..... and (b) .....
- iii) A perceptual barrier is there because of our individual ways of .....  
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- iv) As children, we have always been told to (a) .....  
..... and not to .....  
.....
- v) In global communication it is considered rude to.....  
.....
- vi) Indians do not always understand the ..... of  
British and American English.



3) Listen to the recording again and give one word answers to the following phrases:

- i) that which hinders or obstructs .....
- ii) incorrect/faulty communication .....
- iii) a person's way of seeing the world around herself/himself .....
- iv) relating to people's state of mind .....
- v) what human beings use for communicating .....

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## 1.6 SPEAKING: SOME SUGGESTIONS

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Ask your friend to speak about himself/herself to you. At the end of it, critically review the contents and style of the presentation, and give feedback to your friend. Next, you make a similar presentation about yourself to your friend, keeping in mind the kind of feedback you have given to your friend. Ask your friend to give you feedback.

### Speaking About Oneself

If you are professional, you will be often required to speak about yourself, both at formal and informal occasions. The occasion could be a training session, a classroom, tea party, a formal meeting, an interview, meeting someone for the first time and so on. If it is a formal occasion you will get enough time to prepare, both in terms of contents and style. On the other hand, if it is an informal occasion, often you will not get any time to prepare.

Depending on the occasion and the mood of the person(s) to whom you are speaking, you should be able to make changes to what you want to speak. You could add a bit of humor, you could say something about your nick name, your likes and dislikes in life, interesting anecdotes, etc. Watch the reaction and body language of the person(s) carefully to check if they are getting irritated or bored. In that case, take an on the spot decision and change your script!!

### Body Language

While speaking, how you present yourself is most important. Your dress, your posture, movement of your body parts, eye contact, and facial expression: you need to get all these right. There is no standard prescription for any of these! You will need to decide the "hows", taking clues from the person(s) to whom you are making your speech. Another important point is that your dress should be appropriate for the occasion.

### Tips for Effective Speaking

- Understand who the audience is
- Prepare your speech keeping in mind the educational level of the audience
- Prepare well and ensure that you have included everything that you wanted to include
- Rehearse your speech in front of a mirror or with a friend
- Incorporate any suggestion
- Use simple language and short sentences

- Use words you are familiar with
- Keep the structure simple and logical
- Go with total confidence
- Speak clearly and loudly, don't mumble
- Don't speak too fast
- Repeat important messages to make sure that everyone has understood it
- Summarize at the end, if the situation warrants
- Watch the reaction and body language of the audience from the beginning.

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## 1.7 GRAMMAR: SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

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We use the simple present tense in the following situations:

a) **To show an action that happens daily or very often.**

It represents habits, hobbies and daily events.

**Examples:**

Some people *become* very angry and *show* it through their facial expression and body gestures.

I never *indulge* in small talk.

The trains usually *run* late this season because of the fog.

My office work *begins* at 9 am.

b) **To show likes and dislikes.**

**Examples:**

I *love* chatting with friends. It's such fun.

They *are* enthusiastic expressive individuals who value relationships...

c) **To show events that are scheduled to happen in the near future.**

**Examples:**

The train *leaves* this afternoon at three.

When *do* we begin the meeting?

d) **To show permanent truths.**

**Examples:**

It *is* important to have a short social conversation before you actually begin to talk shop.

Small talk *requires* important social skills.

**Self Check Exercise**

**Note:** i) Write your answers at the space given below.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

7) Now complete these sentences with verbs in the simple present:

i) I ..... to office everyday.

- ii) I ..... my house at 8 o'clock in the morning.
- iii) I ..... my office by 8.30 am.
- iv) I ..... my lunch in the office canteen.
- v) I ..... home by 6 pm.
- vi) In the evening I ..... for a walk.
- vii) On weekends I ..... badminton in the club.
- viii) Once a year I ..... out on a holiday with my family.
- 8) Complete the following questions using suitable verbs in the simple present tense. The first one is done for you.

Q1. How are you?

A. I am fine.

Q2. Where .....

A. I live in Bhopal.

Q3. What .....

A. I like reading and watching TV.

Q4. What .....

A. I like to read books on self improvement.

Q5. What kind of TV programmes .....

A. I like to watch reality shows.

Q6. How often .....

A. I travel out of Bhopal once in two months.

Q7. How .....

A. I usually travel by train.

Q8. What .....

A. On weekends I watch movies.

Q9. What .....

A. I like to watch action movies.

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## 1.8 WRITING: PARAGRAPH WRITING

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It is important to realise that once something is written, it cannot be taken back. Communicating in written form is more concrete than verbal communication, with less room for mistakes. This also makes written communication more challenging: one can be caught if mistakes are made! One needs to be meticulous about spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalisation, use of abbreviations, writing style, choice of words and so on.

### Activity

- 4) Write a paragraph of not more than 15 sentences about your best friend. Include information on factors such as the following:



- 3) **Thinkers** are logical and systematic people who value facts and figures above emotions and feelings. However, this does not mean that they have no heart. They just need to be approached with data and evidence in a logical format. We have to give them time to adjust to changes.
- 4) A dominating and aggressive colleague could be categorised under the '**Director**' type. For working effectively and smoothly with such a person, we need to be direct, clear and precise with him/her. Allow him/her to be in charge and relate our ideas to the set goals. Also we need to try and maintain peace and harmony with them while working in a group.
- 5) i) A gesture showing disinterest — **Shrugging their shoulders**  
 ii) Serious disagreement and argument about something important **Conflict**  
 iii) Willing to do something — **Cooperative**  
 iv) When you understand each other's feelings or points of view — **Rapport**  
 v) Full of positive energy — **Enthusiastic**  
 vi) Unexplained feelings — **Intuition**  
 vii) Not concentrating on the particular topic, but thinking or starting to talk about something else — **Stray**  
 viii) Behaving in a forceful way without caring about the feelings of others — **Aggressive**  
 ix) Talking in a confused way without any order — **Ramble**  
 x) Prevent something from proceeding — **Disrupt**

6)

Factors ↓	Types→ Relaters	Socialisers	Thinkers	Directors
How to recognise them?	Helpful, like positive attention, want people to like them	They get excited and are enthusiastic.	They ask for data, ask too many questions, and function methodically and systematically	They like to have their own way; they are decisive and have strong views and opinions
Tend to ask: Why, How, What, Who? (Choose the correct question type)	Why? (The personal non goal question)	Who? (The personal, dominant question)	How? (The technical, analytical question)	What? (The result oriented question)
What they dislike?	Don't like people to be uncaring towards them, hate rejection	Don't like boring explanations, or too many facts and figures	They don't like spontaneous occurrence of things; don't like being caught on the wrong foot or being unprepared	They don't like anyone being in charge or making decisions for them

Reaction to pressure	Become silent, withdrawn and introspective	Become argumentative and try to 'sell' their ideas	Seek out more data and information for analysis and problem solving	Become more dominating, and try to take charge and control
Best way of dealing with them	Support them by caring for them	Catch their enthusiasm and express your ideas and feelings	Provide them with lots of data and information	Allow them to be in charge
Like to be measured by	Friends, close relationships	Praise, feedback and recognition	Being busy and involved in activities that lead to results	Results achieved, goal oriented
Best results with	Give them care and provide them with specific plans and activities to be achieved	Inspire and encourage them to better and bigger accomplishments	Structure a framework or "track" to follow	Give them freedom to do things their own

- 7) i) I **walk** to office everyday.  
 ii) I **leave** my house at 8 o'clock in the morning.  
 iii) I **reach** my office by 8.30 am.  
 iv) I **have** my lunch in the office canteen.  
 v) I **return / come back** home by 6 pm.  
 vi) In the evening I **go** for a walk.  
 vii) On weekends I **play** badminton in the club.  
 viii) Once a year I **go** out on a holiday with my family.

8) Q1. How *are you*?

A. I am fine.

Q2. Where *do you live*?

A. I live in Bhopal.

Q3. What *do you like to do in your free time*?

A. I like reading and watching TV.

Q4. What *kind of books do you like to read*?

A. I like to read books on self improvement.

Q5. What kind of TV programmes *do you like to watch*?

A. I like to watch reality shows.

Q6. How often *do you travel out of Bhopal for work*?

A. I travel out of Bhopal once in two months.

- Q7. How do you usually travel?  
 A. I usually travel by train.
- Q8. What do you do on weekends?  
 A. I watch movies on weekends.
- Q9. What kind of movies do you enjoy?  
 A. I like to watch action movies.

### Text for the audio on 'Barriers to Listening'

Many people think communication is easy. It is something we have been doing all our lives. It becomes difficult and complex when we put barriers in its way resulting in miscommunication. The word 'barrier' usually carries the meaning of an impediment at different levels. It could be a physical wall or fence, as well as a mental wall or obstruction which hinders thoughts and perceptions. Some of the barriers to communication are:

- 1) Physical barriers
  - 2) Perceptual barriers
  - 3) Emotional barriers
  - 4) Cultural barriers
  - 5) Language barriers
- 1) **Physical barriers** include
    - marked out areas into which strangers are not allowed, e.g. offices having electronic doors which can be opened by access cards.
    - Separate areas/rooms for people of different status.
    - One working unit which is physically separated from other such areas.
  - 2) **Perceptual barriers** are the individual ways of perceiving or looking at things around us. In the process of perceiving things, we select information, organise it and then interpret it in our own way. This may also prove to be a barrier to communication.
  - 3) **Emotional barriers** are our fears, mistrust, misgivings and suspicion of others. We have often heard in our childhood that children should be seen and not heard nor should they question or retaliate to elders. As a result many people hold back from communicating their thoughts and feelings. Psychological factors or personal problems can also come in the way of communication.
  - 4) **Cultural barriers** cause miscommunication because of the presence of diverse cultures, each having its own expressions and behavioral patterns. With global communication, it has become common to adopt global etiquette, e.g. it is considered rude to burp after a meal especially in public.
  - 5) **Language barriers** occur when we communicate with people who are not familiar with our expressions, slang or jargon. Indians do not always understand the idiomatic expressions of British or American English.

### Activities

- 1) Do it yourself.
- 2) i) (a) physical (b) perceptual (c) emotional  
(d) cultural (e) language
- ii) (a) marked out areas where strangers are not allowed,  
(b) separate areas for people of different status/ physically demarcated  
working areas.
- iii) perceiving/looking at the world around us.
- iv) (a) be seen and not heard (b) question or answer back to elders.
- v) burp after a meal especially in public.
- vi) idiomatic expressions
- 3) One word answers to phrases:
  - i) that which hinders or obstructs — **barrier/obstruction/impediment**
  - ii) incorrect/faulty communication — **miscommunication**
  - iii) a person's way of seeing the world around herself/himself — **perception**
  - iv) relating to people's state of mind **psychological**
  - v) what human beings use for communicating — **language**
- 4) Do it yourself.

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## 1.11 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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