

GST 101 LECTURE NOTES

WHAT IS COMMUNICATION

According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, "Communication is defined as the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information. Speech is the fastest method of communication between people". The word communication is derived from the verb "Communicate" which in essence means to share. In essence, to communicate means to share information. Colin defines communication as "sharing of elements of behavior or modes of life by the existence of sets of rules". Wilbur Schramm defines communication as "a tool that makes societies possible and distinguish human from other societies. Bernard Bevelson and Linda Steiner of is the view that communication is "the transmission of information, ideas, emotions, skills through the use of symbols, words, pictures, figures and graphs. Sandra Nwagboso believes that "communication is a process whereby facts, figures, ideas, creativity, information, thoughts , feelings are conveyed to, shared with, transmitted from one person to another such that the two persons understand each other and react accordingly". Therefore, the aim of communication is to pass some information across to the recipient. This can only be possible through the use of sentences. The sentence is an important aspect of communication; it is made up of words which are meaningful.

Communication is vital in all human endeavors. The ability to communicate effectively requires some special skill; every individual can communicate but not all can do it effectively. A dumb can communicate his ideas, opinions, feelings but not all can understand his message. The key to any effective communication is the ability of the listener to understand the message passed across. Much of human communication is through speech and as such, the modern man uses speech more than writing. This is a result of its importance in everyday activity. Communication is not limited to just speaking, writing is an aspect of communication. It is associated with modernity.

Practical communication involves speech; being able to speak effectively can enhance

performance in all human endeavors and help to improve one's social mobility. A haphazard speech does not achieve its aim while an effective speech achieves a specific purpose with a particular audience. Effective communication entails knowing the subject and the audience. The way you communicate at home in your native language will differ from presenting a seminar in an academic environment. There is need to know your audience to be able to communicate effectively. A speech must suit the occasion and its audience. If you are called to deliver a speech, it must be properly written to avoid making mistakes. You must know what to say (subject); plan what to say (organization of ideas); practice the delivery of your speech; deliver the speech appropriately and help the audience to form a favorable impression.

ESTABLISHING THE PURPOSE OF COMMUNICATION

There is need to know the purpose of communication, it will assist the speaker to concentrate on the aim and work towards communicating effectively. There are four general purpose which include: To entertain, inform/instruct, persuade/convince and to Inspire.

- To Entertain: The purpose is to arouse the interest of the audience with jokes and interesting topics. It is used at parties, dinners, rally and social gathering.
- To Inform / Instruct: This is achieved by providing ideas and information on a particular subject. It is used for educational, religious and other corporate gatherings. The audience must understand the ideas well for effective communication.
- To Persuade/Convince: This is used mostly in political rallies, sales promotions, meetings. The speaker convinces an audience to accept his viewpoints or ideas about a certain things. Facts, figures and illustrations are used to achieve this purpose.
- To Inspire: It aims to stir enthusiasm and action in the audience; it deepens emotions and restores hope. It includes sermons, funeral oration, workers or students rallies.

PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

The process of communication refers to the way through which the message is encoded or passed to the receiver. The essence of any information is for it to be understood by the receiver who acts accordingly based on the message. Information is considered useful when the receiver understands the message. The chain goes thus: Sender-Message-Receiver-Feedback.

ELEMENTS / COMPONENTS OF COMMUNICATION

SENDER: This refers to the individual who is in charge of passing the message, a person or group of persons who have a reason or purpose for communicating. He/ they have a message, information or fact to send to the receiver in a way they could understand. The essence of passing information across is for the recipient to understand the message so as to achieve its aim.

RECEIVER: This is the person or group of persons who receives and decodes the message. He/they understands the message and act accordingly in order to show that the aim of communication is achieved. Communication cannot be complete without the intended recipient decoding the message and acts accordingly.

MESSAGE: This is the information, fact, idea, code, image and symbol transmitted from the sender to the receiver.

FEEDBACK: This occurs as a result of the message decoded; it is the response, action or reaction gotten from the receiver. It shows that the essence of communication is accomplished or the information understood by the receiver. We could have a positive feedback when the receiver understands the message or information and acts

accordingly. A negative feedback occurs when the purpose of the message is not actualized or understood thereby produces no result.

TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

1. **ONE-WAY COMMUNICATION:** The focus in this type of communication is on getting the message across to the receiver. It concentrates on the message. This type includes announcement, instructions, directions, news on radio, television, advertisement, commercials and preaching. The sender just delivers the message and expects the receiver to decode them.
2. **INTERACTION OR TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION:** This type recognizes the receiver and his role as a co-communicator in the process. It focuses on sending the message and getting a feedback. The sender uses the feedback to know if the receiver understood the message; it is like a yardstick for measuring people's ability in understanding information. It is often used in teaching, lecturing, discussions and preaching.
3. **TRANSACTION:** It focuses on sending the message and receiving a feedback which is analyzed to ensure that the message was received and understood. The sender does everything to ensure effective communication. This occurs mostly in formal context/ situations when business transaction and deals are taking place.

FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

There are various forms of communication of which the two main forms are Verbal and Non-verbal.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION: This is done through speech, writing and images. As such we have types of verbal communication and they include:

1. **ORAL COMMUNICATION:** This is done through speech, dialogue, discussion, conversation, telephone and mobile phones.
2. **VISUAL COMMUNICATION:** This is used to get the attention of the receiver, such

as pictures, posters, maps, advertisement, billboards and road signs.

3. **WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:** This is used in letters, memos, reports, magazines, pamphlets and posters.
4. **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION:** This is facilitated by an interface such as mobile phones, computers, modems, telephone, fax and e-mails.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION: This is a type of communication where words are not used in communication. It is usually through sign language. It is pertinent to state that the human beings have five or six sense thus: Sight, hearing, smell, touch, feeling and talking. Apart from using speech, any communication that makes use of the other senses is non-verbal. The face is a platform on which three or four basic sense organs are situated and as such, can be used to communicate non-verbally. Examples:

- Face- Smiles, frowns, scowl, grimace
- Eyes: Open, close, glare, signal, squint, direction of gaze.
- Voice: Raise, lower, control speech rhythm, determines tone
- Body: Movement, gestures, direction.

MASS COMMUNICATION: It is the process through which communication is directed simultaneously to a large, heterogeneous and anonymous audience on a massive scale. The messages are transmitted publicly and are transient in nature. The communicator works in a complex organization. The mass media includes the following:

- Print media: Newspapers, magazines, posters, books.
- Electronic media: Radio, television, audio or video recording

TELECOMMUNICATION: This type of communication uses electromagnetic devices to send messages. They include: telephones, mobile phones, radio, television, telegraph and fax.

SECOND LEVEL OF CLASSIFYING FORMS OF COMMUNICATION.

1. **INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION:** This form of communication takes place within an individual wherein he is both the sender and receiver of the information or message. It includes his soliloquies, thinking, deciding, remembering and day-dreaming.
2. **INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION:** It is the process where a sender interacts with a receiver face to face. It includes conversations, discussions, lectures, interviews and meetings. The sender gets his feedback instantly.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

- The interaction is face to face so that all the human senses are utilized by the participants who are in one place at the same time.
- It creates room for focused interaction since the participants are in close proximity, as such they can pay visual cognitive attention to one another.
- The interpersonal setting is not structures, as such there are not many rules governing the form or content of the messages transmitted.

EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

- It is easy to influence and impact people, people's behavior, attitude and actions get easily influenced negatively or positively.
- The content and structure is flexible, therefore you could change anything that might be a barrier to communication.
- The participants can ask questions and direct the process as he/she deems fit. This means that the person has some form of control over communication and can exercise it.
- There is a chance for quick exchange of information. You get immediate feedback, evaluate, correct and explain.

- It is possible to stimulate any other sense which can help one to communicate more effectively.
- There is high percentage of non-verbal communication which enhances the process. Here, the communication is not dependent only on the verbal aspect; body language is involved as well which makes it more effective.

THE BASICS OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION

1. Honesty
2. The right attitude
3. Interest in the other person
4. Openness about yourself: Don't pretend
5. Keep it simple: avoid jargons
6. Time is money- don't waste it, go straight to the point
7. Know your subject/topic
8. Be bold, avoid being shy

LISTENING SKILLS

Listening is an important aspect of life; without which one could run into series of problems and difficulties. As undergraduates, a good number of your time will be spent listening to lectures and taking down notes. It is pertinent to develop a good listening habit in order to take down useful notes. Listening is a fundamental skill while reading and writing are secondary. Listening and hearing are two different concept; you tend to hear everything as far as your auditory organs are functioning properly. Listening is a form of concentrated hearing; it is a deliberate act of paying close attention to the

immediate sounds of teaching going on around you. Listening involves close attention to what you hear so as to absorb the information and act accordingly.

EFFECTIVE WAYS OF LISTENING: Good listening has nothing to do with your level of education, intelligence or social status. It comes through self-discipline and constant practice.

1. Take listening seriously- see it as an active process, it requires concentration.
2. Resist distractions: eliminate all physical and environmental distractions
3. Focus on your listening: listen to the main points, elaboration of the main points, methods of teaching.
4. Don't be diverted by appearance or delivery: don't be carried away with the person's beauty or vice versa
5. Suspend judgment

CAUSES OF POOR LISTENING

1. Poor concentration: it could be mental, physical or environmental.
2. Listening too hard
3. Jumping to conclusion
4. Focusing on delivery and personal appearance: don't pay attention to your lecturers appearance.

READING SKILLS

Reading is an important aspect of students and should be given utmost attention. Most

people often believe they can read well and as such, feels that teaching it is not important. As students, reading is very essential and you have to develop newer reading strategies for coping at this level. You are not expected to read the say way you did while in primary and secondary school. They way you read a newspapers is different from the way you read while preparing for your SSCE AND JAMB examinations. For some football fans, the way they flip through a newspaper just to read the sport news is different from the way they will an interesting novel.

Reading is a skill which helps one to acquire the ability to transform the visual representation of language into meaning.

We have five types of reading and they are as follows:

1. Scanning
2. Skimming
3. Speed reading
4. Light reading
5. Study reading or reading to study

SCANNING

Scanning is also referred to as search reading which entails glancing rapidly through a text, diagram, table or graph. Scanning is used in searching for a specific piece of information, find out the meaning of a word in the dictionary and also, find out if a text is suitable for a given purpose. When you search for your name on list on the notice board, you are scanning. You eyes move quickly through the list till you find your name or whatever you are looking for.

SKIMMING

Skimming is closely related to scanning in the sense that they both require fast reading. It gives a general overview of the text you are reading. You skim to identify the main

points, get a summary of what the text is about, see how the author organized the text as well as to determine whether a text is suitable for your purpose or not by glancing through the table of contents.

In skimming exercise, you are required to identify the main points and give a suitable title to a passage. Skimming helps you to decide if a text is useful for your purpose especially in a bookshop. It also prepares you for a more detailed study of the text.

SPEED READING

It involves the ability to read a certain amount of material within a short time and understand what you have read. You must show evidence of your speed reading by answering questions that follows. Speed reading eye movement and flexibility. Eye reading is a technique that facilitates speed reading. A fast reader makes fewer eye movements than a slow one, a fast reader's eye take in several words at a time.

LIGHT READING

This involves reading for leisure; you read at a pace that you are comfortable with. You may want to increase your pace if the text is full of suspense and interesting. You may also skip some parts of the text if they are boring. This type of reading usually involves reading for entertainment and you may not want to read in order to remember or recall the details. It is not useful for study.

READING FOR STUDY

This is the most important aspect of reading for students and you need to be careful while reading because it may require evaluation or summary. It is slower than the normal rate where your interest is to get the main ideas and their relation to details. Here, your intention is more deliberate because you need to retain what you just read so as to remember them during examination. You may read a text two or three times in

order to digest it as well understand all about the text. In tertiary institutions, you are required to read and understand all. This method enables you to write well in your examinations and as such, serious attention should given to it.

Reading for study requires an intensive and extensive form of reading. The object of extensive reading is to cover the greatest amount of text in as short a period of time as it is possible. Intensive reading is concerned with the study of those features of language-syntactic, lexical that the student or reader requires or draws upon in order to interpret a message. Extensive reading involves a wider coverage of reading materials while intensive reading demands a high degree of concentration. Both types are important for students in tertiary institutions.

Bad reading habits to avoid include:

- Head movement
- Pointing to words
- Vocalization
- Sub-vocalization
- Eye movement
- Regression: the backward movement of the eyes in order to re-read words, phrases and sentences that have already been passed.