

**Class XI**  
**STUDY MATERAIL**  
**Office Procedures & Practices (English)**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Advisors:

- Smt. Anita Karwal, IAS, Chairperson, CBSE.

Content Developed by:

- Mrs. Ritu Veer Vijra, Lecturer in Stenography and Computer Application, Govt. Model Senior Secondary School, Sector 23 A, Chandigarh (Convener)
- Dr. R.C.Bhatia, Ret. Assistant Professor of Delhi University, New Delhi
- Mr. D.P. Bhatia, Former Instructor OMSP, Delhi of University, New Delhi
- Mr. Sudershan Kumar, Retired Lecturer, OMSP Delhi of University, New Delhi
- Mrs. Sunita Chugh, Lecturer (SP-English), MeeraBai Institute of Technology, New Delhi

## **P R E F A C E**

The Working in the administrative management has rapidly developed as a professional field. Though there are various salient factors that have contributed to the increased importance of administrative duties, the revolution in information technology has made the maximum impact. Apart from this, the tremendous expansion of organizations in both private and public sectors is demanding modernized learning of the office activities. Every person nowadays needs a basic familiarity with the computer and skills in office procedures. An attempt has been made to include in this revision the latest development in the field of office, office machines, latest technologies like e-filing, e-office, online filing up of forms-air, road, rail.

The expert committees look forward for any corrections, inclusions and suggestions to improve the contents of the subject material.

“Success in management requires learning as fast as the world is changing. -Warren Bennis”

## **UNIT 1**

### **INTRODUCTION OF OFFICE, OFFICE MANAGER, ORGANISATIONAL CHARTS AND MANUALS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

With the spectacular developments and advancements in the field of science and technology, the manufacturing techniques have undergone a rapid change. The economies of large scale production have brought into being number of multi-national business organizations. The ever-widening markets in business also pose a challenge to themselves. All these problems can be satisfactorily tackled only when adequate information is available. To retain information, to analyze it and furnish it to the management when required, are the basic functions of a modern office.

#### **Objectives**

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- Know the meaning of the term “Office”, its importance and functions
- Know the meaning of term “Management”, its principles and functions
- List out the qualities and functions of Office Manager
- Identify the different types of Organization structure

#### **1.1 MEANING OF OFFICE, FUNCTIONS AND IMPORTANCE**

##### **Meaning**

An office is understood to be a place where all the clerical and paper work is performed like letters, correspondence, files, record, etc. The office also maintains and deals with every paper or documents received in an office. In other words, Office is “a central place where all sorts of clerical work is done to coordinate and control the affairs of the whole organization.”

##### **Functions**

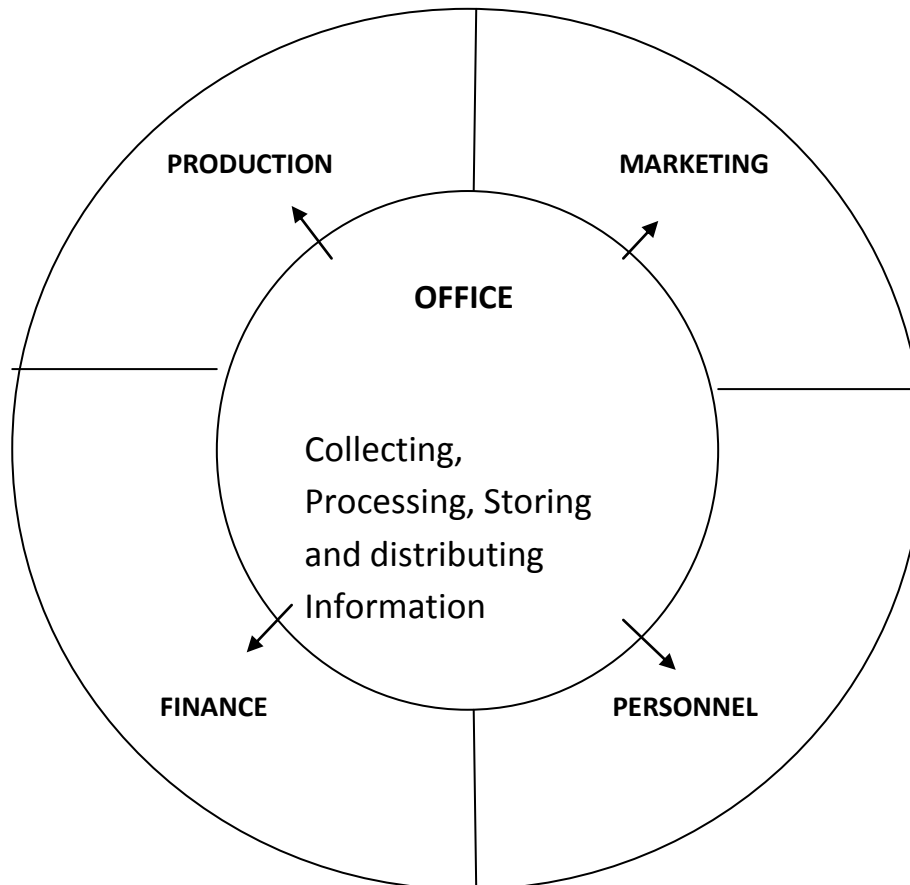
- **To Receive Information:** - Information relating to the activities of an organization may be received from a variety of sources, which may be internal sources or external sources. From internal sources, information may be received from various departments, sections or divisions of the organization. From external sources, it may be received from suppliers, customers, visitors, other organizations, government departments, etc.

- **To Record the Information:-** The object of keeping record is to make information readily available to the management, whenever required. For this purpose, the information received in an office is converted into some form of written records. The records are normally kept in an office which includes financial and cost accounts, orders, progress of work, hours worked by employees, correspondence, etc.
- **To Arrange the Information:-** The information collected by an office is rarely in the form in which it is given out. Facts have to be gathered from various sources and calculations, tabulations etc. have to be made. An office is responsible for supplying information in the form which best serves the purpose of the management. Examples of arranging information are: preparing invoices, payrolls, cost accounting, statements, and reports.
- **To Give the Information:-** An office furnishes information from its records as and when required by the management. The information required by the management may be of a routine nature or of a special nature, and may be supplied verbally or in writing.
- **Public Relations Function:-** An office has not only to maintain cordial relations with other departments in the organization but also with outsiders. It has, therefore to perform public relation functions as well. Good public relations enhance the reputation and goodwill of the organization. Public Relation Officers appointed specially for this purpose not only maintains the relations with the outsiders but also within in the organisation between the staff and management.
- **Safeguarding Assets:-** It is the function of an office to safeguard the assets of the organization, which may be fixed assets like building, plant, machinery, office equipment, lightening and air condition equipment; or which may be moveable assets like furniture, typewriters, calculating or accounting machines equipment of various types Vital records such as major contacts must be properly protected; cash must be held in safety or banked; fixed assets should be protected against hazards of fire and theft y taking out suitable insurance policies.

## Importance

An office is an important and indispensable part of every organization, big or small. Be it a government institution, trading or manufacturing organization, a hospital or an educational institution, an office is vital for its functioning. The office acts as storehouse and nervous system of every operation of a business concern. As well managed office is an indispensable aid to management, it helps the management to plan its operations intelligently and put them in action completely. The office co-ordinates all the activities of the business. Without an efficient and organized office, business activities cannot be carried through systematically. Its importance has rightly been explained by L.R. Dicksee, Office is to a business what a mainspring is

to a watch.” As the watch cannot work without its mainspring, we cannot think of running a business without the office.



## **1.2 CHANGING SCENE – PAPERLESS OFFICE AND VIRTUAL OFFICE**

### **PAPERLESS OFFICE**

A paperless office is an office in which the use of paper is eliminated or greatly reduced. This is possible when documents and other papers are converted into digital form. The effort of establishing paperless office can save money, increase productivity, save space, make documentation and information sharing easier, keep personal information more secure, and help the environment. The concept can be extended to communications outside the office as well.

#### **Definition**

The idea is that office automation would make office paperless for routine tasks such as record-keeping and bookkeeping, and it came to prominence with the introduction of the personal computer. The term “The Paperless Office” was first used in commerce by an automated office equipment company, in 1978. This has been increased ease of document production and widespread use of electronic

communication, which has resulted in users receiving large numbers of documents that are often printed out. However, since about 2000, at least in the US, the use of office paper has leveled off and is now decreasing, which has been attributed to a generation shift, younger people are believed to be less inclined to print out documents, and more inclined to read them on a full-color interactive display screen.



### **Eliminating paper- automation and electronic forms**

The online systems has almost eliminated the need for paper nowadays, such as replacing index cards with database, typed letters and faxes with email, and reference books with the internet. Another way to eliminate paper is to automate paper-based processes that rely on forms, applications and surveys to capture and share data. This method is referred to as 'electronic forms' or 'e-forms' and is typically prepared by using existing print-perfect documents in electronic format, filling data manually online providing secure methods to submit form data to processing systems, and digitally signing the electronic documents without printing.

The technologies used with electronic forms automation include:

- Portable Document Format (PDF) – to create, display and interact with electronic documents and forms
- E-form (electronic form) management software – to create, integrate and route forms and form data with processing systems
- Databases – to capture data for profiling and processing documents
- Workflow platforms – a route information, documents and direct process flow
- Digital signature solutions - to digitally sign documents (used by end-users)
- Web servers – to host the process, receive submitted data, store documents and manage document rights



## **VIRTUAL OFFICE**

A virtual office is business location that exists only in cyberspace. A virtual office set up allows business owners and employees to work from any location by using modern technologies by the use of laptops, computers, cell phones and internet access. It helps in saving of rent of a traditional office space. Personal meetings are replaced by teleconferencing and video conferencing and transmission of documents is done electronically. Each employee in the virtual office can work from his convenient location and is not restricted to hiring employees locally. Thus, it expands job options for employees and hiring options for businesses.

### **1. Communication services**

- a) Remote receptionist –A traditional receptionist is replaced by the team of workers working remotely using high-tech Computer Telephone Integration (CTI) Software.
- b) Virtual assistant – A virtual assistant works from home and rarely meets his client face to face. A virtual assistant typically has no access to CTI software.
- c) For the purpose of receiving and transmitting a large number of requests by telephone, answering services/ call centres operate from a centralized location.
- d) Voicemail is a low-cost technology that stores voice messages electronically. Recent advances in technology allow for the conversion of Voicemail messages to email making message retrieval far more convenient for business owners.
- e) Virtual office space – Virtual office gives a chance to own a high profile reputed address in a desired city at a fraction of buying or renting cost of such an address.





## 2) **Space services**

- Professional address – A prestigious building of the area is used as the business address. A professional address increases the privacy and personal security concerns of running a home-based business. A user can expand into new markets by utilizing a provider with multiple locations to establish a professional presence in the desired growth markets.
- Mailing address – The professional address can be used for accepting, sending and forwarding mail without the connotations of a PO Box.
- Open envelope scanning – A handler opens the mail and scans the contents, e-mail or transfer the digitized documents onto a cloud-based file storage system that users can access immediately. The opened physical mail is then weeded out unless further storage is requested.
- Business meeting space – The on-demand use (hourly, daily or weekly) of conference rooms and offices for meetings. Meeting space can often be rented at short notice.
- On-site amenities – A full-service virtual office will provide broadband internet, fax-copier-printer, advanced phone features, conference calling, video conferencing, kitchenette and a business-worthy lobby/waiting area.
- Virtual office solution – Virtual office solution gives dual advantage in whichever city our need is based and a reputed business address which would marginalize the gap created by established brand value.
- Live virtual answering service – It is an automated system with a live virtual receptionist. This kind of service can be enjoyed without purchasing expensive equipment.
- Other services – other services may include creation of a website, business cards, attorney consultations.

### 1.3 CENTRALIZATION AND DECENTRALIZATION OF OFFICE SERVICES – ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

**Centralization:** By centralization we mean where all the office services, i.e., recording, computing, communicating, etc., are carried on in the central office and managed by the General Manager. The other departments have not to do any office work except that which is directly concerned with their own departments.

#### ADVANTAGES OF CENTRALIZATION

- **Equal Distribution of Work.** In the centralized office, whole of the work is done in the Central place. The supervisor distributes the work equally amongst the members of the staff. The moment any employee gets free, he is assigned more work. Thus there is an equal distribution of work
- **Elimination of Duplication of work.** Under centralization, the work can be done by the common set of staff and equipment. Thus there will be no duplication of work and equipment.
- **Economy.** Double set of typists, machines, etc., will not be necessary. which means less expenditure of the office?
- **Better Supervision.** When all the members of the staff will be at place, they can be supervised by one person as against many Supervisors under decentralization. Therefore, there can be better supervision and co-ordination.
- **Specialization.** Under centralization, each worker will be required to perform a particular type of work over and over again and thus becomes a specialist in his work. The result will be better, quicker and efficient performance. It will mean higher production at a lower unit cost. As a matter of fact, specialization has become a necessity now-a-days.
- **Standardization:** All the workers will be under the supervision of one person who will evolve a particular method of work in the department. Same type of machines and methods will be in use. Thus, every member of the staff knows the procedure of the machines and methods of work in use. Hence there is a standardization of business methods and equipment. Thus no difficulty will be felt if any member of the staff is absent as another clerk can be deputed in his place because everyone in the office knows the procedure and system.
- **Handling of Peak Loads.** Generally it is seen that in the evenings there is more work when the mail has to be sent. If there is centralization, the work at the peak hours can be easily performed by the central office where there are many clerks who will handle the work without any difficulty. There will be no necessity of overtime work.
- **Greater Flexibility in the use of the staff.** If the supervisor finds that some additional work has to be completed in a particular period he may transfer any worker to help others. Thus every clerk knows the different

types of work to be performed in different sections of the office. Similarly if a particular clerk is on leave another clerk may be deputed to perform his work. Thus there is a greater flexibility in the use of staff.

## **DISADVANTAGES OF CENTRALIZATION**

- **Delay in work:** Whenever a Departmental Manager requires any information, he will have to get it from the Central Office as all the records are maintained there. It is possible that the Central Office may be at a distance and thus it may take some time to get the necessary information.
- **Possibility of Errors.** The Central Office may commit mistakes as it has second hand information which it gets from the Department head and, therefore, the information may be misunderstood by the Central Office as it is over-loaded.
- Departmental heads feel inferiority complex as they think that it is the Central Office which is considered supreme to which they have to send necessary records and information.
- The Central Office takes its own time to furnish the information required by the Departmental Manager.
- A too rigid central control may cause frustration.
- There is no direct contact by the Central Office with the departments.
- Each department has its own technicalities or specialization which may not be understood by the Central Office which has to maintain departmental records and to furnish them whenever so required by the departments. The Central Office may not understand these technicalities.

**Decentralization:** Decentralization office is that where each department or section runs its own office in which case there is no central or General Office. Each of these departments have their own supervisors, its Steno typists, clerks etc.

## **ADVANTAGES OF DECENTRALIZATION**

- **Saving of Time:-** The departmental office has not to get the necessary papers or files from the central office as they are departmentally maintained. Thus much time is saved to do the work.
- **Secrecy:-** Since the department maintains all the papers, files, etc., pertaining to the department, secrecy can be maintained as some of the papers may be of confidential nature.
- **Team Spirit:-** Since the workers are more or less permanently attached to the department a spirit of loyalty is created amongst them and therefore they perform the work more enthusiastically.
- **More Efficiency:-** There is more efficiency in the performance of the work by departmental workers as they have to do the same kind of work over and over again and on every day, every week and every month and so on.

## DISADVANTAGES OF DECENTRALIZATION

- **Unequal distribution of work:** In decentralized office, some of the staff members in some departments have more work to do while in other departments there is less work which means the staff sits idle. Hence there is unequal distribution of work in decentralization which leads to wastage of time and manpower.
- **Uneconomical:** As every department requires separate equipment, space and manpower, decentralization proves to be uneconomical.

### 1.4 QUALITIES AND FUNCTIONS OF OFFICE MANAGER

Office manager is an individual, a fulltime officer of any organization who is entrusted with the work of managing the office. He is a key man in the organization and is at the top of the organizational pyramid. He is responsible for all clerical functions performed in an organization. He is an Officer who decides about who has to do the work, how it has to be done and how much has to be done. Office Manager is a line manager for his own department and acts as a staff manager for other departments.

#### QUALITIES

**1).Education:** An Office Manager should possess a required academic degree from a University preferably in commerce and management. He should have proficiency in English and command over other regional languages as well.

**2) Training.** Special training in business administration, accounting, business procedures, office machines and computer shall help the manager to guide and direct work to be performed by others.

**3) Experience.** He must have experience in similar position in a same type of industry. Experienced manager is an asset for the business organization, wide experience help manager to anticipate and solve the problems easily.

**4) Personal Qualities.** In order to perform the task of an office manager, a person must have common sense, self-confidence, emotional control, initiative, leadership qualities and a sense of responsibility and discipline. He must have power to analyse the problem. The ability to delegate his authority shall help him to make a good manager.

**5) Professional Interests.** He must take keen interest in the development of technology having impact on office work. It is appreciated if he is a member of some professional body in the field of management. He must read and subscribe newspaper, magazines and journals in the field of office and management.

## **FUNCTIONS OF OFFICE MANAGER**

Functions of an office manager are to manage the office and office work. The scope and extent, however, depends on-

- a. Size of a business enterprise.
- b. Nature of business.
- c. Extent of authority granted to him.

Following functions are commonly performed by office managers:

- I. Chief function is to plan, organize and control office activities.
- II. He acts as a line executive for his own department and staff executive (advisor) for other departments.
- III. He is to develop people through delegation and cultivating team spirit.
- IV. He is to observe rules, regulations, laws etc. imposed or demanded by govt.
- V. Designing and planning layout so as to ensure smooth flow of work.
- VI. Ensure better physical facilities and other environmental factors.
- VII. Safeguarding and maintenance of building and other assets of office.
- VIII. Selection, purchase, maintenance and replacement of furniture, equipment etc.
- IX. Preparation of organization chart and manual.
- X. Design and improve systems, procedures and methods.
- XI. Organizing and supervising office correspondence, filing, indexing, mailing, copying and duplicating.
- XII. Selection training, remuneration, promotion and maintenance of personnel.
- XIII. Setting up of standards of work and output and measuring office performance for control purpose.

# Functions of Office Manager

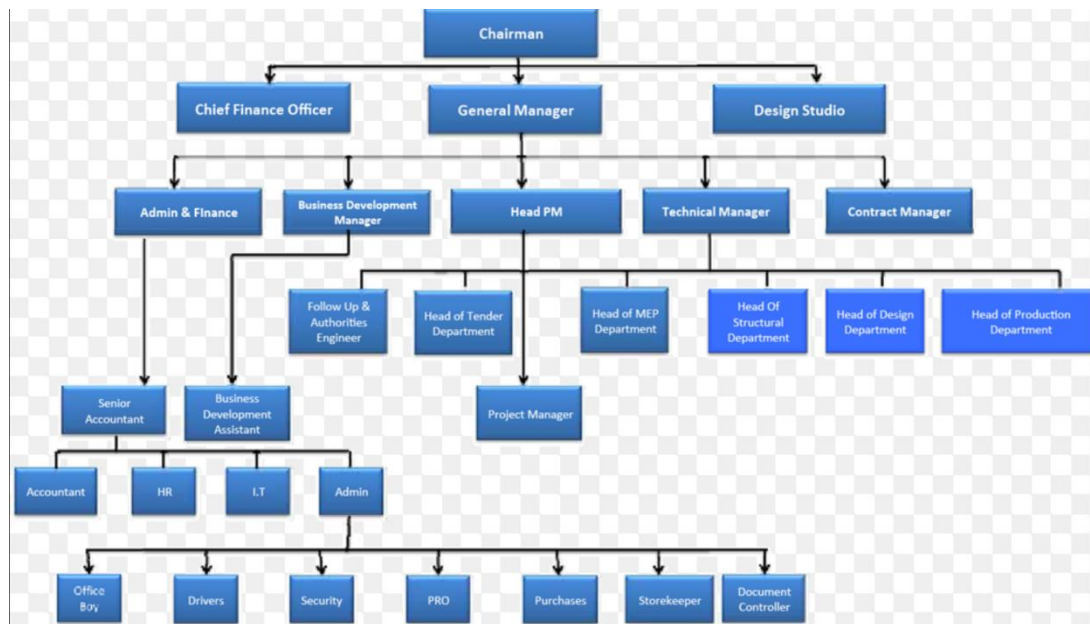


According to Leffingwell and Robinson an Office Manager is responsible for following functions or jobs:

- a. He is to determine how work in an office is to be performed
- b. He makes himself familiar with every type of work in a company.
- c. He coordinates with all the departments of the office.
- d. He studies best way of performing work and establishes uniform work methods.
- e. He prepares written standard instructions and sees that they are followed.
- f. He builds efficient routines.
- g. He designs and redesigns forms to accomplish the purpose effectively.
- h. He sets up specifications for position of clerical nature and provides standard methods of selection, training and supervising clerical workers.
- i. He determines fair rates of pay for each kind of office work.
- j. He establishes standards of performance.
- k. He sets up methods of measuring performance and provides an incentive system for accomplishment.

## 1.5 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART AND OFFICE MANUAL – ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

### ORGANIZATION CHART



An organization chart is a kind of information chart which indicates different departments, divisions and units into which the activities of the organization have been grouped. In addition, it shows the positions held by different executives and their subordinates in the departments, divisions and units as well as the relationship between the functions and the lines of authority and responsibility among them. It also states the functions of each employee, the officer to whom he is responsible for his work and the subordinate who is responsible to him. The organization chart is not that of an organization structure, it is only a graphical representation of the line of authority and responsibility among different positions.

The chart may either be a personnel organization chart or a functional organization chart. While the personnel organization chart states the positions held by different individuals with their names and designations, the functional organization chart depicts the functions of different positions in the organization.

## Advantages

The advantages of organization chart are:

1. It shows, at a glance, the lines of authority and responsibility. Each employee knows his position in the organization clearly.
2. It enables the management to locate the defects, if any, in the organization. It also helps the management to control the results in a better way.
3. Any gaps or overlapping in authority or responsibility can be avoided by suitable corrective action.
4. It serves as a valuable 'guide' in understanding the organization and helps in training new recruits.

## **Disadvantages**

The disadvantages of an organization chart are as follows:

1. It states only the formal relationships and does not show the informal relationships within the organization.
2. It shows a static position and cannot truly represent flexibility which usually exists in the structure of any dynamic organization.
3. Lack of flexibility in the chart may discourage the initiative of enterprising employees.
4. There is a chance of confusion and misunderstanding among the employees, if the chart is not prepared correctly.

In spite of its drawbacks, the organization chart is necessary for the organization. It serves as a tool of management and a valuable guide in understanding the organization. It helps every employee to know his authority and responsibility.

## **OFFICE MANUALS**

When the office systems or procedures are reduced in writing in the form of a book they are called office manuals. These office manuals lay down the instructions as to

- a. What has to be done.
- b. When it has to be done.
- c. How it has to be done.

These written instructions are issued to the staff to acquaint them with their duties which are called Duty Lists. The office manual is prepared and maintained by the management and only the Duty List is issued to the staff.

## **Advantages**

- a. It is easier for the management to supervise as the procedures are known to the members of the staff.
- b. It is a kind of authority on the procedures.
- c. Training of the staff can be made easier.
- d. Amendments can be made from time to time according to the experience gained.
- e. As the manual contains written instructions with respect to their jobs, there is no need to explain them to employees time and again.
- f. While preparing the manual, each job is studied thoroughly and reexamined. This helps in bringing uniformity in the methods of doing different office jobs.
- g. Use of office manuals facilitates delegation of authority and management by objectives.



## **Disadvantages**

- a. It is expensive to prepare such manuals.
- b. It is difficult to keep them up to date and will have to be received from time to time.
- c. Sometimes the performance of the work becomes rigid because of these manuals as they have to be followed irrespective of the exigency of the case.

## **CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

### **Questions:**

1. What is an Office?
2. No organization worth the name can exist without an efficient office.” Comment on this statement and bring out the functions that an office performs.
3. How far do you think the paperless office or virtual office will benefit the nation as a whole? How far is it successful?
4. Write down the drawbacks of paperless office or virtual office?
5. What do you mean by Centralization and Decentralization of Office?
6. How does Centralization differs from Decentralization,
7. Write the drawbacks of Decentralized office
8. “The office has an important role to play in the management of business enterprise in India.” Discuss
9. Define ‘Office Manager’
10. Describe the functions of an office manager in a big modern office?
11. State the considerations to be taken into account while drawing an organization chart.
12. What is an ‘Office Manual’? How far it can help the organization and its workers in an office?

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. You are given a chance to plan an office for your own business which you have started at a small scale. Chalk out the detailed proposals with your teacher.
2. Create your Email ID for your virtual office.
3. Draw an organizational chart of a manufacturing company in your Project file
4. List the information for the administrative post which an ‘Office Manual’ should contain.

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*“Space Management Tools facilitate smart space layout and environment management decisions as they help in real-time views”.*

## **UNIT 2**

### **OFFICE – SPACE & ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT**

#### **2.1 Office Layout, Open and Private Office – advantages and disadvantages**

##### **Office Layout**

Office layout is one of the most important task, though often overlooked factor of Office Management. It is the systematic arrangement of all the physical components i.e. office equipment, machines and furniture and providing proper space to office staff as per the available floor space to provide maximum comfort to the staff and to co-ordinate properly for regular performance of work with efficiency. In other words, it means the arrangement of different departments of an organization at suitable places in order to ensure smooth functioning of the departments, convenience to the employees and free flow of work from one department to another.

The following points should be kept in mind while laying out an office for business:-

1. The entire office should preferably be on the same floor and the rooms should be adjacent to each other so that the sections whose work is interconnected facilitate the flow of work.
2. The room of the Receptionist should be near the main entrance so that the staff is not disturbed by the frequent visit of outsiders.
3. The room of the executives or officers whom outsiders have to visit so often should be near the room of the receptionist so that the visitors may not have to cross the whole office where the clerks are working.
4. Keeping in mind the high rate of rent in the prevailing market, full use of office space should be made.
5. The filing cabinets may be just at a hand's distance so that the clerks may, not have to go at a distance to fetch or replace a file otherwise there will wastage of time.
6. The table of the supervisor or an officer should be so located that he can watch or observe as to what is happening in the office and that the clerks are not whiling away their time in idle talk.
7. The rooms of the clerks using noisy equipments such as type-writers, cyclostyling machines, calculating machines, etc., should be away so that the other clerks are not disturbed by the noise. Alternatively, sound-proof partition walls should be raised.

8. The movement of the messengers or peons who have to carry papers or files from one room to another should be minimized or the alternative arrangement may be made so that they may not have to pass by the tables of other clerks creating disturbance to them.
9. Record room should be easily accessible without waste of much time.



## Open Office

A large room where all the departments, staff and equipment are accommodated without partition wall is known as Open Office. Each department or section of the office is allotted a separate space under the same roof and separated by wooden/steel partitions. This helps in full utilization of space and ensures better control. Office managers normally prefer to have an open office because of the following reasons:-



## **Advantages of Open Office**

1. It facilitates better utilization of office space as more number of employees can be accommodated by raising cabins upto the height of 4-6 feet. This results in reducing the cost of office operations.
2. Free flow of natural light and air is possible as there is no high partitions. It may help in having uniformity in lighting and ventilation. This increases the efficiency of the staff.
3. Open office reduces the cost of supervision as the number of supervisors required to supervise the staff in an open office is less.
4. The staff does not have to move from one place to another for the want of some file or discussion as they are provided filing cabinets within their cabin. Hence, it minimizes the movement of the staff. This helps in saving of time.
5. It facilitates greater flexibility in planning and layout. It can be arranged or rearranged as per the changing requirements of the office.
6. As the employees can see each other, communication among them becomes easier and quicker.

## **Disadvantages of Open Office**

1. No unit or section will have a separate entity in an open office.
2. The staff gets disturbed by the noise due to conversation among employees and working of machines may affect the efficiency of the office staff.

3. It may cause overcrowding in the office.
4. The concept of open office is not suitable for the work which requires secrecy and concentration of work
5. It may lead to distraction caused by visitors to the office.
6. It is difficult to regulate ventilation, lighting, heating or cooling to suit needs of every individual working in the office.

## **Private Office**

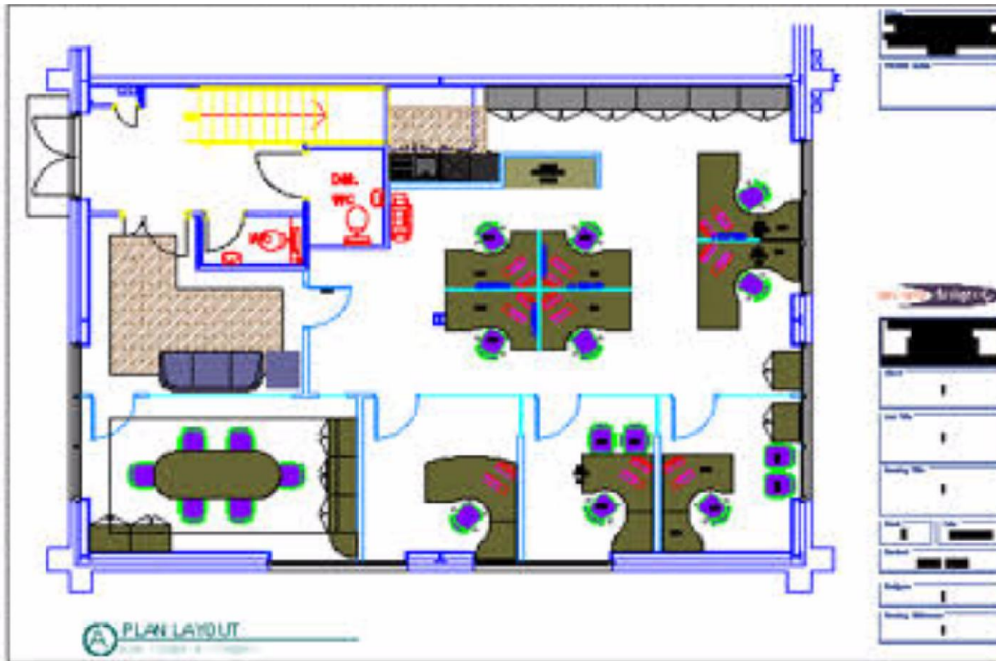
Even though the modern tendency is to adopt the open office system, it should be noted that the private offices cannot be dispensed with completely because a few private offices will have to be provided for top executives and for work which is of a confidential nature and which requires privacy and concentration. Private offices are small rooms which are separated by partitions. They are usually meant for top executives like Managing Director, General Manager, Personnel Department Manager, etc.

## **Advantages of Private Office**

1. It increases the status and prestige of the officer. He commands the respect of employees.
2. It suits very well for such work which is of a confidential nature.
3. Work requiring absence of noise can be done properly in a private room.
4. In a private office, noise is eliminated, and this increases efficiency.
5. Disturbances caused by ringing of phones, conversations between the employees and other types of sights and sounds in an open office set up can be avoided in private offices.
6. The private office layout provides the sufficient amount of room space and desk. In an open office, employees are provided cubicles or small desks space which is often not sufficient for employees handling tons of paperwork on daily basis.

## **Disadvantages of Private Office**

1. There is wastage of valuable space because of partitions and corridors.
2. Supervision becomes costly and less effective.
3. Because of barriers and obstructions, the flow of natural light and air is prevented.
4. Layout becomes less flexible and changes in the layout cannot be made quickly.
5. Because of walls and partitions, free flow of work is hindered.
6. It necessitates the movement of staff from one room to another.
7. The presence of a number of private rooms may affect inter-communication.



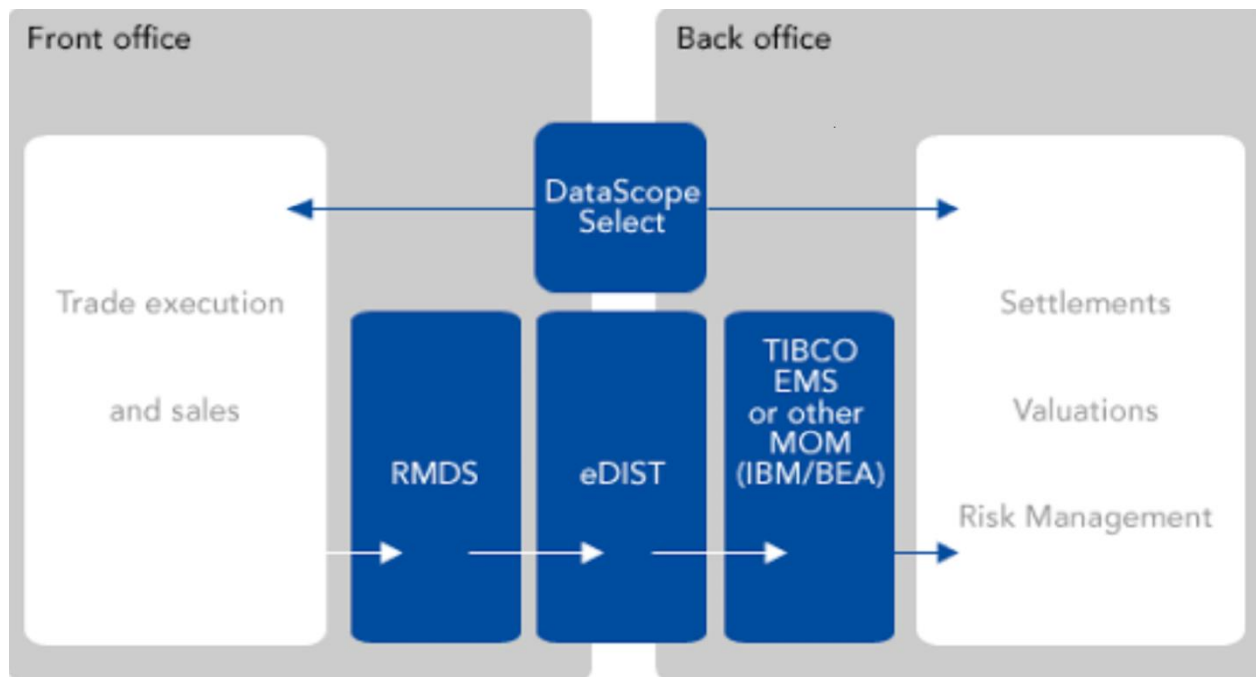
## 2.2 Front and Back Office

**Front Office:** The front office also called reception is an area where visitors first encounter a staff at a place of business. Front office staff deals with each and every query of the visitor and put them in contact with a relevant person in the office. The term ‘front office’ is in contrast to the term ‘back office’ which refers to the company’s operations, personnel, accounting, payroll and financial departments which do not interact directly with customers.

The front office receives information about the customers and then passes this on to the relevant department within the company. The company needs to give training to the front office manager as this position come in contact with customers directly. The front office makes up sales, marketing and customer support.

The most common work for the front office staff will be to get in touch with customers and guide them in the office. Staff working at the front office can also deal with simple tasks such as printing tasks and receiving and sorting emails.





**Back Office:** A back office is a place where the administrative work and support tasks are actually required to run the company. The back office personnel do not come directly in contact with clients. The term ‘back office’ comes from the building layout of early companies where the front office would contain the sales and other customer facing staff and the back office would be those manufacturing or developing the products or those involved in administration without being seen by customers. People recruited in back office positions carry out functions such as settlements, clearances, record maintenance, accounting etc..

## 2.3 Elements of Office Environment – Lighting, Noise, interior design, security, cleanliness etc.

The efficiency of the workers depend not only on their training and aptitude but also on their capacity and willingness to work which is possible when proper environment and working conditions are provided to them. Physical discomforts produce fatigue and cause mental strain. Favorable working conditions increase the efficiency of the workers. Such conditions induce concentration and avoid distraction. The following physical conditions and environments in the office can be considered for increasing the efficiency of the workers and consequently the output.

**2.3.1 Ventilation:-** The office should be well ventilated. Constant flow of fresh air in the office will reduce the fatigue. The rooms will become suffocated if there is no proper ventilation especially in the rainy season. It will create drowsiness in the workers which lowers their efficiency. In summers, when hot winds blow cause irritation to staff working in the office. Ventilation can be improved by the following methods:-

- a. Lobbies should have two doors, the outer and the inner, so that both the doors do not open at the same time. Similarly in winter the rooms will remain warm.
- b. The windows should be protected by fine wire gauge which will help in cross ventilation. Air conditioning of office can also solve the problem but its initial cost as well as the maintenance cost is very high.
- c. Fans/Exhaust Fans may also be of great help.

### **2.3.2 Office Lighting:-**

The office should have adequate natural light. Free flow of natural light is conducive to efficient working. Inadequate light causes strain on eyes. It may cause mistakes and even accidents. In case the natural light is not available, artificial light will serve the purpose. Artificial light increases the cost of office maintenance. Adequate light increases efficiency and consequently the output. This is especially important where figures or drawing work is done in the office.

**Natural Light-** When selecting or designing a building, care should be taken that the office is not shadowed by other building. The large windows should be paned to allow more natural light. It may not be possible in all cases. Therefore the manager should see that rooms with more light are assigned to the workers who have to do figure work like accounts clerks or those who have to do drawing work as in the office of an architect. If the office occupies the whole of the building the top floor may be given to this staff. If even this is not possible, the tables of the workers may be placed near the window.

**Artificial Light:** - Artificial lighting system is of four kinds:

- a. **Individual Desk Lighting:-** Each clerk is provided with a lamp in addition to the common light for the room. It is an expensive system and causes consumption of more electricity.
- b. **Direct light:-** In such a case lights with shades are suspended from the ceiling and thus the lights fall directly on the tables of the workers, such a system of lighting causes shadow.
- c. **Indirect light:-** Under this system the light fixtures are fitted facing the ceiling which in turn reflect it downward. Such a method reduces the glare and gives uniform distribution of light shadows. But it does not give intensity of light on the working surface.
- d. **Fluorescent Lights:-** Fluorescent tubes give a diffused light. This system of lighting has become very popular in the office. It is a cheap system of lighting. While fixing the tubes, care should be taken to avoid glare from the unshaded tubes which may cause distraction to clerks. The consumption of electricity is also less. Of course the installation costs are higher. LED lights are more in use these days as it helps in reduction of cost.





### **2.3.3 Cleanliness:-**

A modern well cleaned office will create a lasting impression on its workers and clients. A light bright and clean office contributes to staff morale. If the office is neat and clean it will not only contribute to the general health and well being of the clerks but also to the neatness and accuracy of the work put in by them and the workers will take a pride of their office.

Even though the office room is cleaned once a day dirt is bound to accumulate on the top of filing cabinets, shelves and behind almirahs, typewriting table, etc.. A definite program of special cleaning of such places, say every Monday or once in fortnight, should be laid down and strictly followed. Rooms should be swept every morning before the members of the staff reach the office. Tables and chairs and cupboards should be dusted after the floors have been swept.

**2.3.4 Sanitation:-** Maintaining a clean work environment is very important in preventing food borne illness, Bacteria grow on unsanitary surfaces and then contaminate food. Office is a place where the workers spend their lot of time every day. Insanitary conditions will affect their working capacity. The office should be free from bad odours. Proper cleaning of the office every day and spraying it with disinfectants and dousing will be conducive to sanitation. Toilets and urinals should be cleaned several times a day. Sufficient number of such conveniences should be provided according to the number of the workers in an office.

### 2.3.5 Heating and Air Conditioning

If the rooms of the workers are too cold or too hot they may feel uncomfortable and may not be able to concentrate fully on the job. Humidity of the right type is of utmost importance from the health point of view. Even heat in winters throughout the rooms will be an ideal system of heating. In summer exterior sunblinds or interior venetian blinds keep the office cool. The temperature of the room, if possible should be automatically regulated, if the rooms are hot, the clerks feel drowsiness and consequently may commit mistakes and there might be reduction in the output.



### 2.3.6 Noise

Noise is common complaint of staff in the offices. It causes distraction to the workers. It is sometimes the cause of irritation. It causes mistakes and delays. It causes fatigue to the workers. It may result in inefficiency of the workers. It decreases productivity especially for complex or difficult tasks. Noise may be

- 1). Internal
- 2) External

#### Internal Noise

The internal noise is usually caused by the following factors:

- i. Office Machines;
- ii. Creaking doors;

- iii. Talking by the clerks;
- iv. Clinging of the bells of telephones and call bells;
- v. Removal of chairs when the workers get up from their seats or the movements of the clerks or peons from one room to another.

## External Noise

The external noise is caused by [transportation systems](#), [motor vehicles](#), [aircraft](#), and [trains](#). Even the offices situated in busy streets and domestic areas are also conducive to external noise. The external noise can be reduced if the premises selected for office is away from these areas. Double windows with sufficient air space in between the two panes will reduce the noise from the street. Sound absorbent walls will go a long way to reduce the noise.

### 2.3.7 Health

Health of the employees cannot be overlooked as far as the provision of physical environment to the staff is concerned. Overcrowding in the rooms should be avoided as it affects the health of the staff. About 40 cubic feet of space should be provided per person. Clean and adequate drinking water should be available for the staff. Washing facilities should be provided where necessary. Clean and hygienic canteens can be set up in the offices where food can be supplied to the employees at subsidized rates. It should be located at a suitable place. Management of the canteen should be in the hands of the representatives of the employers and the employees to see that the quality and quantity sold is not below the standard.

### 2.3.8 Safety – First Aid Box, Fire, Accident etc.

A few measures for the safety of the workers are given below:

**First Aid Box.** One first Aid Box should be provided for every workers. The box should be in the charge of a person trained in First Aid. At least two or three members of the staff should be trained to render first aid in case of need. The first aid box should be at a convenient place.

**Fire Precaution.** Fire extinguishers should be provided. The workers should know how to use a fire extinguisher in case of emergency. Such fire extinguishers should be placed at convenient places. Fire exits and escape routes should be clearly marked. Fire alarm should be fixed and tested from time to time. The workers should be made familiar with those precautions.

**Accidents.** Offices are not usually dangerous places but still accidents do occur. The majority of accidents can be avoided by taking the correct safety measures. To avoid accidents, there should not be patholes on the floors. Carpets and durries should be mended if torn and frayed so that the clerks may not trip over while walking. Stairs must have railings. Files should not be placed on the top of the almirahs lest the clerk might not fell down. Steps ladders should be provided for high reaching shelves. To save the employees from electric wires, cords of heaters or fans should be regularly checked. Electric machines, switches and appliances should be tested from time to time to avoid accidents because of leakage. Razor blades should not be kept in the drawers of the tables. They should not be thrown on the floors after use.



Questions:

1. Indicate whether the statement is true or false:
  - a) Nearness of services is not an important factor in choosing the location.
  - b) Proper layout results in smooth flow of work.
  - c) Private office minimizes the movement of staff.
  - d) LED bulbs consume less wattage than fluorescent tubes.
  - e) Air-conditioner controls temperature as well as humidity.
  - f) Light music marks unwanted noise.
  - g) Air conditioner controls temperature as well as humidity.

## 2. Short Answer Type:

Write few lines on the following:

- a) Security in offices
- b) Noise control

- c) Air-conditioning
- d) Safety arrangements
- 3. “Layout is very important for office operations.” Explain
- 4. State the factors you will keep in mind while laying out an office for your organization.
- 5. Discuss ‘Office Lighting’ as an important physical facility. Also give chief characteristics of light.
- 6. Point out different psychological factors to be considered at the time of planning physical facilities in office.
- 7. Distinguish between:
  - i) Artificial lighting and natural lighting
  - ii) Air-conditioning and ventilation
  - iii) Security and secrecy
- 8. Why noise control is essential and how it can be achieved?
- 9. Discuss the importance of good working environment for the office staff
- 10. The modern tendency is to adopt open office instead of accommodating departments or sections in separate compartments.” State the advantages and disadvantages of an open office in comparison with separate rooms.
- 11. Differentiate between a Private and an Open office. Which is more suitable for secrecy point of view?

## **ASSIGNMENT**

1. While designing an office for your organization, draft a plan suggesting your boss about lighting, ventilation and furnishings for the office. Click the pictures and paste in your Project File.
2. Motivate your Junior Class students of your school in keeping cleanliness in their premises and guide them about different drawbacks of Noise Control.
3. Design and draw a small scale open office with the provision of accommodating 10-12 employees alongwith a Manager’s Room.
4. Plan the reception area of an Office.
5. As the Manager of the Company, plan and draw a proper layout of your office keeping in mind the working conditions of your office.

*“With the concept of Paperless Office, use of on-line forms is increasing while use of stationery is decreasing”*

### **Unit III**

## **OFFICE FORMS AND STATIONERY**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Office forms are printed piece of paper on which entries are made against the marked headings. It forms an integral part of any system and procedure in an office. It helps in collection of only required information briefly instead of writing down the whole information. Thus, it reduces the clerical work. Office forms further facilitate receiving and recording the information and help in arranging and processing the collected information.

With the increase in paper work, importance of stationery supplies is increasing. Arrangement for adequate and proper stationery and other office supplies is necessary to enable the office staff to perform their work efficiently and effectively.

### **3.1 Office Forms**

#### **3.1.1 Meaning of Office Forms:**

An office form is printed or cyclostyled piece of paper which has some fixed data required for some purpose. It provides blank spaces for variable data or information which the user of the form has to fill in. The persons using the form need not write the fixed data again and again. He has to fill in only the variable data. Thus, a form is piece of paper containing some information printed or reproduced by any method with blank spaces left for the entry of additional information by the person using it.

#### **Importance of Office Forms**

Forms are the basic tool of every office. Forms helps us to collect the data and bring together for use by the management. With the help of office forms, information can be collected, processed and supplied in a systematic way. Forms help in increasing the efficiency of office work. Forms also help in saving time and energy considerably by reducing the amount of manual or machine writing. Consequently, there will be reduction in the cost of office operations. Thus, printed forms have become an essential part of office procedure and nearly every office routine centres round one or more forms.

When you log in to [efileshare.com](http://efileshare.com) you will click on the Physician Referrals tab. There are 4 sections to the request (1. Start, 2. Patient, 3. Select Office and 4. Preview and Send). The fields below have numbers highlighted in yellow that correlate with these sections.

### ALABAMA MEDICAID AGENCY REFERRAL FORM

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_ Referral Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### RECIPIENT INFORMATION

Recipient Name <b>2. Name</b>	Recipient # <b>2. Policy Number</b>	Recipient DOB: <b>2. DOB</b>
----------------------------------	--	---------------------------------

#### PRIMARY PHYSICIAN

#### SCREENING PROVIDER (IF DIFFERENT)

Name <b>3. From</b>	Name <b>N/A to Efileshare</b>
Address <b>3. Information Auto Plugged</b>	Address <b>Can indicate difference in notes</b>
Telephone #: ( )	Telephone #: ( )
Fax #: ( ) <b>3. Information Auto Plugged</b>	Fax #: ( )
Provider #	Provider #
Signature	Signature

#### TYPE OF REFERRAL

Patient 1 <sup>st</sup> <b>3. Reason for Exam</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lock-in
<input type="checkbox"/> EPSDT Screening Date _____ <b>Will have to type in vs. checkbox</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Patient 1 <sup>st</sup> /EPSDT Screening Date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Case Management (TCM)	

#### LENGTH OF REFERRAL

Referral Valid for _____ month (s) or _____ visit (s) from referral date <b>1. Authorization Expires/Number of Visits</b>
---

#### REFERRAL VALID FOR

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Only <b>3. Other Notes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Treatment Only
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation and Treatment	<input type="checkbox"/> Hospital Care (Outpatient)
<input type="checkbox"/> Referral to other provider for identified condition <b>Will have to type in vs. checkbox</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Performance of Interperiodic Screening (if necessary)
<input type="checkbox"/> Referral to other provider for additional conditions (diagnosed by consultant)	
Reason for Referral: <b>3. Diagnosis codes required</b>	
Co-morbid Diagnosis:	

#### CONSULTANT INFORMATION

Consultant Name: <b>3. To Doctor/Facility</b>	Consultant Telephone #: ( ) <b>3. Auto plugged</b>
---	--

**Note: Please submit written report of findings including the date of examination/service, diagnosis, and consultant signature to primary physician.**

#### Please submit findings to Primary Physician by:

<input type="checkbox"/> Mail <b>Can be mailed</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fax # with area code
<input type="checkbox"/> E-mail <b>Returned e-mail</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In addition, please telephone

Form 362  
4/01/01

Alabama Medicaid Agency

## Advantages of Using Forms

The main advantages of using forms are as follow:

**1. Simplify the Office Procedure:** The office forms not only simplify the office procedure but also help establish a system. They prove helpful in reducing the volume of work considerably and also help in expediting the office work.

**2. Save Time:** With the use of Office forms, the need for recopying, repetition of standard information is eliminated which ultimately saves time.

- 3. Better Human Relations:** Employees are assured of keeping a proper record of their work, wages, bonus, etc. This builds confidence in the employees about the organisations efforts to protect their interests and this may promote better human relations in the organisation.
- 4. Reduce Chances of Mistake:** As the information to be collected is already known in advance to the persons handling office forms, the chances of mistakes and errors occurring are considerably reduced.
- 5. Preservation of Records:** Forms help to preserve records of business for filing and future reference in case of need.
- 6. Individual Responsibility:** Generally, forms have a column for the signature of the person who gathers the information at any stage. This helps in fixing individual responsibility.
- 7. Reduction in Cost of Office Operations:** The forms reduces the amount of manual or machine work which help in increasing the efficiency and output of each worker. Thus, the use of forms reduces the cost of office operations.
- 8. Help in Systematic Recording of Information:** Forms serve as a tool which assures that all necessary and relevant information is supplied and recorded in a systematic manner.
- 9. Better Customer Service:** By making use of the forms, the records of the customer can be preserved with greater ease. This enables the organisation to serve the customers better.

### **3.1.2 Computerization of office forms**

Computerization of office forms i.e; filling up of e-forms (electronic forms) is a computer version of paper form. It helps in eliminating the cost of printing, storing and distributing pre printed forms. The filling up of forms on computers is much faster as it automatically format, calculate and validate information for the user. It also facilitates the use of concept of digital signatures and routing of forms via e-mail which reduces the time of approval cycle. With electronic submission of completed forms, the cost of rekeying data and associated errors is eliminated. Thus filling up of forms electronically is an automated process to expedite communications and information transfer throughout the world.

#### **Offline and Online filling up of various types of forms:**

Form filling is the way to reduce office load and speed up on customer/client work process. Almost 1 billion forms need to fill each day all over the world. Most of the office works are



now ready to be outsourced through internet. In India 13 lakh companies and some of government agency are outsourcing their form filling works through internet.

The form filling does not come with a particular form and data. It may differ from company to company.

### **How to fill forms Online**

Before applying online, we must make it sure that we have all eligibility documents, scanned passport size photograph and signature for the pupose of uploading on official website.

- We need to know the official website of the conducting authority which is usually given in the advertisement and if not, can be simply found on Google Search.
- Filling up forms online is very simple. Only we have to login into the site and click on dashboard. There will be blank form and data option. Just click on blank form, a new form will appear and we will have to fill the desired columns. The main advantage of filling online forms is that we can apply while sitting at home if we have the internet facility. A little mistake in filling the application can reject our application so we should follow step by step procedure for filling up online. We should always enter our present address or valid mobile number and email ID for future communication. The scanned signatures and passport size photographs should be uploaded at the required box of the form. After successfully filling in all respect, we should take print out of duly filled form for future reference.

### **How to fill forms Offline:**

- Offline procedure to fill is simpler and only require the requisite format which is usually available on the official website of conduting body alongwith the notification and other important information.
- To apply offline, we need to fill all details first in respect of certificates/document that are to be attached with form, address where the application need to be posted and the most important thing is last date.

### **3.1.3 Principles of Form Designing**

Forms must be well-designed if they are to serve the purpose for which they are meant to be framed. In designing the forms, there is need to observe certain principles. A brief explanation of the principles is given here.

**1. Principle of use:** A form should be developed only if there is a need. Need for a form may arise due to reasons such as

- (i) The need for recording data in a systematic way
- (ii) The need to avoid the recording of certain data repeatedly
- (iii) The need to fix responsibility for the work done.

**2. Principle of Standardisation:** The Standardisation of form reduces cost and it also eliminates chances of confusion. A form may be standardised in respect of the quality of

papers, the number of copies to be printed, the colour of the paper, the method of producing it, etc.

**2. Principle of Centralised Control:** The design, use and replacement of office forms should be centrally controlled less than one executive who is responsible for their design, etc. If this is not done, new forms may continuously get added while old and outdate useless forms may also remain in use resulting in confusion.

**4. Principle of System Integration:** There is also the need to design the forms in such a way that they are harmoniously adjusted to the systems design. This helps in avoiding duplication of the information obtained or given.

**5. Principle of Ease OF Entry of Data:** Form designing should be such that it would facilitate the entry of data in the forms with ease. This depends to a great extent on the style of printing, writing surface, method of entry, proper sequence of information etc.

**6. Principle of Multiple uses:** There is the need to use a single form for more than one purpose in order to keep the number of forms to the minimum numbers. This helps in exercising a better control over the forms due to the smaller number and economy in their preparation and printing.

**7. Principle of Identification:** Form designing should facilitate the identification of the forms with ease. For example, the office manager may select different colours of paper and ink for printing forms according to the purpose for which they are meant.

### **3.2 OFFICE STATIONERY**

It has been found that the amount of stationery used in office is increasing year after year and consequently expenditure under this head is growing. Office stationery includes not only envelopes, letterheads, papers etc.. but it also includes printed forms, inks, pencils, erasers, gums carbon papers, pins file covers, typewriter ribbons etc. In office, much attention is paid to cash or goods lest they may be misappropriated but no or very little attention is paid to these items probably because this item is considered to be of least importance.

What kind of stationery should be purchased for an office, will depend upon the type of business being carried on and its financial position. One should remember that the quality of the stationery used in an office will impress others who are receiving letters, etc., from the office. Moreover a good quality paper is cheaper in the long run. The paper used for office copy may be of different colours to distinguish it from the main letter head. Stationery which is not required should not be purchased. Care should be taken to purchase the right type of stationery.

There are three aspects of stationery, viz. (1) The Quality of stationery, (2) cost of stationery, and (2) storing of stationery (receipt, storing and issue of stationery).

**3.2.1 Methods of purchasing stationery:** The expenditure on stationery in an office will depend upon several factors but one of them is efficient buying. Very large firms who use lot of stationery during the course of the year usually adopt any one of the following methods of purchasing stationery :

- a) Buying by tenders.
- b) Buying by asking quotations from the suppliers.
- c) Buying from the same supplier year after year.
- d) Buying from the travelling salesmen of the manufactures or suppliers.

**i) Tender System:** The Office Manager or the Chief Executive has to decide about the quality and the quantity of the stationery to be purchased. He has also to decide whether the supplies for the whole of the year should be purchased at a time or it should be spread over the year in three or four instalments. After deciding, the firm advertises in the newspapers inviting tenders specifying the quality and quantity to be purchased. On receipt of the tenders the prices are compared quoted by different companies and the order is placed with the firm demanding the lowest cost. Nowadays e-tendering system or Electronic Tendering System is being used. This system facilitates the online submission of tender from the advertisement of the requirement till the placing of the contract. This includes the exchange of all relevant documents in electronic format. This enables the firms to be more efficient as paper based transactions are reduced or eliminated, thereby facilitating speedy exchange of information.

### **Advantages of Tender System**

1. Instead of placing orders from time to time during the year whenever the stock of stationery is exhausted, order is placed only once and thus time is saved.
2. Discussion and bargaining in prices is avoided.
3. If the prices go up during the period of contract, the firm will have to pay the contracted price which is lower than the price prevalent in the market later on.
4. As the lowest tender is accepted, money is saved.
5. Requirements for the whole of the year need not be stocked and thus lock up the funds with the possibility of the stock getting old as the stock of stationery can be requisitioned from the suppliers by instalments according to the agreement.

### **Disadvantages of Tender system**

1. Experience has shown that the lowest tenderer is not always the best supplier.
2. There may be a possibility of the prices of stationery going down during the period of contract and thus the firm will have to pay higher price prevailing at the time of accepting the tender.

**ii) Quotation System:** Under this system, the firm writes letter of enquiry to the supplier or the manufacturer asking them to submit their quotations. Sometimes specimens of the stationery required are also sent to the supplier. This system is practically the same as that of asking for tenders except that the time of the firm in writing letters of enquiry to different firms is saved in the case of tender system.

**iii) Purchasing from the same Supplier:** Some firms do not follow the methods of purchasing stationery mentioned above but adhere to the old system and place

order year after year with the same suppliers. Whenever they stand in need of any particular item of stationery, they ask the suppliers to send that particular item. The disadvantage of this method is that the suppliers sometimes betray the confidence reposed in them by supplying the goods either of inferior quality or charge high prices.

- iv) **Purchasing from the Travelling Salesmen:** Manufacturers or wholesalers often send their travelling salesmen with samples to book orders, Experience has shown that the travelling salesmen do not always prove to be trustworthy. They show good samples but when the goods are supplied they may not be of the desired quality.

### 3.2.2 Purchase Procedure

A standard purchase procedure may consist of following steps:

- a). **Purchase requisition:** It is a request from various departments needing the stationery items. It is on the basis of purchase requisition, purchase department estimates the quantity and type of items required.
- b) **Deciding Quantity:** Large quantity or bulk order shall bring discount. However, quantity of items is decided by taking into account the stock in hand, consumption in a period, storage space available, risk of obsolescence and time needed to get the delivery etc. After knowing the quantity a source of supply is located.
- c) **Calling Quotation:** Quotations are called from the dealers who can supply the required items in desired quantity. Sometimes, tender system is followed to find out and decide the source of supply. On the basis of quotations received, price and other terms and conditions can be negotiated.
- d) **Placement of order:** An order is placed with the selected supplier. An order is placed in writing stating description of the items, brand names, rates, quantity and date of delivery. One copy of the order is kept in the office for record purpose.
- e) **Receipt of Supplies:** On receipt of supplies, items are inspected and checked with the order placed. If items are not in accordance with the sample, such fact may be brought of the notice of the suppliers.
- g) **Issue of stationery and supplies:** The issuing system should be such which would save time, energy and material. No items of supplier should be issued without requisition in writing and duly signed by supervisor. It is desirable that stationery should be issued to the department for a period. Issue should be made in specified units, for instance a rim of paper, a dozen of pens, a bottle of gum etc. Usually items are stored in unit packs. Every issue should be recorded in the issue registers. As soon as the stock reaches a minimum level, an order is placed with the selected supplier. An order is placed in writing stating description of the items, brand names, rates, quantity and date of delivery. One copy of the order is kept in the office for record purpose.

## PURCHASING PROCEDURE



### 3.2.3 Storing stationery

Minimum stock and efficient storage helps in keeping down stationery costs. Many losses arise due to over stocking and defective store keeping. Adequate attention is necessary towards storage of stationery and supplies. Proper storage ensures safety from leakages, spoiling, theft, pilferage, moisture etc., Ready availability of items, saving in cost, time and labour etc.

**Storeroom:** It is advisable to know something about storeroom where the stationery is to be stocked. In the case of very large firms, there should be separate storeroom for stationery which should be neat, clean and dry so that stationery may not get spoiled on account of the dampness of the room. It should be well ventilated and lighted. It should be centrally situated and should be under lock and key. It should have shelves preferably of steel to prevent the stationery being damaged by white ants, insects, etc. the shelves should be adjustable so that they may be adjusted according to the height of different items.



### **Receipt of Stationery from the supplier**

As soon as the stationery is received from the supplier, the same should be compared with the Invoice to find out if the items have been received as per the order. The next step is to make the entry of the items in the Stock Register. The purpose of purchasing stationery at the cheapest price will not be achieved unless a proper stock account is maintained. It is possible that when a particular item of stationery is required, one finds that it is out of stock and therefore it will have to be purchased locally which means higher rate and we may have to compromise with its quality also. Overstocking of stationery is also not advisable because it means unnecessarily locking up of funds and consequently some of the items of stationery like ink, eraser, typewriter ribbon, carbon papers, etc., may be spoiled by the lapse of time. To avoid such consequences, “Bin Cards” should be prepared for each item of stationery. A bin card is a document which keeps the track of every stationery item in the store-room. Whenever any stationery item is received or issued, the necessary entry is made to keep the stock updated. Control over stock can be more effective if Bin cards are in use as it also shows the maximum and minimum level of every stationery item. The specimen of the Bin Cards is given below:

Bin No.....  
Maximum Quantity.....  
Minimum Quantity.....  
Ordering Quantity.....

[illegible]

FROM: DEPT: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM	TYPE	QTY	ITEM	TYPE	QTY
Writing pads			Highlighter	Yellow	
Pencil	2B			Blue	
Mechanical Pencil				Pink	
Ball Pen	Black			Green	
	Blue			Orange	
	Red		Glue		
Staples Bullet	Big		Pencil Lead	Buncho	
	Small			Pilot	
Whiteboard Marker	Black		Eraser		
	Blue		Double Clip	Big	
	Red			Medium	
Permanent Marker	Black			Small	
	Blue		Loytape	Big	
	Red			Small	
Correction Pen			Post-it note pads	Medium	
Ruler	Long			Small	
	Short		Puncher	Small	
Paper Clip	Big		Exercise Book		
	Small		Stapler	Small	
Scissors			Stapler Remover		
Magazine box file			Sharpener		
Manila File	Pocket		Calculator		
	Holder		Fancy Card		
L Shape Folder	A4		Name Card Album		
Diskette			CD-R-Verbatim		
Plastic Holder	Holes		Cutter Knife		

Folder	Notes	Cutter Knife
Please add here any additional items not mentioned above		

Please add here any additional items not mentioned above					

HOD Approval \_\_\_\_\_

ITEMS RECEIVED

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.2.4 Control on consumption of Stationary

Following points can be considered to check waste and control costs.

**Fixing responsibility:** The department signing the requisition should be held responsible for consumption and cost of issued material should be charged to the department making requisition.

**Standardized units of consumption:** Standard specification should be prepared for all supplies used in the office. These items should be packed in easily dispensable quantities to avoid waste. Consumption of these items be checked and supervised by:

**1. Proper selection:** Economy in consumption can be achieved through proper selection of items. For instance, use of ball pens may save use of ink; blotting papers etc. standard brands should be preferred. Proper quantity may help in reducing the cost.

**2. Method of purchase:** A proper procedure for purchase be adopted and method of purchase should be decided after analysis of various methods. Adopting one best method shall help in reducing costs.

**2. Proper use of Stationery:** To reduce the cost of consumption of stationary, it must be used properly. Following are few hints.

- i) Use both sides of paper for correspondence.
- ii) Provide half size stationery for short correspondence.
- iii) Substitute post cards for letter to save postage, envelope etc.
- iv) Use spoiled papers for scratch pads.
- v) Minimize the use of red and black ribbons.
- vi) Reuse pins, clips, rubber bands etc.

### 3.3 Maintenance of Stock Register:

Stock Register is a register to keep the record of receipts and issues of stock items. It is kept in charge of the store keeper of the concerned department. It is an essential part of the store to keep the record of the items in the store. One can easily find the items in the store just viewing the stock register.

**Types of Stock Registers:** There are generally two types of stock registers:

Consumable Stock Registers

Non-consumable stock Registers

**Consumable Stock Register** is a register that is used to keep the record for the consumable items. These items can be issued at any time after the purchase.

**Non consumable or Permanent Stock Register** is a register that is for the items that are permanent and not consumable.

#### Receipt Voucher:

Whenever a new item is purchase it is first taken of receipt voucher with all details from where the items have been got and by whom it is purchased, date of purchase and quantity of the items, price of the item and the total price of all the items purchased. A proper number is given to the voucher along with the date.

**Starting a new Stock Register:** After keeping the record of the items received on the receipt voucher next step is to take the items on the stock register. When a new register is started, first of all page number is given to all the pages and then a certificate is given saying that this register contains .... number of pages. If the register contains 100 pages then we can



give a certificate that this register contains 100 pages. After that index page is prepared giving the details of the items and their page numbers. Each item should be entered on a separate page.

**Entry in the Stock Register:** These items are then entered into the stock registers. At the end there is a column that must be signed by the store keeper. In the first column the voucher number and the date is entered.

### **Physical Verification of Stock:**

Physical verification of stock is an important part of the company's control over assets. It is intended to verify the accuracy of inventory records and to assign the proper carrying value to that inventory so that those assets are properly reflected in the financial records of the Company.

Purpose of Stock Verification

1. To support the value of stock shown in the balance sheet through physical verification;
2. To verify the accuracy of stock records;
3. To disclose the possibility of fraud, theft or loss, or deterioration; and
4. To reveal the weakness of the system if any (i.e. whether the stock is in safe custody).

### **Exercises**

1. "Forms have become an essential part of office procedure." Discuss the Statement highlighting advantages of using office forms.
2. What do you mean by office forms? How important are they for an office?
3. What are the advantages of Office forms?
4. What is the procedure of filling offline form? What are its drawbacks?
5. What is the latest method of fill online forms? What are its advantages?
6. What points should be kept in mind while designing forms for your office?
7. What are the different methods of purchasing stationery? Which method proves to be economical
8. What is e-tendering?
9. What is the procedure of purchasing stationery for an office.
10. Write short note on the store room for stationery
11. Enumerate various methods used for purchasing bulk stationery in an organization.
12. How can we put a control on consumption of stationery in our office
13. What is the procedure of maintaining Stock Registers in Stationery Department?
14. Why physical verification of stock is important?

*Communication makes the world go round. It facilitates human connections, and allows us to learn, grow and progress. It's not just about speaking or reading, but understanding what is being said – and in some cases what is not being said. – Richard Branson*

## **UNIT 4**

### **COMMUNICATION**

#### **Introduction**

Communication plays key role in the success of a secretary. It is nearly impossible to go through a day without the use of communication. Any information or transaction which is sent out and received by two or more people is called Communication. Information can be in the form of facts, ideas, concepts, opinions, instructions etc.. How much professional knowledge and intelligence you may have it becomes immaterial if you are not able to communicate effectively with your boss and others to create understanding in them. Directing abilities of a Manager mainly depend upon his communication skills. That is why organisation always emphasises on improving communications skills of all employees. Communication is a process by which meanings or thoughts are exchanged between individuals through a mutually understood language or symbol.

#### **Objectives**

At the end of the chapter, you will be able to:

- Define communication
- Understand the meaning and importance
- Know the essentials of communication
- Type and Method of communication
- Know the various means of communication

#### **4.1 MEANING, IMPORTANCE AND TYPES OF COMMUNICATION**

##### **Communication**

The word communication has been derived from the Latin word “Communis” which means ‘common’ which implies common understanding or opinion. Communication is defined in different ways. Generally, it is understood as a process of exchange of ideas, view, facts, feeling etc., between or among people to create common understanding.

Thus communication is the process of exchange of information between two or more persons to reach common understanding. It may be conveyed by written or spoken words or through actions, gestures, signs or symbols etc.

In business, it is a key function of management where organization cannot operate without communication between two or more level, departments and employees.

### **Importance of communication**

Communication serves as foundation to planning. It has been estimated that a secretary spends most of the time in communicating-reading, writing listening, guiding, instructing, approving, etc. Effectiveness of a secretary depends significantly on her/his ability to communicate effectively with the superiors, subordinates and external agencies such as banker, supplier, union and government etc.

Communication serves as the lubricant fostering for the smooth management and can be judged from the following:

- I. Communication acts as basis of coordination. It provides coordination among departments, activities and persons in the organisation
- II. Communication makes possible for the smooth and unrestricted working of the enterprise all organisational interactions depends on communications.
- III. Communication provides required information for decision making
- IV. Communication is essential for quick and effective performance of managerial functions.
- V. Efficient operation is the aim of all prudent management. It promotes cooperation and industrial peace.
- VI. Communications is the basis of leadership and it helps in establishing effective leadership
- VII. An efficient system of communication enables management to motivate, influence and satisfy the employees. Thus it boosts their morale and provides motivation.

### **4.1.3 TYPES OF COMMUNICATION—FORMAL AND INFORMAL**

Communication taking place within an organization may be broadly classified as formal and informal communication.

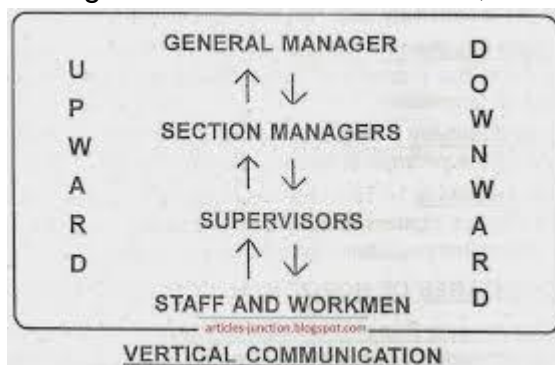
#### **Formal communication**

Formal communication flows through official channels designed in the organisation chart. This communication may take place between a superior and subordinate or among same cadre employees or managers. The communications may be oral or written but is generally recorded and filed in the office.

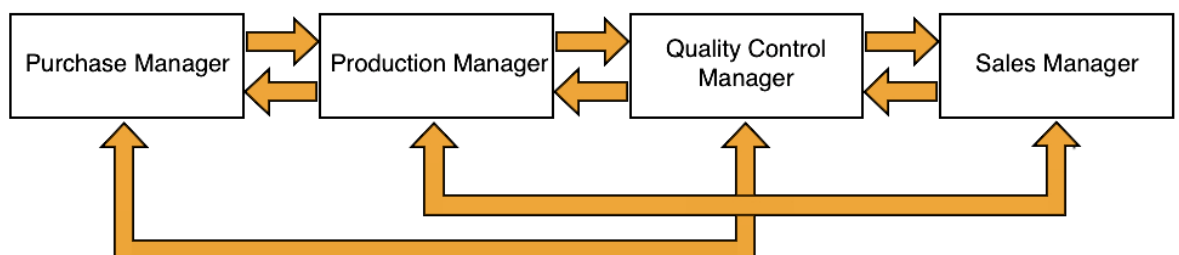


Formal communication may be further classified as – Vertical and horizontal.

- i) **Vertical** communication flows vertically i.e., upward or downward through formal channels. Upward communication refers to flow of communication from subordinate to superior whereas downward communication flows from superior to subordinate. The examples of upward communication are – application for grant of leave, submission of progress report, request for grants etc. Similarly, the examples of downward communication include – sending notice to employees to attend a meeting, ordering subordinates to complete an assigned work, passing on guidelines framed by top management to subordinates etc.,



- ii) **Horizontal** or lateral communication takes place between one division and another. For example, a production manager may contact marketing manager to discuss about schedule of product delivery, design, quality etc.



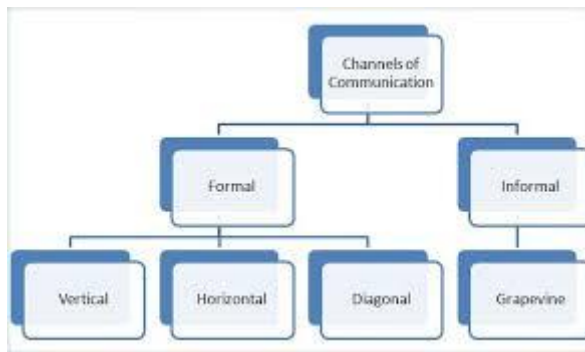
The pattern through which communication flows within the organization is generally indicated through communication network. Different types of communication networks are presented and discussed as below:

- 1) Single chain: This network exists between a superior and subordinates. Since many levels exist in an organisation structure, communication flows from every superior to his subordinate through single chain.
- 2) Wheel: In wheel network, all subordinates under one superior communicate through him only as he acts as a hub of the wheel. The subordinates are not allowed to talk among themselves.
- 3) Circular: In circular network the communication moves in a circle. Each person can communicate with adjoining two persons. In this network, communication flow is slow.
- 4) Free flow : In this network, each person can communicate with others freely. The flow of communication is fast this network.
- 5) Inverted: In this network, a subordinate is allowed to communicate with his immediate superior as well as his superior as well as his superior. However, in later case, only prescribed communication takes place.

### **Informal communication**

Communication that takes place without following the formal lines of communication is said to be informal system of communication. Informal system of communication is generally referred to as the 'grapevine' because it spreads throughout the organisation with its branches going out in all directions in utter disregard to the levels of authority.

The informal communication arises out of needs of employees to exchange their views, which cannot be done through formal channels. Workers chit chatting in canteen about the behaviour of the superior, discussing about rumours that some employees are likely to be transferred are some examples of informal communication spreads rapidly and sometimes gets distorted. It is very difficult to detect the source of such communication. It also leads to generate rumours which are not authentic. People behaviour is affected by rumours and informal discussions and sometimes may hamper work environment. Sometimes, grapevine channels may be helpful to the manager at times. Informal channels are used by the managers to transmit information so as to know the reactions of his/her subordinates. An intelligent manager should make use of positive aspects of informal channels minimise Grapevine network



Grapevine communication may follow different types of network. Some of these networks are shown in figure given below.

- In single strand network, each person communicates to other in sequence.
- In gossip network, each person communicates with all on non-selective basis.
- In probability network the individual communicates randomly with other individual.
- In cluster, the individual communicates with only those people whom he trusts. Of these four types of networks, cluster is the most popular in organisations.

## 4.2 ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION PROCESS

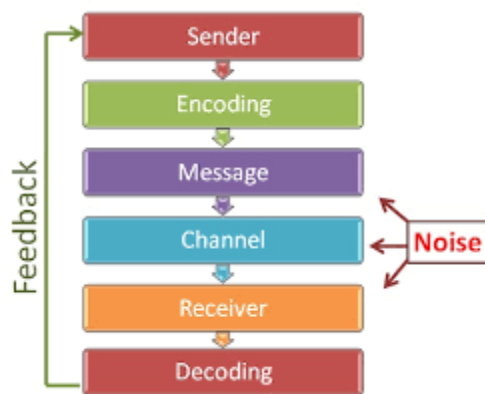
Communication has been defined as a process which involves elements like source, encoding, noise and feedback. The process is represented in the figure.

The elements involved in communication process are explained below:

- I. Sender: sender means p[erson who conveys his thoughts or ideas to the receiver the sender represents source of communication.
- II. Message: It is the content of ideas, suggestions, order etc. intended to be communicated.
- III. Encoding: It is the message into communication symbols such as words, pictures, gestures etc.
- IV. Media: It is the path through which encoded message is transmitted to receiver the channel may be in written form, face to face, phone call, internet etc.
- V. Decoding: It is the process of the sender.
- VI. Receiver: The process who receives communications of the sender.
- VII. Feedback: It includes all those actions of receiver indicating that he has received and understood message of sender.

VIII. Noise: Noise means some obstruction or hindrance to communication. This hindrance may be caused to sender, message or receiver. Some examples of noise are:

- A. Ambiguous symbols that lead to faulty encoding.
- B. A poor telephone connection.
- C. An inattentive receiver.
- D. Faulty decoding (attaching wrong meanings to message).
- E. Prejudices obstructing the poor understanding of message.
- F. Gestures and postures that may distort the message.



### 4.3 METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

The two most common methods of communication are Verbal (ORAL and WRITTEN) and non verbal communication.

**4.3.1 Verbal communication:** When information and messages is communicated through words, it is a Verbal communication. It may be of two types – Oral or Written Communication.

**Oral communication** is information spoken by mouth; the use of speech, face to face conversation or through devices like telephone, loudspeaker, dictating machines etc. The other modern forms of oral communication are presentations at meetings, video conferencing and video phones which allows us to both see and speak with the person available at a distant location. Podcasts includes audio clips which can be accessed through internet and Voiceover Internet Protocol (VoIP) which allows caller to communicate over the internet without any telephone charges are the latest modes of oral communication. Skype is an example of VoIP

The advantages of oral channels of communication are:

- a) Oral communication is fast. If the time is limited and the business matter requires quick resolution, telephone conversation is better option than written communication;
- b) It is more personal and less formal;
- c) It is based on two- way communication and therefore promote an understanding of the real information need(s) and the communication of relevant information;
- d) It is flexible. Different aspects of an issue can be discussed better and decisions can be reached more quickly.
- e) It is especially effective in case of conflicts or disputes. Matters can be talked over in a better way and reach to the settlements and agreements.
- f) Oral communication is the best way to promote employee morale and arouse enthusiasm among the employees.

The disadvantages of oral channels of communication are:

- a) The majority of transactions in an organisation require written proof which is not possible with oral communication
- b) It can lead to misconceptions because the information is sometimes incomplete (lack of detail etc.)

### Oral Communication

Face to face Communication	Mechanical devices Communications
1 Face to Face Talk	1 Telephonic conversation
2 Interviews	2 Loud speaker system
3 Lectures	3 Recorded messages
4 Meetings	4 Wireless system
	5 Dictating machines
	6 Mobile system

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:** A medium for communication that entails the written words in the form of letters, email and manuals are forms of written communication. In this type of communication messages are sent internally/externally through written words, reports, memos etc.

Some of the main advantages and disadvantages of written communication are:



## **ADVANTAGES**

- Written communication is good for complicated and vital instructions, which can be given in a precise and uniform manner.
- There is a lesser chance for the message to be misunderstood.
- Written instructions can be checked at a later date. It serves as a useful reference.
- Authority is transmitted more effectively with a written order than with an oral one

## **DISADVANTAGES**

- It is impersonal.
- People may not always read them.
- It does not answer questions and there is no immediate feedback.

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Written communication	
Messenger Service	Mechanical Aids
1 Office messengers	1 Telex messages
2 Inter mail service	2 Telefax
3 Postal Communication	3 E-mail
4 Courier service	

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### **4.3.2 Non Verbal Communication**

Non verbal communication is the process of communication which is done through sending and receiving wordless messages. When message or information without any spoken or written words, it is called Non verbal communication. This communication takes place through gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, physical proximity, postures, signals etc. This mode of communication is quite vague and imprecise.

## **4.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

The problem to effective communication exists in all organisations to a greater or lesser degree. Organisations keen on developing effective communication should adopt suitable measures to overcome such problems and improve communication effectiveness some such measures are indicated below:

- I. **Clarify the ideas before communication:** The problem to be communicated to subordinates should be clear in all its perspective to the executive himself. The entire problem should be studied in depth, analysed and stated in such a manner that is clearly conveyed to subordinates.

- II. **Communicate according to the needs of receiver:** The level of understanding of receivers should be crystal clear to the communicator. Manager should adjust his communication according to the education and understanding levels of subordinates.
- III. **Call others before communicating:** Before actually communicating the message, it is better to involve other in developing a plan for communication. Participation and involvement of subordinate may help gain ready acceptance and willing cooperation of subordinates.
- IV. **Be aware of language, tone and content of message :** The contents of the message, tone, language used , manner in which the message is to be communicated are the important aspects of effective communication. The language used should not offend the sentiments of listener. The message should be stimulating to evoke response from the listeners.
- V. **Convey things of help and value to listeners:** While conveying message to others, it is better to know the interests and needs of the people with whom you are communication. If the message relates directly or indirectly to such interests and needs it certainly evokes response from communicate.
- VI. **Ensure proper feedback:** The communicator may ensure the success of communication by asking questions regarding the message conveyed. The receiver of communication may also be encouraged to respond to communication. The communication process may be improved by the feedback received to make it more responsive.
  - **Communicate for present as well as future:** Generally communication is needed to meet the existing commitments, to maintain consistency, the communication should aim at future goals of the enterprise also.
  - **Follow up communications:** There should be regular follow up and review on the instructions given to subordinates. Such follow up measures help in removing hurdles if any in implementing the instructions.
  - **Be a good listener:** one should be a good listener. Patient and attentive listening solves half of the problems managers should also give indications of their interest in listening to their subordinates.

#### 4.5 BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Communication is the nervous system of an enterprise. It is said to be No. 1 management problem today. "It serves as the lubricant, fostering for the smooth operations of management process." Thus, it is very essential for the management to maintain an efficient flow of communication in all directions. But in practice, all messages are not effectively transmitted or received. Several obstructions, blockades, hurdles, stoppages or bottlenecks, called barriers to communication, distort the message and make communication ineffective. These communication

barriers lead to misunderstanding and conflict between men-living in the same community working on the same job and even persons living in different parts of the world who even do not know each other. A large number of managerial problems is the result of ineffective or faulty communication. Significant improvement in managerial efficiency can be made if communication barriers are toned down or minimised. Some of the important barriers to communication have been discussed below:

1. **Physical Barriers.** A communication is a two-way process, distance between the sender and the receiver of the message in an important barrier to communication. Noise and environment factors also block communication.
2. **Personal Barriers.** Personal factors like difference in judgement, social values, inferiority complex, bias attitude, pressure of time, inability to communicate, etc. widen the psychological distance between the communicator and the communicatee.
3. **Semantic or Language Barriers.** Semantic is the science of meaning. The same words and symbols carry different meanings to different people. Difficulties in communication arise when the sender and the receiver of the message use words or symbols in different senses. The meaning intended by the sender may be quite different from the meaning followed by the receiver. People interpret the message in terms of their own behaviour and experience. Sometimes, the language used by the sender may not at all be followed by the receiver.
4. **Status Barriers (Superior-Subordinate Relationship)** - Status or position in the hierarchy of an organisation is one of the fundamental barriers that obstructs free flow of information. A superior may give only selected information to his subordinates so as to maintain status difference. Subordinates, usually, tend to convey only those things which the superiors would appreciate. This creates distortion in upward communication. Sometimes, "the superior conditions or results which may affect adversely on his ability and judgement. To do so would undermine his position as a superior being in the formal organisation." This causes distortion in downward communication. A subordinate may also feel reluctant to report his shortcomings or may not seek clarification on instructions which are subject to different interpretations for fear of loss of prestige in the eyes of the superior.
5. **Organisational Structure Barriers.** Effective communication largely depends upon sound organisational structure. If the structure is complex involving several layers of management, the breakdown or distortion in communication will arise. It is an established fact that every layer cuts off a bit of information. In the words of W.C. Bennis, "communication gets distorted particularly as it goes up the hierarchy." Moreover, information travelling through formal structure introduces rigidity and causes delay because of long lines of communication. Similarly, lack of instructions for further conveying

information to the subordinates and heavy pressure of work at certain levels of authority also act as barriers to effective communication.

6. **Barriers due to Inadequate Attention.** Inadequate attention to the message makes communication less effective and the message is likely to be misunderstood. Inattention may arise because of over business of the communicate or because of the message being contrary to his expectations and beliefs. The simple failure to read notice, minutes and reports is also a common feature. Whatever is the reason, communication remains only a one-way process and there is no understanding of the message, if the receiver pays little attention to the message.
7. **Premature Evaluation.** Some people have the tendency to form a judgement before listening to the entire message. This is known as premature evaluation. Premature evaluation distort understanding and acts as a barrier to effective communication.
8. **Emotional Attitude.** Barriers may also arise due to emotional attitude because when emotions are strong, it is difficult to know the frame fo mind of her person or group. Emotional attitudes of both, the communicator as well as the communicate, obstruct free flow of transmission and understanding of message.
9. **Resistance to Change.** It is a general tendency of human beings to stick to old and customary patterns of life. They may resist change to maintain status quo. Thus, when new ideas are being communicated to introduce a change, it is likely to be overlooked or even opposed. This resistance to change creates an important obstacle to effective communication.
10. **Barriers due to lack of Mutual Trust.** Communication means sharing of ideas in common. When we communicate, we are trying to establish commonness. Thus, one will freely transfer information and understanding with another only when there is mutual trust between the communicator and the communicate, the message is not followed. A credibility gap, i.e., inconsistency in saying and doing, also causes lack of mutual trust which acts as a basic obstacle to effective communication.
11. **Other Barriers.** There may be many other barriers, such as unqualified assumption, lack of ability to communicate, mirage of too much knowledge or closed minds, communication overload, shortage of time etc., which cause distortion or obstruction in the free flow of communication and thus make it ineffective. Failure to retain or store information for future use becomes a barrier to communication when the information is needed in future.

#### 4.6 TELEPHONE ETIQUETTES

The following etiquette should be followed while talking on the telephone:-

1. Pick up or answer the telephone before the third ring.

2. Some words that you should use in your conversations on telephone are "Hello! Good Morning/ Good Afternoon/ Good Evening".
3. Speak clearly and identify yourself.
4. If the caller does not introduce himself/ herself, say , " May I know who is speaking?"
5. In case the caller does not tell to whom he/ she wants to talk to , then you may ask questions like "May I know to whom you want to talk to?"
6. In case you have to take a message then you may say "I'm sorry, he's busy at the moment. May I take a message?" or May I take your name and number and have him/ her call you back? (Be sure to write down the name, phone number, time the caller had called and the message).
7. Ask the caller to wait while you acquire the information required.
8. Do not make the caller wait for more than two minutes. It is better to return a call than to keep someone on hold for too long. Do not forget to return the call.
9. At the end of the waiting period, please express your gratitude for caller's patience.
10. Keep your conversation to the point
11. End the conversation with gratitude.
12. Always use a pleasant and friendly tone.
13. Before placing a caller on hold, ask his/her permission first. For example, "could you please hold the line, while I call the person."
14. Avoid leaving long messages.
15. Do not interrupt the person while he/she is talking to you.
16. Do not answer the phone if you are eating. You should mention that you are having your meal and you will call back after you have finished.
17. When hanging up the phone, make sure the caller hangs up first.

## **CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

### **Short questions.**

1. Briefly explain the process of communication.
2. Explain the two types of communications.
3. What is the importance of communication?
4. Name four means of communications.
5. Name the two most common modes of communication.
6. Write short note on physical barriers.
7. What is non-verbal communication
8. Give two example of noise.
9. Why understanding of Communication Cycle is important for effective communication?
- 10.
11. Identify mode of communication in the following.  
✓ X instructed Y to carry out the task in 2 days.---

- ✓ Y submitted a report to X.-----
- ✓ X commented on the report over the telephone.-----
- ✓ Y accepted and sent a reply through E-mail.-----

**Long Questions.**

1. Explain the meaning of oral and written communication and give two merits and demerits each.
2. Give any five Importance of communication.
3. How does informal communication exist and help formal communication in achieving objectives.
4. How can one effectively communicate? Explain.
5. State the points the secretary has to keep in mind while attending telephone calls.
6. Write a short note discussing any two important barriers of communication
7. Explain how noise becomes hindrance to communication process.
8. What are the characteristics of effective communication?

*“The first rule of any technology used in a business is that automation applied to an efficient operation will magnify the efficiency. The second is that automation applied to an inefficient operation will magnify the inefficiency. - Bill Gates”*

## **Unit V**

### **Office Machines**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The rapid increase in the industrial technologies have given rise to the use of office machines. Apart from this, with the advent of information technology, the paper work has been considerably reduced in offices over the years. Various office equipments are being used frequently in handling the office work speedily and effectively.

Nowadays, a modern office depends completely on office machines. Office equipment is being used in order to standardise office work, as the same has assumed importance due to globalisation. Further, many of the routine office functions viz. typing, copying, mailing, filing, communication etc which are of repetitive and monotonous nature, can be performed with much ease, accuracy and at less cost with the help of office machines. The use of machines help in the improvement of performances, safeguard the files and increases the accuracy.

In this chapter, we will learn about various office equipment which have brought about automation of office activities.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

At the end, you will be able to

- Know the importance of using office equipment and machines.
- Explain the objectives of office mechanisation and describe its advantages and disadvantages.
- Identify various types of office equipments and machines
- Describe the main features and uses of accounting machines, computer, mail room equipments, telephone, fax paper shredder etc.

## 5.1 Meaning, advantages and disadvantages of Mechanisation

### Meaning of Mechanisation

Mechanisation may be defined as replacement of manual labour by office machines. The mechanical and electronic devices aid to office works. They range from calculators to computers.

A lot of secretary's time is used in document preparation, filing, mail handling, communicating, making travel arrangements etc. Use of various office equipment, machinery and software is helpful in carrying out such office functions. At the management level, computers and various softwares are being used in decision making, solving complex problems etc.

Mechanisation in the office has the following basic objectives:

- i. **Saving of time:** Machines turn out more work than what is manually possible. They work faster and thus there is considerable saving of time.
- ii. **Saving of labour:** Office machines are labour saving devices. Large volume of work can be handled by fewer employees and thus there is saving of labour.
- iii. **Increasing accuracy:** One of the objectives of using machines is accuracy of work especially in accounting, computation and calculations. They minimise clerical errors.
- iv. **Reduction of monotony:** The repetitive nature of office work is generally monotonous and cause boredom. Human labour can be spared of these effects when machines are used.
- v. **Reduction of chances of fraud:** Machines like cash Register etc. put check on frauds and misappropriation of funds to a considerable level.
- vi. **Improving quality of work:** Written work produced with the help of machines is usually neat, clean and uniform in appearance.
- vii. **Ensuring better control:** Mechanisation of office enables the management to exercise more effective control over activities. For example, the use of Time Recorder/ biometric attendance at the factory gate ensures better control over attendance.
- viii. **Improving goodwill:** The use of machines results in better service to the customers and public. This enhances the prestige of the organisation.

### Advantages and Disadvantages of Mechanisation

There are number of advantages and disadvantages of office mechanisation.



## Advantages:

1. **Reduction in operation costs:** Office machines are labour saving devices. They save manual effort and increase productivity and thus lead to overall reduction in operating costs.
2. **Higher efficiency:** The speed of work is greatly increased with the use of machines. This results in higher efficiency on account of saving in time. Written material is generally neat and legible.
3. **Greater accuracy:** Mechanisation ensures accuracy of work, prevents clerical errors and provides for automatic checking of the documents.
4. **Relieves monotony:** A job of repetitive nature creates boredom and monotony amongst the employees. This monotony of routine work is reduced with the help of machines. This gives considerable satisfaction to office staff.
5. **Effective control:** Mechanisation enables management to exercise more effective control over office activities. For example, data can be analysed by computers promptly to check the work done quickly.
6. **Better service:** The use of machines results in improvement of office services and activities. For example, the invoices, statements and other documents are prepared in legible form and distributed and despatched **more promptly. This enhances the popularity of the organisation.**
7. **Standardisation:** The use of machines facilitates standardisation of the work done in terms of qualitative output. This enhances working spirit and better coordination between the employees.

## Disadvantages:

There are certain limitations associated with mechanisation of office services. These limitations are outlined below:

- 1) **Heavy investment:** Many office machines like computer require huge initial investment. Generally it may not be possible to make the maximum use of a costly machine. An idle machine is as wasteful as idle labour.
- 2) **High maintenance cost:** Machines require periodical repair, cleaning, oiling and maintenance. This involves an additional cost for the organisation. Apart from this, running cost may also be very high. Breakdown of machine may cause considerable loss.
- 3) **Cost of skilled operators:** Special skills are required for operating machines and it is necessary to pay more for skilled employees and trained staff. Money has also to be spent on the training of office staff.
- 4) **Problem of changing existing system:** Machines purchased for specialised jobs cannot be adapted to new systems. Machines make the existing system less flexible.

- 5) **Employees resistance:** Employees generally do not like installation of machines due to fear of unemployment and losing their jobs.
- 6) **Risk of obsolescence:** Some machines are liable to become obsolete in a relatively short period of time. The wastage is greater if the machine is comparatively expensive.

## 5.2 Factors in selection of Office Machines

When purchase of any machine is justified, the next step is to make a choice of the machine. There is a wide range of every type of machine available in the market and the technology also changes very frequently so it becomes very difficult to select the type of machine to be purchased at that time.

The factors which should be considered or taken into account at the time of purchase of machines are:-

- a) **Ease of operation** –The machine selected should have easy and fast operation, less fatigue, and possibility of fewer errors and good results. . While purchasing, the operating system, control keys and other elements should also be taken into account. Thus, simplicity in operation will reduce the expenditure in training the staff.
- b) **Durability** – As the machines is to be used by different people under various conditions, the machine should be durable in use.
- c) **Flexibility** – Unless, there is enough work to keep a highly specialized machine busy, it is better to select that machine which can be used for different types of work. In the absence of this flexibility, the purchase for machine would not be justified at all.
- d) **Portability** – As certain machines have to be frequently moved from one place to other, the machines purchased should be compact, light in weight without compromising with the efficiency and quality of machine.
- e) **Adaptability** – If a machine can be used without disturbing the existing system, it would be advisable to select that machine which do not require major changes in form of records and other adjustments in existing procedure.
- f) **Service-** The continuous performance of the machine requires proper maintenance & quick repairs. After-sales-service should be available locally and immediately.
- g) **Operating cost** –When the machine is in operation, its operating cost should be minimum. It includes such things, like supplies, the space occupied, the special equipment and forms required for its operation, repairs and training, etc.
- h) **Reputation of the supplier** – It is very difficult to judge or decide the reputation of the supplier whose claim is high in order to sell their machines or

machinery. Thus, it has to be kept in mind to verify the fact claimed by the supplier from the already users of that machine and decide about the reputation of the supplier.

### 5.3 Kinds of Office Equipment/Machines

A wide variety of machines has come into use in modern offices. There are machines which give print-like impression and can write many times faster than the most expert penman. There are machines which can produce multiple copies of a document. Machines are available for accounting, calculating and counting cash. Electronic computers can read, store, analyse and interpret information quickly. In mail room, letters can be opened, sealed, folded, franked, weighed and addressed automatically with the help of mailing machines. Messages can be sent from one place to another within no time through computer, fax and telephone.

Some important machines are discussed as under.

#### i) COPYING MACHINES

Many-a-times, there arises need for making many copies of a circular, form, report or such other documents. Necessary equipment for reprography work has to be provided in the office itself for convenience and to avoid delays.

A number of methods are used for copying and duplicating. Due to fast changing technology, new processes, procedures and equipments are being introduced constantly. Stencil duplicator and photocopier are two widely used equipment for making copies.

#### Photocopying Machine

A photocopier (also known as a copier or copy machine) is a machine that makes paper copies of documents and other visual images quickly and cheaply. Most current photocopiers use a technology called xerography, a dry process using heat. (Copiers can also use other output technologies such as ink jet, but xerography is standard for office copying.)



**Digital Copying Machines:** Digital copying machines scan the text and images to create digital data and printing documents. These machines use optical and lens

technologies. In addition to copying, these machines offer faxing, printing, and scanning. A digital copying machine is made up of an input unit (scanner) for reading documents as digital data. A laser unit that uses laser light to form images based on the scanned data, and an output unit (printer) prints the image formed.



## ii) **ACCOUNTING MACHINES**

Every office has to provide accounting services to the organisation. These services may be provided manually or with the help of Accounting Machines. The mechanisation of accounting is becoming increasingly important in large organisations as they have to cope with a large amount of figure work. Accuracy and speed are the main features of accounting machines and it enables analysis of various types of figures for different purposes within few minutes.

Accounting Machines have various advantages viz. legibility and tidiness of entries, checking of accuracy, printing of balances, cumulative totalling and preparation of payroll, pay slip etc.

Some of the common types of accounting machines are :-

### **Adding and Calculating Machines**

Adding machines are used for several clerical operations e.g., listing of cheques and invoices, totalling payments by cheque or cash, preparing trial balance, tallying wage payments, checking cash balances, preparing sales analysis and preparing cost-sheets.

A calculating machine can perform a variety of functions: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, percentages, square and cube roots etc.

These machines contribute greatly to office efficiency by eliminating routine mental calculations. They also perform a variety of functions with speed and accuracy. Calculations become very easy instead of burdensome work. However, the regular use of these machines may cause lot of dependence on them thus causing loss of mental ability in calculations.



## **Book keeping Machines**

Book keeping machines help in posting entries in cash book, journal, ledgers, etc. Debit and credit entries are posted easily in these books. These machines contribute greatly to office efficiency and economy in staffing and can perform a variety of functions with speed and accuracy. Calculations become a pleasure instead of monotonous work. The main drawbacks are the machines are expensive for small offices and they cause dependence which may sometimes cause delay in work.

## **Cash Register**

These machines record on paper roll cash receipts. The customers in departmental stores need receipts and cash memos. The operator receives the amount, and issues receipt or cash memo. The machine prints the amounts on rolled paper which is visible through a glass panel on the top of the machine. It automatically records cumulative total of receipts. At the close of the day, the owner or manager can open the machine to know the total sales. The amount can be checked with the cumulative total. The merits of the equipment are:

- a) The record of cash receipts are neat, clean and accurate.
- b) There is no chance of arithmetical errors.
- c) Any time the total amount of sale can be known.
- d) The chances of fraud are eliminated.
- e) Duplicate copy of receipt is not needed.

The main drawbacks are :

- a) Correction of errors is difficult.
- b) The receipts do not have complete details.

In spite of these demerits, this machine is used widely in business houses and at collection counters of different organisations.



**Electronic Cheque Writer:** Electronic Cheque writer is a machines which writes on blank cheques electronically including payee, date and amount. This machine can be attached to work with computers. This machine eliminates the need to write and sign the cheques manually.



### **Note Counting and fake note detecting Machine**

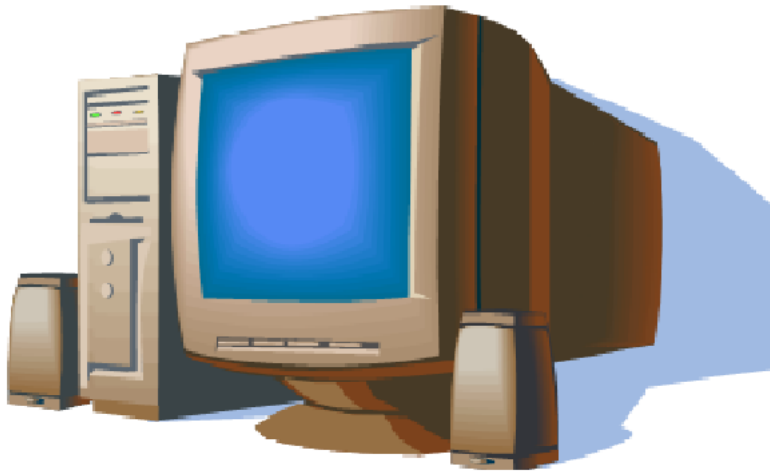
Various companies in India provides the facility of counting new and old notes at a great speed. These machines not only cater to the need of speedy and accurate counting of notes but also counterfeit detection and authentication of fake currency.



### iii) COMPUTER

These days, the computer is the most commonly used machine in offices. A computer is a machine that can perform a variety of operations such as : arithmetical calculations, comparison of data, storage of information, analysis of data and preparation of diagrams and charts. The main component of computer is the 'memory' unit. The input data and programmes are fed and remain available for reproduction. With the help of Word processing programme, one can compose letters, memos, reports etc. visible on screen, edit them, save them and print as often as needed. A document is given a file name and stored in PC or pen drive. You can produce an error-free document as per your requirement. Sending e-mails through computers is very common. High speed, flexibility and accuracy are main advantages of the computer. The main disadvantages are: high initial operating cost, need of trained staff and serious disorder in case of breakdowns.

**Laptop** : Computer's desktop environment is within physical limits while Laptop is a personal computer designed for mobile use. It is small and light enough to be kept on a person's lap while in use. A laptop integrates most of the typical components of a desktop computer, including a display, a keyboard, a pointing device and often including a battery, into a single small and light unit. The rechargeable battery is charged from an AC adapter and typically stores enough energy to run the laptop for three to five hours in its initial state, depending on the configuration and power management of the computer.



## **PRINTER**

A computer printer is a device or an instrument that must be connected to a computer which allows users to print text and graphics on the plain papers. A printer is a piece of hardware for a computer. It can also work with digital cameras to print directly without the use of a computer.

Digital printers and laser printers are the most popular printer types for business use.



## **Scanner**

In computing, a scanner is a device that optically scans images, printed text, handwriting, or an object, and converts it to a digital image. The document is placed on a glass window for scanning.

### **iv) Mail Room Equipment**

The mail room staff is always busy in repetitive duties concerning the inward and outward mail. In large organisations, the volume of mail is also large. So, its handling becomes difficult and time consuming. It also causes monotony and boredom. Use of various mechanical device helps to reduce monotony and increase the efficiency



of mailing operations. Equipment and machines in mail room provide the following benefits :-

- i. Increases the speed of operations.
- ii. Saves time and improves efficiency and accuracy.
- iii. Eliminates wastage
- iv. Simplifies fixing of postage
- v. Avoids misuse of postage stamps
- vi. Speeds up the delivery of letters.

The following types of equipment and machines are used in the mail room :

### **Letter Opener**

Letter may be opened by hand or by the letter opening machine. The machine is used when the number of mail received is very large. It operates manually or electrically at a great speed. It can open 50 to 500 letters per minute. It has a rotary knife which shaves off a very thin slice of the edge of envelopes. It does not damage the contents of the envelope.

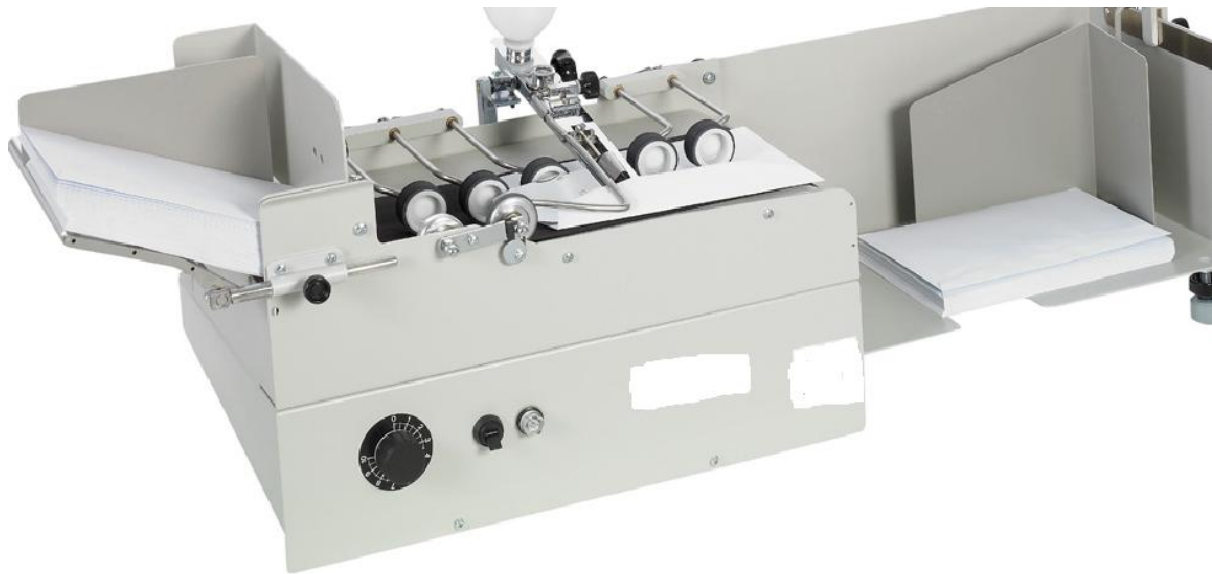


**Folding Machine**-This machine is capable of folding papers to the size required for insertion in the envelopes. A folding machine can fold 5,000 to 20,000 sheets per hour. It is possible to fold, insert and make letters ready for mailing with this machine. The machine is to be adjusted as per the needs of folding.



## Sealing Machine

This machine is used to automatically moisten the flaps of envelopes and seal them properly. The machine is very useful in those offices where a large number of envelopes have to be sealed every day. Certain machines are designed to seal with wax. Another type of machine is available in which a strip is pasted on the flap. Hand operated sealing machines can seal about 150 envelopes a minute while electrically operated ones can operate at a speed of 25000 envelopes an hour.



## Mailing scale

In big business organisations large quantity of mail is sent every day. Postal stamps on mail are to be affixed as per postal rates which are prescribed according to weight. The Mailing Scale is used to weigh so that correct postage stamps can be affixed on them.

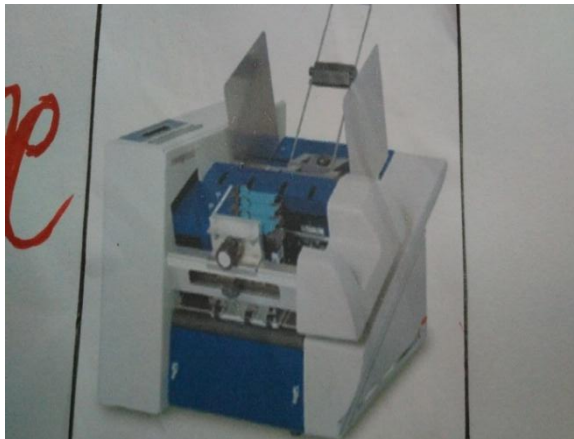


## Numbering, Dating and Time Recording Machines

After opening the mail, letters are stamped with time and date of receipt. A serial number is given for numerical reference. An automatic numbering machine is popular for stamping serial numbers of letters received. The serial numbers automatically change in this machine. Dating machine is used for stamping date on mail. Four rubber rings with the impression of date, month and year rotate on wheels. Self-inking stamp pad is used for inking the impression. Time recording machine is used for recording the accurate time of arrival of letters. Assistants enter the opened letter into the machine and it prints the correct time on it accurately.

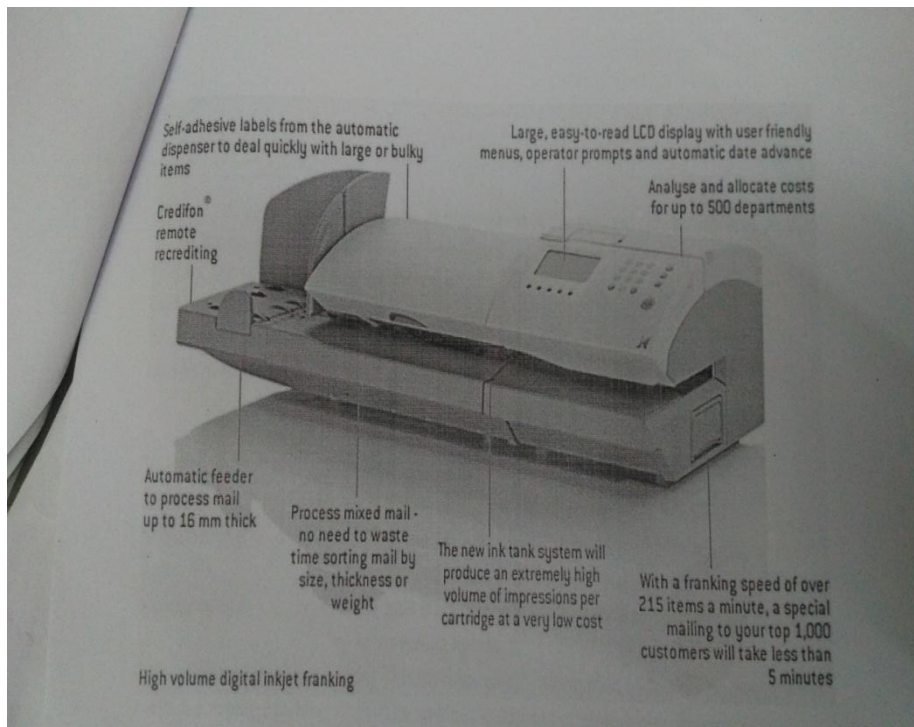
## Addressing Machine

This machine is used to print addresses on envelopes, wrappers, parcels etc. To be sent frequently to a large number of regular customers. In Addressograph machine inked ribbon is used to print the addresses from plates. List of addresses once prepared can be repeatedly used any number of times. The address plates are stacked on a hopper fitted to the machine. The required plates are automatically selected and fed into the machine. These machines may be operated manually or electrically.



## Franking Machine

This machine is used to make impressions of the required denomination of postage stamps on the outbound letters and envelopes. It is very popular in large offices where thousands of letters have to be stamped every day. The Franking machine can be hired under a license from the Post-Office. Rent is charged for use of the machine. The letter to be stamped is inserted in the machine and a handle is operated, The machine marks the letter with the required denomination of the postage stamp. It stops when the total value of the postage is used up. It can be again re-set by the Post Office on further payment. The benefits are : (1) it avoids errors in stamping, (2) eliminates wastage of stamps (3 ) simplifies the counting of stamps, (4) avoids risk of misappropriation of postal stamps and (5) there is no need to go to post Office every time. The limitations are : (1) It can be misused for private mail; (2) Franked letters cannot be posted but have to be handed over at the Post Office; (3) There is no proof of posting the letters; (4) Errors in franking cannot be rectified.



## v) Mail Accounting Software (MAS)

MAS is easy and flexible way to manage your postage expenses. It is designed for businesses with more sophisticated needs than those provided by a standard franking machine. MAS will collect, maintain and report on mail accounting data, helping you track and better control you business mail expenses. Productivity is naturally enhanced, with better management of all aspects of mail reporting and budgeting. MAS van be used from any computer with appropriate network access – there's no need to install software on every user's PC. The easy-to-use, customisable user interface provides instant access to all mail data, in all mailrooms, in real time.

## vi) Machines used for communication

### Fax

The FAX service enables instant transmission of the fascimile of an entire document. It can send handwritten and printed matter as well as pictures; charts and diagrams to different locations within or outside the country. The advantage of this service over TELEX is that it sends messages without the need for typing. This service is

permitted on existing telephone lines on a dial-up basis. The FAX machine is to be procured and owned by the user and should be attached to the telephone lines.

## Telephone

Now-a-days it is impossible to imagine the office without a telephone. It is the most convenient means of oral communication. It is widely used for internal as well as external communication. Telephone calls are classified according to distance and area as local calls, trunk calls and overseas calls. The following types of internal and external services are commonly used by telephone users:

A mobile phone (also called mobile, cell phone or hand phone) is an electronic device used for full duplex two-way radio telecommunications over a cellular network of base stations. Mobile phones differ from cordless telephones, which only offer telephone service within limited range through a single base station attached to a fixed land line, for example within a home or an office. Mobile phones that offer more advanced computing ability are referred to as smart phones.

In addition to being a telephone, modern mobile phones also support many additional services, and accessories, such as SMS (or text) messages, email, Internet access, gaming, Bluetooth, infrared, camera, MMS messaging, MP3 player, radio and GPS

## Private Automatic Branch Exchange (PABX) System

For this system, there is no need for telephone operators because the system is automatic. The internal communication from one extension is possible by dialling the relevant internal phone number. However, external communications are sent through operator or by dialling a particular number say 'zero'.



## **Electronic Private Automatic Branch Exchange (EPABX)**

It is an improvement over PABX by making it an electronic device for automatic telephone connections. Programming of telephone connections is possible. If the person called is not available in his seat, the connection will automatically shift to other extension as per the programme.



## **Intercom**

It is an automatic system of office intercommunications. It does not require an exchange. Multicore cable is used throughout the installation so that each telephone can be connected direct to every other.

Subscriber's Trunk Dialling (STD) calls – Telephone subscribers with STD facility can directly dial any number in other cities. Every city is allotted a code number and dialling of the code number connects the city and after that the particular telephone number is to be dialled. The charge for STD calls vary according to duration of talk and distance.

International Subscriber's Trunk Dialling (ISTD) calls: On the pattern of STD calls, for telephonic talk with other countries, allotted specific code numbers are to be dialled.

Trunk Calls : Trunk calls can be made through the Telephone Exchange for contacting people outside the local limits. On request the operator connects the number required. Now-a-days these are substituted by STD calls. Trunk calls may be ordinary calls, lighting calls, urgent calls, priority calls etc.

## **vii) PAPER SHREDDER**

A paper shredder is a mechanical device used to cut paper in either strips or fine particles. Government organizations, businesses, and private individuals use shredders to destroy private, confidential, or otherwise sensitive documents. Privacy experts often recommend that individuals should also shred bills, tax documents, credit card and bank account statements, and other items which could be used by thieves to commit fraud or identity theft.



### **viii) LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY**

A liquid crystal display (LCD) is a thin, flat electronic visual display used in a wide range of applications including: computer monitors, TV, instrument panels, aircraft cockpit displays, signage, etc. They are common in consumer devices such as video players, gaming devices, clocks, watch, calculators, and telephones. They are usually more compact, lightweight, portable, and less expensive.

**ix) TIME AND ATTENDANCE RECORDING MACHINES :** It is the most important part of Personnel management. A time clock, sometimes known as a clock card machine or punch clock or time recorder, is a mechanical (or electronic) timepiece used to assist in tracking the hours an employee of a company worked. In regards to mechanical time clocks this was accomplished by inserting a heavy paper card, called a time card, into a slot on the time clock. When the time card hit a contact at the rear of the slot, the machine would print day and time information on the card. This allowed a timekeeper to have an official record of the hours an employee worked to calculate and pay an employee.



**x) Biometric time clocks** are a class of employee time clock that uses a person's biological attributes to identify them, rather than using a card or some other external device. Examples of this are the hand print clock, which detects the overall attributes of a person's hand, fingerprint clock, and retina scanning clock. Biometric time clocks help cut down on fraud, such as buddy punching, in which an individual clocks in and/or out on behalf of another person.





## SECURITY SYSTEMS

Burglar (or intrusion), fire and safety alarms are electronic alarms to alert the user to a specific danger. Besides, video security systems (CCTV), metal detector, cash security system, PC video surveillance etc are commonly used security equipment in offices.

I

## WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

Mechanisation may be defined as replacement of manual labour by machine operation. It may include the use of different types of machines in office work. The importance, objectives and advantages are : (1) saving of labour cost (2) saving of time (3) accuracy (4) relieving monotony (5) improvement in quality (5) better control and (7) improvement in prestige for the organisation. The limitations are : heavy investment, high running cost, risk of obsolescence, need of skilled operators, employees resistance etc. Commonly used office machines are: accounting machines, computer, mail room equipment, fax and telephone, paper shredder, time recording clocks and security systems.

Photocopier produce multiple copies of a letter. Office accounting services are handled by accounting, book-keeping machines and cash registers. Computer is an electronic machine which can perform all mathematical operation, record and store information and reproduce it at a very high speed. Printer and scanner are hardware connected with the computer.

Various machines are used in the mailing section to ensure speed and accuracy such as letter opener, folding, sealing machine, mailing scale, stamping, addressing and franking machine. Besides, there are some rapid communication system such as FAX, electronic mail and telephone. The internal and external telephone services available are : PABX, EPABX, intercom, local calls, STD, ISTD and trunk calls etc. Besides, paper shredder is an important equipment, Time recorders and various security equipment help in smooth functioning of office activities.

### I. Fill in the blanks :-

- a) One of the characteristics of a modern office is the increasing use of office ...
- b) The term ....means replacement of manual work by machines.
- c) Office machines are.... saving devices.
- d) Office machines minimise clerical....
- e) Mechanisation of office work is often resisted by....
- (f) ..... Machine is used to make impressions of the required denomination of postage stamps on the outbound letters and envelopes.
- (g) Duplicating machine requires the use of.....
- (h) MAS is used to .....

- (i) The main component of ..... is the memory unit.
- (j) The machine known as ..... record cash receipts on paper roll.

II. Which of the following statement are true and which are false?

- a) Machines can do the work of storage, analysis and interpretation of information within shortest possible time.
- b) Office equipment help the management in keeping the employees busy and dissatisfied by providing repetitive work.
- c) Machines tend to make the existing system flexible.
- d) Machine operations call for additional cost in the form of repair and maintenance.
- e) An idle machine is as wasteful as an idle labour.

III Use a single term for each of the following:

- i) A software used to manage your postage expenses.
- ii) A machine which can open 50 to 500 letters per minute.
- iii) Time clocks which uses a person's biological attributes.
- iv) This machine enables instant transmission of the facsimile of a document even to foreign countries.
- v) A mechanical device used to cut paper in either strips or fine particles.

IV. Name the machine:

- (a) In which cash receipt is recorded
- (b) Which is used to make calculations
- (c) Which is used for internal and external communication.
- (d) Which is used for transmission of facsimile of a document.

V. Term Statement

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| a. Laptop machines. | 1. This is one of the oldest reprographic machines.  |
| b. Photocopier      | 2. It can perform variety of functions addition, subtraction, multiplication and division etc. |
| c. Mimeography      | 3. This is a small light weight machine specially meant for use by travelling agents.          |

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| d. Calculating Machines | 4. This machine enters information in accounting books.  |
| e. Book keeping machine | 5. The machine is capable of reproducing drawings, hand written and typed illustrations with a photographic process. |

## **VI Questions:**

1. What are the objectives of mechanising offices?
2. Name and explain various mechanical devices commonly used in the despatch section of an office.
3. What are Accounting Machines? Describe their uses in modern offices.
4. Describe, in brief, the various types of copying machines used in modern office.
5. Explain the use of the following machines –
  - i. Printer
  - ii. Computer
  - iii. Paper shredder
6. State the importance and use of following-
  - (a) Franking machine
  - (b) Time recorder
  - (c) Mail Accounting Software
  - (d) EPABX

*"I have now attained the true art of letter writing, which we are always told, is to express on paper exactly what one would say to the same person by word or mouth"*  
- Jane Austen

## **UNIT VI**

### **CORRESPONDENCE-BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

When the communication is done in writing whether dealing with business organisation or in government organization. In business, written communication could be in the form of business letters, drafting, reports, agenda and minutes etc. All these are written in certain recognized format, which is known as "Business Correspondence". Business correspondence convey the impression of a company in the way they are displayed, the language and tone used and in the quality and printing of the letter head.

Government or Official Correspondence means the letters written between different offices and departments of government, autonomous bodies and government or semi-government offices. These letters include letters written between two different governments, semi-governments, or Central Government. These letters are written by the concerned authoritative officer in his official capacity. It is different from business letters as they are not friendly and have a direct style of addressing. The official letter demands special care of dignity and designation of the person or officer writing the letter.

The Personal Assistant/Private Secretary has to compose, organize and type the business letters. Therefore it is essential that they are well acquainted with the different types and formats that are involved in conducting business and Government correspondence.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

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

- State the meaning of Business Correspondence
- Explain the importance of business Correspondence

- Recognition of various types of Business Correspondence
- Essentials of Effective Correspondence
- Differentiate between various types of business letters
- Know the meaning of noting and drafting
- Government Correspondence and its types

## **6.1 BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE- MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE**

Written communication is the powerful media of communication in a business organization. It can take various forms viz. letters, notice, agenda, circulars, memorandum, office orders, e-mails, proposals, etc. and every Office Executive has to deal with these types of documentations now and then. It is expected that the Executive is conversant with the objective of generating each type of document along with its proper display.

When the communication is in writing for exchange of information for the process of business purposes, it is called Business correspondence. In other words, business correspondence may be defined as the means of written communication through which we can express ideas, suggestions, thoughts, views etc. during the conduct of business operations. It may be within the organizations or with outside parties viz. customers, govt. organizations etc. Besides, an organization may also write letters to its suppliers or shareholders.

### **Importance**

In this era of globalization and information technology, it is impossible to contact each and every stakeholder of business personally. Herein comes business correspondence which helps to build and maintain business relationships. Its importance can be underlined due to the following facts:

- Convenient mode of communication
- Economical mode of communication
- Serves as permanent record as can be used as an evidence, if required.
- Less chances of ambiguity
- Helps in developing a professional relationship with stakeholders
- Create and maintain goodwill
- Helps in Expansion of business.

## ESSENTIALS OF BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

As business letters are formal in character, it needs to be simple, presentable and decent in the language which has been used in the letter. The language used should be simple and polite. It is necessary to reach directly to the point in the first paragraph itself. The second paragraph of the letter should include supporting information and the final paragraph reinforce the main issue and state the desired action. Basically, the internal attributes include 7Cs as follows:

- Correctness
- Clarity
- Conciseness
- Completeness
- Consideration
- Convincing
- Courtesy

**Correctness:** Correctness in writing letters helps in building confidence. It means use of right language, correct use of grammar, spelling and punctuation and writing correct facts and figures. An incorrect letter not only reflects the inefficiency of a business house but also has a damaging effect on the officer who signs it.

**Clarity:** By clarity, it means that the letter should not be ambiguous or open to interpretation in two different meanings. The receiver of the letter should immediately understand what the writer has to convey in the letter. It is important that the letter is properly punctuated, sequence of numbers well organized, sentence pattern well constructed etc. so as to give full information to the reader and leave no scope for guess work. In short, appropriate words should be used to convey ideas or thoughts.

**Conciseness:** Every business letter should be concise and to the point but at the same time nothing important should be left out. Conciseness does not mean that certain statements, though vital should not be included. On the other hand, conciseness means giving much information in few words. Care has to be taken to avoid constant repetition of words so as to achieve compactness and harmony.

**Completeness:** The letter should be self explanatory and complete in all respects leaving no basis for any further explanation, clarification or correspondence. For this purpose, it is necessary that the Private Secretary should read the received letter very carefully and ensure that no point or query is left unanswered.

**Consideration:** It means empathizing and putting oneself in the place of receiver while composing a message.

**Convincing:** The letter should convince the reader that the facts stated therein are correct. It, further, convince to take the action desired in the letter.

**Courtesy:** The tone used in the business letter should be polite and as far as possible friendly. Due courtesy will win loyalty, cooperation and confidence of the reader. Even if it is important to refuse a request, reject a proposal or turn down a recommendation, the use of language should be such that the reader does not feel offended or annoyed.

It is very important to take care of the appearance of the document which is considered as the external attributes of the letter. Appearance of a business letter includes:

- Good Quality of paper to be used.
- Appropriate size of paper, preferably A4 size.
- Proper use of margins; top, bottom, left and right one.
- Proper folding of letter according to the size of envelope being used.
- Proper use of envelope according to the size of paper and enclosures.

## 6.2 Parts of a Business Letter

The following are the commonly used different parts of a business letter:

1. **The Heading** – In business letter, the name of the firm along with its address is given. It also contains telephone numbers, e-mail address and logo of the firm, if any. Company's formed with limited liability should use the word Ltd. in their name.
2. **Reference Number** – The word reference no. is generally printed on the letter head on the left hand side. It is the file no./name of the department/year. It facilitates the location of the copy of letter as and when required for future reference.

3. **Date-** The date is typed on the right hand side ending with the right hand margin and in straight with the reference number. The date should be typed correctly. For example: November 6, 2016 or 6 November, 2016 or 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2016

4. **Inside Address** - The Inside address is the full address of the party to whom the letter is being written. The words Mr. or Mrs. should be used before the name of the individuals and the word Messers. (M/s) should be used in case of the name of the firm. In case of private/public limited company, the abbreviated words Pvt. Ltd Co./'Ltd. Co' . should be used. The inside address should be correctly written and the spellings should be correct so that the letter reaches the party promptly. The address should be in single line spacing. The Pin Code of the addressee should also be indicated for early and prompt delivery to the firm.

5. **Salutation** – Salutation is a way of greeting the addressee and the idea is not to begin a letter abruptly. It should be written after leaving two line spacing after the inside address. The words : Dear Sir(s) or Dear Madam should be used in salutation. In circular letters, Dear Customer(s) , Dear Reader can be written. The first letter of both the words should be in Capital.

If you don't know the name and title of the particular person you are writing to, you can greet the reader with 'Dear Sir or Madam'.

6. **Subject** – The subject matter is indicated after salutation. It helps in understanding the matter to which the letter relates. It is a matter of the letter at a glance. It should not be more than 2 or 3 lines. The last line of the subject matter can be underlined.

7. **Body of the letter** : It is the main part of the business letter. It contains the main message to be conveyed to other party. If you are replying to a letter, it is useful to underscore or highlight each part of the letter that asks for information or which requires comment. If there are more than one point to be conveyed, then every point should be mentioned in separate paragraphs as it will be convenient for the receiver to know every point easily and clearly. The language should be simple, polite and clear.



### **Opening or introduction**

The opening paragraph should contain the reference to any previous letter or provide an introduction or briefly convey the subject matter of the letter.

Examples:

- Thank you for your letter of .....
- We have received your order No.....
- We wish to hold our annual conference at your hotel on Wednesday 26 October,.....

### **Middle section (details)**

This section will be the main part of the letter. This is where you give all the information which has been requested or which the recipient needs to know. All the facts should be stated in this central section, arranged logically in separate paragraphs where appropriate.

### **Future action (or response)**

After all the details have been provided, it is logical to state the response required from the recipient or what action you wish them to take. Alternatively, you may state what action you will take as a result.

Examples

- If payment is not made within seven days, we will have no alternative but to place this matter in the hands of our solicitor.
- Please let us know the costs involved and also send us some specimen menus.
- Please complete the enclosed reply form and return it to us immediately for a full color catalogue and price list.

### **Closing Section**

In the last paragraph of the business letter, you should summarize your purpose, outline any specific requests you're making, and thank the reader for his time.

Examples

- I look forward to hearing from you soon.

- A prompt reply would be appreciated
- We apologise again for any inconvenience.
- I trust this information meets with your requirements.

7. **Complimentary Close** (Subscription) – Complimentary Close is the concluding part of the letter. It is a polite way of ending a letter. The words ‘Yours faithfully’, ‘Yours truly,’ ‘Yours sincerely’ etc. are used. The first letter should be in capital. The second word should be followed by a Coma.

8. **Signature** – Signature is the identity of the writer. The signature and name of the writer should be typed immediately after the complimentary close. A four-line space allows the sender for a written signature immediately below the closing, then the sender’s full name is typed, with the full business title (sometimes with the department or division as well) on the next line. The signature on a business letter signifies that the writer is taking responsibility for fulfilling any commitments being made. Thus, even when the sender and recipient know each other well, a full signature is used.

9. **Enclosures** – This part is necessary when some documents viz. cheques, receipts, invoices etc. are attached with the letter. The number of documents attached must be indicated in enclosures. It should be typed on the left hand side after signatures. Sometimes the details of the document is mentioned or sometimes the total number of documents being attached is mentioned in enclosures.

10. **Post Script (P.S.)** – In case, something is to be added in the letter, which has not been included in the body of the letter, it can be included in this part. Generally, Post Script is an afterthought that comes in mind of the writer after the whole letter is typed. Sometimes, it is written to catch the attention of the reader. PS was common when manual typewriters were used.

### **General Characteristics**

Use an easy-to-read font such as Arial or Times New Roman. Stick with a consistent font size throughout your letter. Avoid using different colors or images. Additionally, incorporate bold or underlines only when absolutely necessary. For example, if your letter has several bullet points, you may want

to bold or underline the key point in each section. Proofread your letter carefully to make sure there are no typos or incomplete sentences.

### 6.3 TYPES OF BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

Business correspondence refers to written communication which relates to business of any interest to both the parties between whom messages are being exchanged. In other words, we can say that it is nothing but communication of information on matters of trade and commerce.

A business man has to write letters every time he wishes to purchase goods or sell them. Besides, in business matters complaints are received which have to be attended to through letters. Similarly, goods have to be offered, payments to be made, old business relations to be maintained, and new ones to be established. For all these purposes, a business man has to write letters and receive communication, without which business cannot be carried on. The various types of business letters usually written include –

- Inquiry Letters
- Quotation Letters
- Order Letters
- Follow up Letters
- Compliance Letters
- Complaint Letters
- Collection Letters

a) **Letter of Inquiry:** Letter of inquiry is one of the most important types of business letters. When a buyer wishes to get some information about the quantity, price, availability etc. of goods to be bought or about the terms of sale, payment etc he writes a letter of inquiry to the seller. So, we can define the letter of inquiry as a letter sent to the seller from the prospective buyer asking information about the price, quantity, availability etc. of a product and the terms of sale, terms of payment, service etc.

Inquiry letter is written in order to carry out one of the following objectives below:

- To get the price quotation of specific commodities
- To ask for catalogue
- To know terms of payment
- To know the credit worthiness of a firm or a person
- To know the financial strength of a firm or a person
- To know the business reputation of a firm
- To know the transportation facility provided by the firm

- To learn about the quality of a product
- To know the availability of an item
- To make request for sample etc.

The inquiry for the supply of various goods can also be had from the following:

- a) Through pricelists
- b) Through newspapers
- c) Through Trade Magazines
- d) Through Business Directory

Some of the **Opening Sentences** that can be used in the letter of Inquiry are:-

- We shall be obliged if you would like to have/give terms and conditions of the supply of following stationer items
- We shall be glad to receive your lowest quotations along with the terms and conditions of business for the following items.
- As we are interested in the purchase of following goods, we should be glad to have your lowest rates and terms and conditions for the same.

### **Closing Sentences**

- We look forward to have your prices and terms & conditions of business at competitive rates to place a large order
- We hope to place a large order if your quotations are of reasonable terms.
- We must, therefore, ask you to provide us with best terms and conditions you can offer to enable us to place an order.

### **Quotations Letters (Reply to Inquiry Letters)**

A letter of quotation is any letter written in reference to the price of a service or product. This could range from a customer or client requesting or accepting a quote, to the supplier or service provider sending the quote amount. Either of these letters could be headed as a letter of quotation. Because money is likely to be exchanged it is important for both parties to be clear about the service or product in question and the terms of the agreement.

The following points should be taken into account at the time of submitting quotations to the customers:

- a) On receipt of letter of Inquiry for the supply of goods, the seller should be prompt in replying the inquiry so that the prospective customer may not place order somewhere else because of our delay in replying.
- b) In the opening sentence of the letter, the seller should thank the party for the inquiry mentioning the number and date of receipt of inquiry letter
- c) The terms of business should be clearly mentioned leaving no room for any doubt or confusion.
- d) The letter should be generous in terms of business and special terms of business, if possible, should be offered.
- e) The supplier sometimes in order to induce the customer to place the order, use such a sentences or means that goods will be supplied at the price quoted if the same are available in stock at the time of receipts of order. For this purpose, letter should indicate that the offer is 'subject to availability of stock' or 'subject to the stock remaining unsold'.
- f) It should also be mentioned if the price lists are being enclosed or being sent separately. If the sample or patterns are being sent, it should also be mentioned in quotation.

#### **Quotation Writing Tips:**

- g) The letter should be simple, clear and simple to understand.
- h) The information should be conveyed in a straightforward manner and upto the point.

Opening sentences for reply to request for quotation:

- Thank you for your letter of .....
- We thank you for your enquiry of ..... and are pleased to quote as follows:
- This is reference to your enquiry of ..... we shall be glad to supply .....at the price of .....

### **Closing sentences:**

- We trust you will find our quotation satisfactory and look forward to receiving your order.
- We shall be pleased to receive your order, which will have our prompt and careful attention.
- As the prices quoted are exceptionally low and likely to rise, we would advise you to place your order without delay.
- As our stocks of these goods are limited, we suggest you place an order immediately.

### **Letter for Placing an Order**

An order letter is a contract of selling and purchasing of services. Orders are considered as one of the simplest types of direct request. Many companies use special forms for ordering merchandise or service. They may use their own purchase order or one provided by the seller called an order form. These forms have blank spaces to ensure the inclusion of all necessary information. Their advantage is that they enable a company to number and carefully file all types of selling and purchasing or services. Orders are considered as one of the simplest types of direct request. You must be sure to include COMPLETE, ACCURATE INFORMATION because incomplete orders result in delayed deliveries, and inaccurate facts result in receipt of the wrong orders. The following points should be kept in mind while placing an order:-

- a) The particulars of the goods to be ordered should be clearly mentioned.
- b) The quality, brand, shade, number, size, color, packing etc. should be clearly mentioned and any other detail related to the item being ordered should also be mentioned.
- c) The price of the goods according to the price list or the quotation should be mentioned against each item.
- d) The discount if any allowed or offered should also be mentioned.
- e) The date or time of delivery or period of delivery should also be mentioned.
- f) It should also be clearly mentioned that the goods are to be insured, if so, for the amount required should also be stated.

- g) Mode of transport such as by rail, air, post, bus should be clearly mentioned.
- h) The urgent order being placed on telephone or telegraphically, should be immediately confirmed by a separate letter in order to avoid any discrepancy or dispute later on.

### **Letter for Execution of Order**

The letter through which the seller informs the customer that the ordered goods have been delivered is called order execution letter. Once seller receives order from customer, he can accept or reject it. Whether the order is accepted or rejected, the seller must inform it to the customer. When the seller accepts the order and dispatches or delivers the ordered items, he writes the **order execution letter**. The purpose of writing this letter is to inform the customer about the date of delivery, mode of transportation used, the probable date at which customer will get the shipment and the total price. The invoice is usually enclosed with this letter.

Generally, the execution of order letter contain the following points:

- Reference number of order letter with date: The seller should thank the buyer for the order. The order No. and date of the order must be mentioned in the opening sentence.
- Name, brands and quality of products being dispatched should also be specified.
- Quantity of products: Quantity of products should be clearly mentioned in the letter. If there will be partial dispatch of material against the order, it must be clearly mentioned in the letter of execution.
- Date of delivery of goods: The supplier should indicate the date when the order was dispatched and also mention expected date of reaching goods to the buyer's address
- Nature of packing of goods: In order to secure the safe delivery of the consignment, the nature of packing used should also be stated.
- Transportation used for delivering goods: The mode of dispatch of goods, i.e the goods have been dispatched by road, rail or air should be previously informed to the buyer.

- Total price of the products and mode of payment: It should be mentioned in the letter that the invoice or bill is being enclosed with the letter. The mode of payment should clearly mention and clearly indicate the following points:-
  - a) If the good having sold on credit, the time allowed for the payment should be clearly mentioned such as 30 days, 60 days, 1 month etc.
  - b) The mode of sending the receipt for dispatch of goods should be mentioned whether directly to the buyer or through Bank in cash of credit transaction. The name and the branch of bank should be mentioned.
  - c) An expression of hope that the goods will satisfy the buyer and expectation for the future order should be made in the letter.

If the order has been received for the first time and the supplier is doubtful about the financial status of the part, a polite request can be made for an advance may be stated. This point should be written very tactfully so that the customer may not feel annoyed or feel bad.

### **Adjustment letters**

Letters of complaints, claims or adjustments are very often sent by the buyer to the supplier regarding the goods or products received from them. The complaints are made either for any grievances, short comings, damages or any other adjustments such as :-

- a) Against the quality or quantity of goods which are not according to order placed by the buyer.
- b) Adjustment against anything damaged during travelling or transit.
- c) Adjustment or complaint against any term and condition not according to the contract offered by the supplier or agreed upon with the supplier.
- d) Complaints or any adjustment for unnecessary delay in the execution of the order.

The purpose of writing such complaint letter is either to claim the damages or to make adjustments and give a chance to the supplier to rectify the errors. The complaint should not be so that the unnecessary correspondence between two parties lead to spoiling of business relations. Therefore, before lodging any complaint, it must be mentioned that the same does not happen in future. While writing these types of letters, the words should be used tactfully to avoid any dispute in law court. The complaint should be clearly mentioned without any confusion so that it is given proper consideration. It should also be stated that the complaint being lodged is



serious, not to be overlooked and expression of regret should be made so that the same does not happen in future. It shall clearly specify as to what action the buyer is expecting by the supplier i.e. whether the goods are to be returned or any other special discount is expected by the supplier or the goods required are to be replaced. The complaint letter should be sent immediately on receipt of goods.

### **Reply to the Complaints, Claims or Adjustment Letter**

Adjustment letter is a reply letter to the buyer's complaint or claim. In other words, when seller writes letter in response to the complaint or claim letter of the buyer, it is known as **adjustment letter**. This letter informs the customer either acceptance or rejection of their complaints and claims. Acceptance of the claims may take different forms such as simply regretting for the mistake, or making correction to the mistake through payment or compensation. Reply to complaint letter plays a vital role in enhancing the goodwill of a company and maintaining relationships with the customers.

Through this letter, the seller notifies the customer whether his claim is granted or rejected. Since this letter settles the claims of the customers, it is also termed as letter of claim settlement. This letter helps to build and maintain goodwill with the customers.

#### **Factors to be considered while drafting Adjustment Letter**

In drafting adjustment letter, the following points should be kept in mind so that it can convince the affected buyer:

1. **Acknowledging the claim letter:** At the beginning of the adjustment letter, seller should acknowledge the claim letter of the customer and thank the customer for pointing out the mistakes.
2. **Regretting for mistakes:** Reply letter should regret for the mistakes and inconvenience of the seller sincerely. If the seller is definitely at fault, he can apologize by saying, "I am sorry", "We apologize" etc.
3. **Immediate reply:** After receiving the complaint from the buyer, the seller should give its reply immediately. Delay in reply may create further arrogance.
4. **Granting immediate promise:** If the customer demanded for something specific like a refund or replacement, the seller should grant the promise immediately.
5. **Assuring preventive measures:** After receiving the claim from the customers, preventive measures taken by seller should be indicated. Seller

must also assure the customer that he will not face any such inconvenience in future.

6. **Offering further cooperation:** In order to promote goodwill of the company and sustain relationship with customers, the seller should offer further cooperation and assurance of satisfaction.
7. **Convincing customer:** If the claim of the customer is unfair, unreasonable and unjust, the seller should not react violently. Rather, he should convince the buyer to consider the matter from the seller's angle.
8. **Courteous and friendly language:** The language of adjustment letter must be courteous and friendly. Such language will cool down the anger of the buyer.

#### 6.4 DISPLAY OF A BUSINESS LETTER

Layout of Business Letter refers to the placing, spacing and indenting of the various parts of business Letters. The following are the most commonly used styles of typing business letters:

- a. Indented Style
- b. Fully Block Style
- c. Semi Block Style

The above styles of typing the letters are discussed as under:.

##### Indented Style

This is the oldest style of typing a letter. The word “indented” generally refers to the beginning of first line of each new paragraph by indenting i.e. giving five or seven spaces from the left set margin and typing the remaining lines of paragraph from the left set margin. A specimen of the indented style of business letter is given below.

**Telephone No. 67563499  
8877665544**

**Mobile No.**

**CONCEPT TECHNOLOGY**

**Railway Road  
New Delhi-110008**

Ref. No.CT/43/Accounts

23 May, 2016

M/s R.K. Groversons  
140, Industrial Area  
Park Street  
New Delhi – 110077

Kind Attention: MR. R.K. GROVER  
Sub: Sole Agency

Dear Sirs,

We are leading construction contractors and dealers in construction materials in this area. The demand for bathroom fittings is steadily increasing in our business and we have a large number of requirements for the same.

Kindly send us your catalogue and price list for wholesale purchases. Since our requirements in bathroom fittings are quite large, we would like to place regular orders with you. Therefore, please quote your most favourable prices and terms.

We look forward to the establishment of mutual beneficial business with you. We remain,

Yours faithfully,

(S. K. Verma)  
Partner

### **Fully Block Style**

This style is most common in America. The word “Block” generally refers to the starting of all the parts of the letter, including the first line of each paragraph from the left set margin. A specimen of the Fully Block style of business letter is given below:

**Telephone No. 67563499  
8877665544**

**Mobile No.**

**CONCEPT TECHNOLOGY**

**Railway Road  
New Delhi-110008**

Ref. No. CT/43/Accounts  
May 23, 60xx

M/s R. K. Groversons  
140, Industrial Area  
Park Street  
New Delhi – 110077

Kind Attention: MR. R.K. GROVER  
Sub: Sole Agency

Dear Sirs,

We are leading construction contractors and dealers in construction materials in this area. The demand for bathroom fittings is steadily increasing in our business and we have a large number of requirements for the same.

Kindly send us your catalogue and price list for wholesale purchases. Since our requirements in bathroom fittings are quite large, we would like to place regular orders with you. Therefore please quote your most favorable prices and terms.

Thanking you and looking forward to the establishment of mutual beneficial business with you.

Yours faithfully,

(S. K. Verma)  
Partner

### **Semi-BlockStyle**

Semi -Block style is the mixture of both the indented style and the block style. In this style, there is no indentation in the first line of each paragraph. All the lines of the paragraph start from the left set margin. All the other parts of the letter are typed more or less in the same way as in the indented style. It gives a neat and balanced look to the letter. A specimen of the Semi -Block style of business letter is given below.

**Telephone No. 67563499**  
**8877665544**

**Mobile No.**

CONCEPT TECHNOLOGY

Railway Road  
New Delhi-110008

Ref. No. CT/43/Accounts

3 May, ....

M/s R.K. Groversons  
140, Industrial Area  
Park Street  
New Delhi –110077

KIND ATTENTION: MR. R.K. GROVER  
Sub: Sole Agency

Dear Sirs,

We are leading construction contractors and dealers in construction materials in this area. The demand for bathroom fittings is steadily increasing in our business and we have a large number of requirements for the same.

Kindly send us your catalogue and price list for wholesale purchases. Since our requirements in bathroom fittings are quite large, we would like to place regular orders with you. Therefore please quote your most favorable prices and terms. Thanking you and looking forward to the establishment of mutual beneficial business with you, we remain,

Yours faithfully,

(S. K. Verma)  
Partner

## **6.5 WRITING JOB APPLICATIONS AND RESUME**

An application for a job is the silent ambassador of the applicant and his personal representative. If it does not create a good impression on the firm to whom it is sent, the object of writing the application will not be achieved. The applicant should be to the point. While writing it, one should not indulge in self-praise. At the same time, one should not be too modest and say how it would mean, when one gets the job.

Resume is a document used by individuals to present their background and skills to prospective employers. Resume can be used for a variety of reasons but most often for employment. A Resume contains a summary of relevant job experience and education. Resume acts as a window which helps the prospective employer to evaluate and check the details of the prospective applicants.

This is your first impression and your chance to capture your potential employer's attention, to boost his or her interest. This is your ticket into the job of your choice. It does not matter what job you are applying for – whether you are applying for an entry level position at a sales office, we have to have knowledge of drafting effective resume.

### **Elements of a Good Resume**

1. **Check for typos, grammatical errors** - Use the spell check feature on your word processor and ask a friend to review the resume to find mistakes you might have missed.
6. If your career demands a two-page resume, then go ahead and create a document that reflects the full range of your experience and accomplishments. Don't reduce the type size to such a degree that your resume becomes **difficult to read**.
3. Don't **lie over dates or titles on your resume** to hide the fact that you have been unemployed, that you switched jobs too frequently or that you held low-level positions. If a prospective employer conducts a back ground check and discovers that you lied, you land in trouble
4. If you are seeking a job in a field in which you have **no prior experience**, don't use the chronological format for your resume. You can present your relevant experience and skills up front, by using a functional or skills-oriented format,
5. Don't simply copy the job description from your company's HR manual. To show that you are more qualified than the competition for the positions you are seeking, you need to do more than simply list your job responsibilities. State your present specific accomplishments and achievements: accounts expanded, awards won, etc.
6. While it is certainly acceptable to have a two-page resume, don't list every single job you've ever held. Personnel Managers are most interested in your experience from the last 10 years, so focus on your most recent and most relevant career experience.

A specimen of Resume is given below for your reference.

**Career Objective:**

To provide high quality of customer service in a renowned organization, where I can use my professional skills and experience as an Office Executive and contribute towards the growth of the organization .

**Core Competencies:**

- Knowledge of handling administrative all tasks
- Excellent customer service skills with excellent telephone etiquettes
- Ability to communicate effectively in a professional manner
- Comprehensive knowledge of Microsoft Office programs like word processor, spreadsheet, access and outlook
- Ability to perform tasks with minimum supervision and under pressure
- Possess pleasing personality with positive attitude

**Summary of Work History or Experience:**

Organization:

Duration :

Designation :

Work Profile:

**Educational Summary:**

(start with latest qualification)

**Personal Details:**

Name :

Date of Birth :

Father's Name :

Marital Status :

Address :

Mobile No. :

E Mail :

Date:

Signature

Place:



# First Last Name

Street name ♦ city, state, zip code ♦ phone # ♦ e-mail

## OBJECTIVE

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To find a position ...

## EDUCATION

---

### High School - City, State; GPA

Expected graduation date to be May of 20..

Relevant Courses:

### Middle School - City, State; GPA

Expected graduation date to be May of 20..

Relevant Courses:

## EXPERIENCE

---

### Job Title – Company Name, City, State

Oct. 2001-Present (dates of employment)

(Description)

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

---

### Job Title – Company Name, City, State

Oct. 2001-Present (dates of employment)

(Description)

## SKILLS

---

### Leadership Skills (also can use teamwork skills)

- 

### Sales Skills

- 

## AWARDS/ HONORS

---

President of the Nutrition and Fitness Society at Florida State University

## CERTIFICATIONS

---

YMCA Certified Personal Trainer

## COMPUTER SKILLS

---

Microsoft Windows

## HOBBIES

---

Basketball

## 6.6. GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENCE

Besides various types of business correspondence, every Personal Secretary has to also deal with types of documents used in a govt. department, viz. letters, notice, agenda, circulars, memorandum, office orders etc. time and again. It is expected that the Executive is conversant with the objective of generating each type of official document along with its proper display. Further, it is the duty of the Secretary to ensure that all the documents being prepared and submitted to the senior executives and outside parties should look professional and have a consistent appearance. Official correspondence is written on the matters related to trade or industry between individuals or departments on official matters.

Official Correspondence is of following types:-

- a) Official Letter
- b) Demi-official Letter (D.O. letter)
- c) Memorandum (Memos)
- d) Notification
- e) Office Order
- f) Circular Letters
- g) Endorsement
- h) Press Communique
- i) Resolutions
- j) Agenda
- k) Minutes

a) **Official Letter:** An official letter is written by one office to another or by one department to another department, to a Ministry etc. This is generally written to foreign government, State Govt., and its subordinate Offices etc. The official letters are the mixture of correctness, conciseness and clarity in all aspects.

### **Parts of Official Letter**

- i) **Reference Number:** It is written in the centre on the top of the letter under the heading name of the department like No. 1,6,3,4/ABC/45-6014/. The reference no. indicates letter no., name of section/department in short, file no. and year.

- ii) **Name of the office and date:** The name of the office should be typed in the centre or on the left hand side of the paper on its top. The date should be typed on the right hand side ending with the right hand margin.
- iii) **Sender's address:** Before typing the sender's address the word 'From' should be typed on the left margin. After this the address of the sender should be typed in separate line.
- iv) **Address of the addressee:** Before typing the address of the addressee, the word 'To' should be typed under the Sender's address after leaving double line spacing. After writing 'To', the double line spacing should be left. No punctuation mark should be given after the words 'From' and 'To'
- v) **Salutation:** It is written after the address of the addressee or sometimes after the subject. If the subject is written after the address of the addressee, it should be written on the left hand margin with the words "Sir" or 'Madam'.
- vi) **Body of Letter:** - In official letters, the body of letter is divided into convenient and suitable paragraphs in serial numbers. The opening sentences of the official letters are generally written with words – 'I am directed to inform you' or 'With reference to your letter No. ....dt...', or 'In continuation to our letter No.....dt..., I am directed' etc. The closing sentences are different from business letters as there is no sales point in official letters.
- vii) **Complimentary Close:** In official letter, generally the words 'Yours truly' or 'Yours faithfully' is written at the end of the letter on the right hand side ending with right hand margin.
- viii) **Signature:** After typing complimentary close, 2-3 line spacing is given under it for signatures where the designation of the official is typed.

**Specimen of Official Letter**

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF DELHI  
KIRTI NAGAR,  
NEW DELHI – 110015**

Ref.No. G.4/ACQ-II/SR-II/6-89/1631/MCD New Delhi -15, 16th April 1999

From

A.B.C  
Deputy Director

To

The Honorary Secretary  
Diamond Housing Society Group,  
Pitampura,  
New Delhi

Sub: Allotment of land under Revised Group Housing Scheme.

Sir,

In continuation of this office letter No. .... dated ..... offering allotment of land measuring 10 acres to this society, I am to inform that M.C.D has proposed to allot 15 acres of land instead of 16 acres offered earlier.

In case the society is interested in the allotment of additional land they are requested to deposit a sum of Rs. 60 lakhs towards the cost of additional land within 60 days from the date of issue of this demand notice failing which the offer of land will be withdrawn.

Yours faithfully,

(A.B.C)  
Deputy Director

**Demi-official Letter (D.O. letter):** Demi-official letters are used when any officer wants to draw personal attention of another officer on any particular

subject. It is official cum personal letter in which the subject matter is official but it is addressed to the person by name to draw his personal attention.

They are generally printed or typed on printed personal letter head containing the name, official designation and name and address of the office. D.O Letters are intended to show personal relationship between the correspondent and sender.

The main objective of writing D.O Letters are as following:

- (a) They are written to get the information or things done at the earliest.
- (b) They are written to involve the personal attention of correspondent by ignoring the usual lengthy office procedure.
- (c) They are written to keep the information confidential.

**Points to be kept in mind while drafting/writing D.O. letter:**

1. Demi-official letters are generally written or typed on printed personal letter heads containing personal name, official designation, name and address of office etc.
2. Reference number and date are written as normin these types of letter.
3. The starting point of a D.O Letter is 'Dear Mr. ....' or 'My dear Shri ....' in the form of salutation.
4. They are written in first person using "I" instead of "We" and official language is used in minimum way.
5. The general or usual way of subscription in D.O Letter is written as 'Yours sincerely' and thereafter the personal name is typed or written in brackets.
6. In these letters, the name and address of the addressee is written at the end on left hand bottom corner of letter together with his official designation.

**Memorandum**

One of the most common forms of communication within an office environment, the memo or memorandum serves as a quick note to convey information from one section of the company to another. A memorandum is usually drafted by Senior Officers for their subordinates. Generally, a memorandum includes the name of the person who write it,, the intended person/s to whom it is addressed, the date of issue, the general topic, and the body of the document that contains the information to be shared etc..

Specimen of a Memorandum:

## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:**

**From:**

**Date:**

**Subject:**

---

With reference to his application dated June 6, 60xx for recruitment in this department as Accounts Executive, V K Sharma is hereby informed that his name has been registered in the list of the approved candidates and he would be informed whenever there is a vacancy.

**(S K Khanna)**  
**Accounts Officer**

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## **NOTIFICATION:**

They are the formal announcements intended for the purpose of the information to the general public or to all the concerned persons. In Government offices, notifications are published in Gazette while in other offices they are displayed in the form of notices on notice boards. They are written with the reference number, date, designation and signature of the concerned authority. Notifications are written in third person and are generally written in regard to new appointment of officers, transfers etc or other such information that are useful for the all the concerned or for the general public.

## **Specimen of a Notification**

Government of India  
Ministry of Tourism  
New Delhi

No .....  
.....

Dated

### Notification

Mr. Navtej Saini working as Under secretary of Education Ministry is appointed with effect from ..... to officiate as the General Secretary of the Ministry as Mr. Krishan Kumar is retiring from his post by next month.

Sd/  
(Joint Secretary)

**Office Order:** Office Order is used for issuing the instructions for any distribution of work, any transfer of employees, sanction/cancellation of leave etc. There is no salutation and complimentary close in the office order. Copies are marked to the concerned persons and departments at the end on the left hand side of the office order.

### **Circulars**

A circular is issued when the communication is to be brought to the notice of several individuals or offices. A circular is issued by Head of the Department to his subordinate officials. A circular letter is also written to gain the attention of people and support, create consciousness, expansion of business etc.

COMPANY'S	NAME
COMPANY'S	Address
Ref. No.	Date
Dear Sir,	
We have pleasure to inform you that large increase in the volume of our sales has compelled us to move from our old premises at _____ (old	

address) to new address, which is as under:

---

---

It is requested to send all the communication henceforth to our new address.  
Yours faithfully,

Office Manager (Administration)

### **Endorsements:**

Whenever the copy of an official letter is forwarded to the other departments, offices or authorities simultaneously with the original addressee, then they are called Endorsements. Whenever any important information has to be forwarded to other offices and departments with the original addressee, it is forwarded with a copy or carbon copy of the same letter.

Full name and address of the endorsee together with the official reference number and date should be written while making any endorsement on any letter.

### **Difference between Official Correspondence and Business Correspondence:**

There are differences between business correspondence and official correspondence and they are detailed below:

- a) **Lay out or Form:-** The official letters are written on plain paper giving the name of office and designation of the officer. Letter heads are not used for writing the letter. The letter heading in an official letter is mostly followed by the words 'From' and the addressee's name and address is followed by the words 'To'. The subject in official letter is generally written above the salutation but in a business letter the subject is written after the salutation. Even the reference number and date is written in different style than business letters. The form or layout of writing salutation depends upon the designation of the writer and addressee.
- b) **Difference in Language:** - The language used in official letters is mostly authoritarian in the form of directions as compared to business letters where the language is polite, friendly and congenial.
- c) **Personal touch or feelings:** - An Official letter is written in authoritative tone and eliminates any personal touch or feelings but is governed by



official directions and the post held where as in business letters, there is a spirit of friendship and fraternity with the addressee.

- d) **Sale Point:** - An official letter is not written to attract attention, create reader's interest, lure, stimulating action etc. because the official letters does not relate to business world. Since business letters aims to persuade and influence customers for longevity and prosperity of good business, they have these element from sales point of view.

### Questions:

1. What is meant by business correspondence?
2. How is personal correspondences different from business correspondence?
3. Explain the importance of writing a business letter.
4. Describe the inner and outer qualities of a good business letter.
5. What is meant by Enquiry letter? What are the points one should remember while writing an enquiry letter.
6. Explain the various parts of a business letter with the help of a specimen.
7. What is meant by Quotation letter? How does it different from enquiry letter?
8. What is meant by Order letter? Give a specimen of an order letter.
9. What is meant by Complaint letter? Under which situations is a complaint letter written?
10. State the important points one should keep in mind while writing a complaint letter in business.
11. Write short notes on –
  - (a) Memorandum
  - (b) Office Order
  - (c) DO Letter