



# *PELTr*

## **PUTRA ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING**

**CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF LANGUAGE COMPETENCE (CALC)**

**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

## PELTra TRAINING SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	UNIT / TOPIC	PAGE NO
1 Nov 2019	8.30am – 12.30pm	Unit 1: Effective Speaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to English Pronunciation</li> <li>• Sentence Stress and Intonation</li> </ul>	1 - 15
	3pm – 5pm	Unit 1: Effective Speaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversing Effectively at the Workplace</li> </ul>	16 - 22
8 Nov 2019	8.30am – 12.30pm	Unit 2: Impressive Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Emails</li> <li>• Writing Reports</li> </ul>	23 - 48
	3pm – 5pm	Unit 2: Impressive Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective Telephone Interactions</li> </ul>	49 - 65
29 Nov 2019	8.30am – 12.30pm	Unit 3: Successful Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Preparation</li> </ul>	66 - 77
	3pm – 5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Presentation</li> </ul>	-

# UNIT 1: EFFECTIVE SPEAKING



## INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be introduced to different components of speaking skills. You will learn to apply phonetics symbols in pronunciation, pronounce words correctly and use appropriate stress and intonation. You will also learn how to converse effectively at the workplace.

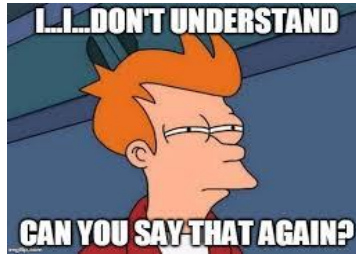


## OBJECTIVES

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

1. apply phonetic symbols and their sounds
2. pronounce words correctly
3. use appropriate word stress and intonation
4. use appropriate language expressions when conversing at the workplace

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION



How many times do you hear this when you are speaking? Even if your vocabulary and English grammar are perfect, it can still be difficult for people to understand you because of your pronunciation. You must speak clearly in order to communicate effectively with another person. To do this, you must make the sounds of the words correctly.

### PRE-ACTIVITY: Let's twist your tongue!

*Tongue twisters are a great way to improve your pronunciation and fluency. Try them slowly at first, and then read them as fast as you can.*

1. I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream.
2. She sells sea-shells on the sea-shore.
3. A big black bug bit a big black bear.
4. I saw a kitten eating chicken in the kitchen.
5. A cheap sheep is cheaper than a cheap ship.
6. Betty bought butter but the butter was bitter, so Betty bought better butter to make the bitter butter better.
7. A canner can can anything that he can,  
But a canner can't can a can, can he?
8. How much wood would a woodchuck chuck  
If a woodchuck would chuck wood?  
A woodchuck would chuck all the wood he could chuck  
If a woodchuck would chuck wood.

## RECOGNISING THE PHONETIC SYMBOLS

One way to improve pronunciation is to learn the phonetic symbols. International Phonetic Association (IPA) symbols are used in order to make the sounds of words correctly. These symbols are widely used in articulating the sounds of words in most languages in the world. Each symbol represents a sound.



### ACTIVITY 1













*How do you think the following phonetic symbols sound? With a partner, try to pronounce the symbols below:*

- 1) /p/
- 2) /g/
- 3) /z/
- 4) /ʃ/
- 5) /ʒ/
- 6) /dʒ/
- 7) /ə/
- 8) /ŋ/
- 9) /ʌ/
- 10) /u:/

Sounds in English can be categorised into three classes: the consonants, the vowels, and the diphthongs (double vowels). Below are the phonetic symbols of these three categories.

Consonant sounds:

### CONSONANT SOUNDS

<p><b>p</b> <u>P</u>en </p> <p><b>t</b> <u>t</u>axi </p> <p><b>k</b> <u>c</u>orn </p> <p><b>s</b> <u>s</u>andal </p> <p><b>f</b> <u>f</u>an </p> <p><b>m</b> <u>m</u>ouse </p>	<p><b>b</b> <u>b</u>oot </p> <p><b>d</b> <u>d</u>uck </p> <p><b>g</b> <u>g</u>oat </p> <p><b>z</b> <u>z</u>ebra </p> <p><b>v</b> <u>v</u>an </p> <p><b>n</b> <u>n</u>urse </p>
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### CONSONANT SOUNDS





<p><b>l</b> <u>l</u>ake </p> <p><b>j</b> <u>y</u>acht </p> <p><b>h</b> <u>h</u>ouse </p> <p><b>ʃ</b> <u>sh</u>ip </p> <p><b>tʃ</b> <u>ch</u>ocolate </p> <p><b>θ</b> <u>th</u>row </p>	<p><b>r</b> <u>r</u>abbit </p> <p><b>w</b> <u>w</u>olf </p> <p><b>ŋ</b> <u>ng</u>er </p> <p><b>ʒ</b> <u>treasur</u>e </p> <p><b>dʒ</b> <u>jack</u>et </p> <p><b>ð</b> <u>weath</u>er </p>
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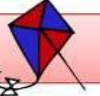





Vowel sounds:

English vowels make it really tricky to know how to say a word. For example, *way*, *weigh* and *why* are all said the same while *comb*, *bomb* and *tomb* are pronounced differently. The symbols of vowels below will help you to differentiate the sounds:

### SINGLE VOWEL SOUNDS

<b>a:</b>	car 	<b>ʌ</b>	bus 
<b>ɔ:</b>	ball 	<b>ɒ</b>	dog 
<b>i:</b>	read 	<b>ɪ</b>	pig 
<b>u:</b>	shoe 	<b>ʊ</b>	book 
<b>e</b>	bell 	<b>ɜ:</b>	skirt 
<b>æ</b>	hat 	<b>ə</b>	teacher 

### DOUBLE VOWEL SOUNDS

<b>eɪ</b>	rain 	<b>eə</b>	chair 
<b>aɪ</b>	kite 	<b>aʊ</b>	cow 
<b>ɔɪ</b>	toys 	<b>ʊə</b>	tourist 
<b>ɪə</b>	ear 	<b>əʊ</b>	coat 



## ACTIVITY 2

*Using the phonetics symbols you have learnt, say each word below with the correct pronunciation:*

1. /mi:tɪŋ/
2. /ɪmpɔ:t(ə)nt/
3. /i:zi/
4. /vju:/
5. /kəmpju:tə/
6. /kwɒntɪti/
7. /stɑ:f/
8. /ɪntəʌpt/
9. /səpəʊz/
10. /bɪldɪŋ/
11. /ɪksprɪərɪəns/
12. /əbdʒektɪv/
13. /kəndɪdeɪt/
14. /ʌndəstænd/
15. /rɪpɔ:t/



Having good English pronunciation is essential to make sure that people understand what you are saying. There are many applications available to help you improve your pronunciation. You may download one of the applications below and install it in your phone to check the accuracy of your pronunciation:

- *dictionary.com*
- *Macmillan English dictionary*
- *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*
- *Oxford Dictionary of English*



### ACTIVITY 3

*Check the transcription of the words below using one of the downloaded applications. Then write down the transcription in the space provided and pronounce the words correctly.*

- |     |             |   |   |
|-----|-------------|---|---|
| 1.  | career      | / | / |
| 2.  | university  | / | / |
| 3.  | faculty     | / | / |
| 4.  | examination | / | / |
| 5.  | restaurant  | / | / |
| 6.  | graduate    | / | / |
| 7.  | student     | / | / |
| 8.  | expensive   | / | / |
| 9.  | hour        | / | / |
| 10. | venue       | / | / |

## MISPRONOUNCED ENGLISH WORDS

Trivia: Did you know that 'almond' and 'salmon' should not be pronounced with the /l/ sound?



A meaning of a word can be completely changed by the wrong pronunciation. Normally, Malaysians often reduce the unvoiced **th** to **t**. Thus you would hear *tree* (*three*), *trow* (*throw*) and many more. Hence, all speakers of English must adhere to the same standard of pronunciation in order to be understood by others.



### ACTIVITY 4: SAY IT RIGHT!

*With a partner, pronounce the words below:*

1. liaise
2. colleague
3. entrepreneur
4. develop
5. schedule
6. doubt
7. debt
8. thorough
9. honest
10. purchase

*Are you sure you pronounced the words correctly? Check the correct pronunciation using the downloaded apps.*

Mispronouncing words can cause major misunderstanding, and the message you would like to deliver fails to reach the listener. This often happens when you learn the word from your reading rather than listening to it in a lecture or on television.



### ACTIVITY 5

Watch the video below and identify the mispronounced words used by the speaker:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SizeEq5MvNFg>

Other than mispronounced words, you should also use the language expressions correctly.

### Use It Right!



X That's mean	√ That means
X Nowsaday	√ Nowadays
X I'm agree	√ I agree
X Tentative	√ Tentative programme
X I came from	√ I come from
X I'm not understand	√ I don't understand
X I'm boring	√ I'm bored

## 1.2 SENTENCE STRESS AND INTONATION

### Introduction to Sentence Stress of Emphasised Meanings

Sentence stress is the emphasis that certain words have in utterances. When we speak in English, we seldom stress every word in a sentence. However, only certain words are stressed. The combination of stressed and unstressed words in a sentence gives us the rhythm of the language.

Words are usually categorised into **content words** and **function words**. In “normal” rhythm, we tend to stress content words and not function words. Content words convey the meaning of the sentence and convey the most information while function words have little meaning except to show a grammatical relationship with other words in the sentence.

Content words include the following classes:

- Nouns: words that refer to people, places, things or abstract ideas  
e.g. *UPM, Amanda, doctor, Malaysia, park*
- Main verbs: words that show action or state of being  
e.g. *walk, explain, look, feel*
- Adjectives: words used to describe nouns  
e.g. *beautiful, kind, new*
- Adverbs: words used to describe verbs, adjectives or other adverbs  
e.g. *slowly, fearfully, very, quite*
- Question words: words used for asking questions  
e.g. *who, which, when, what*
- Demonstrative pronouns: words used to point out or contrast objects  
e.g. *this, that, these, those*

Function words include words in the following classes:

- Personal pronouns: e.g. *he, it, you, they*
- Articles: e.g. *a, an, the*
- Auxiliary verbs: e.g. *has, must, can, should*
- Relative pronouns: e.g. *that, which, who, whose*
- Conjunctions: e.g. *and, but, or*
- Possessive adjectives: e.g. *my, your, our, their*
- Prepositions: e.g. *in, on, at, of*
- Be-verbs (except *been* and *being*): e.g. *am, is, are, was*

When we want to stress the words, we:

- say them with a greater force
- hold them longer
- say them at a higher pitch

There are two reasons why you need to understand sentence stress. Sentence stress helps people to:

- understand better especially in fast speech.
- communicate better by conveying the intended message more effectively

Under normal circumstances, we would stress the content words and not the function words. However, this rule can be intentionally violated when we wish to emphasise other meanings. The following examples illustrate the possible meanings which are emphasised when different words are stressed:

Sentence stress can vary quite frequently depending on the speakers' intention. Look at the examples below and say the sentences with emphasis on the highlighted syllables. Compare the emphasis given with their intention in brackets:

***I** have to sit for PELCA next Tuesday. (me, not anyone else)*

*I have to **sit** for PELCA next Tuesday. (I'll be taking a test, not administering it)*

*I have to sit for **PELCA** next Tuesday. (the name of test is PELCA, not MUET or IELTS)*

*I have to sit for PELCA **next** Tuesday. (not this Tuesday)*

*I have to sit for PELCA next **Tuesday**. (not next Monday)*

Do you notice that different word stress tells different intentions of the speakers?



### ACTIVITY 1

Go to [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0G\\_yZfXJUQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0G_yZfXJUQ) . Watch and listen to the video clip. Each sentence can emphasise a different meaning depending on the word stress. Then work out the meanings emphasised based on the words in bold.

Words stressed	Meaning emphasised
<b>Jack</b> will cycle to the restaurant tonight.	
Jack <b>will</b> cycle to the restaurant tonight.	
Jack will <b>cycle</b> to the restaurant tonight.	
Jack will cycle <b>to</b> the restaurant tonight.	
Jack will cycle to the <b>restaurant</b> tonight.	
Jack will cycle to the restaurant <b>tonight</b> .	



### ACTIVITY 2

With a partner, read the following sentences by stressing the highlighted words. Discuss the intended meanings emphasised in each utterance.

Words stressed	Meaning emphasised
<b>UPM</b> won the theatre competition in 2018.	
UPM <b>won</b> the theatre competition in 2018.	
UPM won the <b>theatre</b> competition in 2018.	
UPM won the theatre <b>competition</b> in 2018.	
UPM won the theatre competition in <b>2018</b> .	



### ACTIVITY 3

Say the sentence out loud with any one word stressed. Ask your partner to guess the word stressed and the meaning emphasised.

The meeting will be held at Block A today.

She might be presenting the results next week.

## INTONATION

When you speak, you do not only use a single tone. You would rather vary the level of your voice to convey different meaning and emotion, and this pattern is called intonation. Intonation is about **how** you say things, rather than **what** you say. There are two basic intonation patterns in English – the falling intonation ( ↘ ) and the rising intonation ( ↗ ). The video below helps you to understand more on intonation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tzh3Owutf5Y>

### THE FALLING INTONATION

It begins fairly high and descends on each stressed syllable with the fall on the last main stressed syllable. It is used when the speaker is:

- making a statement e.g. *The results will be out today.*
- making an exclamation e.g. *Great!*
- giving a command e.g. *Send the report quickly.*
- asking wh-questions e.g. *Why are you late to work?*
- expecting the other person to agree with him e.g. *Do you like my idea?*

The falling tone usually conveys emotions such as:

- sarcasm e.g. *You are the smart one.*
- anger e.g. *Just do what I want.*
- disappointment e.g. *I thought he would stand by me.*
- disinterest e.g. *Really. Have a good time then.*
- assertiveness e.g. *I want it back now.*

## THE RISING INTONATION

The rising tone begins fairly high and descends on each stressed syllable but rises again on the last stressed word and remains high for any unstressed syllables which follow. It is used when the speaker is:

- reassuring the listener or encouraging him e.g. *I think so.*
- unsure of himself e.g. *She's from the Faculty of Modern Languages, I think.*
- expecting a 'Yes' or 'No' answer e.g. *Is she coming to our meeting?*
- checking for information e.g. *Where did you say you were from?*
- not expecting the listener to agree with him e.g. *You do like it, don't you?*

The rising tone usually conveys emotions such as:

- happiness e.g. *I just got promoted.*
- eagerness e.g. *Ahmad, meet my good friend, Mazlan.*
- Interest e.g. *How long will you be attending the course?*
- sympathy e.g. *Don't worry. It'll be alright.*



### ACTIVITY 4

Read the following sentences to your partner. Let him/her guess the emotion that you are trying to convey.



(Emotions: happiness, assertiveness, anger, disappointment, depression, anxiety, excitement, disinterest, relief)

1. Oh, the examiner is already here.
2. Oh, not again.
3. I don't really care.
4. What a day.
5. It's done!
6. You have to do it.
7. Don't do it again.
8. When is the officer coming?





### ACTIVITY 5

*Read the following sentences and decide the suitable intonation (falling or rising).  
Then read the sentences aloud.*

1. How can you do this to us?
2. We can always discuss this over lunch.
3. It's a beautiful day.
4. It'll be fun to meet up again.
5. Are you alright?
6. What action do you think should be taken to curb this problem?
7. Quick! The meeting is about to start in a few minutes.
8. Have a nice day everybody.
9. Let's meet up next week.
10. Two staff in our department did not attend the intensive course yesterday.



### ACTIVITY 6

*With a partner, read the dialogue below with correct pronunciation and appropriate intonation.*

- A : Hey Bard, I haven't seen you for a while!  
B : Hi Alan! Yes, it has been a long time!  
A : How long has it been since we last saw each other?  
B : Hmm, I think it's been two years.  
A : Where are you working right now?  
B : I am currently working in UPM as a research officer.  
A : Wah, glad to hear that. You must be busy conducting researches.  
B : Yes, I'm quite busy these days. So how about you?  
A : I just finished my postgraduate studies. I took Masters in Accountancy in UNITEN.  
B : I see. You are such a hardworking person.  
A : Thank you for the compliment.  
B : I'm sorry I have to take a leave now. I need to fetch my kids from school.  
A : No problem. I'm so glad to meet you today. Till we meet next time. Take care!  
B : Ok, you too. Bye!

## 1.3 CONVERSING EFFECTIVELY AT THE WORKPLACE

The basic unit of a conversation is an exchange which involves two moves: an initiating move, and a response. Conversation-making usually involves starting a conversation, maintaining it, and finally, closing the conversation. This structure, however, is not clearly defined. In this section, we will learn:

- (1) How we can start, maintain and close a conversation and
- (2) The language we can use to convey our intended meaning in conversation-making.



### STARTING A CONVERSATION

It is important to choose the appropriate way to start a conversation each time; our 'opening move' may affect how the rest of the conversation goes. The following are a few ways to start a conversation:

- Using greetings and introduction
- Talking about your surroundings
- Making small talk

### USING GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTIONS

This is an easy way to establish contact with another person, especially if that person is a stranger. Common expression for greetings include:

*Hello*  
*Good Morning/ Afternoon/ Day*  
*How are you?*  
*How do you do?*

Greetings are usually followed by introductions which usually include disclosing some personal information such as our name, where we come from, and our occupation. Following that, we may include other relevant information, for example:

*How do you do? I'm Zainab from the Bursar's office.*  
*Pleased to meet you. My name is Dollah. And you are....?*  
*Good morning. You look familiar. Haven't we met before?*



### ACTIVITY 1

*In pairs, list down greetings and expressions of self-introduction to start a conversation.*

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_

### TALKING ABOUT YOUR SURROUNDINGS

Topics on the surroundings to start a conversation should relate to the context of your conversation, for example, the noise level, the weather, and the furnishing of the room.

*It is noisy in here, isn't it?*

*Today is rather hot, isn't it?*

*This office isn't large, is it?*

*The manager has replaced the furniture, hasn't he?*

Note: Turning a comment on your surroundings into a tag question is a good way to elicit response from the other person.



### ACTIVITY 2

*In pairs, list down two expressions to start a conversation using the surrounding.*

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_



### ACTIVITY 3

*Turn each statement into a tag question.*

- a. The decorations are so lovely \_\_\_\_\_
- b. You have eaten \_\_\_\_\_
- c. This room is very stuffy \_\_\_\_\_

## MAKING SMALL TALK

Small talk is casual and light discussion of everyday topics such as your work, the weather, and current affairs. The following are some examples:

*Was the traffic heavy on the way to work?*

*When is our department meeting?*

*Did you read the papers today?*



### ACTIVITY 4

*In pairs, list down two expressions that you can use to talk about your work in order to start a conversation.*

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. \_\_\_\_\_



### ACTIVITY 5

*You met a foreign visitor Japan. Start a conversation with this person using any of the three ways you have learned.*

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## MAINTAINING A CONVERSATION

Once a conversation has been started, both speakers should try to develop and maintain it. There are various ways to maintain a conversation, which include:

- Highlighting what we have heard
- Asking questions
- Disclosing personal information

### HIGHLIGHTING WHAT WE HAVE SAID

Highlighting what we have said involves referring back to something that was said earlier, for example:

*Earlier you seemed interested when I told you about.....*

*A moment ago I heard you say.....*

We can also repeat keyword or phrases to highlight what was said earlier, for example:

*A: I usually send in my report in the first day of every month*

*B: First day of every month?*

### ASKING QUESTIONS

There are two types of questions: closed questions and open ended questions.

Closed questions require yes/ no answers or one/ two-word responses.

Do you enjoy working here?

When did you start working at *Tabung Haji*?

Who is your boss?

Open-ended question begin with *wh*-words *what*, *how* and *why*.

*What are your job specifications?*

*How do you feel about this report?*

*Why do you like working at Tabung Haji?*



### ACTIVITY 6

*State whether the following questions are open-ended (O) or closed C).*

1. Are you new to this office? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why do we need this SL1M programme? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Was this procedure included in the report? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What are the advantages of enrolling on this course? \_\_\_\_\_



### ACTIVITY 7

*In pairs, write appropriate responses to the comments below in order to maintain the conversation. Use a variety of techniques in your answers.*

1. I was rather late for our department meeting this morning.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The meeting lasted for four hours instead of the usual two hours.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. I bumped into the President in the lift this morning.  
\_\_\_\_\_



## CLOSING A CONVERSATION

When we wish to close a conversation, we do not stop talking suddenly as we would appear to be rude. In many situations, there are signals that will enable us to end our conversation naturally, for example, when a meeting begins or when your telephone rings. In such situations, we can end the conversation by saying. *It looks like the meeting is about to begin, or I apologise but I need to take this call.*

In situations, where we do not have such signals for a natural closing, we may politely end a conversation. This typically involves three steps:

- pre-closing
- closing
- taking leave

### PRE-CLOSING

When we want to end a conversation, we may signal to the other speaker that we wish to end the conversation. We may use any of the following expressions to signal the closing of a conversation:

*Well...*

*So...*

*Look at the time!*

*I know you're busy .....*

### CLOSING

After we have signalled our wish to close the conversation, we can explicitly end the conversation by saying:

*I'll let you get back to your work now.*

*I'm afraid I've got to leave now. It's getting late.*

*I've to rush off now.*

*I've enjoyed our discussion. But I have an appointment at 2 p.m.*

## TAKING LEAVE

After we have explicitly ended our conversation, the next step is to take leave. Below are some expressions we can use:

*Good-bye*

*See you soon.*

*See you some other time.*

*Have a good weekend.*



### ACTIVITY 8

*In pairs, select a job-related topic for a short conversation. Use the different types of expressions you have learnt so far to start, maintain and close the conversation.*



## REVIEW

In this unit, you have learnt to:

- apply phonetic symbols and their sounds
- pronounce words correctly
- use appropriate word stress and intonation
- use appropriate language expressions when conversing at the workplace



## REFERENCES

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# UNIT 2: IMPRESSIVE COMMUNICATION



## INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be introduced to different types of writing at the workplace. You will learn to write emails and reports. You will also learn how to converse effectively over the telephone using proper language expressions.



## OBJECTIVES

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

1. recognise common structure of written texts at the workplace
2. use appropriate grammar and vocabulary in writing
3. use appropriate language expressions when handling telephone conversations

## 2.1 WRITING EMAILS



### PRE-ACTIVITY

*Discuss in groups*

Is the following email suitable for internal and external communication of a company? Why?

E-mail A
<b>From :</b> Daud Ali (bigdude45@yahoo.com)
<b>To:</b> Stephen Choong (stephenchoong@builderpro.com)
<b>CC:</b> Dillah(prettygurl29@gmail.com)
<b>Subject:</b> Serdang Heights Development
<b>Attachment :</b> Proposal 1.doc
Hey stranger  Hope you're all right. I was surprise to hear from you. Say, why we don't meet sometime. Need to thrash out this big project and pick your brain.  See you soon.  You know who

### What is an email?

An email is usually refers to the correspondence between one business organisation to another, to customers, clients or other external parties, mainly for the purpose of sharing information, to promote or to sell a product.

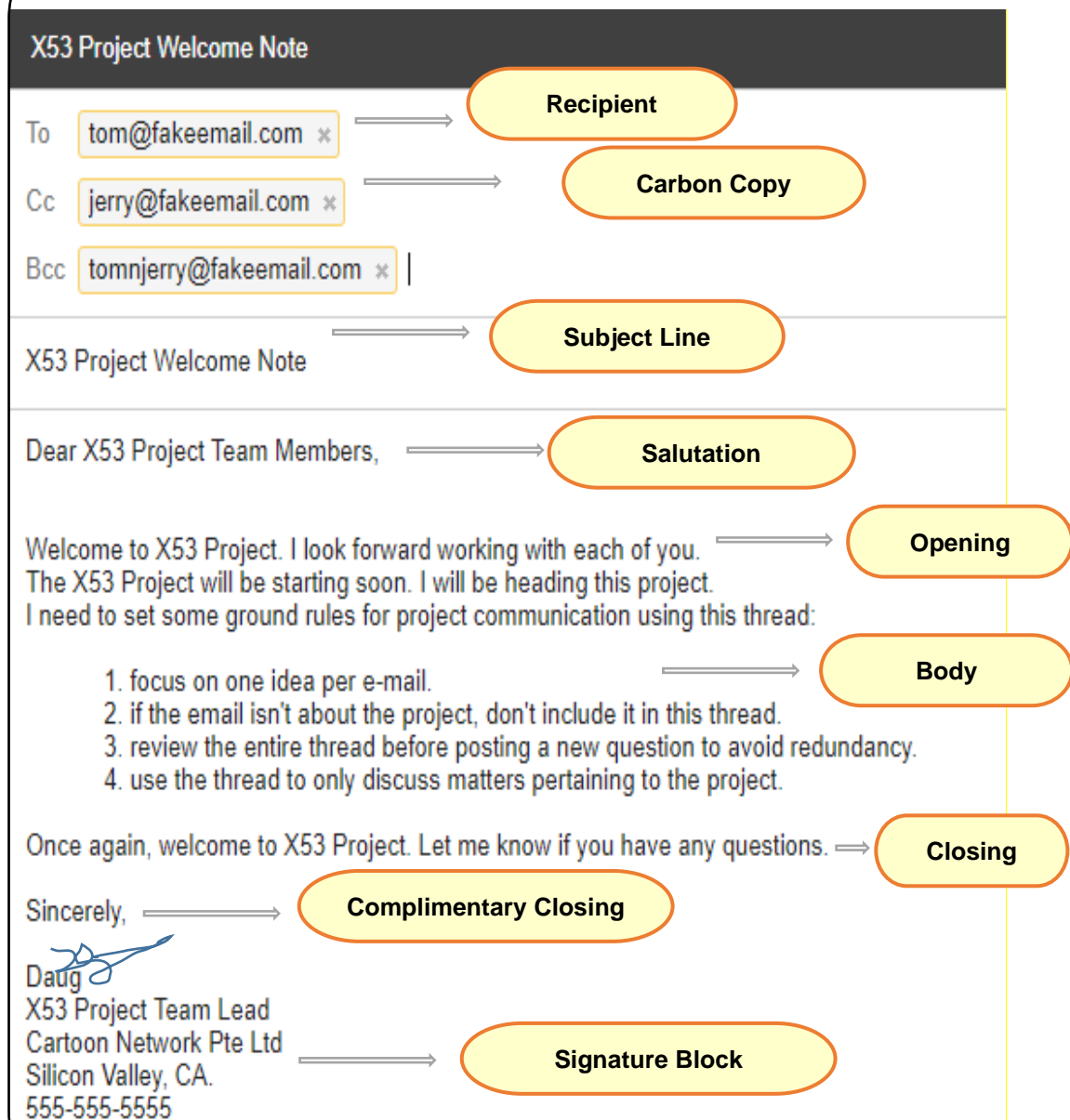
Business communication is important to the success of an organisation because:

- it maintains good relationships between colleagues, companies, and clients;
- it stimulates and nurtures goodwill;
- it serves as documentation;
- it resolves issues and considerations.

## Format of an email

There are many different formats used in writing a business email. However, the full block format is the most common layout used. A good business email should have a logical structure, precision, clarity, accuracy, and conciseness.

### Example



Here are some common business vocabulary and phrases that can be used in business email writing according to the intended purposes.

### **Example**

#### **Starting**

Dear Sir or Madam

Dear Mr / Mrs / Ms / Miss Brown

Hi / Hello

#### **Ending**

Yours faithfully (after Dear Sir or Madam)

Yours sincerely (after Dear Mr / Mrs / Ms / Miss)

Best regards / Kind regards

All the best

Bye for now

#### **Giving reason for writing**

I am writing with regard to / about ...

I am writing to request / inform / enquire / complain about / apply for ...

Just a quick email to ask ...

I am writing on behalf of

#### **Referring to previous contact**

Further to our previous meeting ...

With reference to your letter dated 15/6/13 ...

Following your letter ...

About your email ...

#### **Sending an attachment or enclosure**

I am attaching / enclosing ...

Please find attached / enclosed ...

As you will see from the attachment / enclosure ...

Here is ...

#### **Offering more information or help**

Please feel free to contact me if you would like any further information.

Email me / Give me a call if you want any more information.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further assistance.

#### **Referring to future contact**

I look forward to hearing from you.

We look forward to working with you in the future.

See you soon.

**Introducing good news**

I am delighted to ...

I am happy to ... / I am pleased to ...

Fortunately ... / Luckily ...

**Introducing bad news**

We regret to inform you that ...

Unfortunately ... / Sadly ...

I am afraid (that) ... / I am sorry, but ... / I regret that ...

**Requesting**

I would be grateful if you would send ...

Could you possibly send ...?

Can you send ...?

Please send ...

**Thanking**

I would like to thank you for ...

I appreciate your assistance with this.

I am grateful for ...

Thank you for ... / Thanks for ...

**Apologising**

My apologies. / Sorry. / I am sorry that ...

Please accept my apology / I sincerely regret ...

**Inviting / accepting / declining**

Would you like to ... ? / Do you want to ... ?

That would be great. / I'd love to. / That sounds great.

I am sorry, but I am busy. / I am afraid I can't.

**Arranging**

Can you meet at (time) on (day)?

What day suits you?

Tuesday would suit me.

Tuesday is good for me.

Look forward to seeing you there.

See you next week.

**Checking and clarifying**

I am writing to check / confirm that ...

I do not understand what you mean

Do you mean ... ? / Are you saying that ... ?

## Formal vs. Informal Email



### ACTIVITY 1

*Work in pairs.*

a. Compare the emails below. Discuss these aspects:

- the structure
- the language expressions used in the: opening, closing, salutations, complimentary close
- the tone
- the vocabulary

E-mail A	E-mail B
<b>From :</b> Daud Ali (bigdude45@yahoo.com)	<b>From :</b> Daud Ali (daudali@serdangcorp.com)
<b>To:</b> Stephen Choong (stephenchoong@builderpro.com)	<b>To:</b> Stephen Choong (stephenchoong@builderpro.com)
<b>CC:</b> Dillah(prettygurl29@gmail.com)	<b>CC:</b> Dillah (dillah@serdangcorp.com)
<b>Subject:</b> Serdang Heights Development	<b>Subject:</b> Serdang Heights Development
<b>Attachment :</b> Proposal 1.doc	<b>Attachment :</b> Proposal 1.doc
Hey stranger  Hope you're all right. I was surprise to hear from you. Say, why we don't meet sometime. Need to thrash out this big project and pick your brain.  See you soon.  You know who	Dear Mr Choong  I hope you are well. It was great to hear from you. Thank you for your time.  Could we set up a meeting on this? Let me know the best time for you to meet. It would be great to discuss this in person rather than by email.  If you have any further questions on this, please do not hesitate to ask.  I look forward to speaking to you again.  Kind regards Daud

b. Which email is more formal and business-like?

It is best to adopt formal or standard opening greetings and opening lines in writing an email for external parties.

### **Example**

#### **Opening greeting**

Dear Prof. Smith/ Dr Smith/ Mr Smith/ Ms Smith

To: The marketing team

Dear Mr Steve

Dear Sir or Madam

To whom it may concern:

To Steve

#### **Opening line**

I am writing to you concerning...

Thank you for your interest in our company.

Thank you for your response.

With regards to...

I hope you are well.

I am writing to you about...

Thank you for your prompt reply.

Adopting formal closing lines and complimentary closing (sign-offs or signature) can reflect the professionalism of an organisation.

### **Example**

#### **Closing lines**

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I await your reply with interest.

We look forward to building a strong business relationship in the future.

I look forward to our meeting on the 7th of October.

Thank you for your extremely helpful attention to this matter.

Thanks again for your attention, consideration, and time.

We look forward to hearing from you.

It is always a pleasure doing business with you.

Thank you again for sharing your expertise in this matter.

I am looking forward to getting your input on this issue.

Looking forward to our successful partnership.

### **Complimentary closing**

#### **Best,**

A short, sweet, and safe way to sign off. Many experts agree that "Best" is the best way to go. You can extend it to say "All the best" or "Best regards."

#### **Cheers,**

A slightly British-sounding sign-off which conveys friendly cheer but may also allude to drinking alcohol, which might be a bit too informal for some.

#### **Faithfully (or Faithfully yours),**

Adds a touch of loyalty but might also come across as a bit too zealous.

#### **Hope this helps,**

If you're trying to help someone or offering advice, this might be the perfect closer.

#### **Looking forward,**

Conveys a pleasant, casual assurance of continued relationship.

#### **Regards,**

Indicates professionalism and respect. You can make it more emotional with "Warm regards," but "Warmest regards" might be a little too warm for a professional letter.

#### **Respectfully,**

A nice and somewhat deferential way to end the letter.

#### **Sincerely,**

The most common and benign closer.

#### **Thanks (or Thanks again),**

Use this if you haven't already fully expressed your gratitude.

#### **Warmly,**

A nice but not over-the-top touch of emotion; probably best when you have already met the person face-to-face at least once.

#### **With anticipation,**

If your letter's main purpose was to make a plan or set up an appointment, this may be the way to go.



## Etiquette in Writing



### ACTIVITY 2

*Work in pairs*

Compare the following email messages by observing the style of writing. Which of the email creates a better impression and rapport? Why?

#### E-mail 1

**Subject: Re: Problem solved**

Hey Jackie – We spoke this morning and note your problem is solved. Should you require any further assistance kindly revert.

Thanks & regards

Linda Omar

#### E-mail 2

**Subject: Re: Problem solved**

Hello Jackie

Thanks for your call today.

I am so pleased that we have been able to find solution to this. Good luck with future progress on this project.

I will be here when you decide how we can help you again.

Linda

Even though formal language is preferred in writing emails, it should not lack of the natural, conversational style, as it is a less formal way of communicating than writing a letter or even making a phone call. Writing as speaking helps to keep emails short, personable and friendly. This will allow rapport building and eventually a better relationship with the client can be developed.

Additionally, emails should reflect the sender in the real world. If something would not be said face to face to a person, then it should not be said in written emails. Therefore, good manners and etiquette should always be applied in writing emails to avoid miscommunication.

There are some etiquettes in business writing especially in writing emails:

- Include a clear, direct subject line
- Be concise
- Use professional e-mail address
- Consider before 'reply all'
- Include a signature block
- Use professional salutations
- Be cautious with humour
- Know that people from different culture speak and write differently
- Reply to e-mails
- Proofread
- Correct recipient
- Font-classic
- Pay attention to tone



### ACTIVITY 3

*Work in pairs.*

- a. The email below contains inappropriate features that may cause miscommunication. Discuss how the email can be improved.

**From** : Shirley.Tan@presto.com.my  
**Date** : Feb 16 9:55 am  
**To** : [robert@roberttaylortraining.com](mailto:robert@roberttaylortraining.com)  
**Cc** :  
**Subject** : HELLO!!!

hi Robert

Hope things r well with u, its good 2 know that u will be back in malaysia again in nov to hold your seminar on effective biz writing. PLS LET ME HAVE SOME FREE DATE while u r over here. Some bookstores r interested in a talk cum singing event, I hope u will agree to take part.

thnks &rgs

b. Write another version of the email with appropriate language and etiquette.

**From** :

**Date** :

**To** :

**Cc** :

**Subject** :

## Language Point

### Common Words and Expressions

Writing emails in English quickly and correctly can be challenging due to time constraints and little margin for error. English emails for work do not always have to be very formal, but they do have to be professional, which means that being objective, polite, and accurate with spelling and grammar are highly recommended. Therefore, it is best to be familiar with some common words and expressions to speed up the email writing process.



#### ACTIVITY 4

*Work in pairs*

Fill the table below with common words or expressions used for the given functions.

Function	Expressions or Words
Request for information	Example: <i>I am writing to enquire about...</i> • ..... • .....
Response to request	Example: <i>Enclosed is the information you requested</i> • ..... • .....
Introduction of Product/Service	Example: <i>Our new product will be launched next month.</i> • ..... • .....
Reference	Example: <i>I am writing in reference to...</i> • ..... • .....
Goodwill	Example: <i>Thank you for your hospitality.</i> • ..... • .....

Function	Expressions or Words
Confirmation	Example: <i>I am writing to confirm .....</i> • ..... • .....
Offering Assistance	Example: <i>If we can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to ask.</i> • ..... • .....

## Breaking Misconceptions

There is a quote that says “Mean what you say, and say what you mean”. In business writing, there is no room for error because it may lead to miscommunication and thus, reduces the chances of making more business. Therefore, it is crucial to be vigilant with the vocabulary used in writing what you mean, especially those muddling words that are commonly confused.

### EXAMPLE

<b>accept</b> (v)	to take
<b>except</b> (prep)	other than
<b>access</b> (n)	right to enter; admittance
<b>assess</b> (v)	to set a value
<b>excess</b> (n/adj)	extra
<b>adapt</b> (v)	to adjust
<b>adept</b> (adj)	skilled
<b>adopt</b> (v)	to take as your own
<b>affect</b> (n)	to influence
<b>effect</b> (n)	result/ to bring about
<b>appraise</b> (v)	to estimate
<b>advise</b> (v)	to notify

<b>bare</b> (adj)	naked; no more than
<b>bear</b> (v)	to carry
<b>beside</b> (prep)	alongside
<b>besides</b> (prep)	in addition to; except for
<b>capital</b> (n/adj)	official city of a state; money/serious; chief
<b>capitol</b> (n)	building which houses state legislature
<b>Capitol</b> (n)	building in Washington, DC
<b>complementary</b> (adj)	that which completes/ to complete
<b>complimentary</b> (adj)	expression of praise/ to praise
<b>correspondence</b> (n)	letters
<b>correspondents</b> (n)	those who write letters
<b>elicit</b> (v)	to draw out
<b>illicit</b> (adj)	illegal
<b>loose</b> (v)	to set free
<b>lose</b> (v)	to suffer a loss; to mislay
<b>loss</b> (v)	something lost
<b>personal</b> (adj)	private
<b>personnel</b> (n)	staff
<b>stationary</b> (adj)	fixed in place
<b>stationery</b> (n)	writing paper
<b>weather</b> (n/v)	condition/to come through safely
<b>whether</b> (conj)	if; in case



## ACTIVITY 5

*Work in pairs*

Fill in the blanks with the given word that best suits the context of the sentences below.

### 1. accept or except

I cannot \_\_\_\_\_ your explanation.

Everyone \_\_\_\_\_ the service provider was pleased.

### 2. affect or effect

The \_\_\_\_\_ was immediately noticeable.

Will the change \_\_\_\_\_ your plans?

How can we \_\_\_\_\_ this change in policy?

### 3. all ready or already

Are you \_\_\_\_\_ for your presentation?

It's \_\_\_\_\_ been done.

### 4. all right or alright

The schedule is \_\_\_\_\_ with me.

### 5. beside or besides

The printer is \_\_\_\_\_ the desk.

\_\_\_\_\_ Mr Khan, who else is not attending?

### 6. ensure or insure

Is your car adequately \_\_\_\_\_?

The added step will \_\_\_\_\_ success.

### 7. farther or further

Our Kota Bahru office is \_\_\_\_\_ north than the one in Jertih.

Do you need \_\_\_\_\_ information?

**8. practice or practise**

Our supervisor should \_\_\_\_\_ what he preaches.

It is time to put this idea into \_\_\_\_\_.

**9. principal of principle**

The \_\_\_\_\_ cause was unemployment.

The \_\_\_\_\_ staff welcomed the new candidates.

**10. some time, sometime or sometimes**

I plan to visit our South Africa plant \_\_\_\_\_ this year.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish I was an entrepreneur.

I will need \_\_\_\_\_ to complete this project.



**ACTIVITY 6**

*Work in pairs*

Outline and write an email to a potential international postgraduate student to inform her that the course she would like to register for is not available at the moment.

Consider the following questions:

- Are you going to promise any action, give additional information, offer help, or simply say that you will tell them when the course is available again?
- What courses does your PTJ/faculty/university usually offer, but not available at the moment? Why? When is it going to be available again?
- What solution(s) can you provide?



**From** :

**Date** :

**To** :

**Cc** :

**Subject** :

## 2.2 WRITING REPORTS



### PRE-ACTIVITY

*Discuss the following questions.*

- a) How often do you write reports in the office?
- b) Why are reports written at the workplace?
- c) What are the differences between letters and reports?



### What is a report?

A report is a common form of workplace communication. It is a structured document that is used to provide information, helps to make decisions, or accounts for actions. Therefore, it should be easy to read and professional in presentation. Before you write a report, you need to be clear about who you are writing the report to and why the report has been commissioned.



### ACTIVITY 1

*Talk to **TWO** classmates.*

Find out whether they have ever written a report, what type of report it was, who they wrote it for, and what purpose does the report serve. Share your findings with the class.

### Structure of a report

There are many different types of reports written at work, including visit reports, incident reports, complaint reports, accreditation reports, audit reports, and performance review reports. The formality of the language used in these reports vary, and the structure for each report may vary between institutions, faculties, and departments. Before you write a report, you are advised to check with your supervisor about its formality and structure.

Below is a basic structure for report writing.

### Basic Structure of a report

<b>Introduction</b>	- Background - Objective(s)
<b>Body</b>	- Main ideas
<b>Conclusion</b>	- Conclusion - Recommendation(s)



### ACTIVITY 2

*Work in pairs.*

Below is a report on Putra Leadership Camp attended by staff from Faculty of Engineering. Rearrange the paragraphs and label them.

Introduction	Body I, II & III	Conclusion
--------------	------------------	------------

e.g. Title	Putra Leadership Camp
a.	The second day of the camp was much more hectic. The participants had a rigorous exercise session which involved aerobics and jogging around the campsite. Then, after breakfast, they had to display their survival skills. In the afternoon, the participants had another round of physical activities. They engaged in canoeing in the nearby river. The night programme was the most interesting. Participants had to take part in a night hike in the forest.
b.	All participants had gathered at the main foyer of the faculty at 2.00 p.m. From there, they were taken to the campsite in two buses. They were accompanied by the management, including the dean, deputy deans and assistant registrar of the faculty. Upon arrival at the campsite, they were given a briefing by the facilitators. Then, they were put into groups and asked to set up tents. By 7.00 p.m., most of them had accomplished this task successfully, while others were trying hard to set up their tents. After dinner, the participants had to engage in their first group activity. They were required to come up with names and theme songs for their groups.

c.	The leadership camp was a huge success because all participants showed tremendous support by actively participating in all the activities throughout the duration of the camp.
d.	There was only one activity on the third day of the camp – the feedback session. The participants rated the programme highly and hoped that it would be held annually.
e.	This report was commissioned by the Co-curricular Unit on March 29 2019. The Faculty of Engineering recently organised Putra Leadership Camp at Bamboo Village, Kuala Lumpur, from 8-10 March 2019. The objectives of the camp were to instil leadership qualities and improve teamwork among the 40 staff who attended this camp. The activities at the camp were handled by several facilitators from the university.

## Language Point

### Past Tense

A report is usually written in the past tense to describe an incident or an event in the past (e.g. a visit report). Three commonly used past tense are **past simple**, **past continuous** and **past perfect**.

<b>Past simple</b>	is used to report what happened in the past.  Example: <i>The participants <b>had</b> a rigorous exercise session which involved aerobics and jogging around the campsite.</i>
<b>Past continuous</b>	is used for something which happened before and after a given time in the past.  Example: <i>By 7.00 p.m., most of them <b>had</b> accomplished this task successfully while others <b>were trying</b> hard to set up their tents.</i>
<b>Past perfect</b>	is used when talking about the past and want to refer to an earlier action or event.  Example: <i>All participants <b>had gathered</b> at the main foyer of the faculty at 2.00 p.m.</i>



### ACTIVITY 3

*Complete the paragraph from a visit report below with the past continuous, past simple, or past perfect form of the verb in the brackets.*

Last month, while I <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (attend) a training course in Sarawak, I <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (go) with some colleagues to a wildlife sanctuary – with lots of wild monkeys. We <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (arrive) at lunchtime, and I <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (decide) to explore the jungle. I <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (walk) along a path when I <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (see) a large monkey sitting on a branch in front of me. I <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (stop) because I <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (never / come) across wild monkeys before, and I <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (not / know) what to do. Suddenly, the monkey <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (jump) down and <sup>11</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (come) towards me very aggressively. I <sup>12</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (turn) and <sup>13</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (run) as fast as I could, shouting loudly as I got to the beach. When my colleagues <sup>14</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (look) up, I <sup>15</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (race) towards the water, and the monkey <sup>16</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (chase) after me. I finally <sup>17</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (reach) the safety of the sea and <sup>18</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (dive) in. When I <sup>19</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (look) around, I <sup>20</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (be) pleased to see that the monkey <sup>21</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (disappear), but my colleagues <sup>22</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (laugh) uncontrollably.





#### ACTIVITY 4

Rearrange the letters in the right order to make words relating to report writing. Then complete the sentences below with the words.

Idmosmsicnoe <u>c</u> _____	sperodop <u>p</u> _____	siiredspu <u>s</u> _____
ddecrue <u>r</u> _____	erpvddoi <u>p</u> _____	nlcoeuddc <u>c</u> _____

1. The aim of this report is to assess ways in which the company's travel budget can be \_\_\_\_\_ in the next financial year.
2. It can be \_\_\_\_\_ that there is a need to look into the following areas.
3. The information is based upon data which was \_\_\_\_\_ by heads of department and accounts.
4. This report was \_\_\_\_\_ by the marketing department on April 1<sup>st</sup>.
5. The IT staff at the meeting yesterday \_\_\_\_\_ to purchase video conferencing equipment costing RM30,000, with two years' guaranteed servicing and support.



## Writing a report

It is important to organise and plan your report before beginning to write. You may think about the structure of the report and the details to be included.



### ACTIVITY 5

*Discuss the following questions.*

a. If you were to write a report on a recent visit to an orphanage, what details would you include in your report?

b. How would you structure your report?

Here are some useful tips for writing a report:

a. Write a title that shows what the report is about.

b. Divide your report into paragraphs.

c. State the report objective(s) in the introduction.

d. Use past tense and reporting language.

e. Make some recommendations in the conclusion.



### ACTIVITY 6

*Work in pairs.*

Your centre of responsibility (PTJ) has recently organised an activity to visit an orphanage, as part of its corporate social responsibility initiative. You took part in the activity and are tasked to prepare a report for your supervisor.

In your report, include the following information:

Venue	Rumah Aman, Sungai Buloh, Selangor
Date	March 16 2019
Participants	20 staff from your department
Organised by	Welfare Unit
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- to provide help to the underprivileged children</li><li>- to give back to the community</li></ul>
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- clean the surrounding area</li><li>- paint the house</li><li>- play games with the kids</li><li>- build a mini library</li><li>- other activities</li></ul>

Write your report in about 200 words.



[illegible]

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### Reviewing a report

Before submitting the report to your supervisor, make sure you check the content and structure of the report if it is clear. You should also proofread and ensure the report is free from language errors.



#### ACTIVITY 7

*Share your report with a classmate. Ask him/her to provide feedback using the checklist below.*

		Tick (✓)
a.	The purpose and intent of the report is clear to the reader.	
b.	The report is divided into paragraphs.	
c.	All the essential information is included in the report.	
d.	A recommendation is provided in the conclusion.	
e.	The report is written in past tense.	
f.	The report has no grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors.	
<b>Comments</b>		

Discuss the feedback received with your classmate.

## 2.3 EFFECTIVE TELEPHONE INTERACTIONS

Interacting effectively on the telephone is a vital skill. The effective use of the telephone can result in:

- improved levels of personal contact and the development of relationships – both internally and externally, especially with our customers/clients,
- immediate response to issues which are important in maintaining good relations with our clients,
- good information flow within and around an organisation,
- a reduction in time spent on writing letters which will in turn reduce administrative costs,
- an overall enhanced performance of an organisation.

In this section, we will look into the use of appropriate language expressions in managing effective telephone interactions in relation to:

- 1) making telephone calls,
- 2) receiving telephone calls,
- 3) handling inquiries, and
- 4) directing calls to the relevant personnel.



### MAKING TELEPHONE CALLS

Making effective telephone calls is a process requiring some preparations. These include:

- setting aside a specific time to make our phone calls,
- having a calendar and a pen at hand,
- gathering all our information before making our calls:
  - ✓ having the correct telephone number to call
  - ✓ knowing the name of the person we need to speak to
  - ✓ having our personal information at hand, such as full name, address, telephone number and email to reach us
- thinking about what we need to accomplish with the call and making note of it. It may help to write down our "talking points,"
- making note of any questions we need to ask,
- placing the telephone call,

- taking time to thank the other person and reiterate the important information before we end the call.

Below are some useful language expressions we can use in making telephone calls:

### IDENTIFY WHO WE ARE

*Hello, this is Cynthia from Giant Securities Berhad. (caller)*  
*Hello, my name is Cynthia. I'm calling from Giant Securities Berhad. (caller)*  
*Hi, it's Cynthia from Giant Securities Berhad (caller, informal)*  
*Hi, Cynthia here. (caller, informal)*

### SAY WHO WE WANT TO SPEAK TO

*I'd like to speak to Mr. Nazri, please.*  
*Could I have the Marketing Department, please?*  
*Can you put me through to Mr. Nazri, please?*  
*Could I have extension 8600, please?*  
*Could I speak to someone in the Sales & Purchase Department, please?*  
*Is Mr. Nazri there, please?*

### EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF OUR CALL

*The reason I'm calling is...*  
*I need some information about...*  
*It's in connection with...*  
*I'd like to...*  
*I'm ringing to....*

Besides using these standard language expressions in making telephone calls, please note that **can**, **could**, **will** and **would** can be used to:

### • ASK PEOPLE TO DO THINGS

For example:

*Can you give him a message for me?*

*Could you give him a message for me?*

*Will you give him a message for me?*

*Would you give him a message for me?*

\*Note that: *can* and *will* are more direct than *could* and *would*.

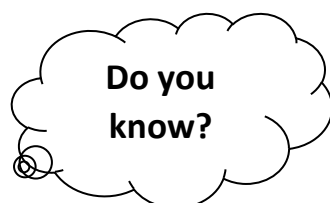
- **ASK FOR PERMISSION**

For examples:

*Can I leave a message?* (which means *is it possible*)

*Could I leave a message?* (which means *would it be possible*)

*May I leave a message?* (which means *do you give me permission*)



*Can* and *Could* are both used to ask for permission or requests. However, *Could* sounds more polite and formal than *Can*.

**Level of formality:**

Can		Could	
Level 1 speaks to Level 1	Can you speak more slowly, please?	Level 1 speaks to someone of a higher level (level 2 and above) or a stranger	Could you speak more slowly, please?
Level 2 or above speaks to Level 1	Can you put me through extension 2, please?		Could you put me through extension 2, please?

An example of an informal call:

A : Hello.  
B : Is that Rizal?  
A : Yes.  
B : Hi. It's Danny. Is your team leader in?  
A : Yes?  
B : Can I talk to him?  
A : Okay. Wait.

An example of a formal call:

- A : Good morning. Legend securities.  
B : Good morning. Could I speak to Mr. Indiana Jones, please?  
A : Yes. May I know who is calling, please?  
B : It's Rizal here / My name is Mr. Rizal.  
A : Right, Mr. Rizal. I'll put you through to Mr. Indiana Jones. (*refer to no. 14 at the box below*)

### Telephone Terms

No.	Term(s)	Meaning
1	Line is engaged	Line is busy
2	On the phone	Someone is using the phone
3	Give you a ring	Call you
4	Returning your call	Call you back
5	Call display	A screen that show you who is calling
6	Someone is engaged	Someone is busy
7	Pick up	To answer the phone
8	Available	Free to talk
9	Hold on (for a moment/a minute/awhile)	Hold the line until the receiver gets back to the caller
10	Hang on	To wait on the phone
11	Relay your message	To repeat what someone has said
12	Line is choppy	Poor connection; can't hear a word you are saying
13	Call was cut off	Sudden termination of the call
14	Put (someone) through	To connect one person to another
15	Get through	To reach someone by phone
16	Get back (to someone)	Come back/return to



## ACTIVITY 1

Fill in the blanks using the correct word(s). Use the words below to fill in the blank spaces provided.

available

get back

relay

cut off

call me  
back

please

get through

hold on

speaking

put you through

- Ms. Tina : Hello, good morning! May I speak to Mrs. Diane, please? I tried to call her yesterday, but I just couldn't \_\_\_\_\_?
- Secretary : She's on medical leave, madam. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ for a minute? I can \_\_\_\_\_ to her manager, Mr Ruco if you need further assistance.
- Ms. Tina : It's alright. I will speak to her when she returns.
- Secretary : Perhaps you would like to leave her a message? I will \_\_\_\_\_ the message as soon as she returns to work. Who shall I say called?
- Ms. Tina : This is Tina from Head Office. Please tell her next Monday's meeting has been postponed to the following Monday and to \_\_\_\_\_ as soon as possible.
- Secretary : No problem. May I have your contact number, please?
- Ms. Tina : It's 03-8947 9394.



## RECEIVING TELEPHONE CALLS

'You never get a second chance to make a first impression'. So, it is important for us to project a professional image in receiving telephone calls. Pause before picking up the receiver to give yourself time to adopt a positive attitude.

When we answer the telephone, we need to use the right phrase involving greetings and identification of who we are i.e. *Good Morning/ Good Afternoon/ Good evening* + Company/Organisation name.

For example:

*Good Morning, Universiti Putra Malaysia. How may I help you?*  
*Good morning. Universiti Putra Malaysia. Azmad speaking, how may I help you?*  
*Good morning. This is the Science Faculty.*  
*Good morning, Aziz speaking.*

Below are some useful language expressions we can use when we:

### ASK FOR REPETITION

*Sorry, I didn't catch your name / your number...*  
*Sorry, could you repeat your name / number...*  
*Sorry, I didn't hear that.*  
*Sorry, I didn't understand/get that.*  
*Could you spell that?*

### ACKNOWLEDGE REPETITION

*Ok, I've got that.*  
*(Mr. Nazri). I understand.*  
*I see, thank you.*



## SAY SOMEONE IS NOT AVAILABLE

(always try to include Time Expression/duration)

*I'm sorry; he/she is not available (right now).*

*Sorry, he/she's away for the week.*

*Sorry, he/she's not in.*

*I'm afraid he/she' is in a meeting (at the moment).*

*He/she is in London. He/she won't be back until Monday.*



Phrases such as "I'm sorry/I'm afraid...." is used to show that you have a feeling of pity or concern to the caller.

## TAKE MESSAGES

*Can I take a message?*

*Would you like to leave a message?*

*If you give me your number I'll ask him/her to call you later.*

*Shall I ask him/her to call you back?*

## OFFER TO HELP IN OTHER WAYS

*Can anyone else help you?*

*Can I help you perhaps?*

*Would you like to speak to his/her assistant?*



## ACTIVITY 2

*You are the secretary for Mr Smith. Write appropriate responses based on the dialogue given.*

**Mr Henry:** Hello, good morning! May I speak to Mr Smith, please? I tried to call him yesterday but I couldn't get through. What happened?

**Secretary:**

\_\_\_\_\_ (1) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

**Mr Henry:** Oh, yes I forgot that it was a holiday yesterday. Thanks! Is he in the office, now?

**Secretary:**

\_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

**Mr Henry:** Yes please. Can you tell Mr Smith to return my call? My number is 04-755-2525. Tell him it's Malayan Logistics.

**Secretary:**

\_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

**Mr Henry:** Thank you so much!



### ACTIVITY 3

*Work in pairs. Study the situation below for two (2) minutes. You will then perform an impromptu role play for the situation. Do not prepare a dialogue/script.*

You are the Coordinator for your department. A caller would like to speak to your Head of Department, but he is out of the office. Take a message and make sure you get the following information:

- name and telephone number (may include company name)
- message the caller would like to leave for the intended receiver
- how late the Head of Department can call the caller at the given telephone number



## HANDLING INQUIRIES

When we handle inquiries on the telephone, there are a few pointers we need to bear in mind. These include:

- listening carefully to the details expressed by the caller,
- making the callers feel that they have your full attention, mentioning the name of the caller, if possible,
- never give wrong information. (If you do not know the answer, transfer the caller to the right person).

### LANGUAGE EXPRESSIONS

Below are some useful language expressions we may use to:

- Show that we are being attentive to what the caller is saying

*Right.*  
*I see.*  
*Okay.*  
*Hmm...Hmm...*

- Let the caller know what we are doing on the other line

*Just a second.*  
*I'm looking at the computer system right now.*  
*Just a moment, I'll get a pen and paper.*  
*I'm putting you through to the person in charge.*  
*I'll check if my colleague is available to help you now.*

- Help the caller to find information online

*Are you online now?*

*Do you have access to the internet while we are speaking?*

- Say we will call back

*If you can give me your contact details, I'll phone you back as soon as I've found the information you are looking for.*

- Inform the caller that someone else may be able to help him/her

*I'm putting you through to my colleague now.*

*I've explained what your problem is and he/she said he/she can definitely help you with this.*

- Clarify the caller's question(s)

*Can you explain a little more of what you want to know?*

*Can you make it clearer what you need?*

*If I understand you correctly, you would like to know....*



At times, in handling inquiries, we come across difficult clients/customers. We can deal with difficult situations by:

1. Allowing the client to express his opinion or dissatisfaction while you shift to the "stay clam" mode. Remember that he/she is not angry at YOU, but he/she is in distressed for solution.
2. Asking questions after the client has completed his/her case. Having the facts and details of the matter at hand will help you to understand your clients' frustrations.
3. Apologizing when appropriate. A simple gesture can help to soothe the situation.
4. Presenting a solution where both you and your client agree upon. Take action and follow-up as promised.

Whenever you come across these:

Abusive	Offensive
1. Are you stupid? 2. Is this your first day, because it seems like you do not know anything? 3. Can you transfer my call to someone who actually knows something?	1. Your company is making the same mistake over and over again as if it is being run by useless people! 2. Do you know who you are talking to? I can get you in trouble in no time, do you know that?

**First, calm difficult clients by trying to apologise by saying these:**

*"I apologise that we did not send your order on time."*

*"I'm sorry and I apologize that this occurred, Mr Taib."*

*"I'm sorry. I don't blame you for being upset, Mr Faiz."*

*"Madam Lina, I can truly understand why you said what you have said. I would too, if I were you."*

*I am sorry for any misunderstanding you may have experienced.*

**Below is some language expression used to handle difficult situations:**

*I have been given full authority to help resolve your concerns. May I have the opportunity to resolve this first?*

*Please give me an opportunity to try and resolve this for you. That's why I'm here.*

*I'm trying to help you, but if you continue to yell and swear, I am going to ask that you call back another time. It's up to you...which would you prefer?*

*I'm sorry that I have not been able to help you. If you don't object, I would like to let a colleague/manager of mine attempt to better meet your needs.*



## ACTIVITY 4

*Look at following pointers for handling inquiries on the telephone. Write the most appropriate response for each.*

1. Inform the caller what you are doing if there is going to be some silence at your end.

---

2. Ask the caller to repeat and spell the complete name of the caller.

---

3. Explain to the caller who called back that the line was cut off.

---

4. Acknowledge to the caller that you understood the message from the caller.

---

5. Informing the caller that there is no such person (who the caller wants to speak to) in the department.

---



## ACTIVITY 5

*Read the jumbled-up dialogue and rearrange them accordingly, from 1- 10.*

Dialogue	Sequence Number
<b>Mary:</b> Thank you for calling Aquaria Wonders. This is Mary, how may I help you?	
<b>Lisa:</b> You have a nice day, too Mary! Bye.	

<b>Mary:</b> Yes, we are currently having this promotion but it is only applicable during the weekdays.	
<b>Lisa:</b> I see. I think I will be coming with my family next Monday.	
<b>Mary:</b> Oh, we are opened from 11am to 8pm every Monday to Friday. On weekends, the operating hours starts at 10am and we are closed at 9pm.	
<b>Lisa:</b> Hello, this is Lisa. I would like to enquire about the opening hours and admission fee?	
<b>Mary:</b> Alright, thank you for calling Aquaria Wonders. Have a nice day!	
<b>Lisa:</b> No, I'm good for now. Thank you for your assistance.	
<b>Mary:</b> My pleasure, Miss Lisa. See you on Monday! Is there anything else that I can help?	
<b>Lisa:</b> Great. I have one more question. Do we get a 10% meal discount if we come in with two adults and two children?	



## DIRECTING CALLS TO RELEVANT PERSONNEL

Directing call to the relevant personnel is part of telephone interactions. We should only transfer call when we are certain we know the right person who is dealing with the matter.

If we cannot answer an enquiry quickly, give the caller the option of you calling him/her back later after you have checked out the answer. Please do keep your promise of ringing that person back.

When transferring calls and putting a caller on hold, always:

- explain why you need to do this,
- seek agreement from the caller,
- note down the caller's name and telephone number in case the call is 'lost',
- thank the caller for waiting on returning to the call.

### LANGUAGE EXPRESSIONS

Below are some language expressions we can use in directing calls to the relevant personnel:

*One moment, please. I'll see if Mr Jones is available. Thank you for waiting.*  
*I'll put you through.*  
*I'll connect you.*  
*I'm connecting you now.*

When transferring calls and putting a caller on hold, this is what you can say in case the relevant personnel is NOT available.



*I am afraid that the line is engaged. Could you please hold on the line for a moment while I attempt to figure out a solution for you?*

*Regretfully, the person-in-charge is not reachable at the moment. Would you like me to transfer you to another personnel who might be able to help you with your current situation?*



### ACTIVITY 6

*Work in pairs. Prepare a dialogue for the situation below.*

#### Situation

You work as an administrative assistant at the Finance Department. You receive a call from a disgruntled Manager from another department who would like to speak to the person in charge in your Department. You will need to direct the call to the relevant personnel. You need to include the information below:

Person In Charge: Mr. Rizalman Mohamad  
Department : Business Development  
Extension : 6722



### ACTIVITY 7: Role-Plays

*Work in pairs. Study the situation below for two (2) minutes. You will then perform an impromptu role play for the situation.*

### Situation 1

A: You are helping your head of department to invite the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Nestle Malaysia to grace the opening ceremony of a conference.

B: You answer the phone. The person on the other end of the line wants to speak to the secretary to the CEO, but she is not around. Take down the caller's message.

### Situation 2

A: You want to reserve a hall for 50 admin officers to attend a short course. Call the management who owns the hall and make a reservation for 8am to 5pm on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

B: You work as a human resource officer for a freelance company. Someone called to book a hall for the purpose of a short course. Tell the caller that the hall is reserved on that particular date. Suggest another date or a bigger hall for that purpose.

### Situation 3

A: Your house was robbed while you were away for a short holiday. Call the security management to talk to the head of security and make complains.

B: You are newly hired as a security guard for a housing area. The person on the other end of the line called the office and angrily asked to speak to your superior who is on medical leave. Calm the caller down and take down her report.

### Situation 4

A: You are working as an account manager, and you want to schedule a meeting with the Human Resource manager to discuss of ways to improve the payroll system. Call the HR department and make the appointment.

B: You work in the Purchasing Department answering the phones. Transfer the caller to the correct department.



## REVIEW

In this unit, you have learned to:

- recognise common structure of written texts at the workplace
- use appropriate grammar and vocabulary in writing
- use appropriate language expressions during telephone conversations



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# UNIT 3:

## SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATIONS



### INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn about presenting successfully at the work place using appropriate language expressions and vocabulary.

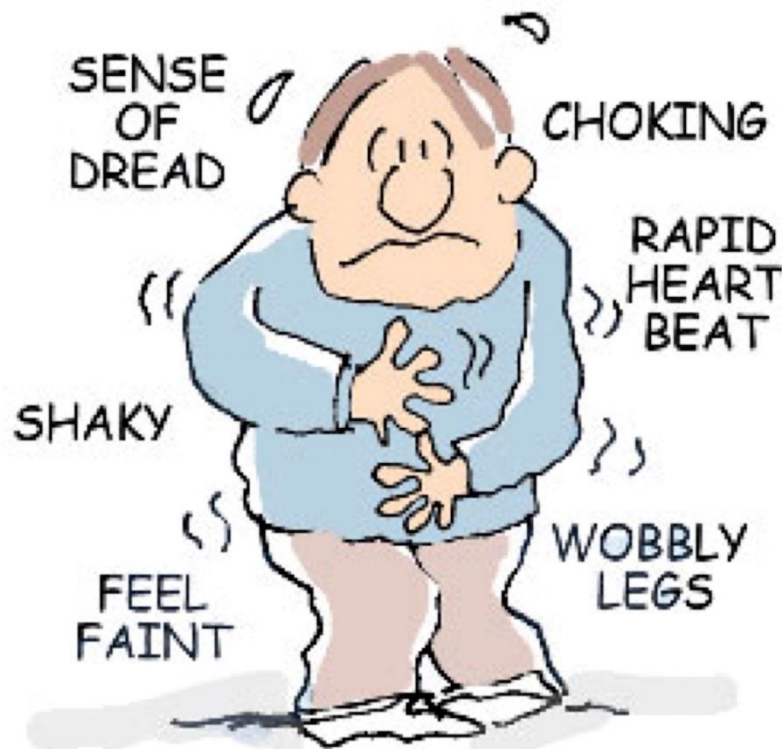


### OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

1. plan, prepare and deliver a presentation
2. use appropriate language expressions in a presentation

## PLAN, PREPARE AND DELIVER A PRESENTATION



Do you experience these symptoms when you think about speaking in public or presenting at a meeting?

Presentations are made by employees to speak precisely and specifically about a product, service or activity in the department or company. In some instances, however, employees will have to make a presentation to introduce their products and services or explain a new marketing or sales strategy that the company wants to implement. Regardless of its purpose, the most effective verbal presentation will include clear, simple language, and visual aids that effectively convey the message.

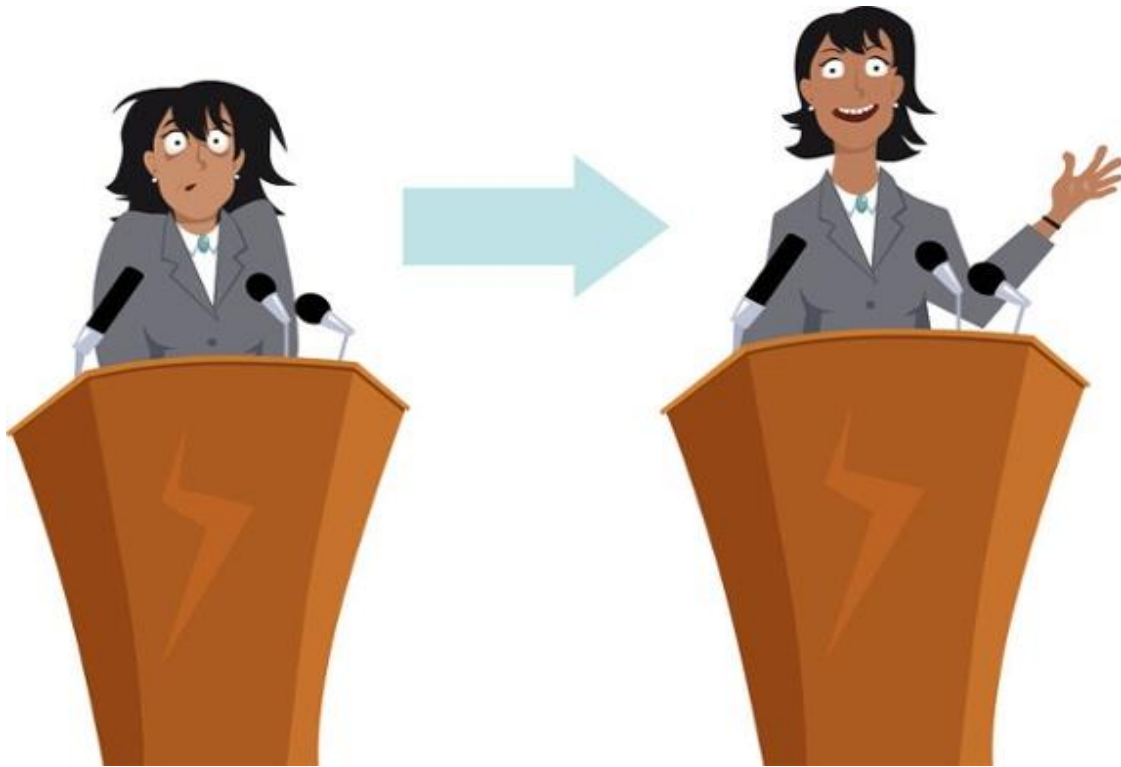


### PRE-ACTIVITY

*Watch the following video and discuss what you think about the presentation.*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6h4i\\_mWhd8s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6h4i_mWhd8s)

However, presentation may not be an easy feat for everyone. Some of us might be hindered by stage fright, anxiety, timidity or language barrier. How can we control our nerves?



Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Know your audience.</li> <li>▪ Do your research and know your facts.</li> <li>▪ Anticipate the questions you may be asked and prepare possible answers.</li> </ul>
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present the speech aloud, to yourself, until it is completely familiar.</li> <li>▪ Go through the speech in front of a mirror and ensure that your body language aids your message.</li> <li>▪ Remember to practice with visual aids.</li> </ul>
Acceptance and Relaxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accept your nervousness as normal.</li> <li>▪ Use relaxation techniques, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-stretching</li> <li>-muscle tensing and relaxing</li> <li>-deep breathing</li> <li>-visualizing an effective presentation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Adapted from: [https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is242b/instructor%20guide/ig\\_04.pdf](https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is242b/instructor%20guide/ig_04.pdf)



### ACTIVITY 1

*Think of five fears that cause you to have presentation anxiety or stage fright. Rank your fears from 1 to 5. Then substitute at least two positive thoughts for each fear you identified. Record your fears and positive thoughts in the columns given. Compare and discuss this with your friends.*

<b>Fear</b>	<b>Positive Thoughts</b>
<i>Example: The audience is too large.</i>	<i>The size of the group doesn't matter. People are listening one at a time.</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

## USE OF VISUAL AIDS

We can employ visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint presentation, whiteboard, flipchart, handouts etc.) to help the audience picture information presented, follow along and understand the presentation better.

What are some common mistakes made using PowerPoint?

- Expecting the PowerPoint to do the presenting – visual aids are intended to support you, not replace you.
- Spending more time on the slides than the actual speech – plan the visuals around your presentation or speech. Remember, if your content is poor, no amount of visuals will help.
- Ignoring the audience – speak to your audience, not the screen or your notes.
- Reading directly from the slides – do not read word-for-word from the slide. Audience will stop listening to you.



### ACTIVITY 2

*Work in small groups. Choose three topics from the list below. Describe visual aids that can be used for each topic.*

- how to make a great cup of coffee
- what is plagiarism
- the dangers of eating junk food
- the need to reduce vehicles on campus
- ways to overcome stress at the workplace





### ACTIVITY 3

Work in small pairs and discuss the mistakes of the following slides. Suggest ways on how to improve them.

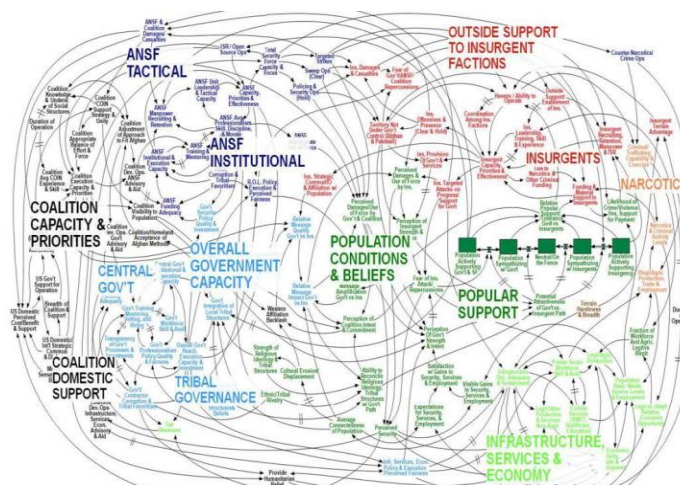
#### Bad font choices:

- This font is too small

#### • This font is too large

#### • *This font is too fancy*

- This font color is hard to read
  - this font doesn't line up
- very well with the other lines
  - Making it very hard to read



## Using Appropriate Language Expressions in a Presentation

What are some useful language expressions that are used in a presentation?

In an oral presentation, it is important that you make the topic clear to your audience, identify and outline main points and link information so that presentation flows smoothly. Using appropriate language expressions to signpost your path through the presentation will help audience to follow along and understand the gist of the presentation.

Function/Skill	Phrases
Introducing the presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Good morning and welcome. Today I'm going to talk about ...</li><li>▪ _____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
Previewing/Providing an outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ I have divided my presentation into 4 parts.</li><li>▪ _____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
Introducing a main point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The main point is ...</li><li>▪ _____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
Moving to a new point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ This leads me to my next point ...</li><li>▪ _____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
Rephrasing a main point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Let me put that another way ...</li><li>▪ _____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
Emphasising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ This is a <i>significant</i> point. If we look more closely at ...</li><li>▪ _____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
Providing examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Let me illustrate this by ...</li><li>▪ _____</li><li>_____</li></ul>
Drawing attention to visual aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The diagram indicates ...</li><li>▪ _____</li><li>_____</li></ul>

<b>Concluding the presentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In conclusion/summary ...</li> <li>▪ _____</li> <li>_____</li> </ul>
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### Using Appropriate Language Expressions to Handle Question and Answer (Q&A) Session

In an oral presentation, it is also important for you to be mentally prepared to answer questions from the floor. Audience may require clarification or further explanation of a point mentioned during the presentation. They may want further information on the subject presented. Stay calm and composed as you receive the questions and strive to answer them to the best of your ability.

You may find the following language expressions useful in facilitating a question and answer session during/after a presentation.

Function/Skill	Phrases
<b>Opening/Facilitating QA session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Thank you for listening. Does anyone have any questions?</li> <li>▪ _____</li> <li>_____</li> </ul>
<b>Answering the question</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That's an interesting question! (Answer)</li> <li>▪ _____</li> <li>_____</li> </ul>
<b>Postponing the question</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That's a really good question but I'm not sure I can answer right now, but it would be interesting to look into ...</li> <li>▪ _____</li> <li>_____</li> </ul>



#### ACTIVITY 4

*Watch the following videos and identify language expressions used in a presentation.*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1afHeCHquf0&list=PLcetZ6gSk969oGvAI0e4\\_PgVnIGbm64bp&index=14](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1afHeCHquf0&list=PLcetZ6gSk969oGvAI0e4_PgVnIGbm64bp&index=14)

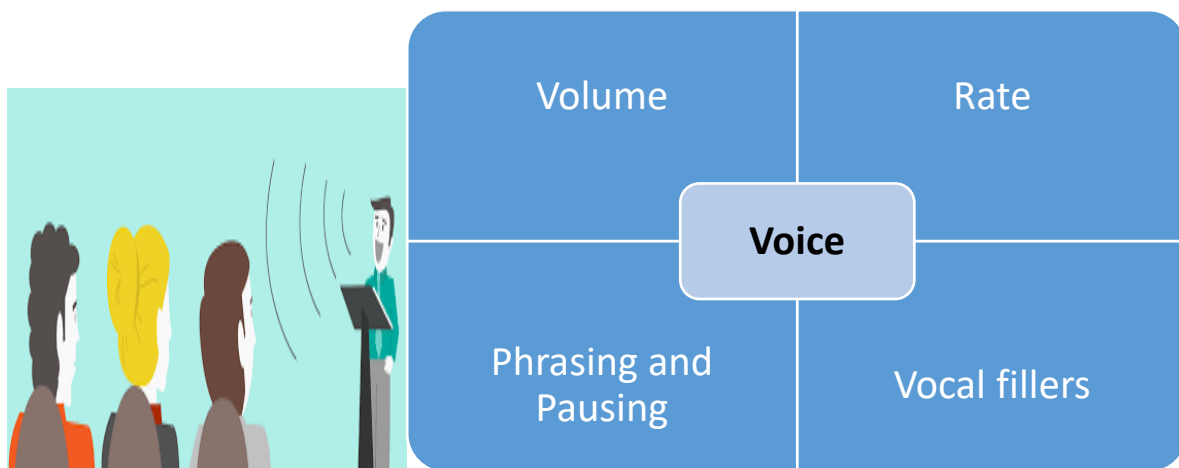
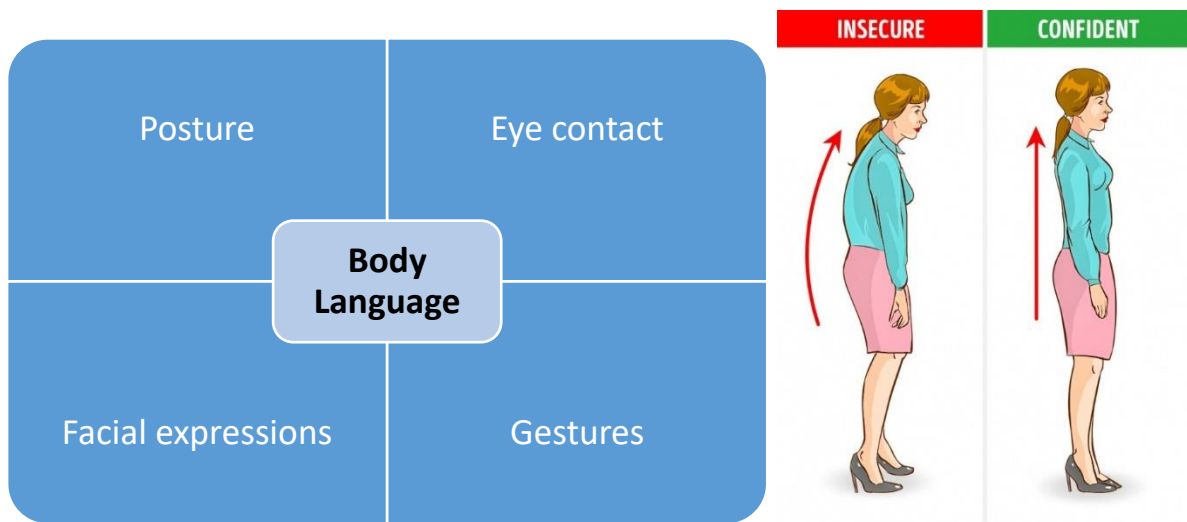
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0U0rGI3prE&list=PLcetZ6gSk969oGvAI0e4\\_PgVnIGbm64bp&index=15](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0U0rGI3prE&list=PLcetZ6gSk969oGvAI0e4_PgVnIGbm64bp&index=15)

Functions	Phrases
1. Introducing the presentation	
2. Previewing	
3. Drawing attention to visual aid	

## BODY LANGUAGE AND VOICE

What is positive body language? What does effective volume include? How can I improve myself to be an effective presenter with appropriate body language and voice control?

Your body language and your speech patterns, reflects how you feel about yourself. It also affects how others react to you. It can help you project an aura of confidence or it can make you appear uncertain before you even open your mouth.





### ACTIVITY 5

*Work with a partner. Take turns making the following facial expressions and guessing the meaning of your partner's expressions. This exercise will help you become aware of how you appear to others while speaking.*

happy	unhappy
worried	neutral
impatient	surprised
interested	excited
fearful	frustrated
angry	doubtful



### ACTIVITY 6

*Work with a partner. Practice reading the following sets of sentences aloud. Vary your volume to match the size of the words.*

- a.
  1. Sorry, I can't hear you.
  2. I'm sorry. I can't hear you.
  3. Can you speak up? I can't hear you.
  4. **SPEAK UP! I CAN'T HEAR YOU!**
- b.
  1. I want you to come home now.
  2. I want you to come home now.
  3. You need to come home now!
  4. You need to come home **RIGHT NOW!**
- c.
  1. I am speaking softly.
  2. I am speaking at a normal volume.
  3. I am speaking loudly.
  4. **I AM SPEAKING VERY LOUDLY!**



## ACTIVITY 7

Work in pairs. You are required to plan, prepare and deliver the following presentation.

Your centre of responsibility (PTJ) has been given a 15 minute slot during the Orientation Day to introduce your centre/department/faculty to new students who have just entered the university. You may include the following in your presentation:

- i) Vision and Mission
- ii) Organisational chart
- iii) Products and services offered
- iv) Activities

Your presentation should have an opening, body and closing. Please ensure your presentation has clear organisation of ideas, supported with relevant information and well displayed. You should rehearse before your presentation.



## REVIEW

In this unit, you have learned to:

- plan, prepare and deliver a presentation
- use appropriate language expressions in a presentation



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