

# MBA

Management Studies

**(SEMESTER – II)**

**MBA 2101**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**BLOCK - 1**



***The University of Burdwan***  
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***West Bengal, India***

**MBA**  
**(Management Studies)**  
**Semester - II**  
**MBA - 2101**  
**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**  
**(RM)**



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# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (RM)

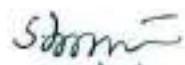
## BLOCK - I

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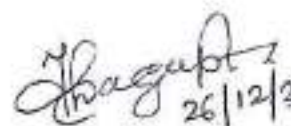
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## MBA - 2101

### BLOCK - I

This block comprises of three units and aims to provide an introduction to the study of Research Methodology

#### Unit-1:

##### Introduction to Qualitative Research

Introduction to Organizational Research Methods, Concepts and Characteristics of Qualitative Research Differences between qualitative and quantitative Research Methods, Advantages and limitations of Research Methods

#### Unit - 2:


##### Qualitative Research Approaches – I

Case Study

#### Unit-3:

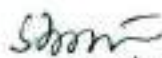
##### Qualitative Research Approaches –II

Ethnography.

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**UNIT – 1**

**INTRODUCTION TO**

**QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**



## **UNIT : I - INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

### **Objectives**

- To know about the importance of research in the study of managerial problems.
- To understand the definition, nature and concepts of qualitative research.
- To understand the characteristics of qualitative research.
- To know about the differences between qualitative and quantitative research.
- To understand the advantages and limitations of qualitative research.

### **Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2.1 Definition
- 1.2.2 Nature and concepts of qualitative research method.
- 1.2.3 Characteristics of qualitative research method.
- 1.3 Difference between qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- 1.4 Advantages of qualitative research method.
- 1.5 Limitations of qualitative research method.
- 1.6 Lets sum up.
- 1.7 Key Words.
- 1.8 Self Assessment questions.
- 1.9 Suggested readings.



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## 1.1 Introduction to Organizational Research Methods

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Research for management of a firm or its various disciplines like marketing, finance, human resources and production etc. requires procedures for solving managerial problems. Research in an organization also needs measures and steps to solve critical business issues. In short, it can be stated that research in an organization helps to solve various managerial problems alongwith advancement of knowledge to achieve organizational goal most effectively and efficiently. Thus, organizational research has to be useful and practical.

In fact, in an organization research work may involve the understanding and explanation of certain issues of functioning of a firm; or explanation of certain phenomena of the issues involved in the research work. Many research works may also involve the ways in which different organizations and managers do things. All these research activities have widened the scope of research in the management of an organization.

Research in an organization can be done with the help of quantitative or qualitative methods. Differences between these two approaches should be taken into account by a researcher, while carrying out the research study. In a simple manner words are considered as the unit of analysis in qualitative methods of research study whereas, quantitative methods tend to be linked with numbers. A researcher may select both or any of the two methods while carrying out organizational research works. In fact both qualitative and quantitative research methods are attached to two worldviews or paradigms. Qualitative research is guided by concepts from interpretive paradigm; whereas quantitative research is guided by concepts from positivist approach.

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## 1.2 Concepts and characteristics of qualitative research

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Qualitative research covers a broad range of techniques and philosophies. In qualitative research a researcher uses a set of research methods that includes in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observations, life-histories, case studies, ethnography etc. Qualitative research methods also enable a researcher to understand the meanings and interpretations the research participants give to certain behaviour, objects and events. Researcher success depends on how he / she interprets the happenings. Here, the researcher also takes into account how the participants' experiences and behaviour are shaped by the context of their lives in relation to social, economic, cultural and physical context in which they live. Thus, a qualitative researcher must be open minded, curious, empathic, flexible and good listener to participants.

### 1.2.1 Definition

Based on the study of the researcher qualities; and methods of carrying out the qualitative research work; the term 'qualitative research' can be defined in the following words of Densing and Lincoln (2008). "Qualitative research involves an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of; or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them."

The interpretive worldview of qualitative research method has enabled (Deacon et al 1999) to describe it as "Exploring the way that people make sense of their social world and how they express these understanding through language, sound, imagery, personal, style and social rituzie."

### 1.2.2 Concepts

On the basis of above definitions of qualitative research methods, now we will examine the basic concepts on which the qualitative research

techniques are based on. There are three basic approaches on which the qualitative research methods' entire edifice is built on. Further, a researcher taking the help of these research methods should have information and thorough knowledge of these three approaches while carrying out the entire research process. These approaches are namely:

- a. The concepts of verstehen and understanding.
- b. The concepts of Etic and Emic Perspectives, and
- c. The concept of Reflexivity.

a. **The Concepts of Verstehen and Understanding**

In order to understand the interpretive approach of qualitative research methods, a researcher should understand the differences between 'verstehen' and understanding. Major focus in qualitative research method is to understand behaviour, perceptions and experiences of both the researcher and that of the study participants. However, when the '**understanding**' of a research problem is interpreted from the frame of reference of the researcher, it is referred to as the term simple 'understanding' of the problem. On the other hand when the problem is studied from those of study participants' perspectives the understanding of the issue, is referred to as 'verstehen'.

The concept of 'Verstehen' was first used by Weber (1864-1920). In the words of Snape and Spence (2008) Verstehen means "Studying people's lived experiences, which occur in a specific historical and social context". In fact, 'Verstehen' concept of qualitative research has aptly been described by Hennink, Hutter, Baily (2011) in following words, "It refers to understanding the life of the people whom you study from their own perspective, in their own context and describing this using their own words and concepts."

Thus, the difference between the concept of **understanding** and **verstehen** is based on **understanding** of the research issues from the

outsiders or researcher perspective; whereas '**Verstehen**' refers to understanding of the research problems from an insider's or study participant perspective. In fact, success of qualitative research occurs when there is a proper balance between **understanding** and '**Verstehen**' of the research problem. A proper mix of these two sub-concepts, supports the interpretive paradigm of the qualitative research.

**b. The Concept of Etic and Emic Perspectives**

Quantitative data used in a research process are based on an outsider perspective and on objectivity, known as an '**etic**' view. In case of '**etic**' perspective the outsider's point of view, their opinions and belief are given more weightage. On the other hand the **emic** view the insider's point of view, perceptions and beliefs are of great importance. The differences between these '**emic**' and '**etic**' perspectives are taken from the subject of cultural anthropology (Pike, 1967). In short, the qualitative research study emphasizes that whether emic perspectives of the research issues are evident or not.

**c. The Concept of Reflexivity**

The researcher, who is carrying out the qualitative research work must be reflexive. The reflexivity approach deals with the social background and behavioural impact of the researcher on the research process. On the basis of this reflexive approach of the researcher; study participants reaction to the researcher and the research setting is determined. Better the reflexivity of the researcher to the research questions; greater is the coordination and cooperation from the study participants; which in turn leads to the success of the particular qualitative research study. Reflexivity also helps researchers to become aware of their own values, ideologies and self identity. Pillow (2003) has aptly stated that, "reflexivity is needed in order to legitimize, to validate and

to question the research process". Thus, the concept of reflexivity in qualitative research study enables the researcher to play a vital role in the process of research design, selection of study participant, data collection, data interpretation and presentation of the total research study problem.

### **1.2.3 Characteristics of qualitative research**

A study of definition and various approaches to qualitative research method enables a researcher or a student of qualitative research methodology to understand its characteristics. The major characteristics of a qualitative research study have been described below:

#### **1. Involvement of the researcher :**

In a qualitative research study the main 'research instrument' (Daymon & Hollonay 2002) is the researcher himself or herself who is closely associated with the study participants.

#### **2. Study Participants' Views :**

In qualitative research study both the study participants subjective views of their social world and the researcher subjective influences to the research process, play a significant role in the study of a research problem. Thus, study participants desire to present various subjective perspectives is closely associated with the qualitative research process.

#### **3. Small sample is the norm :**

In a qualitative research study the researcher makes a deep exploration of the research problem to give detailed and holistic description and explanation. Thus, this kind of study require a small sample size as compared to a quantitative research study.

#### **4. Holistic focus of variables :**

Since qualitative researchers deal with a wide variety of experiences, values, beliefs and practices of study participants in their own social surroundings, a number of variables are taken into consideration

rather than one or two isolated variables. Thus, the qualitative researchers take into account a number of dimensions and relationships in term of references.

**5. Importance of Words :**

Unlike quantitative research study, qualitative research focuses on words rather than on numbers.

**6. Flexible in Approach :**

Often qualitative researcher starts a research problem study with a particular topic and an agenda; but as research work proceeds a number of issues or variables emerge from interaction with study participants. Hence, flexibility on behalf of the research is expected in case of such research study. The procedures, thus, adopted by the researcher has to be unstructured, spontaneous and adaptable to circumstances.

**7. Dynamic Process :**

Qualitative research work always deals with dynamic phenomena rather than static ones. Hence, qualitative research process should be attuned to change, sequence of behaviours; and even in the transformation of cultures.

**8. Inductive then Deductive Approach :**

A qualitative research study begins with inductive reasoning and then as a result of a sequential process follows a deductive researching approach. In a nutshell, it can be said that a qualitative research begins to study the research problem with collection and analysis of data (induction); which is again followed by testing of these ideas by relating them to the literature and further data collection and analysis of data (deduction). Thus, a researcher first move 'inductively' from **specific data to general patterns**; and then moves on to further data collection and analysis of data through a sequential process deductively.

## 9. Study in Natural Settings :

Qualitative research works are carried out by a researcher in the study participants natural setting for example in their community or their offices or where they buy.

### 1.3 Differences between Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

Differences between qualitative and quantitative research approaches are based on interpretive and positivist paradigms respectively. In fact, the key differences between the two research methodologies have been discussed in the following table on the basis of the objective and purpose of the study, the conduct and stages of each approach; and finally on the research outcome of the two processes.

Table 1 : Major Differences between qualitative and quantitative Approaches

Qualitative Research methods	Quantitative research methods
1. Research objective in this kind of research is to get a detailed understanding of underlying reasons, beliefs and motivations of study participants.	1. In this type of research method the research objective is to quantify data and extrapolate results to a broader population.
2. The major purpose of a qualitative research study is 'why' of a phenomena or 'what' is the process of carrying out the research study etc.	2. The major purpose of a quantitative research approach is to measure, count and quantify a problem.
3. In qualitative research approach data are words, not numbers.	3. In quantitative research approach data are numbers.

Qualitative Research methods	Quantitative research methods
<p>4. In qualitative research study small number of participants are selected purposively and non-randomly. They are known as interviewees.</p>	<p>4. In quantitative research study a large sample size representative of the problems are selected. They are commonly referred to as respondents or subjects.</p>
<p>5. Under qualitative research study data collection is done through in-depth interviews, group discussions and observation. Data analysis is interpretive.</p>	<p>5. Data collection in this method is done through opinion polls, population surveys, exit interviews etc. Here the method of analysis is statistical.</p>
<p>6. Quality of data in this case is made through authenticity, for this triangulation approach is adopted.</p>	<p>6. Quality of data is authenticated through validity that is measuring what is intended to be measured and reliability that response consistency.</p>
<p>7. In qualitative research study the result of research is aimed at developing an initial understanding, followed by a need to identify and explain behaviour, beliefs or particular actions of study participants in natural settings.</p>	<p>7. In quantitative research study the outcome of the research work is related to identify prevalence, averages and patterns in data collected for the research purpose.</p>



Thus, in a nutshell, it can be said that the purpose of quantitative research is to quantify a research problem. This stage is followed by a decision to measure and count the issues. This is further followed by generalization of the findings to a broader population. On the other hand, qualitative research works deal with the process of either understanding or explaining behaviour and beliefs of study population, known as participants as they participate in research activities. This is followed by identification of processes and the context of participants' experiences.

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#### **1.4 Advantages of qualitative Research Methods**

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Qualitative research has a wide range of applications. Its various methods are used for getting an in-depth understanding of the research problems that take into consideration the perspectives of the study population, their beliefs, values, social and cultural norms; and other complex social issues. In short, the advantages of qualitative research study are described below:

Firstly, it helps in understanding the beliefs opinions emotions from the perspective of the study participants which is also known as 'verstehen' approach. It also helps in analyzing and explaining their views and behaviour in respect of certain situations.

Secondly, Qualitative research also helps in understanding the processes by which study participant make decisions, run a business etc. It also explains how people under study give meaning to their experiences.

Thirdly, the social interactions among the study participants can easily be understood with the help of such types of research techniques.

Fourthly, the advantage of a qualitative research process provides an in-depth and detailed nuance and context to the research questions.

Finally, many sensitive social issues and problems can be studied and their remedies can easily be identified with the help of qualitative research methods.

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### **1.5 Limitations of qualitative research techniques**

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Qualitative research techniques are not free from limitations, too. In fact, Bryman (2001) has identified four common; but major criticism of qualitative research methods. These limitations are the following:

**i) Too subjective :**

Qualitative research techniques are commonly accused to be too subjective. However, subjectivity of such research techniques can be overcome by establishing authenticity of these approaches through 'triangulation'.

**ii) Lack of Transparency :**

Absence of transparency is one of the major criticisms of qualitative research methods as stated by Bryman (2001). Bryman is of the opinion that researchers, who employ qualitative research techniques, often fail to provide transparency in selection of samples; collection of data and analysis of data thus collected.

**iii) Problems of Generalization :**

In many cases qualitative researchers use small sample size, which is not representatives of a larger population. As a result of this, outcome of the research study is restricted in its conclusions.

**iv) Difficult to Replicate :**

Since the qualitative researcher's work is the main research instrument, clarity of the study becomes difficult. Thus, the replicability of a qualitative research study is established by a careful articulation of the steps taken in the entire research process.

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## 1.6 Let's Sum Up

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Managerial problems of an organization or other related issues can be very well studied with the help of research studies. These research studies are generally carried out with the help of either quantitative or qualitative methods, or combination of both the approaches. In the present unit; definition, concepts characteristics, advantages and limitations of qualitative research approaches have been discussed in detail. In subsequent chapters qualitative research methods, tools of qualitative data collection, analysis and interpretation of data collected and other issues will be discussed in detail.

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## 1.7 Key words

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Interpretive, Positivist, Reflexibility, Verstehen, etic and emic views etc.

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## 1.8 Self Assessment questions

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1. Define qualitative research and discuss its various concepts.
2. What are the major characteristics of qualitative research methods?
3. What are the major research advantages and limitations of qualitative research methods? Discuss.
4. Write **short notes** on the following:
  - a) Verstehen
  - b) Deductive and Inductive approaches
  - c) Etic and Emic perspectives.

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## 1.9 Suggested Readings

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1. Carson David; Gilmore Audrey; Perry Chad and Gronhaug Kjell; Qualitative Marketing Research, Sage Publications Ltd; New Delhi, 2001.
2. Daymon Christine; Holloway Immy; Qualitative Research Methods in Public Relations and Marketing Communications, Routledge, London, 2002.
3. Hennink Monique; Hutter, Inage; Baily Ajay, Qualitative Research Methods, Sage Publications Ltd; New Delhi, 2011.
4. Sayre Shay; Qualitative Methods for Marketplace Research, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2001.

**UNIT – 2**  
**QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH**  
**:CASE STUDY METHOD**

## **UNIT 2 - QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH : CASE STUDY METHOD**

### **Objectives**

**Objectives of this unit are the following:**

- i. . To understand the nature, definition and characteristics of case study method
- ii. To know about the various types and sources of data for case study method
- iii. To understand the stages on the development of a case study method
- iv. To throw light on crucial factors to be considered for developing a case.
- v. To know about both the advantages and disadvantages of a case study method.

### **Unit Structure**

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Definition, types and characteristics of case study method
- 2.3 Sources of Case Data
- 2.4 Stages or Steps in Case Development
- 2.5 Key factors for developing a Case
- 2.6 Limitations of a Case Study Research Method
- 2.7 Let's Sum Up
- 2.8 Key Word
- 2.9 Discussion Questions
- 2.10 Suggested Reading

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### **2.1. Introduction**

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Case studies are used both in qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Case study usually deals with an intensive exploration of a location or an organization or a marketing campaign by the researcher. Case study method in qualitative research takes into account both deductive and inductive approaches in solving a research problem. In fact, case studies differ from other qualitative research methods because of their in-depth and specific focus on a research problem. Because of the specific nature of having a holistic approach to a research problem, case studies are familiar means to marketing educators and students as "a teaching device" (Carsan, Gilmore et.al)

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### **2.2. Definition, types and characteristics of case study method**

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Among many available methods of qualitative research, case study provides an in-depth and thorough insight into the case of a research problem and devising methodology or means to

solve the problem. Case study follows a naturalistic and realistic culture based data collection methods. No doubt based on this quality of case study, Shay Sayre (2006) defined case study, "as a closed and integrated system off patterned behaviour. In the words of Christine Daymon and Immy Hollaway. "Case study inquiry enables a researcher to collect rich, detailed information across a wide range of dimensions about one particular case or a small number of cases." A good case study highlights a number of factors operating and influencing a particular research problem

Thus, there is no doubt that in sociology, anthropology, organization and marketing studies, case studies are given a central role in research activity. Here case study helps to generate theory, test theory and in providing a new insight into the research problem, which has hitherto not been done by any other qualitative methods of research.

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### 2.2.1 Types

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In qualitative research three types of cases are used for research purpose (Shay Sayre 2001). These three types of case are given below in **figure I**

Now we will examine each type one by one

#### **i. Intrinsic Case Study**

This type of case study is carried out by a qualitative researcher to have a better understanding of a particular research problem or a topic of interest. It is not concerned with theory building exercise or understanding of a phenomenon

#### **ii. Instrumental Case Study**

In this type of case study method the problem is examined with a perspective to provide insight into an issue or to refine an existing theory. The case is secondary as it facilitates the researcher's understanding of something else.

#### **iii. Collective Case Studies**

In this case several instrumental studies are conducted independently. These studies are taken into account as they may have had to better 'understanding of larger issues" (Shay Sayre :2001) or problems. These cases help a researcher to identify distinctive features by exploring similarities and contrasts between the cases (Hollaway 2001). A researcher studying multiple cases must give a detailed description of each case. identify themes within the case and then follow by a thematic analysis across the cases. A researcher is supposed to give an interpretation together from the lessons learned from these cases, identify themes within the

case and then follow by a thematic analysis across the cases. A researcher is supposed to give an interpretation together from the lessons learned from these cases.

### **2.2.2 Characteristics:**

After going through the types of case method, one should be aware of major characteristics of a case method. The major characteristics are:

- 1. Deep Exploration :** Case method provides a deep exploration of a problem
- 2. Real Life Events:** Case method gives focus on real events. The problems or events are studied in their real-life context
- 3. Research Boundary:** In a case method the problem is bounded by time and place. These two factors of time and place should be considered seriously by the researcher
- 4. Longitudinal Study:** In case study a longitudinal study of events is done. Here, the events are studied both in their present and past perspective.
- 5. Multiple Information Sources:** In order to make a case study successful multiple sources and view points are to be considered by the researcher.
- 6. Detailed Study:** Case study research should be done in a detailed and descriptive manner. Absence of detailed and descriptive study may lead to the loss of a number of contexts or issues; by the researcher at the time of compilation of the case.
- 7. Holistic view:** Case study method gives a holistic view to the research problem. This can be done significantly by exploring relationships and connections between the issues and contexts
- 8. Useful Theory building:** A good case study helps in theory building. Not only this, the application of theory in a problem solving can be tested on the basis of information in the case.

### **2.2.3 Benefits of Case Method:**

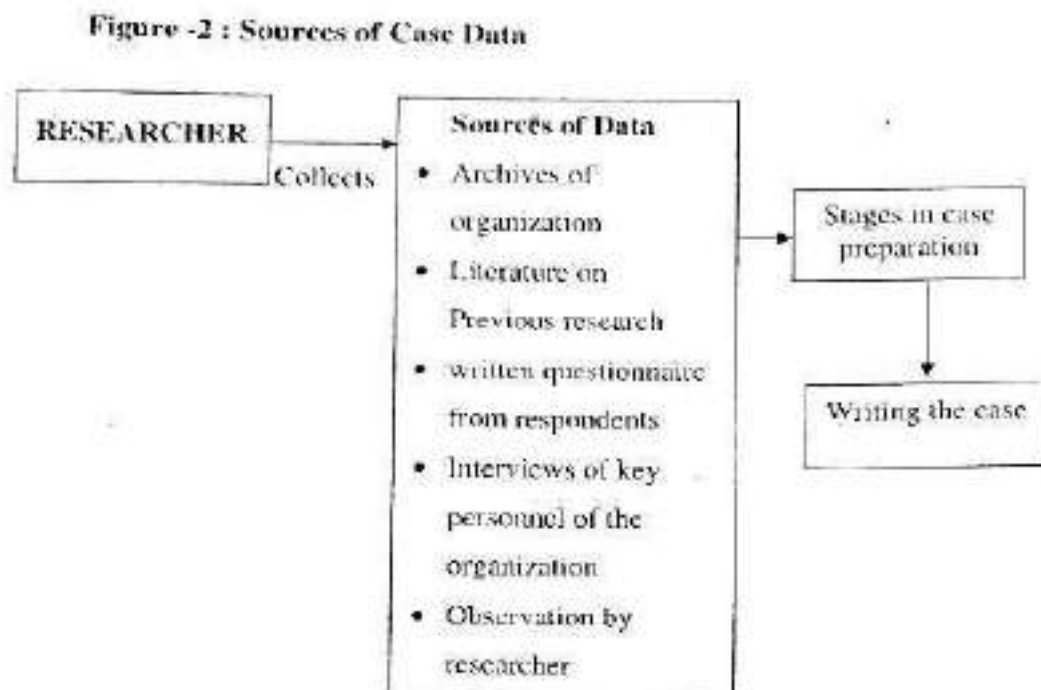
On the basis of the study of the characteristics and types of a case method, its benefits can be understood. The major benefits of cases are the followings:

- i. First of all, it provides the researcher with real life problems faced by an organization, a consumer or an event.
- ii. Secondly, in relation to real life problem, the researcher also comes into term with the real life environment like corporate culture, consumer lifestyle etc.
- iii. Thirdly, case study enhances the application and testing of a theory. It also helps in the generation of a theory.
- iv. Finally in case study research method, a number of qualitative and quantitative data are taken into account. Thus, it involves a variety of data collection and analysis activities. These

tasks help a researcher to use the effective triangulation approach for the validity and reliability of the information, thus, collected qualitatively.

### 2.3 Sources of Case Data

A qualitative researcher before developing the case study of a problem must collect information relevant to the particular case from various sources. In the words of Shay Sayre, "case research relies on five key sources to provide information." These five major sources are given in the following figure



Now we will discuss each sources of case data briefly

#### 1. Archives of Organizations

Every organization maintains the records of the financial, marketing, production, human resources and corporate happenings. The firm also maintains records of their competitors' functional activities too. These data are kept usually in both electronic and paper formats. It becomes essential for a researcher to go through these records in preparation of a case study,



## **2. Literature on previous research**

A researcher should also take into consideration the literature available on related previous research work while developing a case. This will enable the researcher to generate research questions and hypotheses. Literature survey also helps the researcher to identify consistencies and conflicts of data generated during the process of the case development.

## **3. Written questionnaire from respondents**

In case of a big corporate organization, the number of respondents are large. Further, interview of key executives and staff members scattered over a large geographical area often becomes a difficult task for a researcher. Under this circumstances, collection of information and necessary data through written, unstructured and open ended questionnaire becomes quite handy. A qualitative researcher must have the required skill to decode the answers of the respondents.

## **4. Interviews of the key personnel of the organization**

Well prepared interview protocols are required to interview key personnel of the organization in case development. Interview of key personnel by the researcher yields in-depth understanding of the problem, organizational conflict, organizational culture etc. Moreover, success of the case thus developed depends on the right and insightful interpretation of the problems by the researcher.

## **5. Observation by researcher**

Observation is an important tool for understanding the process and levels of conflict in an organization. This becomes more evident, when the researcher acts as a participant.

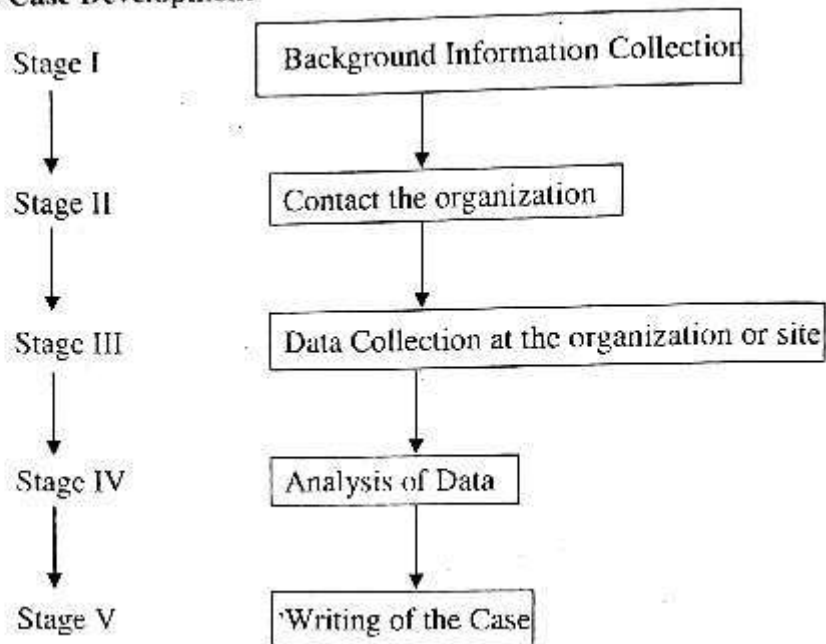
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## **2.4 Stages or steps in Case Development**

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Once the sources of collection of case data are identified by the researcher, stages in the development of a case become easier to manage. A researcher goes through following five stages in developing a case. The stages are given in a sequential manner in the following figure:

**Figure 3 : Stages in Case Development**



Now we will examine each stage briefly

### **Stage 1: Background Information Collection**

A researcher before developing a case on an organization or event must collect background information on the subject. Most widely used practice is to check out internet sites and go through articles, reports in print media like books, journals, magazines, newspapers etc. On the organization or event prior to a visit to the site by the researcher this process enables the researcher to understand the company or the event properly, and helps in identifying what type of information will be required to be collected from the site of happenings.

### **Stage II: Contact the organization**

In the second stage the researcher should contact the organization. Here it is the best practice to contact the Public Relations department or the Communication cell of the organization under study by the researcher. The researcher should explain to the key personnel of the PR or Communication development of the firm about the objectives of the research study, the number of key personnel both in management and staff categories to be contacted and interviewed, number of meeting and sittings to be arranged etc.

### **Stage III: Data Collection at the organization or site**

In this stage the researched should interview key company executive, staff and employees. He should also go through company publications, such as newsletters, annual report, advertising, customer feedback reports etc. The research should contact data from the customers, suppliers and intermediaries from the market too.

#### **Stage IV: Analysis of Data**

After collection of data by the researcher the stage of analysis of data comes. The researcher should review notes and transcript with proper scrutiny. This is done until options for solutions to the research problem under study emerge.

#### **Stage V: Writing of the Case**

This is the final stage in case development process in respect of particular research question. The researcher should write the case in a build narrative style. Here the written approach should be a move from general to the specific one by the researcher.

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### **2.5 Key factors for developing a case**

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In order to develop a case and at the time of writing the case, the researcher should take into account a number of factors. These factors are given below

a. **Setting**

b. **Research focus**

c. **Place**

d. **Time**

a. **Settings**

In developing the case study, researcher must take into account the convenience or accessibility of the site. The setting should be one that requires the least travel and the least expensive one. The researcher should have the easiest access to the site. Further, the setting should be unique in nature, related to the problem and suitable to the researcher

b. **Research Focus**

When a researcher is aimed at developing a case study related to study a particular organization, particular person or a particular event then the first step in research focus should be on purposeful sampling. Further, in case of developing a case on a particular event or business programme the significant or unusual events related to the happenings should be taken into consideration. This should be supplemented by the everyday goings on in case of a person, event or an organization. Thus, research focuses is very much essential for a researcher to develop a proper case study.

c. **Place**

While developing a case for a particular research problem the researcher should be able to identify and write about the relevant boundaries of place and time. (Dayman and Holloway 2001) have written about these two factors in following words "Imagine the case as a "picnic

basket" where everything inside the basket is the subject of a researcher's investigation, and everything outside is excluded",

Further, while dealing with an organization, the place is the firm itself. Here the researcher should select its 'social boundaries which means membership of the staff or the executives and the formal structure of the firm, as they put in together give the organization a distinct identity. Along with social boundaries, the firm's 'physical boundaries too should be taken into account. They are the building, sites or structure of an event etc.

**d. Time**

The researcher developing a case should decide about a clear beginning and end of the study, that is the time frame for the study is an essential ingredient. In relation to time, the researcher should decide whether to take into account a specific event or a number of occurrences of a specific incident into consideration. This particular focus on time is one of the most important advantages of a case study.

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## **2.6. Limitations of a case study research method**

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In spite of a number of advantages, case study method in qualitative research too has some disadvantages or limitations.

- First, limitation of a case based research method is that it has little information. So the idea in case writing should be given enough information for making right decisions: rather than giving every detail of the happening
- Second, problem relates to the focus on a single issue. In case study, research is difficult to write about a broad range of issues concerned with an event or an organization.
- Finally, limited generalization is one of the major criticism of case study research method. Hence, a case should offer a rich portrait of the problem to the readers. Geertz (1988) has stated in this regard that "readers of case study should be made to feel as if they have been there with the researcher in research, seen what the researcher has seen and concluded what the researcher has concluded.

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## **2.7 Let's Sum Up**

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In this unit we have studied the importance of case study method in qualitative research study. The direct, holistic and lucid approach of case study has made it very popular among

management educators, researchers and students as an important research and academic tool. Further, in this unit the various type of case study, stages in the development of cases, its characteristics and advantage alongwith its limitations have been discussed. In subsequent units other major methods of qualitative research approaches will be studied.

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## 2.8 Key Words

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**Intrinsic case study** : This type of case study is carried out by a qualitative researcher to have a better understanding of a particular research problem or a topic of interest

**Collective case studies:** In this case several instrumental studies are conducted independently. These cases help a researcher to identify distinctive features by exploring similarities and contrasts between the cases

**Instrumental Case Study** : In this type of case study method the problem is examined with a perspective to provide insight into an issue or to refine an existing theory.

**Sources of Data** : A qualitative researcher before developing the case study of a problem must collect information relevant to the particular case from various sources

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## 2.9 Discussion questions

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1. What is a case method? What are the various types of a case method?
  2. What are the characteristics of a case study method?
  3. Discuss the major sources of information for case study data.
  4. Discuss the major stages in a case study development process.
  5. What are the major advantages and limitation of a case study method?
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## 2.10 Suggested Reading

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1. Carson David: Gilmore Audriy: Perry Chad: and Gronhaug Kjell: Qualitative Marketing Research. Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2001.
2. Dayman Christine; and Holloway Immy, Qualitative Research Methods in Public Relations and Marketing Communications, Routledge London: 2002.
3. Sayre Shay: Qualitative Methods for Marketplace Research. Sage Publications, London, 2001.

**UNIT – 3**  
**QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH :**  
**ETHNOGRAPHY**

## UNIT: 3

### QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH : ETHNOGRAPHY

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#### Structure

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- 3.1. Introduction
  - 3.2. Definition, Nature and Characteristics of Ethnography Research
  - 3.3. Types of Ethnography Research
  - 3.4. Steps in Ethnography Study
  - 3.5. Advantages and Disadvantages of Ethnography Study
  - 3.6. Lets Sum Up
  - 3.7. Key Words
  - 3.8. Self Assessment questions
  - 3.9. Suggested readings
- 

#### 3.0 Objectives

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Objectives of this unit are the following

- i) To understand the nature and characteristic of ethnography study.
  - ii) To know about the types of the ethnography research.
  - iii) To study the steps involved in the ethnography research study.
  - iv) To understand the relative advantages and disadvantages of ethnography study.
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#### 3.1 Introduction

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Ethnography method of qualitative research has its roots in anthropology and sociology. This method is used to describe a society, group or culture. In fact, the main objective of ethnography study is to answer research questions related to understanding and describing a group of interacting people. This function of ethnographical research has been described by Sanday (1979) in following words. "Essentially, the researcher becomes immersed in the group, that is, goes native and lives with a small group of people in a specific setting to record, categorize and code what is going on to provide a holistic picture of the group . In a nutshell, it can be said that ethnography approach in qualitative research helps in collection of such a data that is deep, rich and thick in content.

Ethnography research thus is the art and science of describing a company, target audience or consumer culture. It also helps in the study of organizational culture taken up by managers of an organization. This method also facilitates a researcher to describe a wide variety of social groupings such as street gangs, professional gamblers, doctors and nurses in hospital emergency wards etc. Thus, as a qualitative research approach; ethnography may be used by researcher on its own or combined with other qualitative research approaches such as discourse analysis or grounded theory.

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### **3.2 Definition, Nature and Characteristics of Ethnography**

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The word ethnography has been derived from Greek, which means a description of a people or literally, the writing of culture" "(Atkinson 1992). In the words of Christine Dayman and Immy Holloway. "It is a dense and detailed account of experiences and the patterns and connections of social relationships that join people together."

Ethnography study having its roots in anthropology is based upon culture as an organizing concept. Thus, in this method of qualitative research ethnographers or researchers use a mix of observational and interviewing tactics as well as document analysis to record the behaviours and communication of people in particular social settings. Here, researchers immerse themselves in a group or community for an extended period of fieldwork. They also observe and ask questions about the way in which people interact, collaborate and communicate in regular ways among themselves as well as with the researchers.

Thus, ethnographers must possess the skills of investigative reporters or detectives. However unlike the reporters and detectives, who try to find out the sensational matter, ethnographers seek out the routine.

In short ethnography study is carried out to understand the organizational structure, culture and problems in a particular setting. In respect of marketing this method can be very useful in the studies of brand loyalty and experiences of consumer, interpretation of marketing communications, internal communication, inter-personal and cross cultural communication etc.



Further ethnographical study requires an extensive period of research by the researchers. Here, the researchers are required to be immersed in a research activity in a group or community context for a long period.

Another nature of this kind of research is that its report contains a "thick description" (Geertz 1973). It means going beyond recording of facts about what participants are doing. It should contain a dense and detailed account of experiences, followed by the patterns and connections of social relationships that join people of the particular social group together.

Based on definition and nature of all ethnographic studies, their overall characteristics are common. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) have described following major characteristics of an ethnography study:

1. **Small Group:** In ethnography the behaviour of people in a small group is studied. The study of this particular small group is carried out in its every day setting and contexts.
2. **Researcher Participation:** The researcher participates in the small social group for a long period. Here, the researcher has to live two simultaneous lives. First he or she participates as an insider or participant in the group and then he or she acts as an outside observer of the said group.
3. **Information sources:** In ethnography study informal interviews and observations are the two major sources of information. Other secondary sources of information like literature, organizational journals, annual report etc. are also taken into consideration.
4. **Data collection:** Here all data are collected in a relatively unstructured way. Thus, flexibility in collecting data related to everyday life of the people under study is an essential part of ethnographic research.
5. **Thick Description :** In ethnographic research thick descriptions of the group under study are collected. These rich descriptions of the group are thoroughly analysed to extract the meanings and functions of the group's behaviour by the researcher. The report thus prepared contains both verbal description and explanations.

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### 3.3. Types of Ethnography

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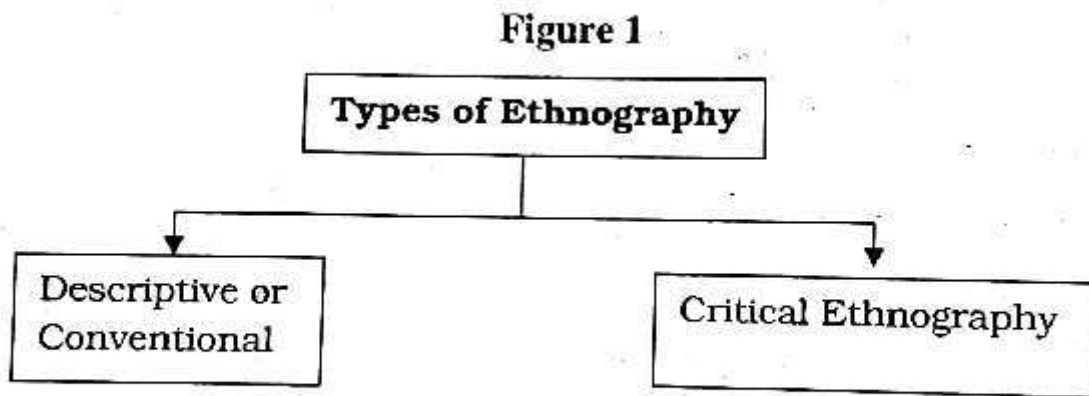
According to Sarantakos (1998) and Thomas (1993), there are two types of ethnography. They are described below:

#### i. Conventional or descriptive ethnography

## ii. Critical Ethnography

- i. **Conventional or Descriptive Ethnography:** This method focuses on the description of communities or groups. The group members behavioural patterns, categories and typologies are based on a thorough study of the activities of everyday life of the group and its members.
- ii. **Critical Ethnography :** It is meant to cause a change in the setting it investigates. In fact, critical ethnography study involves a study of macro- social factors and examines common sense assumptions and hidden agendas. It is very useful in studying the buying behaviour of rural consumers.

However, whatever type of ethnography study a researcher may select depends on the phenomenon or the group under study. The types of ethnography study are given herein



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### 3.4 Steps in Ethnography Study

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Ethnographic qualitative research study is carried out in multiple stages and sub-stages. These stages, along with sub-stages can be broadly discussed as under:

#### **Stage 1: Data Collection Method**

In ethnographic data collection participant observations and interviews play vital roles. Ethnographers study what people do, where they do in a significant manner. However documents are also used extensively in ethnographic study.

- i) The first sub-stages of data collection method is widely known as fieldwork. In fieldwork following issues are to be considered by a researcher extensively:

- Researcher should explore the nature of a particular social phenomenon.
- The data should be collected in an unstructured way.
- The sources of data collection should be multiple. However two major sources should be observation and informal conversation.
- The data should be collected in settings where phenomenon or events take place.
- Focus of the study should be on one culture, organization, one group.
- The researcher should work closely with native informants or the participant from that particular social group under study.
- The researcher's perspective should be both **etic** and **emic**. However emphasis should be more on **emic** perspective.
- Symbols and rituals of the social group under study should be taken into consideration.
  - ii) **Sampling:** One of the difficult task of ethnography study is selection of reliable informants. Successful interview in case of such type of qualitative study depends. on the interactions between informants and ethnographers.

Unlike randomized subjects used in case of quantitative studies, ethnographers generally use purposeful sampling technique. Here an ethnographer first selects a specific group and setting for research. Afterwards criteria to select who and what will be studied are decided. Key informants' are selected by the researcher in a manner to make sure that they are representative of the group under study. Further, it is to be maintained that they have been in the group for a longer period of time to have expert knowledge about the group's rules, routine and culture.

Apart from the above mentioned criteria the time and context are also to be considered by the researcher. In order to make the findings reliable and valid, a researcher must make steps to observe the group at different times of the day and different days of the week.

Further peoples' behavior is influenced by situation factors ; it is essential in sampling procedure of ethnography study to take into account the context.

**iii) Participant observation :** In ethnography the researchers act as the major research tool. Since the research is carried on for a pretty long period of time the researcher should become part of the culture. As a participant observer the researcher should observe participants actions and the ways in which they interact with each other. The gist of the theme is that the researcher should go native (Shay Shayre 2001).

**iv) Taking Field notes:** In ethnographic work making field notes is an essential step. In fact in the words of Emerson. Fretz and Shaw 2001, field notes are a form of representation a way of reducing just observed events, persons and places to written accounts." In field notes interviews and observations are recorded for analysis of data and writing the report. According to Spradley (1979) there are four types of field notes. They are given below.

- a. The Condensed Account
- b. The Expanded Account
- c. The Fieldwork Journal
- d. The Analysis and Interpretation notes

a. **The Condensed Account:** Condensed accounts are made in the field during the time of data collection. They are short descriptions of the fact in nature. Here members of the group give an account of important events from their perspective to the researcher.

b. **The Expanded Account:** These accounts helps the researcher in extending their observations and other contents of field notes. If a researcher fails to make any recordings during data collection, "the expanded account should be written as soon as possible after any observation or interview session" (Holloway and Daymon 2001)

c. **The Field work journal :** It is the note which a researcher prepares during fieldwork. Here the researcher writes down his/her reactions, biases and problems during fieldwork.

d. **The Analysis and Interpretation notes:** These are the write ups, which the researcher should make during the observations and interviews along with his/her analysis and interpretation of the happening noted in the field notes.

Other than these notes the researcher must use other ways of recording events and behaviour of group members under study in the form of tapes, films, photos, flow charts and diagrams.

iv).**Online Data Collection:** Another emerging area for ethnographic study is the study of "Virtual Communities' (Daymon and Holloway: 2001). In this connection Ward (1999) has made a study on virtual communities. According to her shared meanings that were held by participants on Websites should be examined an online data collection method. In this method

both participants as well as researchers ask questions to each other. Finally, the interpretation of data is left open to a process of constant renegotiation by both researcher and researched.

### **Stage II: Data Analysis**

After going through the 1st stage of data collection in ethnographic study the stage II of data analysis commences. The stage of data analysis "includes a reflective activity that results in a set of analytical notes." (Shay Sayre 2001). At this stage the researcher organizes the collected notes, transcribes the interviews, develops the photographs taken etc. Thus the collected data become the text for analysis.

In other words, the processing of raw data begins with coding of the texts by the researcher. Here the researcher tries to find out patterns, themes and connections between ideas. Further in this stage the researcher intertwines the task of data analysis with that of interpretation; so that an insight into data collected can be made by attaching meaning to them. Here, the researcher takes into account both the **emic** and **etic** perspectives into consideration while analyzing the data. The 'etic view helps the researcher to develop a scientific and conceptual framework. It also acts as a system of categories for the researcher's observation, on the other hand, the 'emic' view provides insider's view of the reasons why people of the group under study act in a way as they do. In fact, it supports the etic perspective, too.

### **Stage III: Report Writing**

In ethnography study the report can be written in different styles and formats. Since ethnography study is a story of interactions, events and communicative actions between the group members of a cultural group under study it can be written in the form of a story or as Van Maanen (1988) states as a tale'. This story writing can be done in the following different forms:

- a. The Realist Tale
- b. The confessional Tale
- c. The Impressionist Tale

Holloway (1997) discussed these 'tales and ideas of Maanen in a specific manner. The gist of Holloway's ideas goes like this,

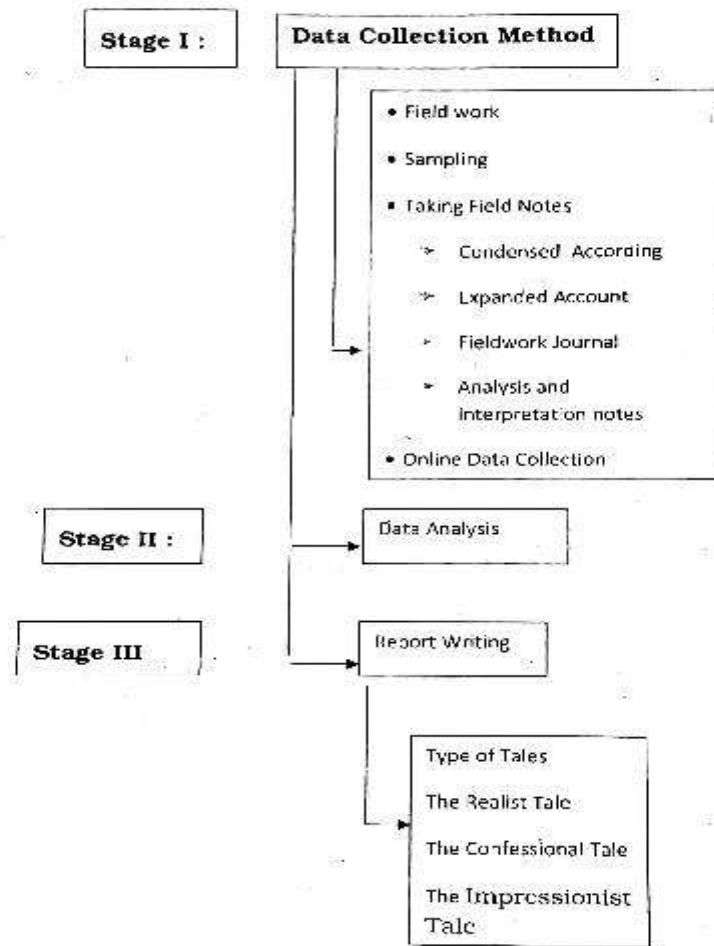
- a. The '**Realist Tale**' is written in the third person, as the ethnographer is excluded from the text. This provides the details of everyday life of the social group and the ordinary life and

routines of the informants of the group under study. This kind of text writing as Holloway states gives a 'natives' point of view, and provides objectivity and neutrality to the story.

b. **Confessional Tales:** Contain the detailed account of techniques and strategies of the ethnographer in the field. The ethnographer while writing the story uses very personal language in this case and writes in the form of a confession. Even his biases and stances, while carrying out the field work is mentioned in this type of writing. Thus, the tale thus emerges is confessional, transparent and lucid in nature. In short it is very much authentic and acceptable among readers.

c. **The Impressionist Tale:** This kind of tales are creative, contextual and artistic (Holloway, 1997). The researcher, in this tale gives himself/herself a place in this story as a fieldworker. The culture under study is presented in a creative and imaginative way (Holloway). Success of the researcher as a writer depends on his/her ability to draw the readers into the story so that the latter ones will be able to learn about the culture of the group under study.

Figure 2  
Steps in Ethnography Study



### 3.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Ethnographic Study

- In ethnographic study the first advantage is that the researcher not only observe the behaviour of a cultural group, but also shares the experience of the research participants.

- Secondly, ethnography study is used as an important research tool by the researcher when researching consumers in other culture since he/she does not put his/her opinions directly on a stranger, which is considered to be an inappropriate behaviour.
  - Finally, it helps in giving a 'thick' and 'rich' description of a cultural group to the readers of the report.
- The first and foremost disadvantage of this study is the time taken to develop trust among members of the group under study.
  - Secondly, the researcher should have the necessary skill to develop rapport and trust of the group under study.
  - Finally, generalization in this kind of study is not possible. This happens because the researcher tries to make statements based on a particular study to other similar situations. However this is not possible as findings from one sub culture or one setting cannot be made applicable to other settings automatically.

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### **3.6. Let us Sum Up**

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In the present unit we have studied the ethnography research approach in qualitative methodology. This is a kind of a research technique which is originally used by anthropologists and sociologists to gather information on how people in a group under study interact with each other on a daily basis. In this method a researcher is required to become one of the members of a specific group under study for a longer period of time. This enables the researcher to understand the values and attitudes of the members of the group and the group as a whole clearly.

Further in this method a researcher is expected to keep a track of the group and its individual member's behaviour by taking down notes and if possible by collecting videographic or photographic evidences. This part has been discussed in the data collection method of ethnographic study. Further, the nature, characteristics, advantage and disadvantages of ethnographic research work have been discussed in this unit. Moreover, the ways of writing the report in the framework of a 'tale' or story has been discussed in the present unit too.



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### 3.7 Key words

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**Ethnographic study :** Ethnography study is carried out to understand the organizational structure, culture and problems in a particular setting

**Condensed Account:** Condensed accounts are made in the field during the time of data collection.

**The Expanded Account:** These accounts help the researcher in extending their observations and other contents of field notes.

**The Field work journal :** It is the note which a researcher prepares during fieldwork

**The Analysis and Interpretation notes:** These are the write ups, which the researcher should make during the observations and interviews along with his/her analysis and interpretation of the happening noted in the field notes.

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### 3.8 Self Assessment Question

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1. Define the term ethnography? What are the major characteristics and types of ethnographic study.
  2. What are the major stages involved in the ethnographic study?
  3. What are the major components in the data collection procedure in an ethnographic study? Discuss.
  4. How the ethnographic field work notes and report writing of the study are carried out? Discuss
  5. Write short notes on the followings:
    - a. Advantages and disadvantages of the ethnographic study.
    - b. Maanen's concept of story writing or preparing tales for ethnographic research.
- 

### 3.9 Suggested Readings

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1. Daymon, Christine and Holloway: Immy: Qualitative Research methods in Public Relations and Marketing Communications, Routledge Publications, London, 2001.
2. Kolb, Bonita; Marketing Research: A practical Approach, Sage Publications. New Delhi 2008.
3. Sayre: Shay: Qualitative Methods for Market Place Research. Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2001.

# MBA

Management Studies

**(SEMESTER – II)**

MBA 2102

**BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT &  
LEGISLATION**

**BLOCK - 1**



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**Semester - II**

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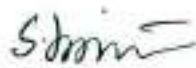
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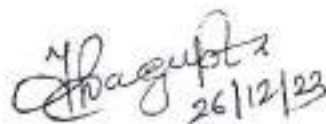
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**MBA - 2102**

**BLOCK - 1**

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**Unit – 1:**

**Introduction to Business Environment**

Overview and Framework of Business Environment-Economic Environment: Economic Development and Human Development; Different elements of economic environment;

**Unit – 2:**


**Economic reforms**

Role of Govt. of India; Industrial Policy; Fiscal Policy; Monetary policy; Economic reforms; Liberalization; Privatization and Globalization; Structural Adjustment Programme; Current trends in economic environment affecting business.


**Unit – 3:**

**Social Environment**

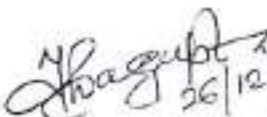
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# MBA

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**(SEMESTER – II)**

**MBA 2103**

**MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION &  
SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

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**MBA - 2103**

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**MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION  
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**BLOCK – 1**

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## MBA – 2103

### BLOCK – 1

This block comprises of three units and aims to provide an introduction to the study of Managerial Communication and Skill Development

#### Unit – 1:

Business Writing—Introduction, written business communication

#### Unit – 2:

Business letters, Common components of Business Letters; writing effective memos;

#### Unit – 3:

Business reports & Proposals; format for proposals; proposal layout and design; Secretarial Practices in Business Organizations

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# MBA

Management Studies

**(SEMESTER – II)**

**MBA 2704**

**FUNDAMENTALS OF COMPUTER  
APPLICATIONS & MANAGEMENT  
INFORMATION SYSTEM**

**BLOCK - 1**



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**MBA**  
**(Management Studies)**

**Semester - II**

**MBA - 2704**

**FUNDAMENTALS OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS &  
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM  
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**FUNDAMENTALS OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS &  
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM  
(FCAMIS)**

**BLOCK - 1**

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**MBA - 2102**

**BLOCK - 1**

This block comprises of three units and aims to provide an introduction to the study of Business Environment and Legislation.

**Unit – 1:**

**Computer Fundamentals:**

Generations of Computers, Types of Computers, Basic Structure of Computers, Data Representation; Concepts of Software; Types of Software.

**Unit – 2:**

**Basics of Computer Languages:**

Generations of Computer Languages, Elements of Programming Language, Representation of Programming Logic; Introduction to C Language.

**Unit – 3:**

**Concept of Systems:**

System: Concepts, Characteristics and Classification – Open & Closed, Deterministic & probabilistic etc. Concept of data, Information & information system.

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# MBA

Management Studies

**(SEMESTER – II)**

**MBA 2705**

**QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES IN  
MANAGEMENT**

**BLOCK - 1**



***The University of Burdwan***  
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***West Bengal, India***

**MBA**

**(Management Studies)**

**Semester - II**

**MBA - 2705**

**QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES IN  
MANAGEMENT**



**The University of Burdwan**

**Centre for Distance and Online Education**

**Golapbag, Burdwan - 713104**

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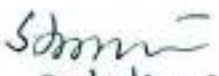
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QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES IN MANAGEMENT  
(QTM)

BLOCK – 1

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## MBA - 2705

### BLOCK - 1

This block comprises of three units and aims to provide an introduction to the study of Quantitative Techniques in Management.

#### Unit - 1:

##### **Measures of Central Tendency & Dispersion**

Different measures of Central Tendency: Arithmetic Mean, Geometric Mean, Harmonic Mean, Median and Mode. Measures of Dispersion: Range, Quartile Deviation, Mean Absolute Deviation, Standard Deviation, Measures of Relative Dispersion.

#### Unit - 2:

##### **Moments: Measures of Skewness & Kurtosis**

Moments: Raw Moments & Central Moments. Measures of Skewness and Kurtosis.

#### Unit - 3:

##### **Correlation & Regression**

Correlation and Regression: Simple correlation analysis, properties of product moment correlation coefficient; Simple regression analysis -Derivation of regression lines by the OLS method -properties of regression lines.

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# MBA

Management Studies

**(SEMESTER – II)**

**MBA 2103**

**MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION &  
SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

**BLOCK - 1**



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***Centre for Distance and Online Education***  
***Golapbag, Burdwan – 713104***  
***West Bengal, India***

**MBA  
(Management Studies)**

**Semester - II**

**MBA - 2103**

**MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION  
AND  
SKILL DEVELOPMENT(MCSD)**



**The University of Burdwan  
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**MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION**

**AND**

**SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

**(MCSD)**

**BLOCK – 1**

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## **MBA – 2103**

### **BLOCK – 1**

This block comprises of three units and aims to provide an introduction to the study of Managerial Communication and Skill Development

#### **Unit – 1 :**

Business Writing—Introduction, written business communication;

#### **Unit – 2 :**

Business letters, Common components of Business Letters; writing effective memos;

#### **Unit – 3 :**

Business reports & Proposals; format for proposals; proposal layout and design; Secretarial Practices in Business Organizations

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**UNIT-I**  
**BUSINESS WRITING**

---

## UNIT-I : BUSINESS WRITING

---

### STRUCTURE :

---

- 1.0 : Objectives
- 1.1 : Introduction
- 1.2 : Importance of Written Communication
- 1.3 : Types of Business Messages
- 1.4 : Approaches to Business Messages
- 1.5 : Stages of Business Messages
- 1.6 : Let us sum up
- 1.7 : Key Words
- 1.8 : Self-assessment Questions
- 1.9 : Suggested Readings
- 1.10 : Further Readings

---

### 1.0 : OBJECTIVES

---

The objectives of this unit are to :

- ⇒ Discuss the importance of business communication.
- ⇒ Analyse the types of business messages.
- ⇒ Throw some light on the approaches to business messages.
- ⇒ Give brief accounts of various stages of business messages.

---

### 1.1 : INTRODUCTION

---

Written communication is pivotal to modern organizations. It serves the important purpose of documentation in a business organization. The different tools of business writing such as reports, proposals, inter office memorandums, letters,

manuals, business plans, notices, circulars, e-mails etc. provide important information, convince readers, establish and nurture relationships. Today's organizations are technology-driven where communication skill of employees has become utmost important. In order to be successful at workplace, an individual needs to effectively communicate with his/her boss, co-workers, subordinates and customers. It is imperative that one has the right approach, proper choice of words that best suit the message and the readers. It can be said that one might have great ideas, but he/she is not in a position to express those, then success will elude the person.

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## 1.2 : IMPORTANCE OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

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Today business is conducted in a globalized world. Competition comes not only from the neighbourhood, but also from distant continents. Written communication in various forms help a firm to reach across to people far and wide, be it employees across the world or customers in every nook and corner.

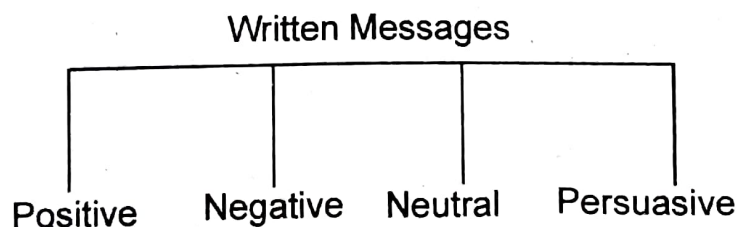
Organizations depend on written mode of communication for a number of reasons. It provides a permanent document which is a necessity in modern times. Documentation is an important business activity that enables a firm to store important information for present and future reference. Written documents can be reviewed if necessary. But care should be taken while preparing it keeping in mind its sensitivity to audience and future implications. This is because of the fact that unlike oral communication (which could be forgotten), written communication could become a public record. Well-written business documents create the image of an individual as well as that of a business organization.

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## 1.3 : TYPES OF BUSINESS MESSAGES

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Written messages can be categorized as positive, negative, neutral, and persuasive.



Source : Business Communication. Meenakshi Raman and Prakash Singh, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2006.

(i) Positive messages :

Those messages that convey a positive information in order to keep alive the business relationships can be termed as positive messages. Some examples are :

⇒ The CEO of a company sending a letter of appreciation congratulating an employee for commendable performance.

⇒ The Chairman of a company initiating a note of sympathy to the family of a deceased employee.

(ii) Negative messages :

Negative messages are those messages that are undesirable or disappointing. Messages conveying denials, rejections, etc. come under this category. Some examples are :

⇒ A manager (HR) of an organization sending a message to the candidate who was rejected for a position in the company.

⇒ A manager of a bank refusing to grant loan to an applicant.

(iii) Neutral messages :

Neutral Messages are neither positive nor negative. In fact, their emotional content is usually lower as compared to both positive and negative messages. Most of the routine messages fall under this category. Examples are

⇒ A Sales manager of a company sending weekly sales report to the head office.

⇒ A Company responding to the request for a brochure.

(iv) Persuasive messages :

Those messages that try to convince the readers to agree with the sender or make them to act in the way as desired by the sender. Some examples are :

⇒ An Advertising Agency sending a proposal in response to the demand from a company for a nationwide campaign

⇒ A publishing company sending the catalogue of Management Books to all management institutions.

## 1.4 : APPROACHES TO BUSINESS MESSAGES

There are two approaches to preparing business messages, namely the direct and the indirect approach. Let us discuss these two approaches one by one.

### Direct Approach :

Under this approach, the sender's primary objective is in tune with the receiver. The sender wishes to transmit those messages which is foremost in the mind of the receiver. The sender does not face any problem in sending the messages as messages tend to be positive or at best neutral. This direct approach is also referred to as the deductive approach in which the main idea is first stated and then it is followed by any needed explanation. An illustration of the direct approach is presented below :

Congratulations ! It gives me immense pleasure in announcing that you have been selected for the position of Assistant Manager (HR) in our organization.

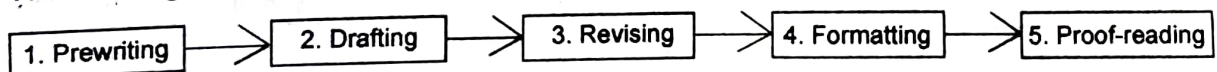
### Indirect Approach :

When the message is of such type that the audience is expected to be displeased, unwilling, or even antagonistic, then the indirect approach is more appropriate. This approach is different from the direct approach in the sense that one does not reveal the central idea until after he has offered the explanation for it. To put it in another way, it can be said that one explains his/her reasons for saying 'no' before actually saying 'no'. This is also referred to as the inductive approach where, the explanation comes first and the main idea comes later on. Most of the negative messages and persuasive messages use this approach. An illustration of the indirect approach of sending messages is given below :

Applicants other than you, ones with equally strong educational background but with vast experience in the field, have been selected for the aforesaid positions.

## 1.5 : STAGES OF BUSINESS MESSAGES

There are five main stages involved in developing effective business messages. Those stages are presented below:





## The Five stages of writing business messages

Source : Business communication. Meeakshi Raman and Prakash Singh, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2006.

Let us discuss the five stages one after the other.

### 1. Prewriting :

This is the stage in which we think and develop a plan for writing our messages. In this stage, we should first determine the purpose of our writing. After determining the purpose of writing the message, we should put ourselves in the reader's shoes, i.e. try to understand the reader's viewpoint. A message is successful only when it directly appeals the reader. We should try to create a positive tone in our writing by trying to connect with our audience. The key to keeping the reader's interest alive is getting the reader involved in the message. In order to start writing, we need to have an outline first. The main points should be decided first based on importance.

### 2. Drafting :

Drafting is the next stage where one needs to find the right balance of words. One should remember to keep the writing short and simple. We should try to be concise and to the point. The message will become more interesting if it is written in a conversational style that is warm and friendly. We should try to tailor our language to the need of the audience.

### 3. Revising :

It is advisable to review the business messages carefully after completing the first draft. Revising is the process of checking and modifying a document. Revise the document for clarity, conciseness and content by using the right words at the right places for maximum effectiveness.

### 4. Formatting :

The get-up of the message is important. In fact, good looks can help the message get across to the audience. The sender of the message should accept the responsibility for not only the content but also the format and appearance of the document. Finally it can be said that there is no universal standard of writing business messages; a fair amount of variation is fairly common.

## **5. Proof-reading :**

After composing the first draft of the message, proof-reading must be done. We should devote a fair amount of time for proof-reading. We should be meticulous in our approach during proof-reading. Proof-reading is for giving the finishing touch to the message.

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## **1.6 : LET US SUM UP**

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The importance of written communication in business can't be undermined. This has become more important in the present scenario as business is being conducted in a globalized era. Business messages can be of different types : positive, negative, neutral and persuasive. There are two approaches to business messages, namely direct approach and indirect approach. While a direct approach is used to convey business messages that are positive or neutral, an indirect approach is best suited for messages that are negative or persuasive in nature. There are five major stages in preparing business messages : prewriting, drafting, revising, formatting, and proof-reading. Each of these stages is equally important.

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## **1.7 : KEY WORDS**

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Business messages, Positive message, Negative message, Neutral message, Persuasive message, Direct Approach, Indirect Approach, Prewriting, Drafting, Revising, Formatting, Proof-reading.

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## **1.8 : SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

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1. Discuss why written communication is important in business organizations.
2. Briefly describe the two approaches to writing business-messages with suitable examples.
3. State and explain the five stages in preparing business-messages.
4. Discuss the importance of 'proof-reading' in preparing business messages.
5. Why is 'revising' considered as an essential step in preparing business messages ?

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## **1.9 : SUGGESTED READINGS**

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1. Business Communication by Meenakshi Raman and Prakash Singh (Oxford University Press, New Delhi). [Chapter-8].
2. Communication skills by Nageshwar Rao and Rajendra P-Das (Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai) [Chapter -11]

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## **1.10 : FURTHER READINGS**

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Business Communication Essentials by courtland Bovee and John Thill, (Pearson, New Delhi) [Chapter 3, 4 and 5].

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**UNIT-II**  
**BUSINESS LETTERS AND MEMOS**

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## UNIT-II : BUSINESS LETTERS AND MEMOS

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### STRUCTURE :

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- 2.0 : Objectives
  - 2.1 : Introduction
  - 2.2 : Components of Business Letters
  - 2.3 : Types of Business Letters
  - 2.4 : Memorandums (Memos)
  - 2.5 : Preparing Résumé
  - 2.6 : Let us sum up
  - 2.7 : Key Words
  - 2.8 : Self-assessment Questions
  - 2.9 : Suggested Readings
  - 2.10 : Further Readings
- 

### 2.0 : OBJECTIVES

---

The objective of the unit are to :

- ⇒ Discuss the various components of business letters
  - ⇒ Analyse the types of business letters
  - ⇒ Provide guidelines for writing memos.
  - ⇒ Throw some light on preparing Résumé.
- 

### 2.1 : INTRODUCTION

---

Effective business writing is of utmost importance for an executive whether it is a letter, an application or a memo. Managers should be made to learn the functional importance of business correspondence. Writing should be precise, to-

the-point and clear. Attempts should be made o keep the writing simple. Business letters should contain short sentences and simple words. We should always keep the reader in mind while writing letters or memos.

We should try to gain the reader's attention while writing a letter. A letter should start with a strong opening. We should make the first paragraph of the letter stand out and get noticed. The most important information should come first. The letter should also close on a friendly note. It should invite the reader to continue to write and make correspondence. In case of a longer letter, the last paragraph may summarize the key points. If some action is needed at the reader's end, then it should be clearly mentioned. The letter should end with a positive and polite note. A strong close is equally important as a strong opening.

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## **2.2 : COMPONENTS OF BUSINESS LETTERS**

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The various components of business letters are :

**Heading**—It contains the address of the writer and the date on which it is sent. In case the letter is written using a letterhead, then only the date is mentioned as other details are already mentioned in the letterhead.

**Address of the recipient**—The name and address of the recipient should be mentioned to avoid confusion.

**Salutation** – The salutation means the 'Dear Sir' or 'Dear Madam' of the letter which is usually followed by a colon or a comma.

**Subject or reference** – The subject line announces the main intention of the letter. It should be short and to the point.

**Body of the letter**— The actual message is presented in the body of the letter. This is the main part of the letter.

**Closing segment** - The 'Sincercly yours' or 'Yours sincerely' element is known as the complimentary close. Other forms are 'Respectfully yours', 'Yours faithfully' etc.

**Enclosures** – Enclosures convey the items that accompany the letter. Indications such as 'Enclosure', 'Encl.' Or 'Enclosures' (in case of more than one attachment) are used for this purpose.

**Copies** – If the letter is sent to more than one person, then it should be mentioned ('CC'. is used for this purpose).

## 2.3 : TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

---

Business Letters can be of different types, such as routine letters, covering letters for job applications, acceptance letters, resignation letters, etc.

### (a) Routine Letters

It can be planned in three steps : opening paragraph, middle paragraph, and closing paragraph.

#### Opening Paragraph :

Most routine business letters begin by making reference to a previous correspondence. This saves the time spent on searching for what is being referred to. The letter can either be in response to a previous letter, a telephonic call or an in-person conversation.

#### Middle paragraph :

All the necessary details are provided in this paragraph. The sender of the letter should try to answer any possible questions that the reader may want to ask.

#### Closing paragraph :

We should not close the letter abruptly. The letter should close on a positive note. In a letter, it is good to end the communication in a way that will enable the reader to think positively about the company/organisation on behalf of which the letter is written.

### (b) Covering letter for job applications :

A covering letter accompanies a C.V. or a résumé. Through this letter, the prospective candidate puts forward his/her candidature for a particular position. This letter has to be written meticulously since it creates the first impression. The format of a covering letter is same as that of a routine letter (Refer-components of business letters).

### (c) Acceptance letters :

If a job applicant is offered a job, then he/she should formally intimate the employer of his/her decision. The date on which he/she wants to start work should be mentioned. The letter should close with sincere thanks to the prospective employer.

(d) Resignation letters :

Resignation letters should be carefully worded. The letter should not begin or end on a negative note. The person sending the letter might be feeling bad about his/her supervisor or the organisation, but that feeling should not be conveyed through the letter.

## 2.4 : MEMORANDUMS (MEMOS)

While writing memos it is important to keep the goal of all business communications in mind : to make the readers to do what we want them to do and to promote goodwill and amity. Memos are used for routine, day-to-day exchange of information within an organisation.

Format of Memos :

Memos have a specific format. They are carefully designed so that the purpose is served. A Memo has an introduction, main body and conclusion. A sample memo format is presented below.

Fig 1 : In-house Memorandums

In-house Memorandum of XYZ Ltd.	
Date	:
To	:
From	:
Ref/Sub	:
Main Body	: _____
	_____
	_____
	_____
Close.	



If should be remembered that the length of the memo is short (few lines) and the writing should be concise. The conclusion should be proper. The tone should be courteous, friendly and positive.

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## 2.5 : PREPARING RÉSUMÉ

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A résumé is a structured, written summary of a person's education, employment details and achievements. It is a persuasive business message intended to generate a prospective employer's interest in a candidate. The basic purpose in writing a résumé is to create interest about the job applicant. Another term that is interchangeably used with résumé is Curriculum Vitae (C.V.). Although résumés and C-V's are essentially the same, but there is minor difference-in fact, a C.V is (more) detailed than a résumé (a résumé is to the point). A résumé is a summary of achievements and highlights the strengths of the candidate. A C.V. can contain information about hobbies and extra-curricular activities, whereas, a résumé contains information relevant only to the job in question. Personal information like age, sex, religion, etc. are part of a C-V, but they are not essential for a résumé. Résumé is widely used in the US, whereas, C.V. is popular in Britain.

### Writing Résumé :

We should remember that until we are able to meet with the prospective employer in person, we are our résumé, and a small mistake can cost us interview opportunities. Secondly, we should give ourselves plenty of time to prepare our résumé. We should take time to modify and reframe our résumé. Third, we should take cue from good models or formats of résumé.

We should try to keep our résumé honest so that it represents who we really are. The target audience for whom the résumé is meant, should be kept in mind. If necessary, we can customize our résumé for individual companies. We should write the résumé in a simple and direct style. Short, crisp phrases should be used. The sample format of a résumé is depicted below.

## Figure 2 : Resume

Name and contact Information

(Name, Address, E-mail address, telephone numbers etc.)

Career objective :

Educational Background : (In reverse chronological order).

(Start with the most recent)

Work Experience, Skills and Accomplishment. (Reverse chronological order)

Signature

Guidelines regarding personal data and references :

Résumé should not include any personal data beyond the information provided above. When applying for a U.S company for example, one should not include information like age, gender, marital status, religious or political affiliations, national origin, salary history, reasons for leaving jobs, names of references, etc. Also, never include a photo with the resume—some employers won't even look at résumé with photos for fear of being accused of discrimination based on personal characteristics. Try to keep the résumé to one-page length. If a prospective employee has more experience and he/she is applying for a higher position, then he/she may go for a longer résumé.

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### **2.6 : LET'S SUM UP**

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We write business letters to provide certain specific information to readers. The other purpose might also be to persuade the readers to take some action. Business letters can be challenging to develop, because we have to retain the reader's attention throughout. While writing letters, we must analyse our audience and

determine the purpose. Then, we should gather information, create an outline, prepare a draft and revise it. Inter-office memorandums or memos are used for day-to-day, routine exchange of information within an organisation. Memos are written using a format. In fact, the length of the memo is short and the writing is concise. A résumé is a structured, written summary of a person's education, employment details and achievements. C.V. and résumé are interchangeably used, although a C.V. is more detailed than a résumé. It is important to note here that to communicate information in a simple, clear, concise form is of great importance for a successful executive and for his/her organization's proper functioning.

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## **2.7 : KEY WORDS**

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Salutation, Enclosure, covering letter, acceptance letter, resignation letter, Inter-office memorandum, Résumé, Curriculum Vitae (C.V).

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## **2.8 : SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

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1. Discuss the various components of business letters.
2. Throw some light on types of business letters.
3. What are the basic ingredients of an effective memo ? Discuss how can it be used as a very strong tool to send the right messages.
4. Explain the role of covering letter while sending a résumé to a prospective employer.
5. Develop the outline of an effective Résumé.

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## **2.9 : SUGGESTED READINGS**

---

1. Business Communication by Meenakshi Raman and Prakash Singh (Oxford University Press, New Delhi) [Chapter-9].
2. Business Communication Essentials by Courtland Bovée and John Thill (Pearson, New Delhi) [Chapter -13]
3. Communication Skills by Nageshwar Rao and Rajendra P-Das (Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai) [Chapters -16,18]

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## 2.10 : FURTHER READINGS

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Business Communication Strategies by M. M. Monippally (Tata-McGraw Hill Publishing Company, New Delhi) [Chapter-8].

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**UNIT-III**  
**BUSINESS REPORTS**

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**STRUCTURE :**

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- 3.0 : Objectives
  - 3.1 : Introduction
  - 3.2 : Kinds of Business Reports
  - 3.3 : Elements of Effective Business Report Writing
  - 3.4 : Steps in Writing a Report
  - 3.5 : Corporate Reports
  - 3.6 : Let us sum up
  - 3.7 : Key Words
  - 3.8 : Self-assessment Questions
  - 3.9 : Suggested Readings
  - 3.10 : Further Readings
- 

**3.0 : OBJECTIVES**

---

The objective of this unit are to :

- ⇒ Discuss the kinds of business reports.
  - ⇒ Analyse the elements of effective business reports.
  - ⇒ State and explain the steps in writing a report.
  - ⇒ Throw some light on corporate reports.
- 

**3.1 : INTRODUCTION**

---

Report writing – whether annual reports, monthly sales reports, production reports or project reports, is a very important aspect of the job of a manager in a business organization. Apart from these, every organization has a system of periodical reporting on progress made and status of different activities. The

management may also publish some audit reports from time to time. The information contained in a report is needed for various purposes, like for reviewing and assessing progress, for planning future course of action, for taking crucial decisions, and for solving problems.

A report is a logical and orderly presentation of facts and information that is objective in nature and serves important business purpose. According to the American Marketing Society, the purpose of a report is 'to convey (to) the interested persons the whole results of the study in sufficient details and so arranged as to enable each reader to comprehend the data and so determine for himself the validity of conclusions'.

---

### **3.2 : KIND OF BUSINESS REPORTS**

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The objective of a business report is either to provide some information or to solve a problem by analyzing a situation. Reports can broadly be classified as information reports and research reports.

#### **Information Report :**

An information report consists of past and present information that will help readers to stay abreast of a situation, a topic, or to learn about the progress on a project. The purpose of an information report is to present ideas and data in a concise and clear manner.

**Research Report :** A research report is concerned with analysing a situation. The person preparing the report looks at the problem, collects data and analyses the data, arrives at a conclusion and then makes certain recommendations.

---

### **3.3 : ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE BUSINESS WRITING**

---

An effective business report should be objective and accurate. Objectivity in business report writing means presenting information in a manner that is free from personal feelings, bias and prejudices.

The writer of the report should distinguish between facts and opinions. The opinions and inferences drawn by people should be verified. While preparing a report, both positive and negative aspects should be presented. All the pertinent information must be included in the report.

Accuracy on the other hand includes accuracy of information presented and accuracy of writing the report. The writer of the report must ensure that report should contain factual information only. The accuracy of any report is dependent upon the accuracy of the data collected to prepare it. The source (s) used for data collection should be reliable. The report should be free from errors. Due care should be taken to see to it that the report is free from grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. Precise words and concrete terms should be used.

---

### **3.4 : STEPS IN WRITING A REPORT**

---

There are several steps in report writing. They are discussed below :

1. Determining the scope of the report
2. Collecting information
3. Analyse the information
4. Determine the solution
5. Organise the Report

#### **1. Determining the scope of the report.**

The scope of a report is defined by the factors that will be studied. The different aspects that will be studied should be clearly defined. Once the scope is defined, then it becomes easier to decide the amount of information to be collected.

#### **2. Collecting Information :**

Information to be collected can be of two types : Primary and Secondary. Primary information is the information that the writer of the report gathers and record himself/herself. It is fresh information collected by him/her. Secondary information on the other hand is the information that has been collected and recorded by someone else. Examples of primary information are information collected through questionnaires, surveys, interview schedules, observations, etc. Secondary source of information include books, journals, magazines, newspapers and the Internet.

#### **3. Analyse the Information :**

After collecting information from different sources, it needs to be analysed. The purpose of analysis is providing meaning and to make sense out of the information that has been collected. The step is very important because without proper analysis, we can not reach a conclusion or determine a solution to the problem.



#### **4. Determine the Solution :**

Based on the analysis, the solution (s) can be offered to the problem under study. The conclusion one draws or the solution one provides should be based on the data collected. All the pertinent information (whether good or bad) should be reported.

#### **5. Organise the Report :**

Once we are through the steps mentioned above it is time to think about presenting the information and prepare a report. Before actually preparing the report, we should organise the information into an outline form. The outline becomes the skeleton of the report. We should decide about the main and supporting ideas, facts and figures, and the unnecessary ideas and information that is to be eliminated.

---

### **3.5 : CORPORATE REPORTS**

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Corporate reports are special types of reports published by public or listed companies as part of their corporate communication exercise. These reports are meant for the stakeholders like the shareholders, creditors, government, etc. Sometimes these reports are published as part of compliance, while, sometimes, it is done to bring transparency to the system. Corporate reports are usually statutory reports, while reports like sustainability reports are voluntary. Statutory reports include director's report, auditor's report etc. Let us discuss various types of corporate reports.

#### **1. Director's Reports**

An annual report of directors, attached to a balance sheet, is called the director's report. It contains issues like

- (a) The state of affairs of a company
- (b) The amount of dividends to be paid to the shareholders
- (c) Future prospects of the company, changes in directors etc. if any,
- (d) Any other information which the company wants to share with the shareholders.

---

## 2. Auditor's Reports

Companies appoint auditors to scrutinize their books and accounts and submit their reports. The companies Act, 1956 has provisions in this regard. As per the Act, the companies must have auditors to audit the books and examine the affairs of the company on behalf of the shareholders. The auditor's report is usually attached to the balance sheet.

## 3. Sustainability reports

Sustainability reports present what the companies think in terms of social, environmental and economic value addition. This report shows the companies relationship to sustainable development. Sustainability means ensuring high quality of life both for present and future generations. This report has not yet been made mandatory in India.

---

## 3.6 : LET'S SUM UP

Business report is a major form of business communication. Reports present information in a logical and orderly fashion. Reports provide information that helps in decision making. Business reports are of two types, i.e., information reports and research reports. An effective business report should have two characteristics, it should be objective and accurate. Report writing follows several steps. Corporate Reports are special types of reports. Corporate reports are usually statutory reports, whereas reports like sustainability reports are voluntary in nature.

---

## 3.7 : KEY WORDS

Business Report, Information Report, Research Report, Corporate Reports, Director's Report, Auditor's Report, Sustainability Reports.

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## 3.8 : SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Before a manager begins the task of accumulating data for writing a report, some important questions need to be asked \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss.
2. State and explain the steps involved in writing a business report.
3. Throw some light on Corporate Reports by taking into account both statutory and non-statutory reports.

### **3.9 : SUGGESTED READINGS**

---

1. Business Communication by Meenakshi Raman and Prakash Singh (Oxford University Press, New Delhi) [Chapter-10]
  2. Business Communication Essentials by Courtland Bovée and John Thill (Pearson, New Delhi) [Chapter-10]
  3. Communication Skills by Nageshwar Rao and Rajendra P. Das (Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai) [Chapter -13]
- 

### **3.10 : FURTHER READINGS**

---

- Business Communication Strategies by M. M. Monippally (Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Company, New Delhi) [Chapter-11]
-

# MBA

Management Studies

**(SEMESTER – II)**

**MBA 2103**

**MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION &  
SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

**BLOCK - 1**



***The University of Burdwan***  
***Centre for Distance and Online Education***  
***Golapbag, Burdwan – 713104***  
***West Bengal, India***

**MBA  
(Management Studies)**

**Semester - II**

**MBA - 2103**

**MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION  
AND  
SKILL DEVELOPMENT(MCSD)**



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**MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION**

**AND**

**SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

**(MCSD)**

**BLOCK – 1**

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## **MBA – 2103**

### **BLOCK – 1**

This block comprises of three units and aims to provide an introduction to the study of Managerial Communication and Skill Development

#### **Unit – 1 :**

Business Writing—Introduction, written business communication;

#### **Unit – 2 :**

Business letters, Common components of Business Letters; writing effective memos;

#### **Unit – 3 :**

Business reports & Proposals; format for proposals; proposal layout and design; Secretarial Practices in Business Organizations



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**UNIT-I**  
**BUSINESS WRITING**

---

## UNIT-I : BUSINESS WRITING

---

### STRUCTURE :

---

- 1.0 : Objectives
- 1.1 : Introduction
- 1.2 : Importance of Written Communication
- 1.3 : Types of Business Messages
- 1.4 : Approaches to Business Messages
- 1.5 : Stages of Business Messages
- 1.6 : Let us sum up
- 1.7 : Key Words
- 1.8 : Self-assessment Questions
- 1.9 : Suggested Readings
- 1.10 : Further Readings

---

### 1.0 : OBJECTIVES

---

The objectives of this unit are to :

- ⇒ Discuss the importance of business communication.
- ⇒ Analyse the types of business messages.
- ⇒ Throw some light on the approaches to business messages.
- ⇒ Give brief accounts of various stages of business messages.

---

### 1.1 : INTRODUCTION

---

Written communication is pivotal to modern organizations. It serves the important purpose of documentation in a business organization. The different tools of business writing such as reports, proposals, inter office memorandums, letters,

manuals, business plans, notices, circulars, e-mails etc. provide important information, convince readers, establish and nurture relationships. Today's organizations are technology-driven where communication skill of employees has become utmost important. In order to be successful at workplace, an individual needs to effectively communicate with his/her boss, co-workers, subordinates and customers. It is imperative that one has the right approach, proper choice of words that best suit the message and the readers. It can be said that one might have great ideas, but he/she is not in a position to express those, then success will elude the person.

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## 1.2 : IMPORTANCE OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

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Today business is conducted in a globalized world. Competition comes not only from the neighbourhood, but also from distant continents. Written communication in various forms help a firm to reach across to people far and wide, be it employees across the world or customers in every nook and corner.

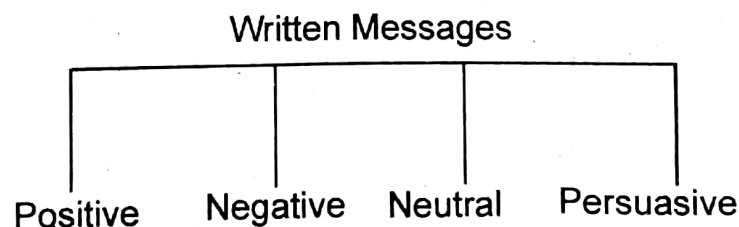
Organizations depend on written mode of communication for a number of reasons. It provides a permanent document which is a necessity in modern times. Documentation is an important business activity that enables a firm to store important information for present and future reference. Written documents can be reviewed if necessary. But care should be taken while preparing it keeping in mind its sensitivity to audience and future implications. This is because of the fact that unlike oral communication (which could be forgotten), written communication could become a public record. Well-written business documents create the image of an individual as well as that of a business organization.

---

## 1.3 : TYPES OF BUSINESS MESSAGES

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Written messages can be categorized as positive, negative, neutral, and persuasive.



Source : Business Communication. Meenakshi Raman and Prakash Singh, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2006.

**(i) Positive messages :**

Those messages that convey a positive information in order to keep alive the business relationships can be termed as positive messages. Some examples are :

⇒ The CEO of a company sending a letter of appreciation congratulating an employee for commendable performance.

⇒ The Chairman of a company initiating a note of sympathy to the family of a deceased employee.

**(ii) Negative messages :**

Negative messages are those messages that are undesirable or disappointing. Messages conveying denials, rejections, etc. come under this category. Some examples are :

⇒ A manager (HR) of an organization sending a message to the candidate who was rejected for a position in the company.

⇒ A manager of a bank refusing to grant loan to an applicant.

**(iii) Neutral messages :**

Neutral Messages are neither positive nor negative. In fact, their emotional content is usually lower as compared to both positive and negative messages. Most of the routine messages fall under this category. Examples are

⇒ A Sales manager of a company sending weekly sales report to the head office.

⇒ A Company responding to the request for a brochure.

**(iv) Persuasive messages :**

Those messages that try to convince the readers to agree with the sender or make them to act in the way as desired by the sender. Some examples are :

⇒ An Advertising Agency sending a proposal in response to the demand from a company for a nationwide campaign

⇒ A publishing company sending the catalogue of Management Books to all management institutions.

## 1.4 : APPROACHES TO BUSINESS MESSAGES

There are two approaches to preparing business messages, namely the direct and the indirect approach. Let us discuss these two approaches one by one.

### Direct Approach :

Under this approach, the sender's primary objective is in tune with the receiver. The sender wishes to transmit those messages which is foremost in the mind of the receiver. The sender does not face any problem in sending the messages as messages tend to be positive or at best neutral. This direct approach is also referred to as the deductive approach in which the main idea is first stated and then it is followed by any needed explanation. An illustration of the direct approach is presented below :

Congratulations ! It gives me immense pleasure in announcing that you have been selected for the position of Assistant Manager (HR) in our organization.

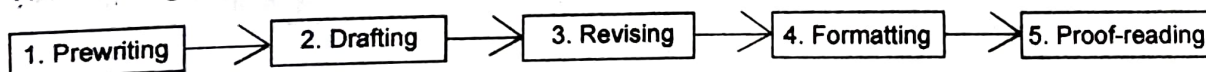
### Indirect Approach :

When the message is of such type that the audience is expected to be displeased, unwilling, or even antagonistic, then the indirect approach is more appropriate. This approach is different from the direct approach in the sense that one does not reveal the central idea until after he has offered the explanation for it. To put it in another way, it can be said that one explains his/her reasons for saying 'no' before actually saying 'no'. This is also referred to as the inductive approach where, the explanation comes first and the main idea comes later on. Most of the negative messages and persuasive messages use this approach. An illustration of the indirect approach of sending messages is given below :

Applicants other than you, ones with equally strong educational background but with vast experience in the field, have been selected for the aforesaid positions.

## 1.5 : STAGES OF BUSINESS MESSAGES

There are five main stages involved in developing effective business messages. Those stages are presented below:



## The Five stages of writing business messages

Source : Business communication. Meeakshi Raman and Prakash Singh, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2006.

Let us discuss the five stages one after the other.

### 1. Prewriting :

This is the stage in which we think and develop a plan for writing our messages. In this stage, we should first determine the purpose of our writing. After determining the purpose of writing the message, we should put ourselves in the reader's shoes, i.e. try to understand the reader's viewpoint. A message is successful only when it directly appeals the reader. We should try to create a positive tone in our writing by trying to connect with our audience. The key to keeping the reader's interest alive is getting the reader involved in the message. In order to start writing, we need to have an outline first. The main points should be decided first based on importance.

### 2. Drafting :

Drafting is the next stage where one needs to find the right balance of words. One should remember to keep the writing short and simple. We should try to be concise and to the point. The message will become more interesting if it is written in a conversational style that is warm and friendly. We should try to tailor our language to the need of the audience.

### 3. Revising :

It is advisable to review the business messages carefully after completing the first draft. Revising is the process of checking and modifying a document. Revise the document for clarity, conciseness and content by using the right words at the right places for maximum effectiveness.

### 4. Formatting :

The get-up of the message is important. In fact, good looks can help the message get across to the audience. The sender of the message should accept the responsibility for not only the content but also the format and appearance of the document. Finally it can be said that there is no universal standard of writing business messages; a fair amount of variation is fairly common.

## **5. Proof-reading :**

After composing the first draft of the message, proof-reading must be done. We should devote a fair amount of time for proof-reading. We should be meticulous in our approach during proof-reading. Proof-reading is for giving the finishing touch to the message.

---

## **1.6 : LET US SUM UP**

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The importance of written communication in business can't be undermined. This has become more important in the present scenario as business is being conducted in a globalized era. Business messages can be of different types : positive, negative, neutral and persuasive. There are two approaches to business messages, namely direct approach and indirect approach. While a direct approach is used to convey business messages that are positive or neutral, an indirect approach is best suited for messages that are negative or persuasive in nature. There are five major stages in preparing business messages : prewriting, drafting, revising, formatting, and proof-reading. Each of these stages is equally important.

---

## **1.7 : KEY WORDS**

---

Business messages, Positive message, Negative message, Neutral message, Persuasive message, Direct Approach, Indirect Approach, Prewriting, Drafting, Revising, Formatting, Proof-reading.

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## **1.8 : SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

---

1. Discuss why written communication is important in business organizations.
2. Briefly describe the two approaches to writing business-messages with suitable examples.
3. State and explain the five stages in preparing business-messages.
4. Discuss the importance of 'proof-reading' in preparing business messages.
5. Why is 'revising' considered as an essential step in preparing business messages ?



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## 1.9 : SUGGESTED READINGS

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1. Business Communication by Meenakshi Raman and Prakash Singh (Oxford University Press, New Delhi). [Chapter-8].
2. Communication skills by Nageshwar Rao and Rajendra P-Das (Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai) [Chapter -11]

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## 1.10 : FURTHER READINGS

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Business Communication Essentials by courtland Bovee and John Thill, (Pearson, New Delhi) [Chapter 3, 4 and 5].

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**UNIT-II**  
**BUSINESS LETTERS AND MEMOS**

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## UNIT-II : BUSINESS LETTERS AND MEMOS

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### STRUCTURE :

---

- 2.0 : Objectives
  - 2.1 : Introduction
  - 2.2 : Components of Business Letters
  - 2.3 : Types of Business Letters
  - 2.4 : Memorandums (Memos)
  - 2.5 : Preparing Résumé
  - 2.6 : Let us sum up
  - 2.7 : Key Words
  - 2.8 : Self-assessment Questions
  - 2.9 : Suggested Readings
  - 2.10 : Further Readings
- 

### 2.0 : OBJECTIVES

---

The objective of the unit are to :

- ⇒ Discuss the various components of business letters
  - ⇒ Analyse the types of business letters
  - ⇒ Provide guidelines for writing memos.
  - ⇒ Throw some light on preparing Résumé.
- 

### 2.1 : INTRODUCTION

---

Effective business writing is of utmost importance for an executive whether it is a letter, an application or a memo. Managers should be made to learn the functional importance of business correspondence. Writing should be precise, to-

the-point and clear. Attempts should be made o keep the writing simple. Business letters should contain short sentences and simple words. We should always keep the reader in mind while writing letters or memos.

We should try to gain the reader's attention while writing a letter. A letter should start with a strong opening. We should make the first paragraph of the letter stand out and get noticed. The most important information should come first. The letter should also close on a friendly note. It should invite the reader to continue to write and make correspondence. In case of a longer letter, the last paragraph may summarize the key points. If some action is needed at the reader's end, then it should be clearly mentioned. The letter should end with a positive and polite note. A strong close is equally important as a strong opening.

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## **2.2 : COMPONENTS OF BUSINESS LETTERS**

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The various components of business letters are :

**Heading**—It contains the address of the writer and the date on which it is sent. In case the letter is written using a letterhead, then only the date is mentioned as other details are already mentioned in the letterhead.

**Address of the recipient**—The name and address of the recipient should be mentioned to avoid confusion.

**Salutation** – The salutation means the 'Dear Sir' or 'Dear Madam' of the letter which is usually followed by a colon or a comma.

**Subject or reference** – The subject line announces the main intention of the letter. It should be short and to the point.

**Body of the letter**— The actual message is presented in the body of the letter. This is the main part of the letter.

**Closing segment** - The 'Sincercly yours' or 'Yours sincerely' element is known as the complimentary close. Other forms are 'Respectfully yours', 'Yours faithfully' etc.

**Enclosures** – Enclosures convey the items that accompany the letter. Indications such as 'Enclosure', 'Encl.' Or 'Enclosures' (in case of more than one attachment) are used for this purpose.

**Copies** – If the letter is sent to more than one person, then it should be mentioned ('CC'. is used for this purpose).

## 2.3 : TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

---

Business Letters can be of different types, such as routine letters, covering letters for job applications, acceptance letters, resignation letters, etc.

### (a) Routine Letters

It can be planned in three steps : opening paragraph, middle paragraph, and closing paragraph.

#### Opening Paragraph :

Most routine business letters begin by making reference to a previous correspondence. This saves the time spent on searching for what is being referred to. The letter can either be in response to a previous letter, a telephonic call or an in-person conversation.

#### Middle paragraph :

All the necessary details are provided in this paragraph. The sender of the letter should try to answer any possible questions that the reader may want to ask.

#### Closing paragraph :

We should not close the letter abruptly. The letter should close on a positive note. In a letter, it is good to end the communication in a way that will enable the reader to think positively about the company/organisation on behalf of which the letter is written.

### (b) Covering letter for job applications :

A covering letter accompanies a C.V. or a résumé. Through this letter, the prospective candidate puts forward his/her candidature for a particular position. This letter has to be written meticulously since it creates the first impression. The format of a covering letter is same as that of a routine letter (Refer-components of business letters).

### (c) Acceptance letters :

If a job applicant is offered a job, then he/she should formally intimate the employer of his/her decision. The date on which he/she wants to start work should be mentioned. The letter should close with sincere thanks to the prospective employer.

(d) Resignation letters :

Resignation letters should be carefully worded. The letter should not begin or end on a negative note. The person sending the letter might be feeling bad about his/her supervisor or the organisation, but that feeling should not be conveyed through the letter.

## 2.4 : MEMORANDUMS (MEMOS)

While writing memos it is important to keep the goal of all business communications in mind : to make the readers to do what we want them to do and to promote goodwill and amity. Memos are used for routine, day-to-day exchange of information within an organisation.

Format of Memos :

Memos have a specific format. They are carefully designed so that the purpose is served. A Memo has an introduction, main body and conclusion. A sample memo format is presented below.

Fig 1 : In-house Memorandums

In-house Memorandum of XYZ Ltd.	
Date	:
To	:
From	:
Ref/Sub	:
Main Body	: _____
	_____
	_____
	_____
Close.	

If should be remembered that the length of the memo is short (few lines) and the writing should be concise. The conclusion should be proper. The tone should be courteous, friendly and positive.

---

## 2.5 : PREPARING RÉSUMÉ

---

A résumé is a structured, written summary of a person's education, employment details and achievements. It is a persuasive business message intended to generate a prospective employer's interest in a candidate. The basic purpose in writing a résumé is to create interest about the job applicant. Another term that is interchangeably used with résumé is Curriculum Vitae (C.V.). Although résumés and C-V's are essentially the same, but there is minor difference-in fact, a C.V is (more) detailed than a résumé (a résumé is to the point). A résumé is a summary of achievements and highlights the strengths of the candidate. A C.V. can contain information about hobbies and extra-curricular activities, whereas, a résumé contains information relevant only to the job in question. Personal information like age, sex, religion, etc. are part of a C-V, but they are not essential for a résumé. Résumé is widely used in the US, whereas, C.V. is popular in Britain.

### Writing Résumé :

We should remember that until we are able to meet with the prospective employer in person, we are our résumé, and a small mistake can cost us interview opportunities. Secondly, we should give ourselves plenty of time to prepare our résumé. We should take time to modify and reframe our résumé. Third, we should take cue from good models or formats of résumé.

We should try to keep our résumé honest so that it represents who we really are. The target audience for whom the résumé is meant, should be kept in mind. If necessary, we can customize our résumé for individual companies. We should write the résumé in a simple and direct style. Short, crisp phrases should be used. The sample format of a résumé is depicted below.

## Figure 2 : Resume

Name and contact Information

(Name, Address, E-mail address, telephone numbers etc.)

Career objective :

Educational Background : (In reverse chronological order).

(Start with the most recent)

Work Experience, Skills and Accomplishment. (Reverse chronological order)

Signature

Guidelines regarding personal data and references :

Résumé should not include any personal data beyond the information provided above. When applying for a U.S company for example, one should not include information like age, gender, marital status, religious or political affiliations, national origin, salary history, reasons for leaving jobs, names of references, etc. Also, never include a photo with the resume—some employers won't even look at résumé with photos for fear of being accused of discrimination based on personal characteristics. Try to keep the résumé to one-page length. If a prospective employee has more experience and he/she is applying for a higher position, then he/she may go for a longer résumé.

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### **2.6 : LET'S SUM UP**

---

We write business letters to provide certain specific information to readers. The other purpose might also be to persuade the readers to take some action. Business letters can be challenging to develop, because we have to retain the reader's attention throughout. While writing letters, we must analyse our audience and



determine the purpose. Then, we should gather information, create an outline, prepare a draft and revise it. Inter-office memorandums or memos are used for day-to-day, routine exchange of information within an organisation. Memos are written using a format. In fact, the length of the memo is short and the writing is concise. A résumé is a structured, written summary of a person's education, employment details and achievements. C.V. and résumé are interchangeably used, although a C.V. is more detailed than a résumé. It is important to note here that to communicate information in a simple, clear, concise form is of great importance for a successful executive and for his/her organization's proper functioning.

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## **2.7 : KEY WORDS**

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Salutation, Enclosure, covering letter, acceptance letter, resignation letter, Inter-office memorandum, Résumé, Curriculum Vitae (C.V).

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## **2.8 : SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

---

1. Discuss the various components of business letters.
2. Throw some light on types of business letters.
3. What are the basic ingredients of an effective memo ? Discuss how can it be used as a very strong tool to send the right messages.
4. Explain the role of covering letter while sending a résumé to a prospective employer.
5. Develop the outline of an effective Résumé.

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## **2.9 : SUGGESTED READINGS**

---

1. Business Communication by Meenakshi Raman and Prakash Singh (Oxford University Press, New Delhi) [Chapter-9].
2. Business Communication Essentials by Courtland Bovée and John Thill (Pearson, New Delhi) [Chapter -13]
3. Communication Skills by Nageshwar Rao and Rajendra P-Das (Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai) [Chapters -16,18]

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## 2.10 : FURTHER READINGS

---

Business Communication Strategies by M. M. Monippally (Tata-McGraw Hill Publishing Company, New Delhi) [Chapter-8].

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**UNIT-III**  
**BUSINESS REPORTS**

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**STRUCTURE :**

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- 3.0 : Objectives
  - 3.1 : Introduction
  - 3.2 : Kinds of Business Reports
  - 3.3 : Elements of Effective Business Report Writing
  - 3.4 : Steps in Writing a Report
  - 3.5 : Corporate Reports
  - 3.6 : Let us sum up
  - 3.7 : Key Words
  - 3.8 : Self-assessment Questions
  - 3.9 : Suggested Readings
  - 3.10 : Further Readings
- 

**3.0 : OBJECTIVES**

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The objective of this unit are to :

- ⇒ Discuss the kinds of business reports.
  - ⇒ Analyse the elements of effective business reports.
  - ⇒ State and explain the steps in writing a report.
  - ⇒ Throw some light on corporate reports.
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**3.1 : INTRODUCTION**

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Report writing – whether annual reports, monthly sales reports, production reports or project reports, is a very important aspect of the job of a manager in a business organization. Apart from these, every organization has a system of periodical reporting on progress made and status of different activities. The

management may also publish some audit reports from time to time. The information contained in a report is needed for various purposes, like for reviewing and assessing progress, for planning future course of action, for taking crucial decisions, and for solving problems.

A report is a logical and orderly presentation of facts and information that is objective in nature and serves important business purpose. According to the American Marketing Society, the purpose of a report is 'to convey (to) the interested persons the whole results of the study in sufficient details and so arranged as to enable each reader to comprehend the data and so determine for himself the validity of conclusions'.

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### **3.2 : KIND OF BUSINESS REPORTS**

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The objective of a business report is either to provide some information or to solve a problem by analyzing a situation. Reports can broadly be classified as information reports and research reports.

#### **Information Report :**

An information report consists of past and present information that will help readers to stay abreast of a situation, a topic, or to learn about the progress on a project. The purpose of an information report is to present ideas and data in a concise and clear manner.

**Research Report :** A research report is concerned with analysing a situation. The person preparing the report looks at the problem, collects data and analyses the data, arrives at a conclusion and then makes certain recommendations.

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### **3.3 : ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE BUSINESS WRITING**

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An effective business report should be objective and accurate. Objectivity in business report writing means presenting information in a manner that is free from personal feelings, bias and prejudices.

The writer of the report should distinguish between facts and opinions. The opinions and inferences drawn by people should be verified. While preparing a report, both positive and negative aspects should be presented. All the pertinent information must be included in the report.

Accuracy on the other hand includes accuracy of information presented and accuracy of writing the report. The writer of the report must ensure that report should contain factual information only. The accuracy of any report is dependent upon the accuracy of the data collected to prepare it. The source (s) used for data collection should be reliable. The report should be free from errors. Due care should be taken to see to it that the report is free from grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. Precise words and concrete terms should be used.

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### **3.4 : STEPS IN WRITING A REPORT**

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There are several steps in report writing. They are discussed below :

1. Determining the scope of the report
2. Collecting information
3. Analyse the information
4. Determine the solution
5. Organise the Report

#### **1. Determining the scope of the report.**

The scope of a report is defined by the factors that will be studied. The different aspects that will be studied should be clearly defined. Once the scope is defined, then it becomes easier to decide the amount of information to be collected.

#### **2. Collecting Information :**

Information to be collected can be of two types : Primary and Secondary. Primary information is the information that the writer of the report gathers and record himself/herself. It is fresh information collected by him/her. Secondary information on the other hand is the information that has been collected and recorded by someone else. Examples of primary information are information collected through questionnaires, surveys, interview schedules, observations, etc. Secondary source of information include books, journals, magazines, newspapers and the Internet.

#### **3. Analyse the Information :**

After collecting information from different sources, it needs to be analysed. The purpose of analysis is providing meaning and to make sense out of the information that has been collected. The step is very important because without proper analysis, we can not reach a conclusion or determine a solution to the problem.

#### **4. Determine the Solution :**

Based on the analysis, the solution (s) can be offered to the problem under study. The conclusion one draws or the solution one provides should be based on the data collected. All the pertinent information (whether good or bad) should be reported.

#### **5. Organise the Report :**

Once we are through the steps mentioned above it is time to think about presenting the information and prepare a report. Before actually preparing the report, we should organise the information into an outline form. The outline becomes the skeleton of the report. We should decide about the main and supporting ideas, facts and figures, and the unnecessary ideas and information that is to be eliminated.

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### **3.5 : CORPORATE REPORTS**

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Corporate reports are special types of reports published by public or listed companies as part of their corporate communication exercise. These reports are meant for the stakeholders like the shareholders, creditors, government, etc. Sometimes these reports are published as part of compliance, while, sometimes, it is done to bring transparency to the system. Corporate reports are usually statutory reports, while reports like sustainability reports are voluntary. Statutory reports include director's report, auditor's report etc. Let us discuss various types of corporate reports.

#### **1. Director's Reports**

An annual report of directors, attached to a balance sheet, is called the director's report. It contains issues like

- (a) The state of affairs of a company
- (b) The amount of dividends to be paid to the shareholders
- (c) Future prospects of the company, changes in directors etc. if any,
- (d) Any other information which the company wants to share with the shareholders.

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## 2. Auditor's Reports

Companies appoint auditors to scrutinize their books and accounts and submit their reports. The companies Act, 1956 has provisions in this regard. As per the Act, the companies must have auditors to audit the books and examine the affairs of the company on behalf of the shareholders. The auditor's report is usually attached to the balance sheet.

## 3. Sustainability reports

Sustainability reports present what the companies think in terms of social, environmental and economic value addition. This report shows the companies relationship to sustainable development. Sustainability means ensuring high quality of life both for present and future generations. This report has not yet been made mandatory in India.

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## 3.6 : LET'S SUM UP

Business report is a major form of business communication. Reports present information in a logical and orderly fashion. Reports provide information that helps in decision making. Business reports are of two types, i.e., information reports and research reports. An effective business report should have two characteristics, it should be objective and accurate. Report writing follows several steps. Corporate Reports are special types of reports. Corporate reports are usually statutory reports, whereas reports like sustainability reports are voluntary in nature.

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## 3.7 : KEY WORDS

Business Report, Information Report, Research Report, Corporate Reports, Director's Report, Auditor's Report, Sustainability Reports.

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## 3.8 : SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Before a manager begins the task of accumulating data for writing a report, some important questions need to be asked \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss.
2. State and explain the steps involved in writing a business report.
3. Throw some light on Corporate Reports by taking into account both statutory and non-statutory reports.



### **3.9 : SUGGESTED READINGS**

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1. Business Communication by Meenakshi Raman and Prakash Singh (Oxford University Press, New Delhi) [Chapter-10]
  2. Business Communication Essentials by Courtland Bovée and John Thill (Pearson, New Delhi) [Chapter-10]
  3. Communication Skills by Nageshwar Rao and Rajendra P. Das (Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai) [Chapter -13]
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### **3.10 : FURTHER READINGS**

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- Business Communication Strategies by M. M. Monippally (Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Company, New Delhi) [Chapter-11]
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