



Official English communication guide

(From my experience of training candidates in English communication)

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Welcome!

The new trend in organizations is 1) Documentation, 2) Conversations internal and external, 3) Reviews of periodical performance, 4) Stage presentations 5) Business mails / chat. You have to communicate effectively in English for letting others know how you perform and to conduct your day to day work.

The basic for all these, lies in **“telling clearly what you want to tell”**

In this booklet about official communication, I have taken care to present the matter in two sections.

- 1) Basic section - Elements of a conversation
- 2) Advanced section - official communication

Actually, training a student to frame sentences and ask questions is like **laying the foundation** for a building. If the basic is strong, the building is also strong. It has to be done very **carefully**.

Section 1- Basic section - elements of conversation

Let us start!



English communication 1 - conversations

Conversations are both official and personal. In official conversations, we talk with our office mates and customers. In general conversations, sentences are used with limited questions. In official conversations (when you talk to a client) it is a question and answer session.

Conversation has two parts

- 1) Speaking sentences (also known as answers),
- 2) Asking questions

Example for a sentence is “**I like chocolates**”. Example for a question is “**What is your name?**”. If you understand the rules and if you can form one sentence without mistake, you can speak for an hour. Most of you know English basics.

Most of my students tell me that they could understand clearly when others speak, but they could not speak because there is no practice!

Suppose Kumar’s friend tells him, “I am going to T.Nagar”, Kumar replies “OK”.

If Kumar’s friend tells “T.Nagar going I am today”, Kumar feels that the friend is not speaking correctly. This means Kumar knows something in spoken English, but does not know how to form a sentence. English language has a set of rules and syntax for proper communication.

Skills needed for a conversation

- 1) How to frame a sentence
- 2) How to ask a question

Then

- 3) Practice in expanding sentences and questions



4) Conversational practice

There are **proven methods** to develop conversational skills, both self help and through a trainer.

Before a student can start framing a sentence / question according to a formula, he/she should know the basics. The basics are very easy. I have provided a crisp explanation on parts of a sentence.

Parts of a sentence / question

Noun - Noun is a name of **anything**. A **direct** name - Vinod / Rekha

Name of a **profession** - Doctor / Postmaster / Policeman...

Name of an **animal or a thing or a place** - Dog / Marina beach/ Gandhi nagar 16 th street / next street / chair

Verb - Verb is **an action**. Walk, talk, jump, sing, dance, count... verb forms present, past, future (verb list given)

Brush up

Present tense - An action that happens **now**. Past tense - an action **completed** (even before a second). Future tense - an action **not started**. (It may start even after a minute)

Auxiliary verb - Auxiliary verbs support the main verb to indicate the tense. For example...

I **am** going (present)

I **was** going (past)



I **will be** going (future).

Here, in all the three sentences, 'I' and 'going' are used commonly. But the difference in meaning comes with "am, was and will be", which are auxiliary verbs (like 'assistant manager', this is the assisting verb.)

List of auxiliary verbs

Am, is, was, are, were, has, have, had, do, does, did, will, would, shall, should, can, could, may, might, must, need.

A question has to be asked or a sentence has to be framed according to a fixed format. Once you learn how to speak a sentence or ask a question, you can proceed to conversations practice.

How to develop skills in conversation?

The first way is to develop the skills with your friends through "**4 step sentence expansion game**"

Technique 1) - 4 step sentence expansion game (played by you with 2 friends)

You should develop a two word sentence as "I eat"

Your friend 1 should expand a bit

Expanding... I eat an apple.

Your friend 2 should expand further

Expanding further.. I eat an apple everyday



You should conclude

I eat an apple every day for health.

Example 2

I laughed

I laughed for the joke

I laughed for the joke yesterday.

I laughed for the joke yesterday in the beach

Example 3

I will go

I will go to my home

I will go to my home tomorrow evening

I will go to my home tomorrow evening without fail

For this game, you need verbs. **I have given 25 verbs in four forms of tense** in the following table. You should first tell a noun plus a verb from this table. "I go". Your friends should expand step by step. I play this game in my classes. It is very funny.

Verbs play an important role in indicating when the action happens (present, past, future). Like this, there is a form of verb called '**past participle**'. It is used in perfect tense and passive voice. Make a note of the past participle form. It will be of great help to you.

Sample table of verbs - for your reference



S.No	Verb (present tense)	Past tense	Past participle	Future tense
1	Walk	walked	Walked	Will walk
2	Talk	talked	Talked	Will talk
3	Eat	ate	Eaten	Will eat
4	Sing	sang	Sung	Will sing
5	Write	wrote	Written	Will write
6	Fly	flew	Flown	Will fly
7	Rise	Rose	Risen	Will rise
8	Give	Gave	Given	Will give
9	Spend	spent	Spent	Will spend
10	Earn	earned	Earned	Will earn
11	Think	thought	Thought	Will think
12	Bring	brought	Brought	Will bring
13	Draw	drew	Drawn	Will draw
14	Drive	drove	Driven	Will drive
15	Come	came	Come	Will come
16	Teach	taught	Taught	Will teach
17	Copy	copied	Copied	Will copy
18	Conduct	conducted	Conducted	Will conduct
19	Break	Broke	Broken	Will break
20	Fight	fought	Fought	Will fight
21	Clear	cleared	Cleared	Will clear
22	Drink	drank	Drunk	Will drink
23	Learn	learnt	Learnt	Will learn
24	Work	worked	Worked	Will work
25	Win	won	Won	Will win



In schooldays, you were telling

Give - gave - given

Come - came - come

Go - went - gone

No? That is nothing but the past participle form of verbs.

Technique 2 - story reading

You and your friends should buy comics and read stories one by one. If you are unable to understand the meaning of a word, you can get it from a dictionary or from the pictures in the story. Each of you should read a story for others and all should note down new words with meanings for your improvement.

Then comes the questions section.

When you are comfortable with framing sentences and questions, you can start conversational practice. (better with a trainer, for official conversations)

In conversation classes, you and your trainer will start talking in simple sentences and questions. Then they will become long sentences.

After tense forms, articles and prepositions help in framing a sentence or a question. For your understanding, I have given a practical explanation of articles.

A practical explanation of articles

Why do we say 'an' apple'? When do we say 'a Doctor' and when 'The Doctor'?



Suppose I am not well. I go to a nearby small hospital. The receptionist welcomes me and..

Receptionist: How can I help you?

Me: I am not well. I want to see **a** Doctor

Why do I say **a** Doctor? Because I want to see **1 Doctor** and I am ready to meet **any Doctor** told by the receptionist. **1 Doctor & any Doctor**- This is where I use the article 'a'. I do not know the Doctor's name. If you know something in particular, use '**the**'. If you know in general, 'use **a/an**'

Now to the story. The receptionist directs me to Dr.Suresh. He treats me and asks me to go there the next week. Next week. I go to the hospital. Now I know the Doctor's name. The receptionist welcomes me.

Receptionist: How can I help you?

Me: I want to meet **the** Doctor.

(Why do I say '**the**' Doctor? . I want to meet Dr.Suresh only. I know his name. That's why I say '**the**' Doctor.)

"Please give me '**an**' apple"

When I ask like this, it means I want **1 apple and any apple** in the shop. '**An**' is used in the same sense as 'a'. But '**an**' is used before words that start with A, E, I, O & U (vowels). (Exceptions are there like 'an hour'). You have to use articles correctly in your communication.



Your successful communication depends upon how well you combine nouns, verbs and auxiliary verbs with prepositions and articles.. You can get trained in framing sentences or asking questions with the help of a trainer like me. **It is 50% knowledge and 50% practice.**

SECTION 2 - advanced section - Official communication

E mail communication.

Letters have been replaced by emails due to speed and cost factors. In day to day activities, we are supposed to write emails to our associates. Writing an email does not come with 'from' and 'to' sections. We can directly write what we want to communicate.

Idea 1. Use the '**subject**' section cleverly.

The 'subject' section prompts the receiver to open a mail or to delete it without reading. When you write an official mail, the receiver will read it of course. But if you clearly cite the '**exact purpose**' of writing the mail, he will grasp the matter fast.

(What do you want? Tell it)

Sub: "I want leave for a day". - it is a bit hard to be sent to your superior. It can be 'a day's leave requested'

Do not overact while writing the subject. .

Example



Suresh had gone on a medical leave for 3 days. But he became alright only after 5 days. No information to the office meantime.

After becoming alright, Suresh should send a detailed mail. He should explain the reason for the communication gap and why he did not return to work on the 4th day. In this difficult situation, the subject section of the mail should be something like 'unexpected extension of leave'. The HR people would understand easily.

On the other hand, if Suresh writes a mail to the HR with the subject like "I am fine. How are you?" the HR executive would be angry. (If you are fine, why are you absent?) . By writing such an irresponsible subject, Suresh has conveyed something EXACTLY OPPOSITE TO WHAT HE ACTUALLY WANTED TO SAY

A subject like "I will come tomorrow" would be very childish and would be like personal communication.

A subject like "I got well just now" would be treated as a short story & whatever follows as a bigger story.

After the 'subject' line, the body of the mail has to be **crisp and clear**. Nobody appreciates a mail because it is too long.

Example

Suresh is the marketing manager of a concern. He sent his marketing executive to a new company on appointment. But the owner of that company had gone out when the executive visited. Now Suresh needs another appointment from the same person.

How to build the body of the letter?



Break any mail into four parts.

Here, the first part tells that when the executive visited, the client was not there.

Caution!

You should never write like, “When my executive came to meet you, you had gone out”. This is very bad.

You can write like this.

“My marketing executive came to your office at the time given by you. But he could not meet you” - polite!

Part 2

My marketing executive has left the documents given by me to you, with the front desk executive (Do not write ‘receptionist’ in B2B)

Part 3

I request you to collect (not ‘take’) the materials sent by me from the front desk and give another appointment for my executive to meet you.

Part 4

We are interested to do business with your esteemed organization.

The mail goes like this.

Subject: Another appointment please

Sir / Dear Mr. Shyam, (depends upon your client)



Hope you are doing well. My marketing executive Mr. Arun came to meet you in your office today. Since you were busy, he could not meet you. I request you to kindly give him another appointment, so that he can explain the merits of our products. For your kind reading, he has left our product details with the front desk executive. I request you to collect it and give us an opportunity to do business with you.

Thanking you and regards...

Avoid being sentimental while writing a business mail. ("You are like my brother").

There is nothing as an emotional business mail.

The signature section of the mail should include your mobile number and your website address.

Effective presentation in review meetings & stage presentations

Review meetings are held to monitor the progress of work. Stage presentations are a must when you have to explain a topic or theme to others belonging to your organization.

Review meetings focus on

What was planned?

What was achieved?

What is the difference between the plan and the result?

You are supposed to present data in review meetings. After considering data, you may be asked to explain the reasons for shortcomings, if any.



While telling the reasons for shortcomings (the right word is 'causes', not 'reasons'), explain with responsibility. Do not play with others' time and patience by citing immediate causes. Focus on the root causes. The basic reason for the shortcoming.

Why is the project still incomplete?

"Kishore took an unexpected leave sir"

This is **not** the right reason. We can identify the root cause after analyzing the situation and correct it in the coming days. No fast judgments. Without data and supporting evidence, there is no review meeting. You have to prepare tables consisting of relevant data, read it several times before presenting and discuss with your team.

Golden rules for a review meeting.

- 1) Speak technically with data. No stories.
- 2) Please have a clear knowledge of what happened during the period of review and present it accordingly.
- 3) While discussing shortcomings, please provide actual reasons behind the shortcomings
- 4) Please suggest corrective action and possible deadlines.
- 5) Speak in simple English and never try to impress others with words. In review meetings, reality speaks. Members need not.

10 points to be taken care during stage presentations.

- 1) You should know the subject, on which you are giving presentations. If you know the subject, you can prepare well and even if you miss a point, you can make up. If you know the subject, you will present well



- 2) Nobody likes a person who talks in a boring way, during a presentation. You have to combine data, pictorial illustrations and talk interestingly. If you like the topic of presentation, you will present well.
- 3) If you present with equipments like AV, you will present well. Everybody likes technology and making them comfortable by presenting slideshows is great.
- 4) You have to prepare well prior to presenting. You have to consider the data, create slides and add notes to each slide. If you prepare well, you will present well.
- 5) If you are doing a presentation with more theory, you should have hints with you,. Then only you will not skip topics and you will deliver a smooth speech. If you jump topics, the audience may feel a jerk or a lack of continuity. If you have hints in your hands, you will present well
- 6) The audiences are ordinary human beings, who have worries related to work and home. Sometimes, you can see them looking at you without any expression on their face. You should never think that they are bored. It is very common for every speaker to develop a complex that others are looking at him / her critically. If you are speaking / presenting based on standard preparation, who can judge you less? If you are not bothered about others' opinion and judgments, you will present well. Please do not expect every participant to nod and smile always at you.
- 7) You should convert ideas into long sentences. You should have the relevant practice. People remember only the critical points. But you have to provide more information in a combination of critical data and supporting details If you are good in blowing up ideas into sentences, you will present well.



- 8) If you want to present well, you should read often. Reading from various authors helps you to form your own style and it gives you vocabulary. Even if you forget some details during a presentation, you can make up with your knowledge. If you have regular reading habit, you will present very well
- 9) You should never give up while speaking. You should commit to yourself and assure yourself that you would present the entire content as planned. In case of a miss, you should refer to the hints and start again in no time. If you have the fighting spirit, you will present well
- 10) If you are **trained professionally**, you will present very well. Professional training is a must if you want to develop your presentation skills. I have done a lot of presentations while I was in job. I follow a standard method in training. I suggest that you select a trainer after consulting with him / her about your requirements, the expertise of the trainer and then proceed.

Challenging situations that I faced in communications training

S.No	Difficulties faced by my students	Corrective action taken
1	Sweating while trying to speak in English (and fear)	Making them laugh, encouraging them to speak preformatted sentences and conversations, introducing translation technique, telling them case studies of similar candidates who got good positions later
2	Speaking with mistakes (often)	Asking them to slow down, encouraging them to relax , think and speak slowly . Reviewing parts of grammar in which they

		made mistakes (tense confusion)
3	The candidate knows grammar. He/she is able to understand English when others speak but is unable to speak	Training them how to frame a sentence and a question. Starting with forming very simple two word sentences like “I go”. Then expanding to “I go to a movie”. Upon progress, further expansion “I go to a movie today”
4	The candidate speaks a sentence in English and jumps to Tamil immediately	Letting him speak like that initially. Helping him with the translation of what he said in Tamil and asking him to talk two sentences fully in English. Moving to three sentences form.
5	The candidate is good in grammar. He/she knows how to form a sentence/question but unable to speak continuously	Teaching the technique of keeping points while speaking, training him to blow up ideas into sentences. Rectifying any grammar confusion.

English communication courses that I offer

- 1) **Spoken English course** - Fee Rs 2500, 15 classes of 90 minutes duration, focusing on grammar, sentence formation, question formation and conversations.
- 2) **Brush up sessions** - You can fine tune your grammar / speech / writing, if you are already speaking in English and if you want to do better. I charge Rs 1500 for 8 classes of 90 minutes duration.



3) Total English course - Fee Rs 5000, 30 classes of 90 minutes duration, focusing on spoken English, writing official communications and stage presentations. If referred by **HR**, the fee is Rs 4000.

4) Stage presentations course

This course is for effective speaking. If you know good English, I charge Rs 2500 for 10 classes of 90 minutes duration. After the session, you can contact me for developments or **when you need help** for presentations.

I give individual attention to my students. Before starting classes, I discuss their needs, their existing level of English and decide the way in which they have to be trained. I **never** start the classes urgently. I keep track of the students and they keep in touch with me even after finishing the course. I have given results. I will continue to do so.

(Contact me for any clarification/ assistance or support - 882555541)

All the best and thanks for reading.



workshops that I offer

- Workshop on '**Effective official communication**'
- Workshop on '**Stage presentations**'
- Workshop on effective communication in **review meetings**
- Workshop on writing **reports**
- Workshop on the importance of **performance review**

Presentation sessions that I offer

- Success secrets of **achievers** in my observation & experience
- Come out of the trap
- **Quality** please
- Problem **solving** made easy
- Stress busting made **easy**
- The positive person & **positive energy**

English communication courses that I offer

- ✓ 1) **Spoken English course** - Fee Rs 5500, 40classes of 90 minutes duration, focusing on grammar, sentence formation, Spoken Training, question formation and conversations.
- ✓ 2) **Brush up sessions** - You can fine tune your grammar / speech / writing, if you 40are already speaking in English and if you want to do better. I charge Rs 4000 for 30 classes of 90 minutes duration.
- ✓ 3) **Total English course** - Fee Rs 7500, 50 classes of 90 minutes duration, focusing on spoken English, writing official communications and stage presentations.
- ✓ 4) **Stage presentations course**



This course is for effective speaking. If you know good English, I charge Rs 4000 for 20 classes of 90 minutes duration. After the session, you can contact me for developments or when you need help for presentations.