

Oral communication implies communication through mouth. It includes individuals conversing with each other, be it direct conversation or telephonic conversation. Speeches, presentations, discussions are all forms of oral communication. Oral communication is generally recommended when the communication matter is of temporary kind or where a direct interaction is required. Face to face communication (meetings, lectures, conferences, interviews, etc.) is significant so as to build a rapport and trust.

### **What is Oral communication?**

Oral communication is the process of verbally transmitting information and ideas from one individual or group to another. Oral communication can be either Formal or Informal.

### **Meaning Nature and Scope of Oral Communication**

#### **Meaning of Oral Communication**

The oral communication skills, hold great importance in interacting properly with people. The communication process which is carried out by means of spoken words is referred to as oral communication. In today's world, development of different media has led to the communication process to take place by different means such as telephones, teleconferences and video conferences. Face-to-face meetings and speeches were the main forms of communication in earlier times. Effective listening in the workplace is important just like speaking.

Oral communication is the form of verbal communication, which conveys the message from the sender to the receiver through the stated word. In other words, communication with the help of spoken words is called oral communication. It is essential at every stage of our social and business dealings.

Oral communication is a two-way process, as it provides a clear insight about the meaning to the message, and the message transmitted and the feedback is immediate. We communicate orally with our family, friends, in meetings, committees, conferences, over the telephone, radio, public, etc.

#### **Definitions of Oral Communication**

Oral communication describes any type of interaction that makes use of spoken words.

Oral communication implies communication through mouth.

Oral communication includes individuals conversing with each other, be it direct conversation or telephonic conversation.

#### **Nature and Characteristics of Oral Communication**

Oral communication does not require much planning. It requires appropriate Para-linguistic features like tone, pitch, register, facial expressions, gestures and body language. Effective oral communication depends on purpose of the message.

For oral communication to be effective, it should be clear, relevant, tactful in phraseology and tone, concise, and informative. Presentations or conversations that bear these hallmarks can be an invaluable tool in ensuring business health and growth. Unclear, inaccurate, or inconsiderate business communication, on the other hand, can waste valuable time, alienate employees or customers, and destroy goodwill toward management or the overall business.

### **The Importance and Scope of Oral Communication in Business are Discussed Below:**

Oral communication should be used because it is simple, faster, informal, more direct and more personal. It saves more time and creates efficiency.

In oral communication, there are no formalities of using pen, paper, stamps, etc. and waiting endlessly for the response. Thus, even most personal and confidential matters can be placed before the receiver in a simple and direct way.

### **Scope of oral communication**

Scope means the possibility of any particular subject in a particular field. It can be understood by dividing in two parts:

1. Internal (within the organization)
2. External (outside the organization)

### **Scope within the organization**

The types of oral communication commonly used within an organization include staff meetings, personal discussions, presentations, telephone discourse, and informal conversation.

### **Scope outside the organization**

Oral communication with those outside of the organization might take the form of face-to-face meetings, telephone calls, speeches, teleconferences, or videoconferences.

### **Examples of informal oral communication include:**

Face-to-face conversations

Telephone conversations

Discussions that take place at business meetings

### **More formal types of oral communication include:**

Presentations at business meetings

Classroom lectures

Commencement speech given at a graduation ceremony

With advances in technology, new forms of oral communication continue to develop. Video Phones and Video Conferences combine audio and video so that workers in distant locations can both see and speak with each other.

Other modern forms of oral communication include Podcasts (audio clips that you can access on the Internet) and Voiceover Internet Protocol (VoIP), which allows callers to communicate over the Internet and avoid telephone charges. Skype is an example of VoIP.

### **Advantages of Oral Communication**

There is high level of understanding and transparency in oral communication as it is interpersonal. There is no element of rigidity in oral communication.

There is flexibility for allowing changes in the decisions previously taken.

The feedback is spontaneous in case of oral communication. Thus, decisions can be made quickly without any delay.

Oral communication is not only time saving, but it also saves upon money and efforts.

Oral communication is best in case of problem resolution. The conflicts, disputes and many issues/differences can be put to an end by talking them over. Oral communication is an essential for teamwork and group energy.

Oral communication promotes a receptive and encouraging morale among organizational employees.

Oral communication can be best used to transfer private and confidential information/matter.

### **Disadvantages of Oral Communication**

Relying only on oral communication may not be sufficient as business communication is formal and very organized.

Oral communication is less authentic than written communication as they are informal and not as organized as written communication.

Oral communication is time-saving as far as daily interactions are concerned, but in case of meetings, long speeches consume lot of time and are unproductive at times.

Oral communications are not easy to maintain and thus they are unsteady.

There may be misunderstandings as the information is not complete and may lack essentials. It requires attentiveness and great receptivity on part of the receivers/audience.

Oral communication (such as speeches) is not frequently used as legal records except in investigation work.

## **Types of oral communication**

**Intrapersonal communication** is self-talk or a conversation you hold with yourself under certain circumstances – for example, when you need to make an important decision or learn something about yourself. You may wonder whether intrapersonal communication is just another way of describing the thinking process. In a way, that would be correct.

**Interpersonal communication** is communication between several people. This form of communication may range from the impersonal to the very personal. Impersonal communication is when you talk with a person you do not really care about – there is often coldness or indifference in your attitude when you engage in this kind of communication.

**Small group communication** takes place in a group, usually comprising five to 10 people. This form of communication serves relationship needs (like companionship, family bonding and affection or support) as well as task-based needs, for example, deciding on disciplinary action or resolving conflict in the workplace.

**Public communication**, also known as public speaking, involves communication between a speaker and an audience. This audience may range from just a few people to thousands or even millions of people. The aim of the speaker is usually to inform or to persuade the audience to act, buy, or think in a certain way. A teacher may address an assembly of students on codes of behavior or school rules.

**Mass communication** is communication that is sent out from a source to many receivers all over the world. It takes place through media like films, radio, videos and television. Modern avenues of mass communication like the Internet and blogs can be very powerful indeed as information is disseminated instantly.

**Corporate communication** is communication that takes place among members of an organization, within that organization. Interacting in teams, conferencing with co-workers, talking with a supervisor or manager, giving employees explanations and directions, interviewing and making presentations are some examples of corporate communication

## **Principles of Effective Oral Communication:**

### **1. Well-Planned**

Before presenting something, there should be proper planning regarding the audience, topics to be delivered, timing, and other factors: So, a person must be well-prepared to deliver his speech.

### **2. Clear pronunciation**

To make oral messages meaningful to receivers, words should be clearly and correctly pronounced. There should not be any lack of clarity, otherwise, the communication would be confusing.

### **3. Brevity**

Effective oral communication desires that a message should be brief. If the sender took a long time for talking, his message may not get the attention of the receiver.

### **4. Precision**

Precision is needed to make oral communication effective. There should not be any

confusing words rather a message to be delivered should be specific so that there is no misunderstanding.

5. **Natural voice**

Any sort of unnatural voice may distort the message. A natural voice can do a lot to make oral communication effective.

6. **Logical sequence**

Ideas should be organized in a sequential way to make the message communicative and attractive. Unorganized ideas do not provide a clear sense while a logical sequence of ideas gives a clear sense.

7. **Suitable words**

Words have different meanings to different people in different situations in oral communication, a speaker should use common, simple, and familiar words so that the receiver can react to the message without any problem.

8. **Courteous**

Courtesy costs nothing but can earn many things. So, a speaker should be courteous while addressing listeners. It helps create a good impression in the mind of listeners regarding the speaker.

9. **Attractive presentation**

It is another principle to make oral communication effective. A speaker should deliver his speech in very nice and sweet language so that the receiver is attracted to take part in the communication.

10. **Avoiding Emotions**

Speaker must control his emotions to make oral communication effective. Too much emotion will take the speaker away from the main subject.

11. **Emphasis**

The speaker must be knowledgeable regarding the portion of the speech where he should give emphasis. Giving emphasis on respective points will help draw the attention of the audience.

12. **Controlling Gesticulation**

The speaker on many occasions, consciously or unconsciously, gesticulates for expressing his ideas or thoughts. This is a habit and should be avoided. Otherwise, the application of such a habit may lead to % disinterest of the audience.

## **Techniques of Effective Speech:**

### **1. Think before you speak**

By organizing your thoughts in advance, you can eliminate many of the awkward pauses that occur when speaking. It will also help you relay your information more concisely.

While writing down your thoughts is not always possible in impromptu discussions, it is still effective to take a minute to organize your thoughts in your mind before you begin to speak.

## **2. Speak with confidence**

Speaking in a confident manner will help you build trust and command the respect of your audience. There are several factors which can impact your ability to speak confidently, including your command of the subject matter, your word choice, the tone of your voice, your body language, and your ability to make direct eye contact with your audience.

## **3. Be clear and concise**

The most effective way to get your point across is to make it in a clear and concise manner. Avoid using complex, convoluted sentences, and try to state your argument in direct language. Before speaking, ask yourself, “What is the clearest way I can make my point?”

## **4. Be aware of your non-verbal communication cues**

Your body language significantly impacts the way others interpret what you say. Pay attention to the gestures you make, your facial expressions, and your body language to ensure they align with the message you are trying to get across.

## **5. Be a good listener**

Being a good listener is as important as being a good speaker, and it will improve the quality of your verbal interactions. It shows the people you are speaking with that you genuinely care about their ideas, and it helps ensure you understand their needs. This will enable you to build trust and rapport much quicker.

## **6. Think about the perspective of your audience**

Just because you have a strong command of a topic doesn't mean the people you are speaking to have the same knowledge as you.

Try to think about how someone else will understand what you are trying to communicate, particularly if they lack the technical knowledge about a subject that you possess.

## **7. Vary your vocal tone**

Speaking in a monotone voice is a surefire way to bore your audience. Instead, use voice inflection to add emphasis to important points, and vary the pitch of your voice to express emotion. This will help keep your audience engaged in your message.

Strong verbal skills will help to encourage essential discussion while playing a major role in bringing people together. Ask questions if you are wondering about a new concept in order to become more knowledgeable about that topic. Explain why you are confused about a certain policy to get the assistance required for a better understanding of that set of guidelines.

Express what you experienced in a certain situation so you can work through what you are feeling. Relaying this information will not only help yourself, but also those who you are speaking with by solving problems, making connections, and avoiding conflicts.

Additionally, be prepared to serve as a good listener in return because lacking the ability to give the same level of attention that you expect from somebody else when you are speaking is not fair.

Effective verbal communication is an important skill to understand. Having the courage and ability to convey your thoughts in a respectable way will help enhance mutual understanding, trust, decision-making, and problem-solving between yourself and others, making the act of properly speaking and listening to an imperative influence on how we learn and think for ourselves.

### **Media of Oral Communication:**

1. **Face to Face Communication:** Face-to-face communication is the distinction of being able to see the other party or parties in a conversation. It allows for a better exchange of information since both speaker and listener are able to see and interpret body language and facial expressions.
2. **Teleconferences:** A teleconference is a live audio or audiovisual meeting with two or more participants. With the ability to teleconference, remote teams in an organization can collaborate and communicate, even when geographically dispersed. The process involves technology more sophisticated than a simple two-way phone connection. At its simplest, a teleconference can be an interactive audio conference with people at two or more locations communicating over a speakerphone. With more equipment and special arrangements, a teleconference also can be a video conference, in which the participants can see each other.
3. **Press Conference:** A press conference is an event organized to officially distribute information and answer questions from the media. Press conferences are also announced in response to specific public relations issues.
4. **Video Conferencing:** Video conferencing is an online technology that allows users in different locations to hold face-to-face meetings without having to move to a single location together. This technology is particularly convenient for business users in different cities or even different countries because it saves time, expenses, and hassles associated with business travel. Uses for video conferencing include holding routine meetings, negotiating business deals, and interviewing job candidates.
5. **Demonstration:** The act of showing someone how to do something or how something works.
6. **Radio Recording:** This includes all kinds of recorded sound that is used for the purpose of broadcast.
7. **Meetings:** A meeting is when two or more people come together to discuss one or more topics, often in a formal or business setting, but meetings also occur in a variety of other environments.
8. **Grapevine:** The informal communication system, sometimes known as the grapevine, is the communication aspect of the informal system of the organization. It is as fickle, dynamic, and varied as people are. It is the expression of the natural motivation of people to communicate.
9. **Group Discussion:** Group Discussion or GD is a type of discussion that involves people sharing ideas or activities. People in the group discussion are connected with one basic idea. Based on that idea, everyone in the group represents his/her perspective.
10. **Mobile Phone Conversation:** Includes verbal conversations on mobile phone.

## **The Art of Listening**

Listening is different from hearing. Hearing is passive in nature. Listening is a proactive undertaking. Active listening requires you to listen attentively to a speaker, understand what they're saying, respond and reflect on what's being said, and retain the information for later. This keeps both listener and speaker actively engaged in the conversation.

The listener may use active listening techniques like paying close attention to the speaker's behavior and body language in order to gain a better understanding of their message — and may signal that they're following along with visual cues such as nodding, eye contact, or avoiding potential interruptions, like fidgeting and pacing.

## **Principles of Good Listening**

It is tempting to think that because you can hear, you must be a good listener. However, there is far more to listening than merely hearing. A good listener will listen not only to what is being said, but also to what is left unsaid or only partially said. Effective listening therefore involves observing body language and noticing inconsistencies between verbal and non-verbal messages, as well as what is actually being said at any given moment.

For example, if someone tells you that they are happy with their life but through gritted teeth or with tears filling their eyes, the verbal and non-verbal messages are in conflict. It is therefore possible that they don't mean what they say. Effective listening involves using your eyes and mind, as well as your ears.

## **Ten Principles of Effective Listening**

There are ten principles behind really good listening.

### **1. Stop Talking**

Don't talk, listen. When somebody else is talking, it is important to listen to what they are saying. Do not interrupt, talk over them or finish their sentences for them. Right now, the most important thing that you can do is simply listen to them. As the saying goes, there is a time and a place for everything—and that includes both listening and speaking.

### **2. Prepare Yourself to Listen**

Focus on the speaker. Put other things out of your mind. The human mind is easily distracted by other thoughts, such as wondering what's for lunch, or what time you need to leave to catch your train, or whether it is going to rain later.



When you are listening to someone, try to put other thoughts out of your mind and concentrate on the messages that are being communicated.

Our page on Mindful Listening explains that it is natural for your mind to wander. However, just as you would when meditating, the trick is to catch your mind as it starts to do so, and bring it back to the speaker.

### **3. Put the Speaker at Ease**

Help the speaker to feel free to speak. It is not always easy for someone to talk freely, especially if they find the topic is difficult, or it causes an emotional reaction. However, as a listener, there are actions you can take to make the speaker feel more confident. For example:

Nod and smile, or use other gestures or words to encourage them to continue;

Maintain eye contact but don't stare;

### **4. Remove Distractions**

Remove as many distractions as possible so you can focus on what is being said. The human mind is prone to being distracted. It is therefore important to ensure that you don't give your mind too much opportunity for escape. When you are listening to someone, it is a good idea to remove possible distractions. Put down your phone, or turn away from your computer screen. It is also a good idea to avoid unnecessary interruptions. For example, at work, you might leave your desks and go to a meeting room, leaving your phones behind.

Avoid behaviours like doodling, shuffling papers, looking out of the window, picking your fingernails or similar. These kind of behaviours are unhelpful for both you and the speaker. They are likely to distract you from the process of listening, and making your listening less effective. They will also suggest to the speaker that you are not interested, which makes it harder for them to speak.

### **5. Empathise**

Try to understand the other person's point of view. When you are listening, it is important to see issues from the speaker's perspective: to empathise with them. This helps you to understand their point of view, and to understand their concerns.

The best way to do this is to let go of preconceived ideas. By opening your mind to new ideas and perspectives, you can more fully empathise with the speaker. If the speaker says something that you disagree with, then wait. Keep listening to their views and opinions without comment, until they have finished speaking.

After all, your first impression could be wrong. Their argument could be more nuanced when you listen carefully to it in full. You should only start to construct an argument to counter what is said, if necessary, once they have finished, and you have fully assimilated their argument.

## **6. Be Patient**

A pause, even a long pause, does not necessarily mean that the speaker has finished.

Sometimes it takes time to formulate what to say and how to say it. Be patient and let the speaker continue in their own time. Never be tempted to interrupt or finish a sentence for someone.

## **7. Avoid Personal Prejudice**

Try to be impartial. Our personal prejudices can lead us to pre-judge someone's words and meaning based on their habits or mannerisms. This prevents effective listening, because you have effectively already decided whether their words have value.

Don't become irritated and don't let someone's habits or mannerisms distract you from what they are really saying. Everybody has a different way of speaking. For example, some people are more nervous or shy than others, some have regional accents or make excessive arm movements, some people like to pace whilst talking, and others like to sit still. These behaviours can be distracting for listeners. However, try to focus on what is being said and ignore the style of delivery or the accompanying mannerisms.

## **8. Listen to the Tone**

Volume and tone both add to what someone is saying. A good speaker will use both volume and tone to help them to keep an audience attentive. Equally, everybody will use pitch, tone and volume of voice in certain situations. Effective listening means using these non-verbal cues to help you to understand the emphasis and nuance of what is being said.

## **9. Listen for Ideas – Not Just Words**

You need to get the whole picture, not just isolated bits and pieces. Words are the most basic elements of communication, but they do not occur in isolation.

Perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of listening is the ability to link together pieces of information to reveal the ideas of others. However, with proper concentration, letting go of distractions, and improving your focus this becomes easier. It is also helpful to use techniques like clarification and questioning to help you make more sense of ideas.

## **10. Wait and Watch for Non-Verbal Communication**

Gestures, facial expressions, and eye-movements can all be important in understanding someone's full meaning. We tend to think of listening as being something that happens with our ears—and hearing is of course important. However, active listening also involves our eyes. Some experts suggest that up to 80% of communication is non-verbal. That includes hearing the volume and tone—but a substantial element of any communication is body language. This is why it is much harder to gauge meaning over the phone. When listening, it is vital to watch and pick up the additional information being transmitted via non-verbal communication.

*(Notes taken from open sources on the internet)*