

SOFT SKILLS (PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT)

COURSE CODE: 9201

UNITS 1-9

SUDY GUIDE

BS-LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCES

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ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY**

2019

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Course Organization

This course has been organized in a way to help you in completing your required course work. There are nine units in this course. Each unit starts with an introduction, which provides an overall overview of that particular unit. The introduction part is followed by objectives in each unit that shows the basic learning purposes. Similarly, the rationale behind these objectives is that after reading unit a student should be able to explain, discuss, compare, and analyze the concepts studied in that particular unit. Hence, this study guide is intended to be a concise appetizer and learning tool in which the course contents are briefly introduced.

This study guide is based on prescribed reading materials. For each unit, these prescribed reading materials have been classified as compulsory readings and suggested readings. Students are bound for studying these materials so as to have successful completion of the course. After the section of 'suggested readings' few self-assessment questions and activities have been put forth for the students. These questions are meant to facilitate students/you in understanding that how much student/you have learned.

For this course, a workshop and tutorial support will be provided as per AIOU policy. So, before going to attend a class, prepare yourself to discuss course contents with your tutor. There will be 70% compulsory attendance in every workshop. After completing the study of first 5 units the 'Assignment No. 1' is due. The second assignment that is 'Assignment No. 2' is due after the completion of next 4 units. These two assignments are to be assessed by the relevant tutor/resource person. Students should be very careful while preparing the assignments because these may also be checked with Turnitin for plagiarism.

Course Study Plan

As you know the course is offered through distance education so it is organized in a manner to evolve a self-learning process in absence of formal classroom teaching. Although the students can choose their own way of studying the required reading material, but advised to follow the following steps:

Step1: Thoroughly read description of the course for clear identification of reading material.

Step2: Read carefully the way the reading material is to be used.

Step3: Complete the first quick reading of your required study materials.

Step4: Carefully make the second reading and note down some of the points in notebook, which are not clear and needs fully understanding.

Step5: Carry out the self-assessment questions with the help of study material and tutor guidance.

Step6: Revise notes. It is quite possible that many of those points, which are not clear and understandable, previously become clearer during the process of carrying out self-assessment questions.

Step7: Make a third and final reading of study material. At this stage, it is advised to keep in view the homework (assignments). These are compulsory for the successful completion of course.

Assessment/Evaluation of Students' Coursework

Multiple criteria have been adopted to assess students' work for each course, except Research Project/Project, as under.

- (a). Written examination to be assessed by the Examination Department, AIOU at the end of each semester = 70% marks (pass marks 50%). AIOU examination rules apply in this regard.
- (b). Two assignments and/or equivalent to be assessed by the relevant tutor/resource person = 30% marks (pass marks 50% collectively).

All the matters relating to Research Project/Project will be dealt with as per AIOU rules. However, the pass marks for Research Thesis is 50% both in evaluation of research report and viva voce examination separately.

Course Introduction

This course is of three credit hours and contains nine units. The introduction provided at the start of each unit, which summarizes contents within that unit. Students should study this carefully so as to have idea of the syllabi and prepare themselves for the solution of assignments, assessment questions, activities, and final examination. A brief introduction of the whole course is provided in the following paragraphs.

Soft skills are personal attributes that enable an individual to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people. Soft Skills are very important for every individual to sustain and grow in any work place in life. According to research conducted in Harvard and Stanford Universities only 15% of your career success is provided by your hard skills, whilst other 85% by so called soft skills. According to Peggy Klaus "Soft skills get little respect but will make or break your career". The soft skills are skills relating to one's personal attributes. These include; communication skills, interpersonal skills, team building and leadership, stress management, decision making, problem solving, and workplace etiquette etc. The soft skills facilitate an individual that how he/she should react and interact in the work place, and in life and how effectively he/she should deal with his/her managers, co-workers, subordinates and others in general. Soft skills, also known as people skills, complement hard skills to enhance an individual's relationships, job performance and career prospects. It is often said that hard skills will get you an interview but you need soft skills to get and keep the job. Unlike hard skills, which comprise a person's technical skills set and ability to perform certain functional tasks, soft skills are interpersonal and broadly applicable across job titles and industries. Many soft skills are tied to individuals' personalities rather than any formal training, and are thus, considered more difficult to develop than hard skills.

This course covers the soft skills namely; Communication skills, Interpersonal relationships, Team building and leadership, Time management and managing stress, Thinking and presentation skills, Problem solving, Decision making, and Employment communication and workplace etiquette. These can be acquired via teaching or direct experiences that are used to handle problems and questions commonly encountered in daily human life. These skills are very important for librarians for their professional grooming and development. With these skills a

professional librarian can perform their job-related tasks as well as daily life activities in a more professional and better way.

Thus, this course has been particularly designed for library and information sciences students with the purpose to prepare them for their future role in librarianship. The expected learning outcomes of this course include a combination of knowledge, values, attitudes and skills with a particular emphasis on its use in professional as well as daily activities.

Objectives of the Course

1. After studying this course the students will be able to:
2. Explain the concept of soft skills and personality development
3. Describe the importance of soft skills
4. Discuss the role of soft skills in professional life
5. Explain communication skills and its different types
6. Explain interpersonal relationship and its uses
7. Discuss team building and importance of human relations
8. Explain leadership and different styles of leadership
9. Understand how to manage time, stress, and solve problems
10. Explain thinking and presentation skills
11. Discuss decision-making
12. Understand how to write CV and face interview
13. Understand how to behave at workplace

Recommended Reading

Joshi, M. (2017). *Soft skills*. Available at <http://worldwideuniversity.org/library/bookboon/soft-skills.pdf>

UNIT NO. 1

SOFT SKILLS AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

1.1. Introduction

Most organizations require that those who work in them have certain abilities that allow them to do their jobs effectively. For example, photographers must understand how different camera settings and lighting affect the picture they are taking, and computer programmers need to know how to use Programming languages. These abilities are known as hard or technical skills and to learn them one usually enrolls in some sort of educational programme, i.e. where they receive classroom instruction and often practical training as well.

However, to work in any occupation you also need what are referred to as ‘soft skills’ (often referred to as ‘life skills’). Soft skills as opposed to hard skills (such as technical skills) greatly impact the personality development of employees. Organizations today recognize that the professional development of their employees plays an important part in maintaining relationships with their customers, clients, suppliers, co-workers and developing a successful business. However, soft skills are not a replacement for hard or technical skills. In fact, they are complementary to them and serve to unlock the potential of people equipped with hard skills.

The sooner the relevant soft skills are learned and developed the better. The learning stage of these skills must start at least at the graduate school level – if not earlier. Today, companies, while interviewing job seekers, are not worried about the candidates’ technical or domain depths. They know that they can teach them the most exotic technology effortlessly but, they also know that the soft skills are the hardest to drive in. Hence the right time to learn these is the time when you are preparing for your graduate/post-graduate programmes.

1.2. What Are Soft Skills?

Soft skills are the personal character traits or qualities each of us has. They make us who we are, generally encompassing our attitudes, habits and how we interact with other people. They refer to abilities that make people better employees and open doors for many opportunities that are not directly related to the subject matter of their jobs. In other words, soft skills refer to a person’s ability to relate to others, to get him/her and others organized, to communicate in written, spoken or other forms.

Soft skills have been defined by the World Health Organization as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal with the demands and challenges of everyday life.” Soft skills include psycho-social abilities and interpersonal skills that help people take decisions, solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, demonstrate qualities of leadership and team building, manage time effectively, and cope with the stress and strain of life in a healthy and productive manner. Essentially, there are two kinds of skills – those related to thinking called ‘thinking skills’ and skills related to dealing with others called ‘social skills.’ While thinking skills relate to the personal level, social skills include interpersonal skills. It is the combination of these two types of skills that are needed for achieving behavior change and negotiating effectively

1.3. Need for Soft Skills

Soft skills allow us to effectively and efficiently use our technical skills and knowledge. They improve the way we interact with our bosses, co-workers and customers/clients. They permit us to get our work done on time. They influence how we feel about our jobs and how others perceive

us. Consequently, the demand for and reliance on soft skills is on the increase due to constant change in the work environment, customer-driven market, information-based technology and globalization.

The development of soft skills in this market is important as there is intense competition for many available positions. The ability to develop and use soft skills can make the difference between the achiever and the non-achiever. Earlier the focus of management was on 'hard' skills. The emphasis was on the technical skills necessary to perform effectively. These skills tended to be more closely related to the actual task being performed. But now every single occupation you can think of demands that you have specific character traits. Moreover, an important thing to note is that soft skills are transferable between occupations. While you may have to go back to school to learn new technical skills if you change careers, you can always take your soft skills with you since they are valued in a variety of fields.

Today, employers want people with efficient soft skills. These are key skills to effective performance across all job categories. As the world has changed, and the nature of work has changed, the skill set required of managers and other executives has changed. Today's business is all about people. It is about communication, relationships and about presenting yourself, your company and your ideas in the most positive and impactful way. Many business people like to think that success is based on logical, rational thoughts and acts, but it is also to be remembered that the human element is as important as the skills mentioned above. That is why a strong soft skills set is considered to be very important.

1.4. What Is Personality?

Personality is the way we look, feel and behave. It is the totality of a person's being not merely the external appearance but also various other traits. Personality includes the following:

Character traits:

- Integrity: a person's honesty in dealing with others, loyalty to one's beliefs, value systems etc.
- Acceptance: by others who come into contact with a person, and recognizing and accepting them as a whole.
- Discipline: refers to a person's disciplined approach to life and work.
- Dedication: refers to the commitment a person shows towards the achievement of individual as well as group goals.

Behavioral traits:

- Interpersonal skills: the way a person develops and sustains interpersonal relations with all those he/she has dealings with – bosses, co-workers, fellow students, customers/clients, suppliers, private and government organizations.
- Communication skills: refer to the effective way a person communicates with others through various channels – writing, speaking, listening, and using positive body language.
- Leadership qualities: refer to the qualities which help a person behave in a leadership position getting work done willingly, exercising participative leadership style, and be a role model by setting example.
- Team management: refers to the effectiveness with which a person demonstrates ability to build and manage team in order to achieve the desired goals and objectives.
- Stress management: the quality of keeping cool in stressful circumstances, identifying the factors causing stress, and finding solutions to reduce if not eliminate altogether – the stressors.

Attitudes:

- Positive attitude: be able to have a positive attitude even in the face of difficulty and impossible situations, and be willing to try out ideas in the face of obstacles and hardships.
- Win/Win situation: be able to negotiate and bring around the other person to an acceptable solution to a problem – thus creating a win/win situation for both the parties.
- Keep the end in mind: be able to focus on the ultimate end (goal) in mind bypassing the various problems that may crop up on the way.
- Synergize: be able to combine or work together in order to be more effective or to make things or people do this.

1.5. Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Explain what are the soft skills
- Describe personality, personality development and its elements
- Discuss Goal and its different types
- Explain creativity and barriers to creativity

1.6. Self-Assessment Questions

Q.1 Define soft skills. Why do we need soft skills in our daily and professional life?

Q. 2 What is meant by personality and how we can develop personality?

Q. 3 Define creativity. What obstacles can stop us from developing creativity?

1.7. Activities

- Start a conversation with your friend/colleague and judge the quality of his personality on basis of behavioral traits.
- While keeping in mind personality traits, do SWORT analysis of yourself.
- Do identify different types of peoples based on creativity from your domain.

UNIT NO. 2 COMMUNICATION SKILLS

2.1. Introduction

Communication is the process by which we give, receive or exchange information with others. Communication means interacting with others:

- To promote understanding;
- To achieve a result of some kind;
- To pass information to another person so that they can take action.

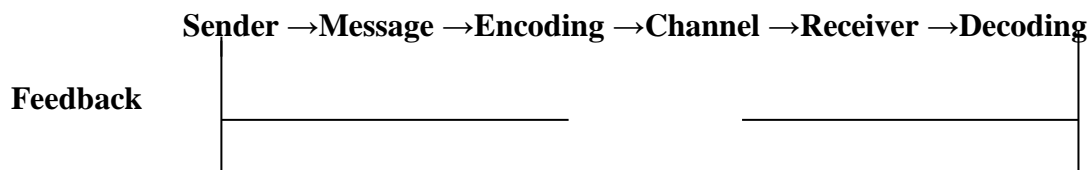
It can involve speaking, listening or writing. This information does not necessarily need to be hard facts. Sometimes just a shrug of the shoulder can act as our means of communication.

One might think we would all live quite happily without communicating at all but, no we all need to communicate throughout our life. Communication is a fundamental part of human life. Since we spend a lot of our daily life communicating in one way or another, we should be very good at it, but unfortunately, this is not the case. Life would be a lot easier if we always knew exactly what others were trying to say. Quite often people fail to communicate in a way that you could understand.

Ann Dobson (2000) has said:

“Nowhere is effective communication more important than at work. Vital information needs to be given, received, exchanged and understood hundreds of times in every working day. Many business transactions go wrong simply because of poor communication between people concerned.”

The communication process involves the sender who transmits a message through a selected channel to the receiver. Information is transmitted over a ‘channel’ that links the sender with the receiver. The channel may be a computer, a telephone, a television, or face-to-face conversation. At times, two or more channels are used. The proper selection of channel is vital for effective communication. Not only information or instructions or ideas be passed from one party to another, but the ‘receiving’ party must also understand exactly what the ‘sending’ or ‘transmitting’ party had in mind. If one party does not clearly understand the meaning of a message or misunderstands or misinterprets its meaning – errors and mistakes, disagreements and disputes, and even accidents, can occur. Figure below depicts this concept.



2.1.1 Tools of Communication

There are four basic tools of communication namely; Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. All these four skills can be learned and improved. First, you must want to improve your communication skills. Next, you must understand them, and recognize their importance in the communication process. Then, you need to learn some new skills. Finally, you must practice good skills to become a better, more effective communicator. At an early age we begin to learn to speak, early enough that it is difficult to remember the process. However, most of us can recall learning to read and write. These are skills we learn from parents and teachers. We spend most of

our communication time listening. Yet, listening is a skill we are not taught, unlike writing, reading and probably listening is the most important communication skill we can develop.

2.1.2 Verbal Communications and Nonverbal Communication

Verbal communication is the use of sounds and words to express you, especially in contrast to using gestures or mannerisms (non-verbal communication). An example of verbal communication is saying “No” when someone asks you to do something you don’t want to do. Verbal communication encompasses both how you deliver messages and how you receive them. Thus, sounds and word are the basic elements of verbal communication. Whereas, nonverbal communication use body gestures, pictures, and images etc. Nonverbal communication can be divided into four categories that is aesthetic, physical, signs, and symbols.

2.1.3 Listening Skills

Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. Listening is the key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen affectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated.

2.1.4 Speaking Skills

Speaking is described as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information. Speaking depends on the context or the situation, Context includes the physical environment, the purposes for speaking is more often spontaneous, open ended, and evolving. Speaking requires learners to not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary but also that they understand when, where, why and in what ways to produce language.

2.1.5 Dealing with Conflict

Every human being experiences conflict. It is a factor of human interaction. Whenever two or more people are involved in communication, there is potential for misunderstanding, and hence, conflict. How we handle conflict is the key to our own well-being and to developing and maintaining good relationships. There are three basic ways to deal effectively with conflict situations:

- Listen carefully to determine the nature of the conflict
- Identify areas of agreement; and
- Allow the other person a way out.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

The study of this unit will enable you to:

- Explain communication and its process
- Discuss various barriers one can face in communication process
- Illustrate different types of verbal and nonverbal communication
- Describe the importance of communication skills at workplace

2.3 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q.1 Define communication. Discuss the purpose and characteristics of an effective communication.

Q. 2 What is meant by verbal communication? Describe its different types, each one, with advantages and disadvantages.

Q. 3 Write a comprehensive note on nonverbal communication.

Q.4 What are the possible barriers to effective communication?

2.4 ACTIVITIES

- Get yourself involve in any type of communication and note what conflict you experienced.
- Identify what communication filters do you use in your daily life.

UNIT NO. 3

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

3.1 Introduction

Interpersonal relationship skills are the soft skills or life skills we use every day to interact with other people, both individually and in groups. People with strong interpersonal skills are often more successful in both their professional and personal lives. Interpersonal relationship is the process by which people exchange information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages. It is face-to-face communication, and is not just what is actually said but how it is said. The non-verbal messages sent through tone or voice, facial expressions, gestures and other body language. Interpersonal skills include a wide variety of skills, though many are centered around communication, such as listening, questioning and understanding body language. They also include the skills and attributes associated with emotional intelligence, or being able to understand and manage your own and others' emotions.

These skills help us to relate in positive ways with the people we interact with. This may mean being able to make and sustain friendly relationships, which can be of great importance to our mental, social and professional well-being. People with good interpersonal skills tend to be able to work well in a team or group and with other people more generally. They are able to communicate effectively with others, whether family, friends, colleagues, customers or clients. Interpersonal skills are therefore vital in all areas of life at work, in education and socially.

3.1.1 Types of Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationship needs to be maintained with a wide variety of people, for example:

- Parents
- Spouse
- Children
- Family members
- Students
- Teachers
- Neighbours
- Co-workers
- Bosses

While dealing with different sets of people, different skills are used as per the situation.

3.1.2 Uses of Interpersonal Relationship Skills

We engage in some form of interpersonal communication on a regular basis. How well we communicate with others is a measure of our interpersonal skills. We use these skills to:

- Exchange information
- Establish contacts and maintain relationships
- Express personal needs and understand the needs of others
- Give and receive emotional support
- Make decisions and solve problems
- Anticipate and predict behaviour
- Influence the attitudes and behaviour of others.

3.1.3 Factors Affecting Interpersonal Relationships

Mainly there are three factors that affect interpersonal relationships:

- Attitude
- Prejudice
- Stereotype

3.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- Explain interpersonal skills and its importance
- Discuss types and uses of interpersonal relationships
- Discuss significance of interpersonal skills in professional life

3.3 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Define interpersonal relationship and discuss its importance in the field of librarianship
2. Explain different types of interpersonal relationship
3. What major factors affect interpersonal relationships
4. Discuss the top eight interpersonal relationship skills

3.4 ACTIVITIES

- Get yourself involve in interpersonal relationships with family members and observe barriers, if any, that affect your relationships.
- Go to a university library and examine librarian's interpersonal relationship skills and highlight weaknesses, if any.
- Examine your interpersonal relationship with your friends and identify in which of the interpersonal skills you are excellent.

UNIT NO. 4

TEAM BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP

4.1 Introduction

Building a team and working with it effectively and harmoniously is quite a daunting task. It is said that “It is easy to get the players, getting them to play together, that’s the hardest part. “Anyone can get the requisite number of team members (for a football team, for example) but it is another matter to develop it into a cohesive group wherein all the members perform in sync with each other. It requires a lot of effort and skills to transform individual members of a group into a team the members of which act in the interest of the whole team rather than focusing on individual glory or satisfaction. A team functions successfully if all the members keep their personal egos aside and maintain actionable human relations. In this context, it is advisable to remember the following:

- ‘I admit I made a mistake’;
- ‘You did a good job’;
- ‘What is your opinion?’;
- ‘Will you please?’;
- ‘Thank you’;
- ‘We’, and the least important word is ‘I’.

No group can be banded together in an effective team unless the individuals forego their individual aspirations and work for achieving team goals and objectives.

4.1.2 Why Do Teams Work Better?

It is a fact that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Individuals, who are the parts of the team, bring with them a range of various elements. They are:

- Talents
- Knowledge
- Contacts
- Attitudes

When all these elements are put together, they ensure the effective working of a team as well-knit unit.

4.1.3 How to Build an Effective Team?

An effective team can be built by following these guidelines:

- Get to know one another: likes, dislikes attitudes, aptitudes, beliefs, aspirations, individual goals.
- Establish consensus: efforts have to be made to ensure that everybody’s viewpoint is discussed but ultimately decisions are taken by consensus.
- Identify available resources: not only the resources, which are readily available but also the ones that can be easily arranged.
- Establish rules of behaviour: members to demonstrate behaviour that encourages team spirit and respect for each other’s viewpoint.
- Cooperate: when the team has reached a decision in spite of any individual’s objections, they need to consider it as a team decision and cooperate in performing all those tasks, which are required in achieving the team’s objectives.

4.1.4 Team Building Skills for Effective Teamwork

To build a good and an effective team you have to learn how to build confidence, trust and friendships. This is a long lasting process that requires many skills. Following are some of the essential team building skills.

- **Communication skills:** If you are helping to unite a team, you need to have strong communication skills. Using both written and verbal communication skills, you will have to explain company goals, delegate tasks, resolve conflicts between members, and more. It is important that you are able to clearly express ideas to teams.

- **Problem Solving:** When team building, you will need to solve problems. These might include problems related to the group's goals. However, these might also include interpersonal problems between group members. A team builder must help to resolve both. He or she needs to be a mediator who can listen to two sides of a problem and help everyone come to an agreement. The goal of a team builder is to solve problems in a way that helps the team achieve its goals and keeps its members working well together.

- **Leadership:** Being a team builder often requires taking on a leadership role for a team, at least part of the time. You need to make decisions when there is conflict, establish group goals, and manage team members who are not producing their best work. All of this requires leadership and management.

- **Teamwork**

While being a good leader is important in team building, so is being a good team player. You can help build a strong team by showing the team what it means to work well in a group. You will need to collaborate and cooperate with team members, listen to their ideas, and be open to taking and applying their feedback.

- **Motivation**

A team builder gets other team members excited about setting and achieving project goals. This kind of motivational energy can take many forms. Perhaps you come to work every day with a positive attitude, or maybe you encourage your other teammates with positive feedback. Another way to motivate team members is to provide incentives. These might range from bonuses and other financial rewards to extra days of to fun group activities. A team builder can think of creative ways to inspire the team to do its best.

- **Delegation:** A good team builder knows he or she cannot complete group tasks alone. Team builders clearly and concisely lay out each team member's specific tasks. This way, everyone is responsible for a piece of the group goal. Good delegation leads to project efficiency, and can help a group achieve a goal on time or even ahead of schedule.

- **Providing Feedback:** To work effectively, team members need to receive feedback on what they are doing well and not so well. They need feedback on both group and individual levels. A team builder knows how to praise and point out progress, but he or she also knows how to provide constructive criticism. He or she must train and advise team members so that everyone is doing his or her best, allowing for the team to do its best.

4.1.5 Ways to Involve Team Members

Team members can be involved by:

- Asking open-ended questions;
- Assigning specific tasks;
- Asking for opinions; and
- Rotating team roles.

4.1.6 Team Decisions

In order to reach team decisions, the following process needs to be adopted:

- Gathering information;
- Analyzing information;
- Generating and discussing ideas;
- Analyzing various alternative solutions; and
- Deciding with consensus.

4.1.7 Understanding Behaviour

The outcome of any situation is dependent on the way you choose to behave. Whether you are initiating some action or responding to someone else's behaviour, you will have three options to choose from:

- Passive
- Aggressive
- Assertive

4.1.8 Characteristics of High Performance Teams

The teams that are able to demonstrate high levels of performance are the ones that have been carefully nurtured. They:

- Set high output, high quality targets and achieve them;
- Gain a high degree of job satisfaction;
- Have a high degree of cooperation among members;
- Have leaders who are well-respected for the example they set;
- Are well-balanced with respect to the roles people play in relation to their skills;
- Have high degree of autonomy;
- Learn quickly from their mistakes;
- Are client-oriented;
- Have high problem-solving skills and regularly review performance; and
- Are highly motivated.

4.1.9 Attributes of High Performance Teams

High performance teams are easily recognizable by the following attributes they have:

- Participative leadership;
- Shared responsibility;
- Aligned on purpose;
- High communication;
- Future-focused;
- Focused on task;
- Creative talents;
- Rapid response.

4.1.10 Leadership

An organization is made up of groups of people. An essential part of management is coordinating the activities of groups and directing the efforts of their members towards the goals and

objectives of the organization. This involves the process of leadership and the choice of an appropriate form of behaviour.

4.1.11 Meaning of Leadership

Leadership might be interpreted in simple terms, such as:

- getting others to follow
- getting people to do things willingly or
- Interpreted more specifically as the ‘use of authority in decision making.

SO, ‘Leadership’ is a complex process by which a person influences others to accomplish a mission, task, or objective and directs the organisation in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. A person carries out this process by applying her leadership attributes (belief, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills). Tead (1935) says “leadership is that combination of qualities by the possession of which one is able to get something done by others, chiefly because through his influence they become willing to do it.”

4.1.12 Importance of Leadership

Since leadership is an inspirational process, a leader influences long-term changes in attitude. It does not necessarily take place within the hierarchical structure, and many people operate without role definition. Leadership is related to motivation and the process of communication through which one person influences the behaviour of other people. The process of leadership is not separable from the activities of the group. Effective leadership is a two-way process. Lord Sieff (1991) explains that: “Leadership is vitally important at all levels within the company, from main board to the shop floor. Leadership is the moral and intellectual ability to visualize and work for what is best for the company and its employees...”

The most vital thing the leader does is to create team spirit around him and near him, not in a schoolboy sense, but in realistic terms of mature adults...To be effective leadership has to be seen, and it is best seen in action.”

To develop leadership, the focus must be on the four clusters of characteristics that successful and strong leaders have in common:

- Vision, perspective and a clear understanding of the big picture
- The ability to organise and empower to achieve results
- Strong interpersonal skills, and the ability to communicate, influence and
- work with others personal motivation, energy and resilience to be consistently successful

4.1.12 Leadership Theories

Leadership theory states that there are three basic ways to explain how people become leaders. These theories are:

4.1.12.1 Trait Theory: Some personality traits may lead people naturally into leadership roles. Many studies have been carried out on the traits of successful leaders. The findings indicate that good leaders come from a variety of sources, and traits for success differ according to situation. Only 5% of traits were similar throughout. These include:

Intelligence: Above average, but not genius. Good at solving complex and abstract problems

Initiative: Independence and inventiveness. Capacity to perceive need for action, and urge to act

Self-assurance: Self-confidence, belief in competence and high aspirations

Helicopter factor: The ability to rise above a problem and see it in relation to its environment

4.1.12.2 Style Theory: Some styles of leadership can be more successful than others. Leadership styles are:

Autocratic Leadership: This style of leadership is both directive and controlling. The leader will make all decisions without consulting employees and will also dictate employee roles.

Democratic Leadership: This style of management is centered on employee participation and involves decision making by consensus and consultation. The leader will involve employees in the decision-making process and they will be encouraged to give input and delegate assignments.

Laissez-Faire Leadership: This free-rein form of leadership, if it is to be successful, requires extensive communication by management with employees. It is the style of leadership that makes employees responsible for most of the decisions that are made, and in which they are minimally supervised. Employees are responsible for motivating and managing themselves on a daily basis under this leadership style.

Transformational Leadership: Leaders who have a clear vision and are able to articulate it effectively to others often characterize this style of leadership. Transformational leaders look beyond themselves in order to work for the greater good of everyone.

Transactional Leadership: This leadership style is characterized by centralized control over employees. The transactional leader will control outcomes and strive for behavioral compliance. Employees under a transactional leader are motivated by the transactional leader's praise, reward, and promise. They may also be corrected by the leader's negative feedback, threats, or disciplinary action.

4.1.12.3 Contingency Theory: Takes account of other variations e.g. the nature of the task and the environment. Contingency theories take more account of other variables in the leadership situation, such as the operating environment, the nature of the task, the work group and the position of the leader in the work group. This theory reflects the 'best fit' scenario, where the most appropriate style can be judged and applied, according to the environment, task, group/staff etc.

4.1.13 Functions and Responsibilities of Leadership

In order to meet the three areas of needs – task, group and individual – certain leadership functions have to be performed. Not all of these functions are required all of the time. The leader needs:

- Awareness of what is going on in groups, the group process or underlying behaviour, and the actual content of discussion;
- Understanding, that is knowing that a particular function is required;
- Skill to do it effectively, which can be usually judged by whether the group responds or changes course.

4.1.13.1 Range of functions of a leader:

- As executive: top coordinator of the group activities and overseer of the execution of policies.
- As planner: deciding the ways and means by which the group achieves its ends. This may involve both short-term and long-term planning.
- As policy maker: responsible for the establishment of group goals and policies.
- As expert: a source of readily available information and skills, although there will be some reliance on technical expertise and advice from other members of the group.

- As external group representative: the official spokesperson for the group, the representative of the group and the channel for both outgoing and incoming communications.
- As controller of internal relations: determines specific aspects of group structure.
- As purveyor of rewards and punishment: exercises control over group members by the power to provide rewards and apply punishments.
- As arbitrator and mediator: controls interpersonal conflicts within the group.
- As exemplar: a model of behaviour for members of the group, setting an example of what is expected.
- As symbol of the group: enhancing group unity by providing some kind of cognitive focus and establishing the group as a distinct identity.
- As substitute for individual responsibility: relieves the individual members from the necessity of, and responsibility for, personal decision.
- As ideologist: serving as the source of beliefs, values and standards of behavior for individual members of the group.
- As father figure: serving as a focus for the positive emotional feelings of individual members of the group.
- As scapegoat: serving as a target for aggression and hostility of the group, accepting blame in case of failure.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Discuss the importance and effectiveness of team and team work
- Understand and control situations based on various behavioral options
- Explain characteristics and attributes of high performance team
- Describe the leadership and its role in an organization
- Discuss different leadership theories and styles

4.3 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. What is a team? Discuss in detail the building of an effective team.
2. Explain the harmful and helpful individual behavior in team.
3. Discuss the passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior. Which one is the best option for a team leader?
4. What is meant by Comfort Zone?
5. Define leadership. Also, discuss various approaches to leadership
6. What are the different styles of leadership? Discuss

4.4 ACTIVITIES

- Go to a university library and observe behavior of team members with the purpose of identifying members with assertive behavior.
- Go to a university library and identify the leadership style of chief/head librarian.
- Examine yourself and make out what leadership attributes you have.

UNIT NO. 5

TIME MANAGEMENT AND MANAGING STRESS

5.1 Introduction

Time management is the process of organizing and planning how to divide your time between specific activities. Good time management enables you to work smarter – not harder – so that you get more done in less time, even when time is tight and pressures are high. Failing to manage your time damages your effectiveness and causes stress.

Effective time management is simply about self-discipline. There is no magic formula, no piece of paper to fill in which will suddenly make you good at managing your time. Everyone has a lot of work to do and not enough time to do it. However, we can all think of people who seem very organized and others who have the same amount of work to do, but the first kind manage to do it in time, and better too. The first lesson to learn about time management is that in the real world of work, things go wrong. Computers break down, files go missing, and problems crop up and so on.

These things will always happen and there is really no way of avoiding them. This means developing and using a simple set of time management systems that work for you. Before you start to plan on what and when you spend your time you need to know how much time you have available to you. The way you manage and budget your time is very similar to the way you manage and budget your money. Imagine your salary. At the end of each month you are paid a sum which you know about in advance. You therefore know how much you can afford to spend on things like mortgages, bills, food, clothes etc. If in any given month you receive a particularly large bill you adjust your expenditure accordingly.

You may choose not to go for dinner for instance, or not to put money away to save. You can do this because you know exactly what your income and expenditure is. You also know how much time you have available to you, which is, 60 minutes in an hour, and 24 hours in a day and so on. The amount of time available is static. You also usually know how long you have to take to complete any particular task because most tasks have deadlines. So once you know this you can start budgeting your time, just as you would budget your money.

5.1.1 How Do You Manage Time?

You can manage your time by adhering to the following:

5.1.1.1 Identifying your priorities

Ask yourself:

- What is the purpose of your job?
- What are you expected to do?
- What is the time scale for doing it?
- What do you need to do (which tasks do you need to carry out) in order to achieve that purpose?

5.1.1.2 Manage your priorities

Work falls in two categories:

- Reactive tasks: There are certain tasks for which you have to provide immediate response. There is no time to plan for them.

- Proactive tasks: These are the tasks about which you know in advance, and so can plan accordingly.
- In order to manage your time as per the situation created by reactive or proactive tasks you need to follow the following course of action:
- You need to know (approximately) what percentage of your working day and week you spend on either proactive or reactive tasks.
- Plan for the proactive tasks.
- Leave time for reactive tasks.
- Never leave things until the last minute. Plan in the time that you intend to spend on a certain job and stick to it.

5.1.2 Time management skills

To manage time, you develop the following skills:

5.1.2.1 Setting Goals

Goals give you a vision, focus and destination to work towards. They help you have a clear mind on where you want to go and how best to manage your time and resources to get there. By setting goals, you are able to identify what's worth spending your time on and what's a distraction to avoid.

Start by asking yourself where you want to be in six months' time. You can go further and look at where you want to be in the next year or even decade from now. Set personal and professional goals that are realistic and achievable. This is a crucial step toward ensure you manage your time better.

5.1.2.2 Prioritizing Task

Prioritizing cannot be overemphasized when it comes to effective time management. It can be difficult to know what tasks to tackle first, especially when a flood of tasks all seem urgent. It is, however, relatively easy to prioritize activities if you have clear goals already set. Ask yourself three basic questions to know what tasks should take first priority:

- Why am I doing this task or activity?
- How does this task help me achieve my goals?
- To what extent does this task I'm doing help me achieve my goals?

Do the most important things first.

5.1.2.3 Keep a Task List

A task list (or "to-do list") is a reminder system that tells you when you need to do what. Keeping a to-do list helps you remain organized and on top of things. It helps break things down into small, manageable tasks or steps so that you never forget to do the important stuff. Do not try to remember everything you need to do in your head. In most cases, trying to remember everything will not work. Instead, keep a to-do list. A simple daily, weekly or monthly planner on a note pad or diary can do.

Write down the things you need to do, including meetings, appointments and deadlines. Prioritize items on your list by listing items in order of importance from high priority to low priorities items or highlighting urgent or important tasks on your list with an asterisk. Cross out completed tasks as often as you add new tasks on your task list to ensure you keep moving forward.

5.1.2.4 Schedule Tasks

“A schedule defends from chaos and whim,” says author Annie Dillard. If you are a morning person and find you are at your most creative and productive early in the morning, schedule high-value tasks in the morning at your peak creative/productive time. If your creativity and energy picks up when the sun is setting, schedule high priority tasks then. Your “down” time can be scheduled for less important tasks like checking e-mail or returning phone calls.

Understand your rhythm of peak and dead times and schedule tasks appropriately to make the most of peak times. Remember you do not find time for important things; you make time for important things best by scheduling.

5.1.2.5 Focus on One Task at a Time

You get more done in the least time possible when you toggle between talking on your cell phone, browsing the internet and jotting down notes, right? Wrong! According to a study published by the American Psychological Association, you actually spend between 20 and 40 percent more time when you multitask. Besides costing you time and efficiency, multitasking can also reduce the quality of your work.

Forget multitasking. You do not get on top of your workload by multitasking. Focus more on completing one task at a time. Completing tasks in sequence one at a time leads to better use of time, says the study researchers. Switching from one task to another does not usually lend itself to good use of time.

5.1.2.6 Minimize Distractions

Whether its client e-mail alerts, phone calls from friends or IM chats with prospects while working, distractions are a hindrance to effective use of time. Distractions break your concentration, lower your productivity and often prevent you from completing important tasks on time. They can also cause stress.

Identify what is distracting you from doing core tasks and put a stop to it. Kill that television and turn off your Internet connection and IM chat. Put up a “Do not disturb” or similar sign at the entrance of your dedicated workspace to prevent interruptions. Just do whatever it takes to minimize distractions. This ensures you take control of your days and maximizes your productivity.

5.1.2.7 Overcome Procrastination

Edward Young, the English poet best remembered for *Night Thoughts*, once said procrastination is the thief of time. Do not put off tasks that you should be focusing on right now and let procrastination steal your time. Remind yourself that the best time to do something is usually NOW. Push yourself a little harder to beat procrastination and get what needs to be done.

An effective strategy to beat procrastination is to tell yourself you are only going to embark on a project for a few minutes, say ten minutes. Once you start the project, your creative juices will start flowing. You will then find you want to continue with the task and quite possibly take it to the end. The trick to beat procrastination can be as simple as devoting a small amount of time to start. Just that!

5.1.2.8 Take Breaks

Unless you are Superman, you cannot sustain working long hours on end without burning out and sacrificing on quality. However, tempting it may be to work to a deadline for 8-10 hours

straight, take breaks in between work. This way you give your brain valuable time to rest and recharge. Taking breaks from work is not time wasting. It is smart time management. You produce top quality work when you are well-rested.

Squeeze short breaks in between work for downtime. Ideally, take a five-minute break every hour or two to rest and think creatively. You may set an alarm to remind you when your break is due. Stop working and just sit and meditate at your desk or go out for a cup of coffee or short walk. Do not forget to give yourself ample time for lunch too. You cannot work optimally on an empty stomach.

5.1.2.9 Say “No”

One skill that many high achievers like President Obama, Bill Gates and Richard Branson have mastered is the gentle art of saying “no” to things that are not a priority. Saying “no” to things that are not a priority allows you to focus on those things that are really important. You only have exactly 24 hours in a day to do the things that matter. If you don’t learn to say “no” to things that are not important, other peoples’ priorities will precede your own and you will be swamped with far too many projects and commitments.

Say “no” amicably to everything that does not support your values or help you achieve your goals. You have the right to say “no” no matter who you are talking to. When you get better at saying “no,” you put you time to good use and defend yourself from rushed work, poor performance and work overload.

5.1.2.10 Delegate Tasks

The old adage by 17th century author John Donne that no one is an island still holds true today. You cannot manage everything on your own. Sometimes it is prudent to let other people help you with tasks, especially when you are swamped. You save time, reduce stress and accomplish a lot more when you assign tasks to the right people.

Relinquish your grip on the wheel and grant authority with responsibility to qualified people. Delegating is not dumping. Give tasks with consequences. This way you promote accountability and ensure goals and deadlines are met.

5.1.3 STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress is derived from the Latin word ‘stringere’ meaning ‘to tighten.’ Through centuries it has meant many different things to different people. In 17th century it was associated with hardship and distress. In 18th and 19th centuries it was associated with Physics and Engineering when people were concerned with metal withstanding stress. Now people talk of stress with reference to mental pressure in performing a certain task or having some kind of situation, which is worrying them. However, it has become an inescapable part of modern life, and we can say that:

- Everyone seems to rush and hurry, with deadlines to meet and targets to achieve ‘yesterday’
- It is about pressure and the reaction it produces within you
- It can be brought about by external or internal factors – internal factors are harder to deal with
- It creates an imbalance between the level of demand placed upon you and your capability of meeting that demand.

5.1.3.1 Recognizing stress

You need to recognize what stress is and what causes it. Only then you can learn how to deal with it. You must understand that:

- Stress is normal, and indeed with no stress we would be dead
- Stress is a very individual thing and everyone has very different stress levels
- Successful stress management requires you to recognize when you are experiencing stress
- We are like a set of scales with scissors being various weights, and we need to recognize optimum levels in order to maintain a balance.

5.1.3.2 Common signs of stress

The following are the common signs of stress.

5.1.3.2.1 Physical signs

- Appetite – increase or decrease
- Sleep – increase or decrease
- Breathlessness
- Hot/cold
- Nervous twitches
- Nausea
- Muscular tension
- Headaches
- Trembling
- Dry mouth

5.1.3.2.2 Emotional

- Sense of failure
- Tearful
- Loss of confidence
- Isolated
- Withdrawn
- Low self-esteem
- Clumsy
- Irrational
- Inability to concentrate
- Loss of interest

5.1.3.3 Stress Management Skills

The following tips can be helpful to manage stress.

➤ Identify the sources of stress in your life

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress in your life. This is not as straightforward as it sounds. While it's™s easy to identify major stressors such as changing jobs, moving, or a going through a divorce, pinpointing the sources of chronic stress can be more complicated. It is all too easy to overlook how your own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors contribute to your everyday stress levels. Sure, you may know that you are constantly worried about work deadlines, but maybe it's™s your procrastination, rather than the actual job demands, that is causing the stress.

To identify your true sources of stress, look closely at your habits, attitude, and excuses:

- Do you explain away stress as temporary (“I just have a million things going on right now”) even though you cannot remember the last time you took a breather?
- Do you define stress as an integral part of your work or home life (“Things are always crazy around here”) or as a part of your personality, (“I have a lot of nervous energy, that’s all”)?
- Do you blame your stress on other people or outside events, or view it as entirely normal and unexceptional?
- Practice the 4 A’s of stress management

While stress is an automatic response from your nervous system, some stressors arise at predictable times: your commute to work, a meeting with your boss, or family gatherings, for example. When handling such predictable stressors, you can either change the situation or change your reaction. When deciding which option to choose in any given scenario, it is helpful to think of the four A’s: avoid, alter, adapt, or accept. That is avoiding unnecessary stress, alter the situation, adapt to the stressor, and accept the things you cannot change.

➤ Get moving

When you’re stressed, the last thing you probably feel like doing is getting up and exercising. But physical activity is a huge stress reliever and you don’t have to be an athlete or spend hours in a gym to experience the benefits. Exercise releases endorphins that make you feel good, and it can also serve as a valuable distraction from your daily worries.

While you will get the most benefit from regularly exercising for 30 minutes or more, it is okay to build up your fitness level gradually. Even very small activities can add up over the course of a day. The first step is to get yourself up and moving. Here are some easy ways to incorporate exercise into your daily schedule:

- Put on some music and dance around
- Take your dog for a walk
- Walk or cycle to the grocery store
- Use the stairs at home or work rather than an elevator
- Park your car in the farthest spot in the lot and walk the rest of the way
- Pair up with an exercise partner and encourage each other as you work out
- Play ping-pong or an activity-based video game with your kids

➤ Connect to others

There is nothing more calming than spending quality time with another human being who makes you feel safe and understood. In fact, face-to-face interaction triggers a cascade of hormones that counteracts the body’s defensive “fight-or-flight” response. Its nature’s natural stress reliever (as an added bonus, it also helps stave off depression and anxiety). So make it a point to connect regularly, and in person, with family and friends.

Keep in mind that the people you talk to do not have to be able to fix your stress. They simply need to be good listeners. In addition, try not to let worries about looking weak or being a burden keep you from opening up. The people who care about you will be flattered by your trust. It will only strengthen your bond.

➤ Make time for fun and relaxation

Beyond a take-charge approach and a positive attitude, you can reduce stress in your life by carving out “me” time. Do not get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of life that you forget to take care of your own needs. Nurturing yourself is a necessity, not a luxury. If you regularly make time for fun and relaxation, you will be in a better place to handle life’s stressors.

Set aside leisure time: Include rest and relaxation in your daily schedule. Do not allow other obligations to encroach. This is your time to take a break from all responsibilities and recharge your batteries.

Do something you enjoy every day: Make time for leisure activities that bring you joy, whether it be stargazing, playing the piano, or working on your bike.

Keep your sense of humor: This includes the ability to laugh at yourself. The act of laughing helps your body fight stress in a number of ways.

Take up a relaxation practice: Relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation, and deep breathing activate the body relaxation response, a state of restfulness that is the opposite of the fight or flight or mobilization stress response. As you learn and practice these techniques, your stress levels will decrease and your mind and body will become calm and centered.

➤ Manage your time better

Poor time management can cause a lot of stress. When you are stretched too thin and running behind, it is hard to stay calm and focused. In addition, you will be tempted to avoid or cut back on all the healthy things you should be doing to keep stress in check, like socializing and getting enough sleep. The good news: there are things you can do to achieve a healthier work-life balance.

Do not over-commit yourself: Avoid scheduling things back-to-back or trying to fit too much into one day. All too often, we underestimate how long things will take.

Prioritize tasks: Make a list of tasks you have to do, and tackle them in order of importance. Do the high-priority items first. If you have something particularly unpleasant or stressful to do, get it over with early. The rest of your day will be more pleasant as a result.

Break projects into small steps: If a large project seems overwhelming, make a step-by-step plan. Focus on one manageable step at a time, rather than taking on everything at once.

Delegate responsibility: You do not have to do it all yourself, whether at home, school, or on the job. If other people can take care of the task, why not let them? Let go of the desire to control or oversee every little step. You will be letting go of unnecessary stress in the process.

➤ Maintain balance with a healthy lifestyle

In addition to regular exercise, there are other healthy lifestyle choices that can increase your resistance to stress.

Eat a healthy diet: Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress; so be mindful of what you eat. Start your day right with breakfast, and keep your energy up and your mind clear with balanced, nutritious meals throughout the day.

Reduce caffeine and sugar: The temporary “highs” caffeine and sugar provide often end in with a crash in mood and energy. By reducing the amount of coffee, soft drinks, chocolate, and sugar snacks in your diet, you will feel more relaxed and you will sleep better.

Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs: Self-medicating with alcohol or drugs may provide an easy escape from stress, but the relief is only temporary. Do not avoid or mask the issue at hand; deal with problems head on and with a clear mind.

Get enough sleep: Adequate sleep fuels your mind, as well as your body. Feeling tired will increase your stress because it may cause you to think irrationally.

➤ Learn to relieve stress in the moment

When you are frazzled by your morning commute, stuck in a stressful meeting at work, or fried from another argument with your spouse, you need a way to manage your stress levels *right now*. That is where quick stress relief comes in.

The fastest way to reduce stress is by taking a deep breath and using your senses—what you see, hear, taste, and touch—or through a soothing movement. By viewing a favorite photo, smelling a specific scent, listening to a favorite piece of music, tasting a piece of gum, or hugging a pet, for example, you can quickly relax and focus yourself. Of course, not everyone responds to each sensory experience in the same way. The key to quick stress relief is to experiment and discover the unique sensory experiences that work best for you.

5.2 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Explain time management and its importance in your professional and daily life activities.
- Discuss time management skills
- Explain the signs of stress and its managing skills

5.3 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Define time management. How would you manage time? Discuss.
2. What is stress? Discuss various signs of stress.
3. What are the most effective stress management skills?

5.4 ACTIVITIES

- Examine your working schedule and identify which time management skills you are using.
- Get yourself involve in communication with your family members and identify common signs of stress in them.

UNIT NO. 6

THINKING AND PRESENTATION SKILLS

6.1 Introduction

Thinking skills are the mental activities you use to process information, make connections, make decisions, and create new ideas. You use your thinking skills when you try to make sense of experiences, solve problems, make decisions, ask questions, make plans, or organize information. Everybody has thinking skills, but not everyone uses them effectively. Effective thinking skills are developed over a period of time. Good thinkers see possibilities where others see only obstacles or roadblocks. Good thinkers are able to make connection between various factors and be able to tie them together. They are also able to develop new and unique solutions to problems.

Thinking refers to the process of creating a logical series of connective facets between items of information. Often times, thinking just happens automatically. However, there are times when you consciously think. It may be about how to solve a problem or making a decision. Thinking enables you to connect and integrate new experiences into your existing understanding and perception of how things are. Thinking skills can be improved by understanding specific types of thinking, how they work, and practicing to improve your thinking abilities. As you become more conscious about these skills, you become a better learner and a more efficient practitioner of your profession.

6.1.1 Core Thinking Skills

Thinking skills are cognitive operations or processes that are the building blocks of thinking. There are several core thinking skills including:

- Focusing skills: paying attention to selected pieces of information while ignoring other that may not be relevant to the situation.
- Remembering skills: storing and then retrieving information.
- Gathering skills: bringing to the conscious mind the relative information needed for cognitive processing.
- Organizing skills: arranging information so it can be used more effectively.
- Analyzing skills: breaking down information by examining parts and relationships so that its organizational structure may be understood.
- Connecting skills: making connections between related items or pieces of information.
- Integrating skills: connecting and combining information to better understand the relationship between the information.
- Compiling skills: putting parts together to form a whole or building a structure or pattern from diverse elements.
- Evaluating skills: assessing the reasonableness and quality of ideas or materials on order to present and defend opinions
- Generating skills: producing new information, ideas, products, or ways of viewing things.

6.1.2 Types of Thinking

Basically there are two categories of thinking – critical and creative. They not only help you in solving problems but also enable you to be efficient in the process of decision-making. However, it is essential that you remain flexible in your thinking. It will ensure effectiveness of your thinking.

6.1.2.1 Critical thinking: That is analysis and evaluation of information, beliefs, or knowledge. If you have the ability to think critically, it means that you have the skill to judge whether an idea is feasible.

6.1.2.2 Creative thinking: That is generation of new ideas breaking from established thoughts, theories, rules, and procedures. It means thinking of unusual ideas which have not been brought forth by anyone so far. If you want to think of new ways of doing things, you have to leave the shelter of your limited horizon and think “out of the box”. There are always different approaches to a problem, and many different ways of doing things. So if you choose the uncharted path, you pave the way for yourself to find new meanings, different interpretations, and still be logical. Creative thinking will help you develop new ideas and concepts.

6.1.3 Presentation Skills

Presentation is a method of communicating your ideas and thoughts on a given topic. Doing an academic or business presentation can be a difficult task particularly when you are doing it for the first time but once you practice, it will come easily to you. Presentations can be very effective in making your point clear. It may be just an internal presentation perhaps to your colleagues/classmates, or to your boss or it may be a marketing or technical presentation. Perhaps it may be to a large group.

Presentation skills are the skills you need in delivering effective and engaging presentations to a variety of audiences. These skills cover a variety of areas such as the structure of your presentation, the design of your slides, the tone of your voice and the body language you convey

6.1.3.1 Preparing Presentation

Following steps can be useful while preparing an effective presentation

Step-1: Plan your presentation

- When you decide to make a presentation, take care of the following:
- Subject: You must be thoroughly conversant with the subject of your presentation.
- Collect information: Collect all the information required – from your knowledge and experience, colleagues/classmates, books and journals, Internet etc.
- Size and type of audience: You must know in advance who your audience is going to be. You should analyse audience needs beforehand.
- Aids to be used: Decide what aids you will use: PowerPoint? White board and marker? Flipchart? Just speak?
- However, these days almost all presentations are made with the aid of PowerPoint.

Step-2: Prepare your presentation

- Write the script in points: Introduction; Main body (points you want to discuss)
- Prepare notes on small index card for you to use when making a presentation (if you are not using PowerPoint).
- Prepare PowerPoint presentation. Do not write paragraphs. Write points only, and click point by point instead of the whole slide. This will help the audience to concentrate on the point you are talking about.

Step-3: Practice your presentation

- Practice either by yourself or in front of a small audience. You can do so in front of a mirror also if nobody is available.
- Check your timing. Quite often you may have to keep to time limit. Hence, it is better to check whether you conform to it – neither less nor more.

Step-4: Make your presentation

Following points should be kept in mind while making presentation

- Get rid of stage fear.
- Be confident
- Talk normally.
- Preferably start with a simple and appropriate ice-breaker. Maintain proper and regular eye contact with the audience.
- Look at the points only. Then speak from memory.
- Always stand while making a presentation. Sitting presentations lose their effectiveness as the invisible thread of eye contact with the audience is lost.
- Correct body language is important. Use hand movements and gestures to emphasize your points.
- Make your presentation interactive. You may elicit information from the participants instead of giving out all of it yourself.
- You may break the monotony with a small game relevant to the subject of your presentation (depending on the length of your presentation).
- At the end, ask if there are any questions. Answer them with confidence
- Provide your contact details (someone may want to contact you for clarifications)
- Thank the audience for their patience and participation.

6.2 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Explain the process of developing various thinking skills
- Describe the ‘critical thinking’ and ‘analytical thinking’
- Discuss the presentation skills and its process

6.3 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q. 1 What is thinking? How the different thinking skills can be developed?

Q. 2 What are the two main categories of thinking? Discuss.

Q. 3 What steps can be adopted to develop an effective presentation?

6.4 ACTIVITIES

- Get yourself involve in a communication and critically think over the information/data received for possible combination of themes.
- Keeping in view this unit, select a topic from your Library and Information Science curriculum and prepare a presentation and present it to your friends.

UNIT NO. 7

PROBLEM SOLVING

7.1 Introduction

Problem is “a doubtful or difficult matter requiring a solution” or “something hard to understand or deal with it”. Everyone experiences problems from time to time. Some of our problems are big and complicated, while others may be more easily solved. There is no shortage of challenges and issues that can arise on the job. Whether in an office or on a construction site, experiencing difficulties with the tasks at hand or with coworkers, the workplace presents ongoing challenges on a daily basis. Whether these problems are large or small, they need to be dealt with constructively and fairly. Having the necessary skills to identify solutions to problems is one of the skills that employers look for in employees.

Some examples of the problems that are typically faced include:

- Which route to take to work?
- What to have for dinner tonight?
- How to fix a project that is running behind schedule?
- How to change from an uninspiring job to a career you are really passionate about?
- How to put together an argument for an article or a research paper?
- How to debug a computer program?
- How to balance your budget?

7.1.1 Need for Problem Solving

No matter what job you are in, or what course of studies you are pursuing, you will be judged on your ability to solve problems. Problem solving is important because we all have decisions to make, and questions to answer in our lives. Any job or academic situation will also bring problems to be faced. It is important to demonstrate that you have the right skills to resolve these problems, and the capability to handle the challenges and pressures they may bring.

You need to be able to:

- Evaluate information or situations;
- Break them down into their key components;
- Consider various ways of approaching and resolving them;
- Decide on the most appropriate of these ways.

Problem solving is one of the most widely sought after skills. You may have to face an immediate challenge to make reasoned judgments and find solutions independently on daily basis.

7.1.2 Skills for Problem Solving

Basically, the following skills are key to problem solving:

- **Analytical ability:** Analytical ability a skill of performing an analysis. It includes the ability to apply logical thinking in order to break complex problems into their component parts.
- **Creative thinking:** It means looking to something in new way. That is thinking outside the box. This is an ability of perceiving patterns that are not obvious.
- **Initiative:** the ability to assess and initiate things independently. It may be a new plan or action to improve something or solve a problem.

- Logical reasoning: Logical reasoning is the process of using a rational, systematic series of steps based on sound mathematical procedures and given statements to arrive at a conclusion. It is one of the fundamental skills of effective thinking. It works by raising questions like:
 - If this is true, what else *must* be true?
 - If this is true, what else is *probably* true?
 - If this is not true, what else *cannot* be true?
- Persistence: the ability to stick with something that is the fact of continuing in an opinion or course of action in spite of difficulty or opposition.
- Team work: teamwork is the collaborative effort of a team to achieve a common goal or to complete a task in the most effective and efficient way
- Communication: the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, and symbols.
- Persuasion and negotiation: these are the skills of interacting with others to bring them to what you want them to do. It means bringing others towards an agreement on an issue.

7.1.3 Process of Problem Solving

Whatever you are faced with, some of these steps are fundamental:

- Identify the problem: Be clear about what the problem is. That do a complete analysis of problem
- Define the problem: Describe the problem accurately that needs to be addressed
- Examine the options: Identify the possible ways of solving the problem
- Act on a plan: after the selection of methods and techniques implement the process.
- Look at the consequences: at the end get results and examine the consequences.

7.2 OBJECTIVES

The study of this unit will enable you to

- Explain “problem” and discuss why problem solving is important.
- Discuss some of the general problem solving procedures.
- Describe the problem solving skills.
- Highlight the process of solving a problem

7.3 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. How to deal with the problem of balancing your home budget?
2. Which problem solving skills can be adopted to make the infrequent library users as frequent users?
3. What are the different stages of solving a problem?
4. What is meant by analytical thinking and how this type of thinking helps in problem solving?

7.4 ACTIVITIES

- Identify and prepare a list of problems in your daily life
- Identify a problem in your study habits and solve it by using the specified problem solving process.
- There are many analytical ability-measuring tools on the internet. By using any one, take your test and measure your analytical ability.

UNIT NO. 8 DECISION-MAKING

8.1 Introduction

Decision-making is the act of choosing between two or more courses of action. In general, the decision making process helps managers and other business professionals solve problems by examining alternate choices and deciding on the best route to take. Using a step-by-step approach is an efficient way to make thoughtful, informed decisions that have a positive impact on your organization's short- and long-term goals. Decision-making has a number of important features such as:

- Decisions are made to achieve identifiable goals.
- They imply the existence of a set of alternatives to choose from.
- The process of decision-making is extremely dynamic.
- Decisions are made in relation to the environment.
- It is implied that a decision maker has the freedom to do so.
- When a decision has been made, the matter does not end there. Decision-making is an ongoing process.
- Decisions are not made in haste. The process is intellectual or rational.
- The role of the decision maker is concerned with decisions regarding the allocation of available resources, decisions regarding the direction to pursue, and Decisions relating to monitoring or checking.

8.1.1 Types of Decision-Making

Following are the main types of decision-making

- Programmed and non-programmed decisions: Programmed decisions are concerned with the problems of repetitive nature or routine type matters. A standard procedure is followed for tackling such problems. These decisions are taken generally by lower level managers. Decisions of this type may pertain to e.g. purchase of raw material, granting leave to an employee and supply of goods and implements to the employees, etc. Non-programmed decisions relate to difficult situations for which there is no easy solution. These matters are very important for the organization. For example, opening of a new branch of the organization or a large number of employees absenting from the organization or introducing new product in the market, etc., are the decisions, which are normally taken at the higher level.
- Routine and strategic decision: Routine decisions are related to the general functioning of the organization. They do not require much evaluation and analysis and can be taken quickly. Ample powers are delegated to lower ranks to take these decisions within the broad policy structure of the organization. Strategic decisions are important which affect objectives, organizational goals and other important policy matters. These decisions usually involve huge investments or funds. These are non-repetitive in nature and are taken after careful analysis and evaluation of many alternatives. These decisions are taken at the higher level of management.

- **Tactical (Policy) and operational decisions:** Decisions pertaining to various policy matters of the organization are policy decisions. These are taken by the top management and have long-term impact on the functioning of the concern. For example, decisions regarding location of plant, volume of production and channels of distribution (Tactical) policies, etc. are policy decisions. Operating decisions relate to day-to-day functioning or operations of business. Middle and lower level managers take these decisions. An example may be taken to distinguish these decisions. Decisions concerning payment of bonus to employees are a policy decision. On the other hand, if bonus is to be given to the employees, calculation of bonus in respect of each employee is an operating decision.
- **Organizational and personal decisions:** When an individual takes decision as an executive in the official capacity, it is known as organizational decision. If decision is taken by the executive in the personal capacity (thereby affecting his personal life), it is known as personal decision. Sometimes these decisions may affect functioning of the organization also. For example, if an executive leaves the organization, it may affect the organization. The authority of taking organizational decisions may be delegated, whereas personal decisions cannot be delegated.
- **Individual and group decisions:** When the decision is taken by a single individual, it is known as individual decision. Usually routine type decisions are taken by individuals within the broad policy framework of the organization. Group decisions are taken by group of individuals constituted in the form of a standing committee. Generally, very important and pertinent matters for the organization are referred to this committee. The main aim in taking group decisions is the involvement of maximum number of individuals in the process of decision-making.

8.1.2 Process

Decisions do not occur in a vacuum. There is an orderly process to decision making. This process passes through a series of steps:

8.1.2.1 Recognizing, defining and limiting the problem

The first step in decision-making is to find the real problem and to define it. One's knowledge about the areas of the problem has a direct bearing on their perception of the problem. One has to determine the conditions for its solutions, and go through the objectives for the solution. The objectives should have a balance between the immediate future and long-range goals.

8.1.2.2 Analyzing, diagnosing and evaluating the problem

The next step is to analyze the problem by classifying it and finding the facts. A decision maker must ask himself/herself: What does the problem mean to me? What does it mean to my family/organization? What do I want to do about it? Is this a problem on which a decision needs to be made? Classification of the problem helps in determining who must make the decision, who must be consulted in making it, and who must be informed. This will ensure that decision is not endangered and that it is clear who has to do what in order to convert the decision into effective action.

8.1.2.3 Establishing criteria

A decision maker functions in a framework of values – personal values, cultural values and the values of the family/organization. Hence, one has to look for solutions the standards of which will be acceptable as per social norms. Griffiths (1959) rightly states, “In a sense, a decision on criteria and standards must be made prior to the major decision.”

8.1.2.4 Discovering alternative solution

The process of decision-making involves considering several alternative solutions. They are the means of compelling us to look at our basic assumptions, examine them and test their validity. A central problem for a decision maker is to choose between maintaining the system of action ‘as is,’ or changing them in desirable directions by desirable and feasible amount. In fact, the phase of search for solutions places emphasis upon how creative the individual has to be in looking for solutions. Though alternative solutions may not ensure making the right decision, they prevent us from making the decision what we would have known to be a wrong one if we had given a serious thought to the problem.

8.1.2.5 Collecting data

In getting the facts, one has to ask: What information do I need for this particular decision. He/she has to decide about the relevance and validity of data available. They may not be able to get all the facts they should have. A large number of decisions are based on insufficient knowledge. This happens because either the information is not available or to get it one may have to spend a lot of time or money. However, decision-making is not hindered by incomplete information if the decision maker knows what information is lacking. This will help in judging how much of a risk the decision involves.

8.1.2.6 Selecting the best solution

Before deciding upon the best solution from among the alternatives available one must consider the following criteria:

- Risk: One must examine the risk involved in making a particular decision. In order to minimize the risk factor, they must consider the possible consequences of a decision.
- Economy of effort: Sustained effort and avoidance of frequent changes in plans go a long way in making a suitable decision.
- Timing: Too long procrastination or haste does not contribute to effective decision making. While a delayed action does not bear fruit, a decision made in haste may prove to be damaging. Any decision has to be timed well.
- Limitations of resources: One must consider the limitations of resources available.

8.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Discuss the decision making process
- Explain the purpose of decision making
- Describe the features of decision making process

8.3 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- What is meant by Decision-Making? What are the different types of Decision Making?
- What are “Decision-Making” techniques? Discuss.

- Discuss various “Decision-Making” skills.

8.4 ACTIVITIES

- Visit your nearest university library and identify a problem. Using decision making skills suggest solution to that problem.
- Identify a social problem and, by using “Individual and group decisions” type of decision making suggest a solution to that particular problem.

UNIT NO. 9

EMPLOYMENT COMMUNICATION AND WORKPLACE ETIQUETTE

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 Employment Communication

Everyone would like a job that pays good money, but many people remain unemployed because they do not know how to look for a job or will not invest the time and energy required to get one. Even in the tightest job market, jobs are always available. Experts agree that 80% of job openings are never advertised. This means that “job seekers” must take the initiative to find the jobs that many other people do not even know about. In many cases, it is not necessarily the “best” person who gets the job, but rather someone who performs adequately but has excellent job search skills. This information in this module will help you start a successful job search. Looking for work is a process, not a single event, so treat it like a “full time job”. When you are working for someone else, you work a forty hours a week. Why would you spend less time when you are working for yourself, job hunting? The job search process can be divided into four stages: (1) Assessing your resources;(2) Identifying potential employers; (3) Applying for the job; (4) Interviewing for the job.

9.1.1.1 Self-Assessment/ Assessing Your Resources

Employment communications are really about selling yourself: your skills, loyalty, and personality, so like any good salesperson you need to know the “product” you are selling well. The first stage in a successful job search is self-assessment. What kind of job are you looking for? What “hidden” skills do you have? What are your strengths and weaknesses? In many ways, the first step in finding work is like is the prewriting stage of the writing process: generating ideas about yourself. Getting that all-important job means convincing an absolute stranger that you are exactly the right person to do a good job for him/her. Get to know yourself: your strengths, weakness, expectations, values.

Job hunting can be lonely, discouraging and frightening, especially if you are just entering the job market or have been away from it for a while. It often means confronting your fears about failure, inadequacy, and, most of all, rejection. Everyone who is looking for work feels these pressures. You do not have to be alone. There are probably more people out there than you realize who are willing and able to help you as you look for work. These include friends, relatives, your partner, a teacher, a minister or priest, social workers, or employment counsellors. Everyone you know wants to see you succeed, but they may not be aware that you need support or perhaps they do not want to interfere unless asked. Talk to everyone you know; most will help keep your spirits up, suggest leads, or even arrange interviews.

People with a plan are not only more productive, they are also happier. A positive attitude is just as important to success in job hunting as it is in learning. If you believe that you will succeed, then your enthusiasm and confidence will show through in everything you do: energy levels, letter writing, phone conversations, interviews, posture, and just plain initiative. As well, people who are positive about themselves present an organized, self-confident image to prospective employers. This is the kind of employee that every employer is looking for. It is easy to be negative, especially when looking for work. Realize that “negative” feelings are normal, so be ready to identify these “down” moods and do something about them. Physical exercise and keeping busy are good remedies for “being down in the dumps”. Being “positive” means working actively to feel good about yourself and your prospects. Telling yourself every day that

you are going to succeed will quickly start to make things easier for you. Getting a job only takes one “yes” from an employer - even though it may have had to listen to many “no” responses. There is a job out there waiting for you. Your job over the next few weeks is to find that job, apply for it, and then have a good interview.

9.1.1.2 Planning the Job Search/ Identifying Potential Employers

If you do not know where you are going, the old saying goes, you will never get there. Planning your job search ahead of time is essential for success, just as it is in any other communication you undertake. Many people think that finding a job is a matter of luck or “being in the right place at the right time”. This is partially true, but you can increase your chances of success by being organized, setting goals, and making a job search plan.

9.1.1.3 Applying for a Job

At the same time that you are identifying potential employers, you should begin to develop techniques and strategies for actually getting the job you want. Depending on the kind of work you are looking for, you may be asked to complete some or all of the following documents: application form, questionnaire, curriculum vitae or CV (usually used in academic fields). As you search for a job, these will be your primary “sales tools”. When you write any one of them, you are, in fact, using a kind of informal report to sell your skills and abilities to the employer, someone who has probably never seen you before. You need to learn how to use these “self-marketing tools” to show all your strong points. Remember to focus on your purpose and audience as you work. If you do a good job on your application and/or résumé, you will be asked to attend a job interview. In the interview, you will have an opportunity to persuade the employer directly that you are the applicant he/she should hire. Applying for a job is one of the most important writing tasks you will ever do. As you already know well, jobs are not easy to find, and the competition is stiff. In general, the first contact an employer has with you is through your written work: an application form or a résumé and cover letter. When you present yourself to a potential employer, you want to do so in a way that will make you stand out as the best, or one of the best, people applying. Take time to do it right! Continue to develop and fine-tune your skills at every opportunity.

9.1.1.4 Job Interviews

Preparing for a job interview is an important part of the job search process. There are many excellent books available in the library, at the bookstore, or at employment agencies to help you learn how to have a good interview. Everyone finds job interviews difficult no matter how many of them they have attended, but everyone agrees that the best way to improve your interview skills is to be interviewed. For up-to-date information on the kind of questions you may be asked, polite behavior, proper dress, etc., be sure to consult a variety of books and employment counselors. Since the job interview is one of the most important conversations you will have in your life, you should spend even more time and energy preparing for it than you did for your resume. Interview skills should be gained before appearing in a job interview.

9.1.2 Workplace Etiquette

Adhering to the correct etiquette at workplace is very important as it has a bearing on your interaction with your co-workers and visitors, as well as your total personality. Quite often we either waste time or create misunderstanding, or even give an unfavorable impression about

ourselves. Behaving in a professional way at workplace goes a long way in ensuring our peace of mind as well as a professional approach to work. When we meet people for the first time in professional capacity, we need to take care of the following:

- The power of introductions: We need to introduce ourselves as well as others in group in a brief but appropriate manner. We need to be absolutely business-like about it.
- The handshake: The handshake needs to be firm – neither strong nor limp. It shows your personality.
- The exchange of business cards: Business card is to be given by holding it in both hands and extending it towards the other person – not to be given by one hand.

9.1.2.1 Meeting Etiquette

The following points need to be kept in mind when you are to attend a meeting:

- Be on time.
- Have a note pad and pen/pencil.
- Have documents related to the Agenda.
- Take notes.
- Remain alert.
- Answer questions confidently
- Ask relevant questions.
- Present your viewpoint but be ready to discuss and accept others' ideas.
- Do not continue talking at length.
- Do not interrupt others.
- Take care of your body language.

9.1.2.2 Behaviour at Work

- Behaviour with senior colleagues: Be formal but polite.
- Etiquette with women: Show courtesy to women in all matters. It is not proper etiquette to extend your hand to a lady for a handshake unless she extends her hand first
- Adherence to office rules: Follow the prescribed office rules with regard to dress, break time, leave procedure etc.
- Discipline: Follow the basic rules of discipline, e.g. timings, reporting procedure, communication channels, protocol etc.

9.1.2.3 Personal Etiquette

You need to take utmost care with regard to the following:

- Hygiene
- Grooming
- Table manners

9.1.2.3 Using Office Utilities and Resources

Follow these suggestions:

- Use office utilities for office work and not for personal work too.
- Do not take away various office items (like stationery) home.
- Do not do personal work on the Internet in the office unless it is extremely urgent

9.1.2.4 Travel Etiquette

If you are travelling on organization business, keep the following in mind:

- Money should be spent only to the extent permissible to you.
- Keep record of all expenditure, and preserve all receipts, documents etc.
- If you are travelling along with your colleague, be very clear and frank about sharing or not sharing accommodation, expenditure etc.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

The reading of this unit will enable you to:

- Explain the employment communication and its importance.
- Discuss the process of useful employment communication
- Describe the work etiquette

9.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Define employment communication. Discuss its importance in the job process of job hunting.
2. Discuss and highlight important skills for the factor ‘applying for a job’ of employment communication.
3. What is meant by workplace etiquette? Discuss in detail the personal etiquette at workplace.
4. While keeping in view the workplace etiquette, write a comprehensive note on using office utilities and resources.

9.6 ACTIVITIES

- Identify a job according to your present qualification and prepare your CV (Curricula Vitae) accordingly.
- Examine your travel manners and compare with the experts’ views in this regard.
- Prepare yourself for a librarian job, do practice and highlight weaknesses.

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